

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update August 3, 2023 **(Av 16, 5783)**

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Iranian, Hamas Officials Discuss Response to Upheaval in Israel — Report; Top Iranian security officials and the Hamas terror group held a closed-door three-hour meeting last week to discuss a response to the societal upheaval in Israel sparked by the government's judicial overhaul, according to a report on Tuesday, July 25. The meeting was attended by a senior commander from Iran's Quds Force, a part of the Islamic Republic Revolutionary Guards Corps that is responsible for extraterritorial operations, and two other Iranian security officials and officials from Hamas, according to British media. The two sides agreed that the judicial crisis has already damaged Israel, but that they should not make any "direct interference" to exploit the situation because getting involved could allow Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to deflect blame outward, to foreign enemies, the report said. A Hamas source told the British media outlet that Hamas, Iran, and the Quds Force were holding discussions "over the whole situation," but would not discuss the meeting about the judicial overhaul. There was no immediate comment from official Iranian sources. Iran backs Israeli enemies including the Gaza-based Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror groups, and Lebanon's Hezbollah terror organization. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, also gloated on Tuesday that Israel was on the "path to disappearance." (TOI / VFI News)

Lebanese Military Analyst: Lebanese Army and Hezbollah Are Prepared for War with Israel; A Lebanese military analyst recently said on local television that the Lebanese army and Hezbollah are prepared for war with Israel. The analyst, Abdul Rahman Chehaitli, said that Israel should not underestimate the Lebanese army, because even though it has inadequate weapons, it has some of the most qualified servicemen, who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the country even if they have low salaries. Chehaitli added that the Lebanese military has Hezbollah's 100,000 fighters and an arsenal of 150,000 rockets to back it up. He made the comments in an interview that aired on July 11 on OTV and translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). "If the army commander orders these 60,000

soldiers to go to the border, all 60,000 will go there, even without a salary. I am not exaggerating. I am telling you how it is." Hezbollah has been provoking Israel lately. On Sunday, July 30, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was meeting with defense officials, regarding the security situation in the North, Hezbollah operatives were recording themselves violating the border and waving the terrorist organization's flag. The previous day, Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's leader said that the entire Middle East will not rest until the "cancerous gland" that is Israel is removed. Nasrallah further warned that Palestinians today "believe more than ever in the resistance and on the axis of resistance." He also reaffirmed that Hezbollah "stands by the Palestinians with everything we possess." (INN / VFI News)

Israeli Nuclear Scientists Considering Resigning over Judicial Reform – Report; Senior nuclear scientists in the Israel Atomic Energy Commission are considering resigning in protest against the government's judicial reform plan, Israeli media reported on Tuesday, July 25. The groups of scientists, dozens as per the report, are still discussing whether or not to resign. These scientists are reportedly targeted across the globe due to the nature of their occupation and have had security detail attached following Iranian threats on their lives. The report continues, adding that any decision is unlikely to be taken as a united group, but rather as individuals. Meanwhile, a poll showed that the majority of Israelis (58%) fear civil war. The poll, conducted by Lazar Research, showed that just 38% of Israelis are not afraid that there will be a civil war, and 4% said they do not know. (JPost / VFI News)

IDF Enters Jenin for the First Time Since Large-Scale Operation, 12 Arrested; The IDF, the Shin Bet, and border police made arrests in Jenin overnight between Sunday and Monday, July 30-31, for the first time since the massive Jenin operation in early July. Although only two Hamas terrorists were arrested in the raid, the raid was significant because, for the past few weeks, the IDF has unofficially stayed out of Jenin to allow the Palestinian Authority to reassert its authority. The Israeli media state that the IDF has been concerned about acting too much in Jenin, which could undermine the PA's legitimacy there, by making them look like they are working directly with the IDF. At the same time, the IDF has been adamant that it would continue to act anywhere that the PA failed to act. Besides in Jenin, the IDF arrested 10 others in raids across Judea and Samaria. Arrests were made in Naalin, el-Muir, Shiyuch, Izaria, and the al-Arouv refugee camp. In Mizra-al-sharkia and Beit Kahil, the IDF seized terror funds and weapons. In some of the arrests in the various villages, there were rock and molotov cocktail thrown by some of the Palestinians. The IDF used non-lethal crowd dispersal methods to facilitate the arrests and there were no IDF injuries reported. (JPost / VFI News)

80% of Palestinians Say PA President Abbas Should Step Down; On the 75th anniversary of the Nakba (the "catastrophe" that Palestinians call the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948), the Palestinian public sees the Judea and Samaria-Gaza Strip split as the most damaging development that has happened since 1948, followed by the (Israeli) "occupation" of Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip in 1967. The results of the second quarter of 2023 also indicate a decline in the popularity of Fatah and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in both Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip, accompanied by a decline in satisfaction with the president's performance. The increased dissatisfaction led to greater demand for Abbas's resignation, reaching 80%. The PA's standing is also worsening, with the percentage of those who believe that its continued existence is in Israel's interest increasing by six percentage points in three months, while half of the public said that the collapse or dissolution of the PA serves the Palestinian interest. (JPost / VFI News)

UN Bodies Receive Millions from 'Terror Charities' – Opinion; The United Nations has a terrorism problem. Last month, its Security Council refused to designate as a global terrorist the architect behind the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which killed 170 people. Just over two weeks ago, the UN's Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, who has previously appeared on a Hezbollah-affiliated channel, issued a report that

was praised by the terrorist group Hamas. Until today, the UN has actively failed to define terrorism, affording terrorists impunity daily. Not only does the UN have a problem identifying terrorism when it is right in front of it, but in some cases the UN has even partnered with terrorism-affiliated groups. Over the last year, four United Nations agencies have partnered with and accepted \$7 million from the terrorism-affiliated NGO Qatar Charity. According to the Counter Extremism Project (that maintains databases on extremist groups, their ideology, leaders, history, financing, violent activities, tactics, and rhetoric), the Qatar Charity is a member charity of the Union of Good network. Furthermore, in 2021, UN Watch exposed 100 UNRWA employees for inciting violence and antisemitism online. UNRWA child educators have reportedly glorified Hitler and terrorism, while UNRWA textbooks have glorified violent jihad and characterized Jews as enemies of Islam. (JPost /VFI News)

Sweden: Woman Burns Sheet of Paper Instead of Hebrew Bible in Stockholm; A Swedish woman who had been granted permission to burn a Hebrew Bible outside the Israeli embassy in Stockholm on Friday, July 28, decided against the act. Instead, the 50-year-old woman burned a blank sheet of paper and stated it was a “symbol of the Swedish system that is empty of content.” This marks the second time in two weeks that a planned burning of a Hebrew Bible was eventually abandoned. The previous activist who made such a request backed down and did not go through with the Torah burning, saying the real reason for the protest was to draw attention to the difference between freedoms of speech and offending other ethnic groups. Israeli authorities on Thursday had denounced the granting of permission to burn a Hebrew Bible for a second time in Stockholm. Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said, “I’m appalled by another threat to burn a Torah in Sweden. Threats to harm holy books and Torahs must stop.” Minister of Aliyah and Integration Ofir Sofer criticized the plans as well, saying, “I strongly condemn the intention to burn the Torah, which is so holy to the Jewish people. This is a shameful event that cheapens the sacred value of the book and critically harms the Jews in the entire world.” (INN / VFI News)

Israel, Ivory Coast Sign Framework Agreement; Foreign Minister Eli Cohen on Thursday, July 27, signed a framework agreement with Ivory Coast in the fields of agriculture, water, and technology, Israeli media reported. He also met with the country’s Vice President Tiémoko Meyliet Koné, Prime Minister Patrick Achi, and Foreign Minister Kandia Camara. “Both of our countries face the threat of terrorism, especially the spread of Hezbollah, Iran’s terrorist arm. In my talks with senior government officials in the Ivory Coast, we agreed to share Israeli knowledge on legal, financial, and intelligence issues,” Cohen said. “We also operate in the field of international aid, with Israel providing the latest of our knowledge in the fields of agriculture for the benefit of the people of the Ivory Coast. The economic forum that I opened with the Israeli business delegation will greatly contribute to increasing trade between the two countries,” he added. Cohen had led a business delegation of a variety of Israeli companies in the fields of cyber, agriculture, and energy to the Israel-Ivory Coast Economic Forum. On Wednesday, he visited Ghana, where he met with President Nana Akufo-Addo and opened the first Israel-Ghana business forum. (INN / VFI News)

28% of Israelis Considering Leaving the Country Amid Judicial Upheaval — Poll; A survey carried out Tuesday, July 25, in the wake of the government passing the first law in its divisive judicial overhaul package found that over a quarter of Israelis are considering leaving the country. More specifically, the poll found that 28% of respondents were weighing a move abroad, 64% were not, and 8% were unsure. The survey reflected the impact of the coalition passing the law on Monday, despite sustained mass protests, vehement opposition from top judicial, security, economic, and public figures, and thousands of Israeli military reservists vowing to quit service. Over half of the survey’s respondents — 54% — said they feared the judicial overhaul was harming Israel’s security, and 56% were worried about civil war. Only 33% of respondents said they believed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s claim that he wants to compromise on the rest of the judicial overhaul legislation, although 84% of voters for the

premier's Likud party said they believed him. Fifty-five percent of respondents said leading opposition figures Yair Lapid and Benny Gantz should return to negotiations. Israel's opinion polls can often be unreliable, but they influence politicians and voters. In the meantime, last week, an unprecedented number of 1,338 distress calls were received by ERAN (emotional first aid organization), including dozens of calls that were defined by the applicants as directly arising from the political and social situation and hundreds of distress calls that were intensified only by the unprecedented crisis in Israeli society. (TOI / VFI News)

Almost 70% of Israeli Startups Act to Shift Funds, Relocate due to Judicial Shakeup; Almost 70 percent of Israeli startups are taking active steps to pull money and shift parts of their businesses outside the country due to the uncertainty created around the proposed judicial overhaul, according to a survey by Start-Up Nation Central, which tracks the local tech ecosystem. The findings of the survey showed that 68% of Israeli startups have started to take "legal and financial steps," including the withdrawal of cash reserves, moving their headquarters outside of Israel, relocating employees, and conducting layoffs. Overall, 78% of the surveyed startup executives reported that the government's controversial plan to weaken the country's judicial system is "negatively" impacting their operations, and 84% of venture capital investors said it has a negative influence on their portfolio companies. Meanwhile, Israel's sovereign credit rating on Tuesday, July 25, was lowered by credit rating agency Morgan Stanley, and Moody's warned of a "significant risk" that political and social tensions will lead to "negative consequences for Israel's economy and security situation." The tech ecosystem is a key engine of growth for Israel's economy, as it generates about 16% of GDP and over 50% of exports, and contributes more than 25% of the total income tax collected by the government. (TOI / VFI News)

Iran Gloats: 'Crisis at Heart of Zionist Regime Deeper than Crisis in Its PM's Heart'; With Israeli society increasingly fractured over the country's democratic character and future, Iran on Sunday, July 23, mocked the Jewish state's troubles while also joking at the expense of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his health problems. "It is reported in the news that doctors have used a battery for the heart of the prime minister of the Zionist occupation regime," the spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, Nasser Kanaani, tweeted in Farsi, referring to the revelation that a pacemaker had been implanted in the premier following a potentially life-threatening cardiac event. "But it is clear that the crisis in the heart of the Zionist regime is deeper than the crisis in the heart of its prime minister," Kanaani added. This was not the first time the Iranian Foreign Ministry has weighed in on the political crisis in Israel lately and implied that it may be a harbinger of the impending demise of the Jewish state. In a tweet on July 14, Kanaani commented on clashes between protesters demonstrating against the Israeli government's judicial overhaul and police: "For many years, the occupying and criminal Zionists tried to make their fake regime appear as the most democratic entity in the West Asian region." (TOI / VFI News)

Hamas Terrorists Killed in Attempted Terror Attack Against IDF Soldiers; IDF combat soldiers shot and killed three Palestinian terrorists who attempted a shooting attack targeting the Israeli force near Nablus, in Judea and Samaria, the military said Tuesday morning, July 25. Hamas has claimed in a statement that the three killed by Israeli forces were its members. According to the IDF, a vehicle with three armed individuals pulled into a neighborhood near the city of Nablus and an armed man got out and began shooting at the soldiers stationed there. The soldiers, members of the 603rd combat engineering battalion of the IDF, killed all three men on the spot. They then confiscated three M-16 firearms, a pistol, and other military equipment. There were no casualties among Israeli forces. (JPost / VFI News)

Israel Arrests 17 Suspects in Overnight Raids; The IDF and the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) conducted a minor escalation against Judea and Samaria terror overnight between Sunday and Monday, July 23 - 24, arresting 17 Palestinians in one night of raids, including using somewhat larger forces and one raid which lasted an unusual five hours long. The number of arrests, altercations, size of IDF forces,

and amount of time the forces spent in some of the Palestinian areas was more extensive than the average nightly IDF raid. However, Israeli media have learned that the IDF did not view the raid as a "mini-Jenin" operation or a warm-up to such an operation. This, despite the fact that many top officials announced that, after the massive two-day operation in Jenin earlier in July, other similar massive operations might soon be necessary. An IDF statement said that 10 explosive devices were seized in addition to the arrests, with many arrestees providing useful intelligence information regarding terror cells and trends going forward. Arrests were also made in Beitut, Misakan Shaabiyah, Beit Kahil, Dura, el-Moir, Katanah and Tapuach. There were also operations in Beit Omar and Bethlehem. In Nur-al-Shams, Beitut, and Katanah, local Palestinians responded to the IDF operations with a mix of gunfire, tossing improvised explosives, and stone-throwing. (JPost / VFI News)

Radical UK Islamist Preacher Anjem Choudary Charged with Three Terrorist Offenses; British radical Islamist preacher Anjem Choudary has been charged with three terrorism offenses after being arrested in London last week, police said on Monday, July 24. Choudary, 56, has been charged with membership of a proscribed organization, directing a terrorist organization, and addressing meetings to encourage support for a proscribed organization, police said. Once Britain's most high-profile Islamist preacher, Choudary was imprisoned in Britain in 2016 for encouraging support for Islamic State before being released in 2018 after serving half of his five-and-a-half-year sentence. Choudary, former head of the now-banned organization al-Muhajiroun, drew attention for praising the men responsible for the 9/11 attacks on the United States and saying he wanted to convert Buckingham Palace into a mosque. His followers have been linked to numerous plots across the world. A 28-year-old Canadian man, Khaled Hussein, has also been charged with membership of a proscribed organization after being arrested on the same day as Choudary when he arrived on a flight at Heathrow Airport, police said. (JPost / VFI News)

Anger as Abbot Told to Hide His Cross on Visit to Western Wall with German Minister; A Christian abbot was asked Wednesday, July 19, by an official at Jerusalem's Western Wall to hide his cross while accompanying Germany's education minister to the holy site, drawing censure and an apology in the latest incident of Jewish-Christian tensions in the capital's Old City. The incident, which took place outside the prayer area of the Jewish holy site, was filmed and posted online by a reporter for German media. Nikodemus Schnabel, the abbot of the Old City's Dormition Abbey, was stopped by a woman who was said to be an employee of the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, the Haredi-dominated state-run body that administers the site. The footage shows the woman telling Schnabel the pectoral cross he was wearing was "really big and inappropriate for this place" and asking him to stow it away, as Germany's Federal Minister of Education and Research Bettina Stark-Watzinger stands by. "This is very harsh; you're not respecting my religion. You're hindering me from my human right," Schnabel says. "This is not a provocation, I am an abbot. This is my dress. The cross is part of my dress code. I'm a Roman Catholic abbot. You want me to not dress as my faith that is the reality." The visit eventually took place as planned and the Western Wall Heritage Foundation issued a statement apologizing "for the distress that was caused," but defending the actions of the woman while also noting that the site is open to all and there are no rules "on this issue" there. (TOI / VFI News)

Jewish Fencer Wins Sabre World Championship; Jewish fencer Eli Dershwitz made history Tuesday, July 25, at the World Fencing Championships in Milan, Italy, where he became the first American man to win an individual title in sabre. The 27-year-old two-time Olympian and grandson of Holocaust survivors defeated No. 1-ranked Sandro Bazadze 15-6 in the sabre final. But Dershwitz's semifinal victory was perhaps even more notable: Facing Áron Szilágyi, a three-time Olympic gold medalist and the reigning world champion, he came back from a 10-4 deficit to advance to the final round. "I've been working most of my life for this moment, this tournament, and towards Paris 2024," Dershwitz said, according to American media. "Hoping my third Olympic Games is the one." Dershwitz — who celebrated his bar

mitzvah at the Conservative Temple Israel in Natick, Massachusetts, and fenced at Harvard University — won two gold medals at the 2017 Maccabiah Games in Israel. Prior to the 2016 Rio Games, Dershwitz had said that he considers himself a “proud member of the Jewish community.” (INN / VFI News)



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