

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update August 17, 2023*** **(Av 30, 5783)**

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The image shows two items: a book and a bottle of oil. The book is titled 'GOD'S APPOINTED TIMES' by Barney Kasdan. The cover is purple with yellow and red text. The bottle is labeled 'Anointing Oil' and 'Jerusalem of Gold Anointing Oil'. It is a clear glass bottle with a gold cap.

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***Iran Says It Has Technology to Build Supersonic Cruise Missile;*** Iran said on Wednesday, August 9, it has the technology to build a supersonic cruise missile, Iranian state media reported, an announcement likely to heighten Western concerns about Tehran's missile capabilities. The announcement comes days after reports on the arrival of over 3,000 US sailors and Marines aboard two US warships in the Red Sea to deter Iran from seizing and harassing merchant ships traveling through the Gulf's Strait of Hormuz. "The supersonic cruise missile will open a new chapter in Iran's defense program, as it is extremely difficult to intercept a cruise missile flying at supersonic speeds," Iranian media reported. "The new cruise missile is currently undergoing its tests." Despite US and European opposition, Iran has said it will further develop its "defensive" missile program. However, Western military analysts say Iran sometimes exaggerates its missile capabilities. Iran, which has one of the biggest missile programs in the Middle East, says its weapons are capable of reaching the bases of arch-foes Israel and the United States in the region. (JPost /VFI News)

***Israel Foils Hamas Plot to Kidnap IDF Soldier, Carry Out Terror Attacks;*** The Shin Bet on Monday, August 14, announced that it had arrested a Hamas terror cell that had planned to kidnap an IDF soldier and to perpetrate a mix of shooting and bombing attacks against the IDF in the Binyamin region of Judea and Samaria. The actual arrests took place last month and were coordinated with the IDF and Israel Police, which included nine Palestinians affiliated with Hamas from the village of Biddu in the Binyamin Regional Council. One of the distinct aspects of the terror cell was how meticulously it used surveillance of IDF patrols to gather intelligence in order to best carry out the kidnapping and the other planned attacks. According to the Shin Bet, the Hamas terror cell studied manufacturing explosives and went as far as to establish its own explosives laboratory. As part of the investigation, the Shin Bet seized the laboratory and

explosive materials, including raw materials for producing fireworks, pipes for pipe bombs, and items such as Carlo guns. The resourceful cell mapped out escape routes and prepared an ideal location for keeping a kidnapped soldier hidden from security forces, said the Shin Bet. The agency noted that just two years ago, it had thwarted a similar Hamas cell including relatives of many of the members of the current cell. (JPost / VFI News)

***IDF Soldier Collapses, Dies during Training Amid Heat Wave;*** A soldier collapsed and died on Monday morning, August 14, during a training exercise in a forest near the central city of Elad, the military said. The IDF said it was investigating the cause of death, though first responders indicated the soldier was apparently suffering from heatstroke or dehydration. The soldier, named 20-year-old Pvt. Hillel Nehemiah Ofen was declared dead at the scene. Ofen, from the Judea and Samaria settlement of Karnei Tzur, was posthumously promoted to the rank of corporal. He had recently completed his basic training and had served in the elite Yahalom combat engineering unit. The incident occurred between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. during a crawling exercise as part of Yahalom's advanced training. One of Ofen's commanders spotted the soldier lying on the ground and began to give him preliminary treatment while calling paramedics. Medical forces from the Air Force's search-and-rescue Unit 669 were also called to the scene. The military said it was unaware of any underlying conditions the soldier suffered from. The IDF generally avoids outdoor training during extreme heat. According to the military, there had been a halt of exercises due to the heat wave until 10 p.m. on Sunday. After temperatures fell at around midnight, the Combat Engineering Corps conducted a new assessment and allowed outdoor training to continue. (TOI/VFI News)

***Israel Rescues More than 200 Citizens and Jews from Ethiopia Conflict Region;*** Israel extracted some 200 citizens and local Jews from conflict zones in Ethiopia Thursday, August 10, the Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister's Office announced, amid fighting in the African country's northern Amhara region. According to a joint statement, Israel rescued 174 Israelis and Ethiopians eligible to emigrate from the city of Gondar in Amhara, home to thousands of Ethiopians waiting for permission to move to Israel. Another 30 Israelis were rescued from Amhara's capital city of Bahir Dar. Four flights brought the evacuees to Addis Ababa, from where those immigrating to Israel will travel on to the Jewish state. The flights were organized by the Prime Minister's Office in collaboration with The Jewish Agency. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that "Israel looks after its citizens wherever they are," while thanking those involved for a "quick, silent and most importantly, successful" operation. Foreign Minister Eli Cohen also hailed the rescue. "The State of Israel will not stand by and will not leave a single Israeli behind. This is the result of successful cooperation and close coordination with the Prime Minister's Office, the NSA, and the Jewish Agency," he said. Cohen also said the Israelis will stay in the Ethiopian capital until deciding to return home or remain in the country. (TOI / VFI News)

***Iran Could Burn Up in 30 Years, and Not from a Nuclear Meltdown;*** The Iranian people are burning up, and not because of a nuclear meltdown. The culprit? Climate change – and the situation is unlikely to change anytime soon. This summer, a significant portion of the global population has been exposed to extreme temperatures and while many might assume that California's Death Valley is the hottest location on Earth, the area with the highest land surface temperature resides in Iran's uninhabitable Lut Desert, said Dr. Amir Givati of Tel Aviv University's Department of Environmental Studies. This remote desert region registered a peak of 70.5 degrees Celsius in 2005. Sahar Tajbakhsh, the head of Iran's Meteorological Organization, said that the country's temperatures are escalating twice as fast as the global average. A study published by Lancet Planet Health in April evaluated the effect of global warming on the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, finding that "Iran has more than 1,700 heat-related deaths per year and is the most vulnerable MENA country per capita, with an estimated 11 deaths per 100,000 people per year." The number is not only five times the average of the Middle East (2.1 per 100,000), but

the researchers estimated that it could reach 423 deaths per 100,000 by 2060. Iran remains the top emitter of greenhouse gases in the Middle East and given its ongoing economic crisis and its lack of commitment to investing in renewable energy, the likelihood of the situation improving remains minimal. By 2050, it will become very difficult to live in Iran, wrote Banafsheh Keynoush in a report for the Middle East Institute (MEI) in January. "Some 70% of the population — or nearly 50 million Iranians — might be ultimately forced to leave the country to survive." (JPost / VFI News)

***Danny Danon: Our Enemies Are Preparing for the Next Conflict;*** MK Danny Danon (Likud) on Monday morning, August 14, said that the battle against the judicial reform and the refusal to serve have harmed the IDF's preparedness and the entire country's resilience. "I think, and rightly, that the army has been cautious about making headlines and speaking about numbers and percentages - that is correct and I support this position of the Chief of Staff's," Danon said. "Obviously there has been harm. We are at the height of a crisis, we can't ignore that, and therefore there has been damage to every system. In my opinion, we need to prepare for the next conflict - our enemies on the outside are preparing for the next conflict." Regarding the judicial reform, Danon said, "I think that the Prime Minister has been consistent on this issue. He said from the beginning what he wanted to do, and this is the end ... I hope that the opposition will give up their desire for a fight so that we can reach agreements." Meanwhile, despite fears of negative economic impact due to the reform, Fitch Ratings on Monday affirmed Israel's 'A+' sovereign credit rating with a "stable" outlook. In maintaining Israel's rating, Fitch said it "balances a diversified, resilient and high value-added economy and strong external finances against a high government debt/GDP ratio, elevated security risks and a record of unstable governments that has hindered policymaking." (INN /VFI News)

***Lebanon at 'Point of No Return': Christian Politician Attacks Hezbollah;*** The head of the Christian Kataeb Party warned Thursday, August 10, that Lebanon has reached "the point of no return" after Christian villagers clashed with members of Hezbollah in a village south of Beirut on Wednesday, Aug. 9. A member of Hezbollah identified as Ahmad Ali Kassas, and a Christian resident of the village of Kahaleh identified as Fadi Bejjani were killed in clashes that erupted after a truck belonging to Hezbollah overturned in the village. The Lebanese Army stated on Thursday that the truck was carrying ammunition and that army forces arrived at the scene after the clashes erupted to calm the situation and transport the munitions to a military center. Hezbollah claimed that after the truck overturned, members of "militias present in the area" began throwing stones and firing at the truck, with the Hezbollah members responding with shooting. "Lebanon is in a dangerous situation, and we cannot continue like this," said Samy Gemayel, the head of the Kataeb Party, on Thursday. "What if the truck had contained explosives and the incident led to a huge explosion and hundreds of people were killed? We are not prepared to coexist with an armed militia in Lebanon, and this will be followed by practical steps, opposition meetings, and decisions," stressed Gemayel. (JPost / VFI News)

***Former Algerian Minister Claims: Tunisia Planning to Normalize Ties with Israel;*** Former Algerian minister Abdelkader Bengrina claimed on Sunday, August 13, that Tunisia is planning to normalize ties with Israel. Algeria should "keep a watchful eye" on Tunisia after several visits were made to the country by representatives of Israel that come in line with normalization efforts, said Bengrina during a press conference. Bengrina added that the Israeli visits made to Algeria's neighbor are expected to produce a normalization deal between "the occupation" and Tunisia in the "coming days", and stressed that such a deal would force Algeria into a state of insecurity and instability. Despite his comments, there are no indications that Tunisia and Israel are close to normalizing ties. Earlier this month, in fact, the Tunisian parliament announced that a committee had started looking into introducing a draft law that would criminalize acts of normalization with Israel. Tunisia, like most Arab countries, does not have diplomatic relations with Israel. After several Arab countries normalized ties with Israel in 2020 as part of the

Abraham Accords, Tunisia reiterated it is not interested in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel and that its position will not be affected by any international changes. (INN / VFI News)

***Terror Squad Directed from Lebanon Arrested;*** In recent months, a number of Palestinian Authority residents in Judea and Samaria have been arrested while plotting to carry out attacks against Israeli citizens, it was cleared for publication Tuesday, August 8. The detainees were operating under the direction of Alam Kaabi, a senior member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) terrorist organization who was deported to Gaza as part of the Schalit deal and currently resides in Lebanon. Kaabi oversaw terrorist activity in Judea and Samaria in which he recruited Palestinian Arab terrorist operatives, some of whom were close to his family, in order to carry out attacks against Israelis. The operation was uncovered during an investigation by the Shin Bet and IDF. One of the operatives who was questioned was Marad Kaabi, who revealed that he had received instructions from Alam Kaabi to carry out attacks. Two M-16 assault rifles were seized as well. Another suspect, Khaled Abu Al Hija, revealed that he had also been recruited by Alam to carry out attacks and to lead a military unit that would have operated in the Jenin area. Additional suspects recruited by Alam Kaabi have also been arrested. (INN /VFI News)

***Predicted Scenario: 6,000 Rockets at Israel During First Days of War with Hezbollah;*** Unusual cross-border incidents between Israel and Hezbollah in recent weeks and months show a noticeable rise in the probability of a war on the Israel-Lebanon border. Israeli media reported that security officials predict that if such a war were to break out, it would not be limited to one front but rather be a multi-front campaign. In such a scenario, over the course of one day of battle, Israel would have to contend with thousands of rockets fired, and within the first few days, about 6,000 rockets would be launched at the Jewish state. As time progresses, the number would decline to about only 1,500 to 2,000 rockets a day. Security experts estimate that every day, there will be approximately 1,500 effective strikes in Israeli territory, and that is after subtracting rockets that statistically land in open areas and interceptions by the Iron Dome system. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, August 8, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant warned Hezbollah and the Lebanese government that Israel would be prepared to attack every position of the terrorist group's assets and other war-related assets if they attack the Jewish state. "Do not make a mistake. We do not want war, but we are ready to defend our citizens, our soldiers, and our sovereignty. We will not hesitate to employ all of our power and to attack every meter of Hezbollah and of Lebanon and return Lebanon to the stone age," he said. (INN / VFI News)

***11,000 Trapped Jewish Descendants in Ethiopia Await Rescue;*** As violent clashes escalate between the Ethiopian Army and the FANO militia in the Amhara province, over 150 Israelis find themselves trapped in the Gondar region of Ethiopia. Israel's Foreign Ministry is actively monitoring the situation and working to ensure the safety and evacuation options for its citizens and eligible immigrants. The ministry is in direct contact with 160 Israelis and 54 individuals who are eligible to immigrate to Israel. "We are acting to find quick solutions to help all of the Israelis through diplomatic channels in Ethiopia and the international arena," Foreign Minister Eli Cohen stated. "We will make every effort to ensure the wellbeing of all the Israelis and Jews who are trapped in the region." Among those caught in the crossfire, 13 Israeli travelers were successfully rescued by the PassportCard insurance company and Magnus International Search & Rescue on Monday, August 7. A senior official within the Jewish community in Ethiopia cited a need for swift action, stating that "the demand is to [bring to Israel] all those who are waiting from the seed of Israel, which is close to 11,000 when Addis Ababa is also included." (JPost / VFI News)

***PM Indicates He Might Make Concessions to Palestinians without Endangering Israel's Security to Achieve Saudi Deal;*** In an interview released Monday, August, 7, Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu indicated that he was open to gestures to Palestinians if a normalization deal with Saudi Arabia depended on it, and hinted that he would not let coalition members block an agreement. “Do I think it’s feasible to have that, and do I think that political questions will block it? I doubt it,” Netanyahu told American media. “If there’s political will, there will be a political way to achieve normalization and a formal peace between Israel and Saudi Arabia. I think there’s enough room to discuss possibilities,” he added. Netanyahu’s comments were in line with what Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said the day before. “The Palestinian issue will not be an obstacle to peace,” Cohen said in an interview with the London-based Arabic-language media. At the same time, when asked specifically what concessions Israel would be willing to make for such an agreement with Saudi Arabia, he said: “I’m not willing to give anything that will endanger Israel’s security,” adding that he considered the Palestinian issue a “checkbox” rather than a serious issue in the context of negotiations with Saudi Arabia. “I think the Palestinian thing is brought in all the time, and it’s sort of a check box. You have to check it to say that you’re doing it.” He said that conversations about the Palestinians occur in closed meetings “a lot less than you think.” (TOI / VFI News)

***Australia Will Refer to Judea and Samaria as ‘Occupied Palestinian Territories’;*** The Australian government considers Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria to be in violation of international law, and will return to using the term “occupied Palestinian territories,” Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong told parliament on Tuesday, August 8. “The Australian government is strengthening its opposition to settlements by affirming they are illegal under international law and a significant obstacle to peace,” Wong said. Still, Wong said, Australia would remain a “committed friend of Israel.” The change “reflects legal advice and UN Security Council resolutions” and will have Australia use the same language as the UK, New Zealand, and Europe, Wong pointed out. It comes after Canberra issued a statement last month saying that they were “deeply concerned” by the advancement of settlement plans, which they argued reduced “the prospects for peace” but did not say were illegal. Australian ministers refrained from using the terms “occupied” or “occupation” in relation to Judea and Samaria since 2014. Before that, the terms were used inconsistently, according to a report from Australian media. (JPost / VFI News)

***Syria: Scientist in Missile Precision Project Killed in Airstrike;*** A scientist working on the missile precision project in Syria was killed in a recent airstrike allegedly carried out by Israel, Israeli media reported. It is estimated that the elimination in itself has more of a deterrent effect than an actual effect, the site added. CERS is a military lab that was responsible for the development of chemical weapons in Syria in the 1980s. CERS operates under the guise of a civilian science research center, and various types of facilities operate at the location, serving the Syrian military, the Iranian regime, and the Hezbollah terror group. Research reveals that the center maintains an Iranian missile precision project, which constitutes a significant threat due to Hezbollah’s large missile stockpile. Following the strike earlier this week, CERS reported that the strike was aimed at military sites and weapons storehouses belonging to Iranian militia near Damascus’ international airport and the Al Kiswah area. They also said that six people were killed - four Syrian soldiers and two whose identities are unknown. Seven others were injured. The Observatory added that weapons storehouses were destroyed in the attack. (INN /VFI News)

***UK Launches Inquiry into Deaths at Sole Nazi Concentration Camps on British Soil;*** The British government is set to begin lifting the lid on the dark secrets of what some have called “Little Auschwitz” — the island of Alderney which housed the only Nazi concentration camps to have existed on British soil during World War II. For decades, official accounts have said that less than 400 of the 4,000 slave laborers shipped to the island — and among them, only a handful of Jews — perished. But, prompted by suggestions from journalists, historians, and military experts that the death toll may have run into the thousands, Britain’s Holocaust envoy last week announced an expert review of evidence into the number of prisoners who died on Alderney during the Nazi occupation. “Numbers matter because the truth

matters,” Eric Pickles, head of the UK Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, said in a statement announcing the review. The dead deserve the dignity of the truth. “The sheer volume of fortifications, walls, and tunnels outstrips anything else in Hitler’s Third Reich. This huge amount of work could not possibly have been done with just 4,000 workers,” Col. Richard Kemp, Britain’s former commander in Afghanistan and fellow former army officer John Weigold wrote in 2017. Instead, Kemp and Weigold argued that at least 40,000 slave laborers died on Alderney during the war. (TOI / VFI News)

***Israel Committed to Christians' Safety in Jerusalem, Police Say;*** Israel is committed to the personal security of Catholic churches in Jerusalem and the religious freedom of the city's Christian community, Israel Police stressed in a meeting with community leaders on Tuesday, August 8. In a "special" meeting held at the initiative of police, Jerusalem District commander Doron Turgeman, flanked by high-ranking police officials, met with the Christian community leaders at the Tower of David museum amid a surge in hate crimes carried out against Christians in the Israeli capital. Since the beginning of the year, police have probed 16 suspected hate crime attacks against Christian communities and churches in Jerusalem. The meeting was held in order to establish an open dialogue with the Christian community, "It was important for me to meet with you. We are committed and working for your security all year round," Turgeman said during the meeting. "The cooperation between the police and the leaders of the Christian communities and representatives of the Christian faith is meaningful for us. We are a police force for everyone and will continue to work to safeguard the peace and security of people of all faiths and denominations, residents of the city, and visitors," he added. (JPost/VFI News)



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