

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 15, 2024 (Adar Aleph 6, 5784)

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Israel-Hamas War, Day 132

Israeli Army Chief:

'We're Focusing on Being Prepared for War in the North'

- *IDF soldier killed in morning rocket barrage fired at northern Israel*
- *Israeli air force began extensive strike in Lebanon following lethal barrage that killed one Israeli, wounded eight*
- *Turkish President Erdogan arrives in Cairo on first official visit since 2012*
- *WHO warns Israeli assault on Rafah would be an 'unfathomable catastrophe'*
 - *Report: Hostage talks in Cairo extended*
- *Delegation of family members of Gaza hostages travels to the ICC in The Hague*

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Directly Beneath UNRWA's Gaza Headquarters, IDF Uncovers Top Secret Hamas Data Center; Beneath the Gaza Strip headquarters of the controversial UN agency for Palestinian refugees, commonly known as UNRWA, the Hamas terror group hid one of its most significant assets, the Israeli military has revealed. The subterranean data center — complete with an electrical room, industrial battery power banks, and living quarters for Hamas terrorists operating the computer servers — was built precisely under the location where Israel would not consider looking initially, let alone target in an airstrike. UNRWA's Gaza headquarters is located in Gaza City's upscale Rimal neighborhood, an area that the IDF had previously operated in, dismantled the local Hamas battalion and withdrawn its troops from. The revelation of the server farm comes amid other accusations of UNRWA collusion with the Gaza-ruling terror group. And while the UNRWA head, Philippe Lazzarini, says that the agency was in the dark about the Hamas center under its Headquarters, the Israeli military, Foreign Minister Israel Katz, and Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, immediately casted doubt on his claim. The latter wrote in a post on X: "It's not that you didn't know, it's that you didn't WANT to know. We exposed terror tunnels under UNRWA schools and supplied evidence that Hamas exploits UNRWA. We implored you to carry out a comprehensive search of all UNRWA facilities in Gaza. But not only did you refuse, you chose to stick your head in the sand." (TOI / VFI News)

Terrorist Released in Hostage Deal Arrested; A terrorist who was one of the hundreds released by Israel during the weeklong hostage deal in late November 2023 has been arrested again after attempting to enter Israel illegally. 'A-Ziam,' 21, was arrested by Border Police in the Jerusalem area over the weekend. The vehicle in which the terrorist was traveling was stopped for questioning and the officers noticed that the suspect identified herself using an Israeli ID card which does not belong to her. An investigation revealed that she was a terrorist affiliated with Hamas who was originally arrested in October for participating in disturbances in which she arrived masked and threw stones at security forces and was even shot in the leg in response. She was also in possession of documents she produced expressing her support for the Hamas massacre of October 7. A-Ziam was part of the fifth wave of security prisoners who were released as part of the ceasefire deal in November. 240 security prisoners were released in total, about three for every Israeli hostage Hamas released at that time. (INN / VFI News)

Iran Recruiting British Muslims to Spy on Jews: Report; Iran is recruiting British Muslims on pilgrimages to the Middle East to spy on Jews and dissidents in the UK, British media reported. According to the report, IRGC recruiters are approaching British Shiite Muslims visiting religious sites in both Iran and Iraq. These individuals are then told to return to the UK and gather information on prominent British Jews or Jewish targets. The report was confirmed by both Israeli and British officials to a British news outlet. Some of those returning to the UK spy on British-based Iranian dissidents. The outlet also quoted an Israeli official as saying that since the October 7 massacre, there has been a higher-than-usual number of warnings to the UK regarding potential attacks by Iranian sources or their proxies. "We do not know the

scale of Iranian agents inside Europe and the UK, but all it takes is for one to slip through the net,” one source said. According to experts, some Iranians studying at British universities as international students are also spies. The UK’s Home Office said, “The UK will always stand up to threats from foreign nations. We continually assess potential threats.” (INN / VFI News)

Iranian Revolutionary Guards Die in Suspected Poisoning in Syria – Report; Several soldiers from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) died from suspected poisoning, Arabic media sources reported Friday night, February 9. The suspected mass poisoning occurred in Deir ez-Zor, in eastern Syria, where several countries have stationed troops in this region to counter an ISIS resurgence, including Iran, the US, and Russia. The poisoning appears to have targeted the leadership, as all four of those killed have been described as commanders or leaders. Several others were reported injured in the event, including several leaders in the IRGC’s women’s groups. Those named include Col. Mortada Mawlawi and a man named Hajj Muqtada. Despite the similar name, it is unlikely to be the well-known Iraqi Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. The cases are believed to be tied to the targeting of leaders of the IRGC and their allies by Israel and the United States during the war in Gaza. With details scarce, Arabic social media is awash with accusations of Israeli or American complicity. (JPost / VFI News)

Third of Israelis Hold a Stronger Belief in God Since October 7, Survey Finds; Israelis have become closer to God and Judaism in the past four months, a survey found. According to a comprehensive survey conducted by Lazar Research for Israeli media, 33% of Israelis have reported a strengthened faith in God since the October 7 massacre by Hamas and the subsequent war. The study, spearheaded by Dr. Menachem of Lazar Research in collaboration with Panel4All.co.il, an internet respondent panel, aimed to gauge the religious sentiments among Israelis in these turbulent times. The survey, which was done on February 5-6, drew responses from 512 individuals, providing a representative sample of Israel’s adult Jewish community. A stark division in the responses was noted. A significant portion of the population, 33%, affirmed that their belief in a higher power has been fortified; conversely, a small fraction, 8%, felt their faith wane, while the majority, 59%, reported no change in their spiritual stance. The analysis further delved into demographic nuances, revealing that faith reinforcement was notably more pronounced among traditionalists, with 44% affirming strengthened beliefs compared to 16% of secular respondents. Age also played a critical role, with younger participants more likely to report a bolstered faith. The practical expressions of the respondents’ strengthened religious faith were primarily prayers (63%), conversations with God (59%), and the recitation of Psalms (45%). The increase in prayers was especially characteristic of respondents aged 60+ (73%); conversations with God were reported at relatively high rates by secular respondents (64%), Sephardic respondents (65%), and respondents aged 45-60 (60%). (JPost / VFI News)

Lebanese, Anti-Israel Judge Nawaf Salam Elected New President of ICJ; Lebanese Judge Nawaf Salam was elected by his peers to be the new president of the International Court of Justice, where he will be expected to serve a term of 3 years, according to a press release published by the Hague on Tuesday, February 6. The ICJ is the judicial sector of the United Nations, established by the United Nations Charter in June 1945, which is composed of 15 judges. Salam had been a member of the court since February 2018 and had previously been employed as an Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations from 2007 until 2017. Salam has a history of making anti-Israel statements and will now be presiding over the case launched by South Africa against Israel, in which it claims that the IDF is committing genocide in Gaza. In 2015, the now-president wrote, “Unhappy birthday to you, 48 years of occupation.” Months later, Jewish media reported that he wrote “Israel must stop violence and end occupation” and “Portraying the critics of Israel’s policies as anti-Semites is an attempt to intimidate and discredit them, which we reject.” (JPost / VFI News)

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