

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 2, 2024 (Nisan 24, 5784)



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Israel-Hamas War, Day 209

Biden: No Place for Antisemitism on Any Campus or Anywhere in America

- *Report: Landmark U.S. and Saudi defense deal could be weeks away*
 - *Hamas delegation to visit Egypt for cease-fire talks, statement says*
 - *Police begin removing barricades at a pro-Palestinian demonstrators' encampment at University of California, LA*
- *UN report: 79,000 buildings in Gaza completely destroyed, reconstruction would take until 2040*
 - *Blinken to Netanyahu: Rafah offensive risks hostage deal and Israel-Saudi normalization*
 - *Erez crossing opens for humanitarian aid to Gaza for first time since Oct. 7*
 - *Gallant tells Blinken Israel preparing for Rafah operation*
 - *Two homes damaged in Israel's north by fire from Lebanon*
- *Israeli negotiating team reportedly arrives in Cairo, presented with Hamas' demands for a deal*
 - *Hamas sources: As condition for deal, need guarantees Israel won't continue fighting in coming months*

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If you are interested in having Yachad Ministries to come your church and share about what is going on in Israel and the Middle East, and how the Bible is unfolding right in front of our eyes.

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Israel Warns Hamas: Accept Hostage Deal, Or We'll Enter Rafah; Israel warned Hamas it will carry out a major military operation unless the terrorist group accepts a deal on the table for the release of some, but not all, of the remaining 133 hostages. “If there is a deal, we will suspend the operation,” Israel’s Foreign Minister Israel Katz told Israeli media as the IDF continued its preparations for the operation and Egypt renewed its push to secure a hostage deal after weeks in which it seemed that such efforts had hit a dead end. “The release of the hostages is a deep priority for us,” Katz stressed. He spoke after an Egyptian delegation was in Israel on Friday, April 26, for talks with Israel on the possibility of a new deal. “If there is an option to make a deal, we will do it,” he said, although he stressed that this would not impact the overall goal of the war, which was to destroy Hamas. Israeli officials told their Egyptian counterparts on Friday that Israel is ready to give hostage negotiations “one last chance” to reach a deal with Hamas before moving forward with an invasion of Rafah. Hamas said it had received on Saturday Israel’s official response to its latest ceasefire proposal and will study it before submitting its reply, the group’s deputy Gaza chief said in a statement. To increase pressure on Israel to make a deal, the terrorist group released on Saturday a video showing Keith Siegel (64) and Omri Miran (47) speaking. As a sign that the video was taken recently, they mentioned the Passover holiday. On Saturday night, Omri’s father, Dan, addressed the rally at Hostage Square, in which protestors demanded that Israel make an agreement, telling the crowd, “I hope a deal will really happen now.” (JPost / VFI News)

Israel Debunks 'Hamas Libels' about Mass Grave Spread by Media for Internet Clicks, Says Netanyahu Spokesman; The Office of the Prime Minister of Israel on Friday, April 26, flatly rejected the disinformation campaign waged by the terrorist movement Hamas that the Jewish State was involved in any misconduct regarding a mass grave found at a battle site located on a hospital compound in Gaza. “Hamas libels know no limits. It’s sad to see how many news organizations are still so quick to copy and paste Hamas’ lies for clickbait. The IDF will continue to target Hamas while avoiding civilian casualties with precision likely to have never been seen in the history of warfare,” Israeli government spokesman Avi Hyman told American media. Middle East expert Tom Gross said to the same news outlet, “Hamas has a long track record of fabricating the truth that puts even al Qaeda or Isis to shame. And yet, the supposedly responsible media — in particular, CNN on this occasion — repeat Hamas lies almost unquestioningly.” Gross added, “Even the BBC was not caught out on this occasion, but it seems CNN was all too eager to give credence to the latest Hamas blood libel against the Jewish state. When historians come to examine why there has been such a sharp increase in antisemitism in America this year, they may well examine the role of some media in encouraging it.” (FN / VFI News)

New Documentary Highlights Hamas's Oct. 7 Sexual Violence; Sexual violence was a central part of the massacre and hostage-taking attack that Hamas terrorists carried out in Israel on October 7 and while many women's organizations stayed silent or made weakly worded statements about it, there are still those who deny that it took place altogether. This inspired former Facebook COO and author Sheryl Sandberg to make the compelling and important documentary, *Screams Before Silence*, which is now widely available. "It's really difficult to talk about it, but . . . it's my duty to come out and talk," said Amit Soussana, one of the interviewees in the film. Soussana, who has also spoken about her ordeal to a renowned American news outlet, was kidnapped from her home in Israel and held hostage for nearly two months. She speaks in detail in the film about the sexual assault she suffered at gunpoint. While other sexual assault victims have not spoken publicly using their names, there are many witnesses and first responders who speak in the film, as well as video evidence of sexual assaults. But the tragic truth, as this documentary makes crystal clear, is that the major reason few of the victims have come forward is that the vast majority were murdered following, and sometimes during, their assaults. Sandberg visited Israel to make this film, which was directed by Anat Stalinsky and in which Sandberg conducts the interviews, so that she could "let those silenced voices be heard." (JPost / VFI News)

Protesters Block Ayalon Highway, Demanding Elections and Hostage Deal; Thousands gathered across the country to protest for the release of hostages in Gaza and for the declaration of elections on Saturday night, April 27. In Tel Aviv, protesters blocked the Ayalon Highway and seven protesters were arrested. Demonstrators gathered in Jerusalem and on Kaplan Street in Tel Aviv. Demonstrators also gathered in Haifa as well as other parts of the country. Protesters carried posters of hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin, calling for his immediate release. Earlier last week, a video was released by Hamas showing Hersh alive. While at Begin Gate, Stav Arnon, from the women's protest for the return of the hostages, condemned the government for prioritizing the war over the release of their family members. She especially called out Ministers Benny Gantz and Gadi Eisenkot, "The responsibility is in your hands. Get out of this ... government immediately! You normalize the abnormal. You said you were there to return the captives, but you didn't live up to your promise, the hostages are still there. The time has come - choose which side you are on." Earlier on Saturday, the Hostage and Missing Families Forum released a statement calling on the State of Israel to stop the war in exchange for a comprehensive deal for the hostages. In their statement, they argued, "For half a year, we have been told that military pressure will lead to the release of the hostages. This strategy has failed." They then concluded that "entering Rafah will lead to the murder of more hostages" so Israel must choose not to enter Rafah to save the remaining captives held in Gaza. (JPost / VFI News)

Blinken to Visit Gaza Border, First Senior US Official Since Hamas Attack; U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is scheduled to visit Kibbutz Be'eri and the Kerem Shalom crossing during his visit to the Gaza border region this week, becoming the first senior U.S. government official to visit the area since the Hamas terrorist attack on October 7, Israeli media learned on Sunday, April 28. At Blinken's request, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant will accompany him on the tour, and Foreign Minister Israel Katz will also join. The secretary of state will arrive in Israel as part of a Middle East tour including a visit to Saudi Arabia. Blinken had previously planned to visit Kerem Shalom during an earlier trip to Israel but canceled due to planned protests against him. During the October 7 attack, over 100 terrorists infiltrated Kibbutz Be'eri. More than 100 kibbutz members were killed, and dozens of soldiers and police officers fell in battles on its grounds. In addition, 32 kibbutz members were abducted to the Gaza Strip. Some of them were released in the first deal with Hamas in November. (YNet / VFI News)

Sign at Anti-Israel Protest Calls for 'Final Solution'; A protester participating in an anti-Israel demonstration at George Washington University in Washington, DC was photographed holding a sign reading "Final Solution," the name of the Nazi's plan to exterminate the Jews. Anti-Israel demonstrations

that have been spreading through university campuses in the US and Europe in the past month have been taking an increasingly anti-Semitic tone. There have been numerous instances of assaults and intimidation against Jewish students. On Friday, April 26, the Association of University Heads in Israel published a statement expressing concern over the wave of anti-Semitic demonstrations on American college campuses over the last week and a half. “We, the presidents of the research universities in Israel, express our deep concern over the recent surge of severe violence, antisemitism, and anti-Israel sentiment across numerous leading universities in the United States. These disturbing events are often organized and supported by Palestinian groups, including those recognized as terrorist organizations,” the association stated. “This troubling development has led to a climate where Israeli and Jewish students and faculty members feel compelled to hide their identities or avoid campuses altogether for fear of physical harm.” (INN / VFI News)

Amid Reports of ICC Warrants Israeli Missions Told to Brace for Anti-Semitic Attacks; Amid rumors that the International Criminal Court in the Hague intends to issue arrest warrants against senior Israeli political and defense officials, Minister of Foreign Affairs Israel Katz has instructed all Israeli missions around the world to prepare for a wave of anti-Semitic and anti-Israel attacks. Due to the severity of the threats against Jewish communities abroad, Minister Katz instructed the missions to update Jewish organizations on the need to prepare for such incidents, including coordination with authorities to heighten security outside Jewish institutions. Katz also spoke with Minister Amichai Chikli, who oversees the fight against antisemitism, and asked him to act on the issue as well. “We are expecting the court to refrain from issuing arrest warrants against Israeli defense and political officials. There is nothing more distorted than trying to prevent Israel from defending itself against a murderous enemy that openly calls for the destruction of the State of Israel,” he stated. “If the warrants are issued, they will hurt the commanders and soldiers of the IDF and will provide support for the Hamas terror organization and the radical Islamic axis led by Iran against which we are fighting,” Minister Katz added. (INN / VFI News)

Israeli Judoka Raz Hershko Wins Gold in European Championships; Team Snags 3 Bronze; Israeli Judoka Raz Hershko won her first European Championships gold medal in Zagreb on Saturday, April 27, beating French competitor Julia Tolofua in the final and capping a successful tournament for the country. It is Hershko’s third gold medal overall competing in the +78 kg class. In the previous two years, she won the silver medal at the European Championships. Israel’s team ranked fourth in the championship out of all countries, winning four medals. Aside from Hershko’s medal, the team also won three bronze medals, achieved by Inbar Lanir (-78 kg), Tamar Malka (-48 kg), and Timna Nelson-Levy (-57 kg). Lanir, ranked first in the world in her weight category, told Israeli media that she was disappointed with her loss in the semifinal, but that she was always happy to earn a place on the medal podium. (TOI / VFI News)

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