

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 23, 2024 (Iyyar 15, 5784)

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Israel-Hamas War, Day 230

IDF Says 30 Rockets Fired at Israel's North; Israeli Drone Kills Hezbollah Officer in Lebanon

- **Netanyahu: Security establishment did not warn against a Hamas attack from Gaza, the opposite is true**
 - **Israel reprimands Irish, Norwegian, Spanish envoys over Palestine move**
 - **EU foreign policy chief: All EU donors resumed UNRWA funding**
 - **Hungary would not detain Israel's Netanyahu despite ICC ruling**
 - **Israel's war cabinet instructs negotiating team to renew talks for hostage deal**
 - **Israeli war cabinet instructs negotiating team to continue working on hostage-release deal**
- **Families of five Israeli military spotters allow release of footage showing their abduction by Hamas**
 - **Israel recalls ambassadors to countries which recognized Palestinian state**
 - **Norway, Ireland and Spain will recognize Palestinian state**
 - **Three IDF soldiers killed in north Gaza combat**
 - **11 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces in two-day raid on West Bank's Jenin**

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'No Signs of Life': Iranian President Killed in Helicopter Crash; Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian were killed on Sunday, May 19, when a helicopter carrying them crashed. An Iranian semi-official broadcaster reported that the President was on board the helicopter when it was involved in an accident in the East Azerbaijan province in northwest Iran. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) said that intelligence authorities have informed him that there is “no evidence of foul play” in the crash of Raisi’s helicopter. “It was very bad, foggy weather, northwest Iran where the copter crashed. So it looks like an accident, but it’s still being fully investigated,” Schumer said. On Monday morning, an Iranian official told British media that President Raisi and Foreign Minister Abdullahian were killed in the helicopter crash, which had left the helicopter completely burned. A little later, Iranian state media confirmed that President Raisi is dead, explaining that he was on his way back from the opening ceremony of the Qiz Qalasi Dam to Tabriz city, in Warzaghan region of the East Azerbaijan province, together with all his companions. The report added: “Local sources who are currently present at the scene of the helicopter carrying the president confirmed the martyrdom of the president and his companions.” The Hamas terror organization also released an official statement on the death of President Raisi and Foreign Minister Abdullahian: “Most sincere condolences and sympathies ... These martyrs were a collection of Iran's best leaders who had honorable positions in supporting the Palestinian issue, helping the struggle of our nation, and supporting the Palestinian resistance.” The acting president of Iran, according to the Iranian Constitution, is now Mohammad Mokhber, Iran's first vice president. (INN / VFI News)

3 Recovered Hostages Laid to Rest in Israel, 7 Months After They Were Slain by Hamas; Funerals were held on Sunday, May 19, for three of the four hostages whose bodies were recovered by IDF troops this weekend from the Gaza Strip, more than seven months after they were killed. Shani Louk was laid to rest in Srigim, Amit Buskila was buried in Kiryat Gat and Itzhak Gelerenter’s funeral was held in Kibbutz Palmahim. The funeral for Ron Benjamin is slated for Monday in Kibbutz Palmahim. All four of the hostages were murdered on October 7 and their bodies kidnapped to Gaza by Hamas terrorists, according to the IDF. The death of Louk had been confirmed by the military back in October, but the fate of the other three hostages was unknown until this weekend. Louk, Buskila and Gelerenter had all been at the Supernova music festival that day, while Benjamin was out on an early morning bike ride. In the small town of Srigim, south of Beit Shemesh, loved ones paid their respects to Louk, 22, a German-Israeli dual national who became an icon of the Hamas massacre after a video, broadcast on October 7 and attributed to the terror group, showed her body on the back of a white pickup truck, her hair matted with blood. She was surrounded by gunmen and paraded through Gaza. At the funeral, her mother, Ricarda, said “I didn’t

believe they'd be able to bring her body back, and it was a relief when the army informed us that they'd found her body and that it was complete." The bodies of the hostages were rescued during a joint IDF and ISA operation, based on precise ISA intelligence obtained during the interrogations of terrorists who were apprehended in the Gaza Strip, as well as intelligence from IDF Intelligence Directorate's Headquarters for the Hostages and Missing Persons. (TOI / VFI News)

Hezbollah Launches 75 Missiles into Israeli Territory; Following the sirens that sounded in northern Israel on Friday, May 17, approximately 75 launches were identified crossing from Lebanon into Israeli territory, dozens of which were intercepted. Earlier that day, IDF soldiers identified a Hezbollah launcher in the area of Yaroun which was ready to fire launches toward Israeli territory. A short while afterward, an IDF fighter jet struck and dismantled the launcher, preventing a large number of launches. On Saturday morning, two launches were identified crossing from Lebanon into the area of Biranit. No injuries or damages were reported. Overnight, IDF fighter jets struck a Hezbollah launcher and military compounds in the areas of Kounine and Khiam in southern Lebanon. Moreover, IDF artillery fired to remove a threat in the area of Hanine in southern Lebanon. The IDF later reported: "Following the sirens that sounded in northern Israel regarding a hostile aircraft infiltration, the incidents concluded and no injuries or damages were reported. Additionally, an explosive drone fell in the area of Yiftach earlier today. No injuries were reported. Following the additional sirens that sounded in northern Israel, numerous launches were identified, some of which fell in open areas. No injuries were reported." (INN / VFI News)

IDF Discovers 700 Tunnel Shafts in Rafah, Including 50 that Cross into Egypt; The Israel Defense Forces have discovered hundreds of tunnel shafts inside the Hamas stronghold of Rafah in southern Gaza, including dozens of tunnels that cross into Egypt. Israeli Deputy Attorney General Gilad Noam made the revelation while speaking at the International Court of Justice. "Rafah, in particular, is a focal point for ongoing terrorist activity. It is a stronghold for Hamas' operators with several battalions belonging to the Rafah brigades entrenched in the area," he said. "Also present in Rafah is an intricate underground tunnel infrastructure that runs underneath the city and provides ample space for operators, command and control rooms, and military equipment." "Nearly 700 tunnel shafts have been identified in Rafah from which approximately 50 tunnels cross into Egypt," he continued. "These tunnels are used by Hamas to supply itself with weapons and ammunition. It could potentially be used to smuggle Gaza hostages out or Hamas senior operators." (DW / VFI News)

UN Cuts Gaza Civilian Casualty Figures by Half Without Explanation; The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) published new figures of civilians killed in Gaza, as the result of Israeli strikes, cutting the previous numbers in half. OCHA gave no explanation for the surprising new count that was released on May 10, just days after the earlier release of much higher figures on May 6 and May 8. The UN now claims that in total 24,686 people were confirmed killed, including 7,797 children (32%), and 4,959 women (20%.) Hamas figures claim 35,091 were killed since October 7, including 14,500 children and 9,500 women. OCHA said it was relying on figures provided by the Palestinian health officials in Gaza and that their tally does not include 10,000 people who are unaccounted for, some possibly buried under rubble. In a disclaimer posted on OCHA's website, the organization said it has not been able to produce independent and verified figures. "The current numbers have been provided by the Ministry of Health or the Government Media Office in Gaza and the Israeli authorities and await further verification. Other yet-to-be-verified figures are also sourced," the disclaimer reads. (YNet / VFI News)

IDF Uncovers Weaponry in an UNRWA Facility; IDF troops are continuing to operate against terrorist targets in the area of Jabaliya, locating weaponry in a UNRWA facility and eliminating terrorists in close-quarters combat. Additionally, an IAF aircraft eliminated operatives who had fired anti-tank

missiles at the troops. No IDF injuries were reported. During one activity in the area, terrorists armed with RPG launchers on their way to attack IDF troops were eliminated in an aerial strike. Meanwhile, an Islamic Jihad tactical-level commander was eliminated in an aerial strike in the eastern Rafah area along with three other terrorists from the organization who were operating against IDF troops in the area. Operations continue in the central Gaza Strip, where IDF tanks struck several terrorists and destroyed military structures in which explosives were planted and other weapons were stored. The IAF struck approximately 80 terror targets over the past day throughout the Gaza Strip, including weapons storage facilities, launchers, terrorist cells, military structures, and other terrorist infrastructure. (INN / VFI News)

Chinese Spies and Iranian Terrorists Are Posing as DoorDash Drivers to Get onto U.S. Military Bases and Steal Secrets; A top lawmaker told British media that China and other adversaries are getting creative with the manner in which they are infiltrating the U.S. military's sensitive sites. Chinese nationals tried at least 100 times to enter U.S. military bases and related installations last year. Often posing as tourists or DoorDash drivers who happen to wander off course and find themselves on or near sensitive and secret federal sites, they can more easily get inside. And it's not just Chinese nationals who are infiltrating U.S. military sites. Iran, Russia and terrorist groups from the Middle East are also involved Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Wis., exclusively told British media in a sit-down interview. "There have been reports of Russians, there have been reports of Iranians, there have been reports of people from throughout the Middle East - people who are members of terrorist organizations - also being caught near military bases," Grothman said. However, the Republican did not specify which terrorist groups have been caught. "There have been reports that off of our military bases ... that we have had foreign nationals here taking pictures and recording what's going on." He also claimed that various foreign nationals "maybe getting jobs as DoorDash or something or other and then poking around, seeing what they can find out" from the U.S. military bases. (DM / VFI News)

Israeli Experts Discover How Cancer Cells Survive, and How to Starve Them; Researchers at Ben-Gurion University have discovered the mechanism that allows cancer cells to survive despite lacking the glucose necessary for their existence. This discovery may pave the way for new treatments for various cancerous tumors in the future. The findings were recently published in a prestigious journal. "Living organisms feed on sugar to survive," explains Professor Barak Rotblat, one of the researchers and a lecturer from the Department of Life Sciences and the National Institute for Biotechnology in the Negev (NIBN) at Ben-Gurion University. "Cancer cells love sugar too. This characteristic is used in one of the common methods for diagnosing cancer metastases through PET CT scans, during which radioactive sugar is injected into the patient." "We discovered that a protein called EBP4 regulates the rate at which the cell produces fat according to its energy status. When we observed the clinical data, we saw that this protein is produced at higher levels in cancer cells compared to normal tissue," Rotblat explains. "We performed genetic manipulation and so disrupted the specific gene that causes the metabolic switch during glucose starvation, creating human, mouse and yeast cells with low levels of EBP4. We found that they don't survive glucose starvation. Moreover, we discovered that when these cells are implanted in mice, not only do they fail to survive glucose starvation, but they are also impaired in their ability to form tumors," Rotblat added. (YNet / VFI News)

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