

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 6, 2025 (Sh'vat 8, 5785)



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Israel-Hamas War 489 Days - Israel-Hamas Cease-fire Day 19, Trump Says Israel Would Hand Over Gaza to U.S. at End of War as Part of Plan

- **ISRAEL:** Netanyahu calls Trump's plan to take over Gaza and displace residents 'remarkable'; Hostages' relatives in U.S. push for deal's implementation
 - **GAZA:** Two soldiers killed in crane crash in north Gaza; Israeli army says it fired at Palestinians who approached troops in Gaza
 - **ISRAEL:** Netanyahu meets Trump in Washington; Hostages' relatives in U.S. push for deal's implementation
- **GAZA:** Israeli army says it fired at Palestinians who approached troops in Gaza
 - **U.S.:** Trump proposes to take over Gaza, displace its Palestinian residents

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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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After 484 Days in Captivity: Keith, Ofer, and Yarden Returned to Israel; Ofer Calderon and Yarden Bibas were transferred Saturday morning, February 1, by the Hamas terror organization to the Red Cross in Khan Yunis, and joined up with IDF forces, who brought them to a reception point in Re'im. Two hours later, Keith Siegel was released from Gaza Port. He ascended the stage briefly, wearing a hat and waving to the crowd. At the transfer point, Hamas gave him two bags. Reports said that one of them was for his wife, Avivah, who was freed in a November 2023 prisoner swap deal. He was later transferred to the IDF and crossed into Israel, where he met his wife. Ofer Calderon landed on a helipad at Sheba Medical Center, and when he noticed his friends, he ran to them and waved, to the sound of applause. Coordinator for the Hostages and the Missing in the Prime Minister's Office, Brig.-Gen. (Res.) Gal Hirsch said, "Today, three of our hostages were returned to Israel: Yarden Bibas, Ofer Kalderon and Keith Siegel. We welcome them with a big embrace. We have made arrangements for receiving them and will assist in their rehabilitation after a long period of captivity." In an official statement, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said, "Today, Americans celebrate the return of American-Israeli citizen Keith Siegel and two Israelis who were held captive by Hamas terrorists since October 7, 2023. President Trump and his Administration have worked diligently to secure their release and are committed to freeing all remaining hostages." (*INN/VFI News*)

Released Hostages Were Held in Harsh Conditions with Little Food; On Sunday, February 2, Israeli media reported new details on the harsh conditions in which Keith Siegel, Yarden Bibas, and Ofer Calderon were held before their release on Saturday. Keith was held by Hamas terrorists in Gaza City along with additional hostages. He was held in the tunnels but was mostly moved between apartments. According to him, the terrorists hid him in a back room so if someone entered the apartment they would not be able to find him. As for his diet in captivity, Keith says there was a severe lack of food. He returned starved since the last time the terrorists fed him was Friday afternoon. Although he is a vegetarian, he had to eat the meat provided to him by the terrorists to survive. Ofer and Yarden were held together during the initial days of their captivity. They related how during the first weeks, the terrorists would hit them, lock them in cages, and torture them - both physically and mentally. During the long days in captivity, the two were moved from one place to another, underground and in buildings, and were held with other hostages. The terrorists treated Ofer as if he were a reserve soldier and therefore he was released on Saturday dressed in an IDF uniform. Yarden was taken from location to location in Khan Yunis and was held in an apartment and the tunnels. He underwent severe psychological abuse, with the terrorists constantly talking about his wife Shiri, and young children Kfir and Ariel, who are still being held by the terror group. He held on to hope in captivity and learned Arabic. (*INN/VFI News*)

Report: Hamas Callously Lured Then Murdered Thai Nationals; Hamas terrorists called out to workers from Thailand in their native tongue to lure them out of hiding, only to murder them or take them hostage during the October 7 terrorist attack on Israel. Israeli media reports Hamas's brutality against innocent civilians on the day they made their bloody incursion that has been recounted by former Thai

hostages. The outlet says: “One of the Thai survivors, nicknamed Top, recounted his near-death experience on October 7, 2023. Initially, he dismissed the sound of gunfire as a routine clash between Israeli forces and Hamas.” “However, by 7:00 a.m., the reality of the massacre unfolded — four armed Hamas militants stormed a nearby labor camp, indiscriminately gunning down every Thai worker in sight. Top managed to hide inside a bunker, narrowly escaping the same fate.” “By 4:00 p.m., Hamas fighters regrouped around the labor camp. Then came an eerie moment he never expected: one of the militants greeted him in Thai: “Sawasdee Kub Khon Thai” (Hello, Thai people). Immediately after, they fired rounds into the air, before setting fire to the room where he was hiding.” Another survivor who found himself in a similar situation described how Hamas meticulously raided each labor camp, slaughtering every unarmed worker they encountered. Those who did not die from gunfire were executed with knives in gruesome beheadings. When Hamas failed to locate the remaining Thai workers, they resorted to deception — driving into the camp while calling out in Thai, offering to sell ducks and chickens. (BB/VFI News)

Horror As 11-Year-Old Dutch Girl Stabbed to Death in Broad Daylight Reportedly by 'Man from Syria'; Police have arrested a man after an 11-year-old girl was stabbed to death in broad daylight in the Dutch town of Nieuwegein. The incident happened at around 3 pm local time, on Saturday, February 1 — with local reports suggesting the victim was in the street in the city of Utrecht, about 30 miles from the capital Amsterdam, when she was stabbed. Emergency services were called to the scene but were unable to save her life, police have said. A 29-year-old man has been arrested, and a Dutch news agency reported that police confirmed the suspect was originally from Syria. The agency said that police are investigating reports that the suspect had been acting “confused” in the week before the attack. They did not indicate any motivation for the attack. Images taken at the scene on Sunday show police inspecting a shed roof near the site. Officers were seen collecting what appeared to be a knife from the roof. Floral tributes have already begun to gather at the site of the attack, with images showing a collection of flowers, teddy bears, and cards. (DM/VFI News)

Netanyahu Before Leaving for US: 'Working with President Trump We Could Redraw the Map'; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took off on Sunday, February 3, for the United States ahead of his meeting with President Donald Trump. Before boarding the plane, the Prime Minister told reporters: “The fact that this would be President Trump’s first meeting with a foreign leader since taking office is telling. I think it’s a testimony to the strength of the Israeli-American alliance.” “It’s also a testimony to the strength of our personal friendship; that friendship and cooperation have already yielded important results for the Middle East, including the historic Abraham Accords which President Trump led and which brought four historic peace treaties between Israel and its neighbors.” He noted that “at this meeting, we will deal with the critical issues facing Israel and our region: victory over Hamas, achieving the release of all our hostages, and dealing with the Iranian terror axis and all its components, an axis that threatens the peace of Israel, the Middle East, and the entire world.” (INN/VFI News)+

University of Michigan Suspends Pro-Palestinian Student Organization for Two Years; A pro-Palestinian Arab student organization at the University of Michigan has been suspended for two years and will lose its funding due to protests calling for divestment from companies linked to Israel, American media reported. The group, Students Allied for Freedom and Equality (SAFE), was found to have violated the university’s conduct standards for recognized student groups, following a demonstration outside a regent’s residence last spring and another protest held on the Ann Arbor campus without university approval. In addition to the suspension, the organization is barred from reserving campus spaces. SAFE has until next Thursday to appeal the decision. The suspension could be lifted before the two years if SAFE fulfills all sanctions and meets with university officials to discuss its violations and policies governing student organizations. However, the earliest possible reinstatement would be in the winter of

2026. “Protests are welcome at U-M, so long as those protests do not infringe on the rights of others, significantly disrupt university events or operations, violate policies, or threaten the safety of the community,” the university said in a statement quoted by the American news outlet. (*INN/VFI News*)

Half of Holocaust Survivors in Israel Struggle with Monthly Expenses; Around 88,000 recognized Holocaust survivors are living in Israel, according to a Knesset report published on Sunday, January 26. These survivors make up around 1% of the population and around 16% of the population aged 75 and up. Nearly half (48%) of survivors receive monthly grants as part of their recognition as survivors. The remainder do not qualify for these grants and instead receive a yearly grant of NIS 7,502, the report said. The amount of the monthly grants is determined based on the percentages of disability the survivors were recognized with following their persecution, as well as their socioeconomic situation. The monthly amount varies between NIS 2,806 and NIS 7,046. Survivors with low income are awarded larger stipends (between NIS 6,929 and NIS 12,890), the report added. Despite monthly grants, a survey by the Foundation for the Welfare of Holocaust Victims found that nearly half of Israel’s Holocaust survivors have a difficult time covering their monthly expenses. The same survey found that 36% of survivors need help purchasing food and 27% gave up on purchasing some food. (*JPost/VFI News*)

Israel Building Outposts in Syria, Report Says; Israel is building military bases in Syria, a local leader told renowned American media. Mohammed Muraiwid, the mayor of Jubata al-Khassab, told the news outlet that Israeli bulldozers tore down fruit trees and other trees in a nature reserve to build an outpost and that he considers it “an occupation.” The IDF has also set up checkpoints, closed and patrolled roads, and distanced protesters. The news agency also viewed satellite imagery showing structures and vehicles inside the Israeli “base,” similar construction five miles south of it, and the beginning of a third location further to the south. The IDF told the American media outlet that it is operating “within the buffer zone and at strategic points, to protect the residents of northern Israel.” Meanwhile, Syria’s new leader, Ahmed al-Sharaa, has kept his forces away from the Israeli border. Al-Sharaa has repeatedly stated that he is not interested in conflict with Israel and that he will respect the 1974 ceasefire agreement between Israel and Syria. (*INN/VFI News*)

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