Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update October 29, 2026 (Cheshvan 17, 5787)



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■ *Israeli stocks tumble in midday trading after inconclusive election*

■ *Election Committee Chief Urges Shin Bet to Probe Foreign Funding Allegations*

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Standing with Israel!

Trump: 'We Have to Make Sure That They Never, Ever Have a Nuclear Weapon' as He Weighs Another Strike or a 'Big, Beautiful Agreement' with Iran; US President Donald Trump addressed the confrontation with Iran at a campaign rally in Georgia on Saturday night, October 24, declaring that American military operations had severely weakened the Islamic Republic and restating his determination to keep Tehran from obtaining nuclear weapons. He defended his decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear agreement negotiated under former President Barack Obama, saying he had terminated the deal "just in time" and describing it as one that "was a road to a nuclear weapon for Iran." "And we obliterated Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity with Operation Midnight Hammer and Operation Epic Fury. We defeated them militarily, financially, and otherwise. And now we are ensuring that just one thing, we have to make sure that they never, ever have a nuclear weapon. And we'll do that very easily," Trump said. He mocked the condition of Iran's military and political leadership, suggesting the regime's losses had complicated negotiations. "They don't have any airplanes, no ships, no anything, no leaders. Level one leader is gone, level two leader is gone," he said, before joking, "I got to stop because I got to figure out who the hell are we negotiating with." Earlier on Saturday, October 24, Trump discussed the possibility of further military action in an exchange with reporters, refusing to say how close he was to authorizing another strike. He acknowledged that an attack could take place while holding open the prospect of a deal: "If I'm going to do it, and there's a possibility I will, there's also a possibility we'll have a nice, big, beautiful agreement. They want to make a deal. But the problem is, will they hold the deal?" His administration, he explained, is seeking a permanent solution to Iran's nuclear ambitions rather than a temporary setback: "I could have done the B-2 bomber thing a year ago and left... I've got to make it permanent." *(INN/VFI News)*

CENTCOM Has Multiple Strike Options Ready for Iran after the November 3 Midterms; Hegseth Met Netanyahu in an Unannounced Visit to Israel; The US military has prepared multiple options for renewed strikes against Iran that could be carried out after the midterm elections on Tuesday, November 3, sources familiar with the planning said on Saturday, October 24. One source said US Central Command (CENTCOM), which oversees American military operations in the Middle East, has developed plans for additional attacks that could be implemented if President Donald Trump authorizes them. A second source confirmed that CENTCOM has prepared several potential operations for consideration by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, and stressed that Trump intends to preserve his freedom of action and will not rule out any option before making a final decision. Asked about the preparations, a Pentagon official said the Defense Department's "job is to develop and present military options to the President." "We don't speculate on hypothetical situations or future operations," the official added. The disclosure came days after Hegseth traveled to Israel, where he visited American troops in the Middle East and met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday, October 19. The meeting had not been announced in advance, and Hegseth later confirmed it had taken place without disclosing the subjects discussed. Speaking to reporters in Wisconsin on Tuesday, October 20, Hegseth pointed to the long military cooperation between

Washington and Jerusalem, particularly in efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. "We've worked with the Israeli military quite a bit. That's nothing new. We have for a long time. They have great capabilities, and we appreciate their contributions to assuring Iran never gets a nuclear weapon," he said, describing Israel as "good partners." Saturday's disclosure followed an article published on Thursday, October 22, indicating that Trump was considering another campaign against the Islamic Republic shortly after the congressional elections, one that officials said could involve several days of attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities, missile and drone capabilities, and energy infrastructure. *(INN/VFI News)*

After Two Soldiers Murdered Near Hebron, Netanyahu Announces IDF Plans for a Judea and Samaria Operation 'Unlike Anything Carried Out Since the Six-Day War': 'It's Coming'; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rushed to the scene of the deadly terrorist attack near Hebron on Friday, October 23, in which Staff Sgt. Ron Yonatan Roytman and Sgt. Yuval Shai Svilem were murdered. Standing at the site, he announced that the IDF had prepared plans for a sweeping operation in Judea and Samaria "unlike anything carried out since the Six-Day War." "It's coming," he emphasized. The Judea and Samaria operation is not the only front the prime minister has pointed to. He has also made clear his intention to lead Israel into another round of war with Iran, and he plans to circumvent the sanctions the international community intends to impose on Israel's banking system by using cryptocurrencies. None of this comes from his opponents; it comes from the prime minister himself. The announcement came two days before Israelis go to the polls on Tuesday, October 27. In Netanyahu's own words, these are the plans a government he leads would carry out after the election: a Judea and Samaria operation on a scale not seen since 1967, a further confrontation with Iran, and an alternative financial track to blunt banking sanctions. For now, the IDF's plans for Judea and Samaria stand ready, awaiting the order the prime minister says is coming. *(YNN/VFI News)*

'You Need to Prepare an Alternative Economic System': Netanyahu Warns Western Banking Sanctions Could Reach Israel and Says He Has Ordered a Digital-Currency Plan; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Friday, October 23, that Israel must begin preparing solutions for the possibility that sanctions imposed by Western countries could extend to the Israeli banking system. Speaking in a television interview broadcast that day, he said digital currencies could offer one possible solution. "Of course I'm concerned," Netanyahu replied when asked about the possibility of sanctions targeting Israel's financial system. "You have to understand that there could be sanctions, including banking sanctions. You need to prepare an alternative economic system. And you know what that is. You know about digital currencies, and I'm working on that as well. There are other things, too," he said. Asked whether he was referring to blockchain technology as an alternative, the prime minister replied: "Yes, that's one of the ways. And I've already asked for a plan to be prepared for that." Netanyahu also addressed US military assistance to Israel: "If you think we're going to continue receiving what I secured twice, tens of billions of dollars in American assistance for the defense budget, get used to the fact that it won't continue, because America has changed. It's over. It's only a matter of time." Nir Hirshman, CEO of the Israeli Crypto Companies Forum, responded that Israel is among the world's leaders in developing cryptocurrency and blockchain technologies, and that crypto has the potential to strengthen Israel's connections to global financial markets and make capital transfers more efficient. At the same time, he said, "the technology is not a safe haven for hiding money: Public blockchain networks allow transparency and the tracking of transactions." The forum, Hirshman added, "is ready to work with the government and regulators to advance appropriate reforms in this field, strengthen the economy, and reinforce its ties with the rest of the world." *(INN/VFI News)*

Bank of Israel Rebuffs the Cryptocurrency Workaround, 'Digital Currencies Cannot Bypass Sanctions,' as Netanyahu Answers: 'I Listen, but I Do What I Think is Right'; The Bank of Israel

on Saturday, October 24, rejected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's suggestion that cryptocurrency could help the country circumvent potential international financial sanctions, warning that digital currencies cannot provide an alternative route around such restrictions. "Cryptocurrencies cannot serve as a means of circumventing sanctions," the central bank said in an unusually direct response to the prime minister's proposal. It urged the government to focus instead on preventing sanctions and preserving Israel's economic ties with its trading partners. "The right course for Israel's economy is to maintain its economic relationships with our main trading partners and focus on preventing sanctions and their negative impact on the economy," the bank said. "This issue falls within the responsibility of the political leadership, and it should take action to advance that goal." The statement followed the prime minister's television interview of Friday, October 23, in which he said Israel must prepare an alternative financial system capable of operating around potential international banking sanctions and claimed he had already ordered a plan to be prepared. Officials in Israel's economic ministries, however, said they were unaware of any such initiative, and even senior figures in the Prime Minister's Office said they knew of no team working on the proposed plan. Netanyahu showed no sign of backing down from the proposal despite the central bank's criticism. In a separate television interview he said: "I hear the objections and take them into account. I thank the Bank of Israel for its advice. I listen, but I do what I think is right." The Bank of Israel's intervention came amid a growing backlash from leading economic figures who warned that attempting to circumvent sanctions through cryptocurrency could undermine Israel's financial stability, damage its international standing and accelerate the departure of investors and businesses. *(YNN/VFI News)*

'We Will Not Give Up on the Truth': More Than 100,000 Fill Hostage Square to Demand a State Commission of Inquiry into October 7; More than 100,000 people rallied at Tel Aviv's Hostage Square on Saturday night, October 24, to demand the establishment of a state commission of inquiry into the failures surrounding the October 7, 2023 massacre. The evening, titled "For Them. For Us.," was organized by the October Council, a body of families and friends of victims and survivors, and most of the opposition's leaders attended. Yossi Marshak and Titi Aynaw opened the rally with an address to the bereaved families, the survivors, the hostages' families, the fighters and the wounded: "To all of you, we want to say: our hearts are with you. We are with you; you are not alone." "Look around you. Look how many people are here," Marshak told the crowd. "After three years of pain. After three years of struggle. After three years during which they tried to deny what happened to all of us... we are here to say: we will not give up on the truth." Aynaw turned to the families who had joined the circle of bereavement in the days before the rally: "With a broken heart, yesterday [Friday, October 23, 2026] we heard the crushing words 'cleared for publication.' Our hearts are with the family of Staff Sergeant Ron Yonatan Roytman and with the family of Sergeant Yuval Shai Svilem, who were murdered in a terrorist attack." Rabbi Elhanan Danino, father of Ori Danino, who was abducted from the Nova festival and murdered in Hamas captivity, said that three years on, the leadership has still not committed to "the pursuit of truth." He called for "a state commission of inquiry that will investigate everyone." "A commission of inquiry will not bring our sons back to us, but it is the duty of all of us... an obligation for our soldiers who continue to risk their lives for our very existence here," he added. *(JPost/VFI News)*

'I Don't Think There's Anyone Who Isn't Considering Immigrating to Israel': Qualita Chief Says 50,000 French Jews Could Make Aliyah in the Coming Years; As France approaches its presidential election in May 2027, growing political unrest, antisemitism and economic uncertainty are prompting more French Jews to consider leaving the country, with as many as 50,000 potentially immigrating to Israel in the coming years, says Ariel Kendel, CEO of Qualita, the umbrella organization representing French immigrants in Israel. "What we saw over the past week [the week of October 19, 2026] was just a dress rehearsal for the elections in France in May," Kendel said. He fears the political confrontation between left-wing leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon and far-right leader Marine Le Pen could

intensify as the presidential race approaches, potentially triggering widespread demonstrations and unrest. Kendel identified Sunday, May 2, 2027, the date of the presidential runoff, as a potential turning point, warning that a disputed or divisive outcome could bring millions of protesters into the streets. "Already, the situation is causing panic among many Jews," he said. "I don't think there's anyone who isn't considering immigrating to Israel." France is home to an estimated 470,000 Jews, approximately 200,000 of whom maintain some level of active involvement in organized Jewish communal life, and discussions about immigration, once largely confined to synagogues and community institutions, have increasingly become part of everyday family conversations. A decade ago, Kendel said, Qualita's surveys indicated that approximately 50,000 French Jews wanted to immigrate to Israel, and roughly that number eventually made the move; he believes current research points to similar potential over the next several years. "The question is whether we're preparing for it and doing what we can to make it happen," he said. "There are factors pushing people out, including antisemitism, economic conditions and political extremism. But it's up to us to create reasons for them to choose Israel, including better absorption conditions and making the decision easier." Kendel receives calls daily from French Jews considering relocation, many of whom are approaching a final decision. *(YNN/VFI News)*

'You Are Your Own Compass': Duvdevan Reservist Who Lost His Leg in Gaza Completes the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii; Three years after he was wounded and lost his right leg in Gaza, IDF veteran Boris Baruch Shtonda completed the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii on Saturday, October 10. Shtonda competed in the long-distance triathlon, a 3.8-kilometer swim, a 180-kilometer bike ride and a full marathon, in a division for athletes with disabilities, wearing a custom-fitted specialized running prosthetic. He lost the leg while serving as a reservist in the IDF's Duvdevan unit after Hamas's October 7 massacre: a month after being deployed, he was severely wounded by an explosive device in the northern Gaza city of Beit Hanoun. Shtonda underwent multiple surgeries before his leg was amputated above the knee, and he made athletic challenges a central goal of his recovery. Since then he has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro twice, swum across the Sea of Galilee and finished a half-Ironman race in Spain before deciding to train for Hawaii. He completed the race after a year and a half of training and support from Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF), and he dedicated it to wounded soldiers and others in rehabilitation, encouraging them to draw on their inner strength, believe in themselves and become their own heroes. "I want to share a message with all wounded soldiers and anyone going through a rehabilitation process: you are your own compass," Shtonda said. "Sometimes, we have to be our own heroes and pull ourselves out of the predicaments we find ourselves in. Keep the faith, and always–always–believe in yourselves." He was also backed by FIDF supporter Mike Hochstein of Dallas, who met him during an FIDF bike ride through Israel in 2025. "From that first meeting, Boris's determination and spirit made a lasting impression," Hochstein said. "His dedication, perseverance, and commitment to pushing his limits are truly inspiring. I'm so proud to support Boris on this extraordinary journey." *(JPost/VFI News)*

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