

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update July 2, 2026 (Tamuz 16, 5786)



For the Yachad Report Newsletter For July 2026

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Israel; Israelis Mark 1,000 Days Since Oct. 7 With Protests and Memorial Services

- *Far-right minister blames Israel's ex-hostage chief for October 7 deaths*
 - *Medics say five killed in Gaza as residents report IDF expansion*
- *Hamas says it executed collaborator who helped Israel kill ex-military chief*
 - *Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese head home as fighting eases*
 - *Indirect talks between U.S. and Iran underway in Doha*
- *Top court freezes appointment of Netanyahu lawyer as state watchdog*

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Standing with Israel!

US Hammers Iran with Fresh Airstrikes After Tehran Attacks Another Ship in the Strait of Hormuz; US forces struck multiple targets across Iran on Saturday, June 27, after the Islamic Republic attacked a second vessel in the Strait of Hormuz, shattering an already fragile ceasefire. President Donald Trump announced the operation on Truth Social, declaring that American aircraft had hit Iranian missile and drone storage sites and coastal radar installations for once again violating the agreement. He warned that the regime may never learn, and that a point could come when restraint is no longer possible. Should the conflict resume in full, Trump cautioned, “The Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer exist.” The strikes followed an Iranian assault on the Singapore-flagged cargo ship M/V Ever Lovely, which had drawn an earlier round of American airstrikes on Friday, June 26. Tehran then struck a second vessel, the tanker M/T Kiku, as it sailed from Qatar. US Central Command said Saturday’s barrage targeted Iranian military surveillance infrastructure, communication systems, air defense sites, drone storage facilities, and minelayer capabilities, with at least 10 targets hit. Senior officials called it a larger strike than the night before, noting that Iran had a chance to stop shooting and chose instead to attack another ship. Central Command stressed that commercial vessel transits through the Strait of Hormuz are continuing despite the exchanges. Iran’s Foreign Ministry condemned what it called savage attacks on its coastal facilities and urged its Persian Gulf neighbors to bar the United States from using their territory. The escalation threatens to unravel the broader peace process, even as Washington signals it remains prepared to act with overwhelming force. For now, American officials have made clear that the cost of further aggression will fall squarely on Tehran. (NYP/VFI News)

Underground Monsters: What Remains of the Terror Tunnels Beneath Lebanese Soil; For decades, Hezbollah quietly constructed a sprawling tunnel network beneath Lebanese soil, a flagship project whose true scale is only now coming into focus. The underground system was built to conceal missiles, living quarters, food supplies, weapons, and an entire raid plan awaiting the order to strike. Former Israeli sector commanders describe an infrastructure far larger than earlier estimates suggested. Much of the threat, they caution, still lies ahead. Major General (res.) Yitzhak Gershon explained that tunnels run throughout Lebanon and was designed to hide hundreds of operatives capable of raiding the Galilee within hours. Had Hezbollah joined the October 7 onslaught, he warned, Israeli forces would have encountered Radwan Force militants at the very entrances to Haifa. The enemy understands its vulnerability to Israeli air superiority and intelligence dominance, and so it burrowed underground to shield fighters, ammunition, missile stockpiles, and launchers. The scale of the work reflects a massive Iranian investment in sophistication and concealment. Colonel (res.) Kobi Marom cautioned that the depth and complexity of the project raise hard questions about whether airstrikes alone can dismantle it. By his assessment, the IDF may have destroyed only about a quarter of the overall network so far. In Hezbollah’s centers of gravity Nabatieh, Beirut, and the Beqaa Valley — the underground system still enables continued production. The full measure of this buried threat, he stressed, has yet to be confronted. (INN/VFI News)

US, Israel, and Lebanon Sign Trilateral Framework in Washington; The United States, Israel, and Lebanon signed a framework agreement in Washington on Friday, June 26, following several days of talks aimed at ending the fighting between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the framework, cautioning that there is a great deal of work still ahead. He said the agreement establishes a clear process to restore Lebanon's sovereignty, disarm Hezbollah, and dismantle its infrastructure. Israel's Ambassador to the United States, Yechiel Leiter, described the trilateral framework as performance-based. The agreement allows Israel to return to its borders once the threat to its citizens has been removed, and it creates a trilateral Military Coordination Group for Lebanon, facilitated by the United States. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed the development in a video message late Friday night, calling it a major achievement for the State of Israel. He affirmed that Israel will remain in the security zone in southern Lebanon and announced plans to coordinate with the Lebanese army over two pilot zones. Turning to Tehran, Netanyahu declared that Iran no longer has a role in Lebanon and that the matter is none of its business. Netanyahu emphasized that the IDF will maintain the original security zone and that Israel's security comes first. Hezbollah, however, signaled defiance, with lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah claiming Lebanese authorities could not enforce the framework and vowing the group would cling to its weapons. The conflict erupted on March 2, when Hezbollah fired on Israel days after the United States and Israel struck Iran, triggering Israeli air and ground operations. Israel's losses in this round include at least 32 soldiers and four civilians, while several thousand Hezbollah fighters have been killed. (JPost/VFI News)

Inside the Israel-Lebanon Framework: Sovereignty, Disarmament, and a Phased IDF Redeployment; The trilateral framework signed in Washington on June 26 sets out the terms by which Israel and Lebanon intend to end their conflict and pursue peaceful relations as sovereign neighbors. Backed fully by the United States under President Donald Trump, the document affirms the right of each state to exist in peace and declares the two countries' intent to formally conclude any state of war between them. It is presented as an initial step toward ensuring the sovereignty and security of both nations. Future agreements are expected to build upon this foundation. At the heart of the framework is a reciprocal, sequenced process with clear conditions. The Lebanese Armed Forces are to restore effective sovereign authority over all Lebanese territory, contingent on the verified disarmament of non-state armed groups and the dismantling of their infrastructure. As those conditions are met, the IDF would progressively redeploy out of Lebanese territory. A forthcoming Security Annex, developed with full American support, is to detail the required measures, security arrangements, and verification mechanisms. To put the process into motion, the framework establishes pilot zones in which the Lebanese army would gradually assume full security responsibility, serving as the mechanism for phased and verified Israeli redeployments. Two initial zones have been agreed upon, one north of the Litani River and one south of it. The arrangement includes mutual recognition of both countries' sovereignty, while the IDF is not required to withdraw from the yellow line. Successful implementation, the framework states, would pave the way for a stable and peaceful relationship between the two nations. (TOI/VFI News)

Hezbollah Supporters Riot in Beirut After Israel-Lebanon Framework Deal; Hezbollah supporters rioted across Beirut overnight after Israel and Lebanon announced their US-brokered framework agreement on Friday, June 26. Crowds waved the terror group's flags, vandalized property, and clashed with Lebanese security forces. Footage showed a convoy of motorcycles streaming toward Beirut's airport, riders brandishing Hezbollah banners as the unrest spread. Lebanese reports indicated that the army resorted to tear gas to disperse rioters near the airport road. Additional footage captured cars and motorcycles set ablaze during the disorder, with dozens of Lebanese soldiers deploying to restore calm. The Washington announcement followed four days of US-led negotiations and laid out pilot zones for a future IDF withdrawal and a corresponding Lebanese army deployment. Israeli officials say no firm

timetable accompanies the agreement. It defines two pilot areas one north of the Litani River and one south of it while the IDF will not withdraw from the yellow line. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who led the contacts between the parties, unveiled the agreement in Washington alongside the Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors. He acknowledged that significant work still lies ahead, casting the framework as merely a first step on a long road. Rubio expressed hope that the Lebanese people would one day enjoy a prosperous and peaceful country where diverse communities live together in coexistence. The violent backlash in Beirut, however, lay bare how fiercely Hezbollah and its loyalists intend to resist that vision. (YNN/VFI News)

Israelis Demand Accountability for October 7 as Security Vigilance Endures; A new television survey finds that a large majority of Israelis remain deeply mindful of the nation's security nearly three years after the October 7, 2023, massacre. Asked whether they fear that another disaster on the scale of that onslaught could occur in the future, 74 percent of respondents said yes, while 20 percent said no. The October 7 attack saw thousands of terrorists' storm southern Israel, murdering some 1,200 people and seizing 251 hostages. In the years since, Israel has waged sweeping campaigns against its enemies in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. The survey, aired Friday, June 26, also revealed a strong public appetite for accountability. Sixty-six percent of respondents said they want the failures that preceded the massacre investigated by a statutory state commission of inquiry, whose members are selected by the president of the Supreme Court. Such commissions are Israel's highest investigative authority, empowered to subpoena witnesses and recommend systemic reforms. On whether the country's security has improved since the attack, Israelis were evenly split, with 33 percent saying it had worsened and 33 percent saying it had improved. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has resisted a commission whose members are appointed by the judiciary, which he contends is biased against him, proposing instead a body chosen through a political process. The poll was conducted by the Midgam research institute in cooperation with the iPanel firm. Taken together, the findings reflect a public that remains vigilant and determined to learn the lessons of October 7. Even amid the debate over how best to investigate those failures, the resolve to safeguard the nation runs deep. (TOI/VFI News)

Texas Adopts the Nation's First Statewide Reading List, Featuring Anne Frank and the Bible; Texas has established the nation's first statewide K-12 required reading list for public schools, mandating that students read Anne Frank's diary, a range of Bible passages, and a host of other Jewish- and Holocaust-related texts. The Republican-controlled state board of education approved the list on Friday, June 26, in a nine-to-five vote. The curriculum will take effect in 2030 and will apply to roughly 5.5 million schoolchildren across the state. It marks a significant assertion of state authority over reading selections traditionally left to individual schools and teachers. The list spans more than 150 titles, among them Elie Wiesel's Holocaust memoir "Night," Lois Lowry's young-reader novel "Number the Stars," and George Washington's celebrated 1790 letter to a Rhode Island synagogue. Beginning in the fourth grade, students will also read numerous passages from both the Bible. Other selections include classics such as E. B. White's "Charlotte's Web" and George Orwell's "Animal Farm." The original edition of Anne Frank's diary was chosen over a graphic-novel adaptation that some had criticized. The measure drew objections from some Jewish leaders, several of whom raised concerns during the public comment period about incorporating Christian content into public-school lessons. The vote follows a broader push by the state's education leaders to reverse a decline in the number of books read in class and to shape the texts students encounter. Because of Texas's vast student population, decisions by its education board have historically influenced curricula well beyond the state's borders. The inclusion of Scripture and Holocaust remembrance places enduring questions of faith and memory before a new generation. (TOI/VFI News)

Israeli-Born Emanuel Sharp Drafted to the NBA's Sacramento Kings; Israeli-American basketball star Emanuel Sharp, son of Maccabi Tel Aviv legend Derrick Sharp, was selected by the Sacramento

Kings with the 45th pick in the NBA draft on Thursday, June 25. Born and raised in Israel until the age of nine, Sharp moved to the United States but carried his Israeli roots onto the game's biggest stage. He joins a growing roster of Israeli talent reaching the world's premier basketball league. His selection caps a remarkable journey marked by both heritage and perseverance. Sharp's basketball lineage runs deep on both sides. His father, Derrick, built a legendary career with Maccabi Tel Aviv, while his mother, Justine Ellison Sharp, was a standout for the University of Toronto, leading her team to two national silver medals. At 15, Emanuel suited up for Israel's U16 national team at the FIBA European Championship, averaging 25 points per game. He overcame a serious leg injury late in high school before raising to the elite Division I ranks. At the University of Houston, Sharp flourished, earning All-Big 12 First Team honors as a senior and setting the school's record for career three-pointers. His finest hour came in the 2025 Final Four, where he scored nine of his points in the closing minutes to power the Cougars into the national championship game. Scouts praise him as a high-IQ guard with a dependable shot and tenacious defense. He now joins Deni Avdija, Ben Saraf, and Danny Wolf as the four Israeli players currently in the NBA. (JPost/VFI News)



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