

**‘Memory is the only (place) from which you cannot be expelled’**

# **Israel News Faxx**

June 12-June 16, 2017, Vol. 25, No. 117W, 2017-06-12-2017-06-16  
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Editor: Don Canaan The Villages, FL 32159 E-mail: [dcanaan4 \(at\) gmail \(dot\) com](mailto:dcanaan4@gmail.com)

*Welcome to the Israel News Faxx Weekly Edition*

*For June 12, 2017– June 16, 2017*

*incorporating news, features and opinion*

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June 12, 2017 Vol. 25, No. 113, 2017\_06\_12)

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## *Netanyahu Accuses Hamas of Committing a Double War Crime*

*By Israel Hayom*

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said Sunday at the start of the weekly cabinet meeting: "In recent days, a Hamas tunnel was discovered under two schools in Gaza. Hamas is using schoolchildren as human shields, and this is the enemy that we have been fighting for many years -- an enemy committing a double war crime. "Hamas is intentionally attacking innocent civilians while simultaneously hiding behind children."

Referring to the fact that the Hamas terror tunnel was discovered earlier this month under two United Nations Relief and Works Agency schools in Gaza, Netanyahu went on to say that in his meeting with US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, "I told her it was time to reexamine the continued existence of UNRWA."

He went on to note that "UNRWA, by its very existence, and by its actions from time to time unfortunately, perpetuates the Palestinian refugee problem rather than resolving it. That is why the time has come to dissolve UNRWA and incorporate parts of it into the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees."

On Friday, meanwhile, UNRWA issued a statement revealing that its employees had discovered the Hamas terror tunnel under an elementary school in the Gaza Strip. Israel has warned for years that Hamas was using kindergartens and schools as a cover for terrorist activity, which includes terror tunnels and rocket stockpiles.

According to the agency, the tunnel was discovered by UNRWA employees on June 1 under the Maghazi Elementary Boys A&B School and the Maghazi Preparatory Boys School during construction work. "The discovery was made during the summer vacation, at a time when the schools are empty, and while work related to the construction of an extension of one of the buildings." UNRWA said in a statement. "The tunnel has no entry or exit points on the premises nor is it connected to the schools or other buildings in any way," it further said.

UNRWA condemned "the existence of such tunnels in the strongest possible terms. It is unacceptable that students and staff are placed at risk in such a way. The construction and presence of tunnels under U.N. premises are incompatible with the respect of privileges and immunities owed to the United Nations under applicable international law, which provides that U.N. premises shall be inviolable. The sanctity and neutrality of U.N. premises must be preserved at all times," the statement read.

"UNRWA has robustly intervened and protested to Hamas in Gaza. It has also informed them that the Agency intends to seal the tunnel under its premises, as an immediate priority. We will not allow any students or staff into the building until the issue is resolved," the agency said.

UNRWA reiterated its demand that "all parties respect the neutrality and inviolability of United Nations premises at all times. Furthermore, we demand they desist from any activities or conduct that put beneficiaries and staff at risk and undermine the ability of U.N. staff to provide assistance to Palestine refugees in safety and security."

Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories Maj. Gen. Yoav Mordechai posted on his office's Arabic language Facebook page 'Hamas is leading Gaza toward a humanitarian disaster by usurping and confiscating humanitarian aid and jeopardizing residents' lives by digging tunnels under schools and hospitals to use the population as a human shield.

"It is clear as day that the Arab world in its entirety now understands that the terrorist organization Hamas is destroying the Gaza Strip and eliminating any prospects of a better future for Gazans. Perhaps it is time for the residents of Gaza to understand it themselves," Mordechai added.

Hamas denied UNRWA's allegations. Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said that "these are baseless accusations -- the Hamas movement has nothing to do with the tunnel that was discovered." He further said that the group "strongly condemns UNRWA's allegations" and warned that the U.N. agency's condemnation of Hamas could undermine its status in the Gaza Strip. We call upon UNRWA to withdraw its accusations against Hamas."

During the 2014 Operation Protective Edge, Hamas gunmen on several occasions made their way into Israel through tunnels, though they did not manage to reach civilian areas. Israel destroyed 32 tunnels during the operation, and has since made neutralizing the tunnel threat a top priority.

## *Saudi Newspaper: Hamas in Gaza is Worse Than ISIS in Syria, Iraq*

*By Israel Hayom*

In a rare and scathing criticism, a Saudi Arabian newspaper has compared Hamas to Islamic State, saying that what the Gaza Strip-based terrorist group was doing in the enclave "exceeds what Islamic State does in Syria and Iraq."

*'Would it not be better for the Hamas movement ... to hasten the end of the humanitarian disaster it has brought upon the Gaza Strip and over 2 million residents, imposing house arrest upon them and holding them in a large prison. '*

The opinion piece, published in the Okaz daily Thursday, came on the heels of last week's dramatic announcement by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and other Arab nations that they were severing ties with Qatar over its support of terrorism.

The piece accused Hamas of using the millions of dollars donated by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as other international aid funds earmarked for humanitarian aid to Gaza's people to build its grid of terror tunnels and to fund terrorist attacks, "as instructed by Iran.

"Would it not be better for the Hamas movement ... to hasten the end of the humanitarian disaster it has brought upon the Gaza Strip and over 2 million residents, imposing house arrest upon them and holding them in a large prison. Threatening the lives of Gaza's residents, depriving them of water, electricity, [medical] treatment and ransacking their freedom exceeds what ISIS does in Syria and Iraq with its quick killing, as what Hamas does is a slow killing."

## ***Jewish Man Beaten by Christians in Old City, Israel Police Arrest Him***

By IsraelNationalNews.com

A haredi man in his mid-30s was assaulted in the Old City of Jerusalem Sunday morning by a group of Christians as their procession passed through the Jewish Quarter. The man, a married father of six, claims he was riding on his bicycle near his home in the Jewish Quarter when he was assaulted by members of the procession.

The assailants, in turn, claim the man had spit on the ground as he passed by the procession, a move they say prompted their angry response. Passersby intervened on the man's behalf, pulling him away from the enraged crowd, which had beaten him severely and left him bloodied.

Yet when police arrived, officers took the victim of the assault into custody, while allowing his assailants to go free. Police took the man in for questioning, even as he was bleeding from the attack which had taken place just minutes before.

Attorney Rehaviva Piltz from the legal aid group Honenu met with the man following his arrest. "Once again, we are witnessing the police abandon the security of Jewish residents of the Old City of Jerusalem," said Piltz. "It is ridiculous that every time there is an incident involving a Jew and a non-Jew, Israel Police place the blame on the Jew and view him as the guilty party."

## ***Woman Strips Naked in Front of Western Wall, Sparking Uproar***

By IsraelNationalNews.com

Jerusalem police escorted a 23-year old woman out of the Western Wall Plaza Sunday morning after she removed her clothes. Police and Western Wall Plaza guards covered the young woman up as she was removed from the area and taken in for questioning.

Witnesses say the woman suddenly began stripping in front of the Western Wall, prompting worshippers to notify plaza guards. "She came in [to the Plaza] fully-dressed," a witness told Channel 2. "Then at one point she started to undress, acting as if she had a purpose, like she wanted to make a provocation. People started to shout and cry out, and as she headed towards the men's section, she was stopped by force."

The guards removed the woman to a nearby restroom and called police. Officers covered the woman with wraps and transferred her to a police station for questioning. According to the initial investigation, the woman appears to be suffering from a mental illness. Police say the young woman has been returned to her parent's home following interrogation and a psychological evaluation.

## ***IDF Company Commander Refuses an Order to Allow His Soldiers More Hours of Sleep***

By YnetNews.com

The commander of the Northern Command, Maj. Gen. Yoel Strick, decided Sunday to remove Maj. (res.) Meni Eitan, commander of a reserve company who refused to send his soldiers to a battalion exercise after claiming that they had not received enough sleep.

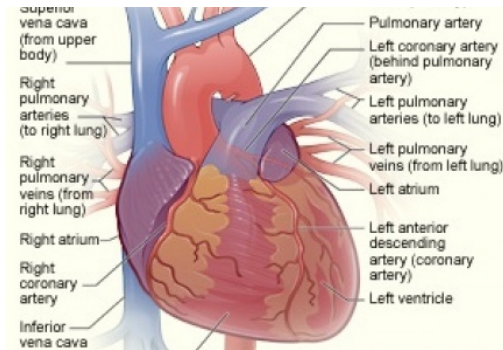
Strick noted in his investigation the long-standing contribution of the company commander, but emphasized that the refusal to obey orders of this type is an exception to the norm expected of a commander of a combat company, and pointed out lessons to be learned from the incident.

The event began during a reserve battalion exercise conducted two and a half weeks ago. Maj. Eitan did not participate in the exercise after claiming that the soldiers had not received enough sleep. After the commanders explained to the company commander that this was in accordance with the army's orders and the original planning, the company commander decided not to lead his soldiers into the exercise. The other companies in the battalion continued their training as planned. According to the commanders, the soldiers were to receive the remaining hours of sleep during the following day, which was monetarily defined as a full day of reserve duty.

## ***Israeli Scientists Discover Protein That Can Regenerate Heart Tissue***

By IsraelNationalNews.com

In groundbreaking research, scientists at Israel's Weizmann Institute have discovered a unique protein found in newborn vertebrates that could potentially be used to repair damaged human heart tissue.



The researchers identified a protein called agrin, which is expressed during embryonic development but stops shortly after birth. In the study, the scientists injected the protein from newborn mice into the hearts of adult mice that had suffered heart attacks, and the protein appeared to "unlock" a regenerative process that allowed the heart muscle tissue to repair itself. It remains to be seen whether the protein has the same effect on humans.

Prof. Eldad Tzahor led the team of researchers and students from the Molecular Cell Biology Department who worked on the study, which was published in the journal Nature. Tzahor said that the renewal of heart tissue in adults is a known phenomenon among some vertebrates. Fish, for example, in effect regenerate damaged hearts. Animals that are evolutionarily closer to humans, such as mice, are born with that ability, but lose it approximately a week after birth.

## ***New Book Glorifies Palestinian Terrorists***

By Israel Hayom

A controversial new book recently published by a Palestinian organization glorifies terrorists with aim of "inspiring" younger generations, Israel Hayom learned over the weekend. The book, "Stories of Qalandiya's Shahids, 1967-2017," was published by the Qalandiya Media Center and tells the personal stories of terrorists who resided in the Jerusalem-adjacent refugee camp.



The book's cover features a map of Israel made up of the photos of terrorists killed over the past 50 years. The Dome of the Rock and the Palestinian flag are featured in the middle of the map.

The Qalandiya Media Center's Facebook page said that the book, launched last week in a festive ceremony, was "published following more than a year and a half of research meant to bring the shahids' stories to light." Seeking to "inspire younger generations," the center posted photos of young girls proudly holding the book on its social media pages.

Maor Zemach, head of the Lach Yerushalayim ("For You, Jerusalem") advocacy group, which seeks to safeguard Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem, called the book "outrageous..."

"Organizations like the Qalandiya Media Center are the snake's head when it comes to incitement on social media," he said. "The publication of a book that glorifies the murderers of women and children is a direct continuation of the incitement by the Qalandiya Media Center, which publishes venomous books, videos, and posts against Israel. It's time to shut the center down."

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June 13, 2017 Vol. 25, No. 114, 2017\_06\_13)

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## *NY Times Reports Trump's Goof: Israel Hacked ISIS' Computer Network*

*By Reuters & JTA*

The intelligence information shared by President Donald Trump with Russian officials that allegedly 'unmasked' Israeli operations included proof that ISIS terrorists in Syria have been plotting to use explosive devices concealed in laptops to bomb passenger planes.

Last month, it was reported that the president had inadvertently revealed Israel intelligence as the source of sensitive security information during discussions with Russian officials. According to The Washington Post, during conversations with the Russian Foreign Minister and Russia's Ambassador to the US, Trump disclosed information obtained by a key US ally – information whose very nature revealed its source.

On Monday, a report by The New York Times identified the source of intel cited by the president, confirming that Israel was indeed the ally who provided the information to the US. According to the Times report, the information shared by Trump with the two Russian officials was a plot by ISIS terrorists in Syria to conceal powerful explosive devices inside laptop computers, then use those bombs to down passenger planes.

Israeli cyber teams reportedly hacked into the systems of terrorists involved in the bombing plot, and were able to extract detailed information regarding the plan, including efforts to create bombs which could fool airport security X-ray machines, giving the appearance of laptop batteries.

It was this intelligence that prompted the US to enact a ban in March on laptops and other digital devices on flights to the US and UK from eight predominantly Muslim nations.

Trump's leak threw Israeli-US intelligence relations into shaky territory with former Mossad chief Danny Yatom telling The Jerusalem Post at the time that it was a major violation that would impact future intelligence sharing.

Former national security advisers Yaakov Amidror and Uzi Arad also told the Post that intelligence leaks were an expected part of the game and that, despite the incident, Israel received far too much intelligence data from the US to hold back from sharing.

The Prime Minister's Office, the Defense Ministry and the Intelligence Ministry all declined to respond to the new details in Monday's report. The exposé by the Times on current cyberwarfare tactics used by the US and its allies, cited American officials revealing Israel's hand in the recent success in penetrating the hard-to-track cyber tactics utilized by ISIS and other extremist groups.

According to the report, Israel months ago hacked a cell of extremists making bombs in Syria. The report did not specify whether the hacking was accomplished by the Mossad or IDF military intelligence. Intelligence gathered from those Israeli breaches reportedly led to the US revelation that ISIS was working to develop explosive devices that resembled laptop computer batteries and easily evaded airport screening methods. The report cited two US officials familiar with the operation as saying that the intelligence allowed the US to understand the mechanisms and the processes for detonating them.

Reports on the leaks subsequently emerged that Israeli officials were furious that Trump may have "compromised a vital source of information on the Islamic State and possibly Iran." Monday's report is also significant because it was the first direct report that Trump's leak to Russia specifically came from Israeli cyber hacking.

Until now, reports had focused on a theory that the information leaked by Trump came from an Israeli undercover agent within ISIS or a Jordanian undercover agent within the terrorist group, with former CIA director Michael Hayden raising the possibility that the leak had come from multiple foreign sources.

## *US Official: Israeli, Palestinian Spoilers Want to Derail Peace Talks*

*By Israel Hayom*

A senior U.S. official told Israel Hayom that the reports suggesting that Hatnuah leader Tzipi Livni was advising U.S. Special Representative for International Negotiations Jason Greenblatt or playing any other role in Washington's efforts to relaunch Israeli-Palestinian peace talks are entirely false.

Israeli and Palestinian officials who spread false reports of this nature are only trying to derail the American efforts to promote peace talks, the official said. He stressed that reports in Israel in May claiming that Livni and Greenblatt had met frequently to discuss ways to advance the peace process were misleading and baseless.

The official was careful not to attack Livni, saying Greenblatt "respects her personally." He reiterated that the two had met as part of general meetings the American envoy held with Israeli officials from both sides of the political spectrum in the first few weeks after he was named for the role, and before David Friedman assumed his role as U.S. ambassador to Israel.

He stressed that like other Israeli officials, it was Livni who had asked for a meeting with Greenblatt. "These were one of many, many meetings that Greenblatt has taken; he has not met with her since that second meeting and is not consulting with her in any way shape or form," the official said.

He stressed that the reports on Livni's alleged relationship with Greenblatt were tendentious. The official said that "there are spoilers both on the Israeli and Palestinian sides who want to derail the possibility of peace," and cautioned that "these spoilers create false narratives in the media and [in] social media to distort the efforts of the administration... It's important to read some of these stories with that view in mind," he said.

According to the senior official, the first meeting between Livni and Greenblatt took place on Friday, March 24, in Washington, following a request from her office, and it included Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer. The official noted that as the meeting was ending, Greenblatt spontaneously invited Livni to join his family for Shabbat dinner.

The official stressed that the Israeli media attributed undue importance to this, saying Livni's joining Greenblatt and his family for Shabbat dinner was meaningless, as she was among 15 or 20 other people who were invited. Two days before his meeting with Livni, Greenblatt met with Habayit Hayehudi leader Naftali Bennett. The American envoy tweeted about both meetings, the official said. Livni and Greenblatt's second meeting took place on May 9, and both Dermer and Friedman were present for it, he said.

Meetings between a White House adviser and Knesset members are not unusual, especially when a new administration comes to power. Greenblatt was one of President Donald Trump's two advisers on Israel during the 2016 presidential campaign, alongside Friedman.

During the campaign, both made sure to publish Trump's potential policy on Israel. A position paper the two wrote shortly before the elections made it clear that Trump would be pro-Israeli, that he would support moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and that he understood that a peace deal is not feasible unless the Palestinians disavow terrorism and recognize Israel and the Jewish state. The two stressed that a Trump administration would promote direct Israeli-Palestinian peace talks without preconditions. Livni was unavailable for comment.

## ***IDF Commander Accuses Ramallah of Being Scared of Wonder Woman***

*By Israel Hayom*

A Palestinian theater has announced that it will not screen the blockbuster "Wonder Woman" movie starring Israeli actress Gal Gadot. The decision follows Lebanon's ban on the movie just before its scheduled premiere in Beirut, as well as Tunisia's suspension of the movie's release.

A representative from the Palestine Towers Cinema in Ramallah confirmed to Israel Hayom that the decision not to screen the movie was due to Gadot's having served in the Israel Defense Forces. The representative emphasized the move was not the result of any government ban on the movie, but rather "our private decision."

"We do not offer food and beverages made in Israel at our theater either, so it was natural not to screen a movie that stars an Israeli actress who played an active role in the occupation as a female soldier in the Israeli army and in fact collaborated in the terrible crimes against the Palestinian people," the representative said. He said they would not screen the movie even if it turns out to be "the biggest blockbuster in history," and those who want to see it can go to other theaters.

Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories Maj. Gen. Yoav Mordechai responded to the decision in a post in Arabic on his Facebook page. "Who's scared of Wonder Woman? It seems Palestine Towers Cinema in Ramallah is scared of the audience enjoying the excellent 'Wonder Woman' movie and cannot differentiate between politics and an American movie," he wrote. "The boycott of the movie just shows the weakness and fear. Those who are sure of themselves are not scared of movies, even if Wonder Woman is the main character."

## ***Elite IDF Forces Getting Customized Uniforms***

*By Israel Hayom*

The Israel Defense Forces has begun issuing soldiers serving in its special forces units new, customized uniforms, believed to be more operationally effective.

Lt. Col. Liron Segal of the military's Technological and Logistics Directorate explained the decision to equip soldiers with new uniforms was made following last summer's Operation Protective Edge in the Gaza Strip, and it seeks to ensure troops are comfortable in their uniforms.

The new uniform shirts are made of high-performance fabric, similar to Dri-FIT activewear, which moves perspiration away from the body and onto the fabric surface, where it evaporates. The shirts have no buttons, as it was found that once protective vests are worn on regular uniform shirts, buttons may cause injury.

The new pants are made from ripstop fabric, which is considered highly durable, and include fitted knee pad inserts, ridding soldiers from the need to wear external knee pads.

The new uniforms, which are three times more expensive than the military's regular combat fatigues, are meant to replace the IDF's regular cotton fatigues. "The new clothing is comfortable, lightweight, and is less likely to cause a distraction for soldiers during combat," Segal said.

The IDF will soon outfit its elite soldiers with new helmets as well, which are significantly lighter and stronger than the ones currently in use. The uniform and helmets will be gradually introduced. The naval commandos, Rimon desert warfare unit, Oketz canine unit, and the Yahalom combat engineering unit were the first to receive the new gear.

## ***Warsaw Mayor May be Forced to Return her Home to Jewish Owners***

*By YnetNews.com*

Warsaw's city mayor and other officials will be summoned this month to testify before a special state commission investigating questionable restitution of private property that was seized under communism, the deputy justice minister said Monday. The committee may eventually decide that the mayor must return her home to the Jews from whom it was confiscated during WWII.

The commission was formed recently in response to growing outrage at the returns, which concern highly valuable plots and buildings, in Warsaw and some other cities, that were seized by the state from private owners—Poles, Jews and others—under a 1945 communist-era decree.

Democratic Poland opened the possibility of the return of property, but in many cases the process has gone wrong, the rightful heirs have been tricked out of their rights and the tenants evicted by the new owners, sometimes with nowhere to go.

The commission led by Deputy Justice Minister Patryk Jaki will review cases. It has the power to take wrong decisions to court to seek their reversal or compensation for the rightful inheritors. It is beginning with restitutions in Warsaw. Jaki said Monday that the first hearings will be June 28-30 and will concern a building in Twarda Street from which a renowned high school was evicted.

Warsaw Mayor Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz refused to appear and had questioned the commission's authority. The panel wanted to know to what extent she was aware of the irregularities that had been described in the media. A house returned to her family was among those investigated. Some other city officials have been put under arrest on suspicion of helping in the irregular restitutions and will be brought before the panel.

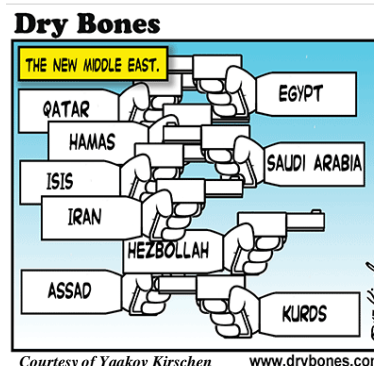
## ***U.S. Holocaust Museum's Kickstarter to Translate, Digitize Victims' Diaries***

*By JTA*

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum has launched a \$250,000 Kickstarter campaign to translate and digitize the diaries of Nazi victims and survivors. Funds from the 31-day campaign, which started on Anne Frank's birthday — Monday, June 12 — to commemorate the renowned teen diarist, would allow the museum to translate its collection of over 200 diaries into English and catalogue them. The museum only gets the funds if it meets its goal. The campaign is being promoted on social media under the hashtag #SaveTheirStories.

The diary collection will expose an array of experiences to the public, including the struggle to stay alive in the ghettos, emotional accounts of survival in concentration camps and "the search for refuge in America," according to the museum.

"Making the evidence of the Holocaust widely available is critical to promoting its understanding and countering those who would deny it," a museum official, Dana Weinstein, said in a statement. "With the support of people from around the world united behind this project, we will help make more voices of those persecuted by Nazism heard."



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June 14, 2017 Vol. 25, No. 115, 2017\_06\_13)

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## Israel Reduces Power Supply to Gaza

By Reuters

Israel will reduce electricity supplies to the Gaza Strip after the Palestinian Authority limited how much it pays for power to the enclave run by Hamas, Israeli officials said Monday. The decision by Israel's security cabinet is expected to shorten by 45 minutes the daily average of four hours of power that Gaza's 2 million residents receive from an electricity grid dependent on Israeli supplies, the officials said.

The West Bank-based Palestinian Authority blamed Hamas' failure to reimburse it for electricity for the reduction in power supplies. But PA spokesman Tareq Rashmawi couched that explanation with a demand that Hamas agree to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' unity initiatives, which include holding the first parliamentary and presidential elections in more than a decade.

"We renew the call to the Hamas movement and the de facto government there to hand over to us all responsibilities of government institutions in Gaza so that the government can provide its best services to our people in Gaza," he said. Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said Israel and the Palestinian Authority "will bear responsibility for the grave deterioration" in Gaza's health and environmental situation.

Any worsening to Gaza's power crisis — its main electrical plant is off-line in a Hamas-PA dispute over taxation — could cause the collapse of health services already reliant on stand-alone generators, many of them in a poor state of repair, said Ashraf al-Qidra, spokesman for the Health Ministry in Gaza.

Israel charges the PA 40 million shekels (\$11 million) a month for electricity, deducting that the transfers of Palestinian tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Authority. Israel does not engage with Hamas, which it considers a terrorist group.

Last month, the Palestinian Authority informed Israel that it would cover only 70% of the monthly cost of electricity that the Israel Electric Corporation supplies to the Gaza Strip. At the security cabinet session late on Sunday, ministers decided that Israel would not make up the shortfall, the officials said. "This is a decision by [Abbas] ... Israelis paying Gaza's electricity bill is an impossible situation," Israeli Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan said on Army Radio.

Israeli military and security chiefs backed the move, despite concern Hamas could respond by increasing hostilities with Israel. Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip from Abbas' Fatah movement in 2007, and several attempts at reconciliation, most recently in 2014, have failed. Hamas has accused Abbas of trying to turn the screw on them to make political concessions.

## Qatar Military Crisis May Spark Gaza Outbreak

By DEBKAFfile (Analysis)

The electricity cutback in the Gaza Strip, engineered by Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas to flex muscle against Hamas rule, was just one piece on the checkerboard created by the crackdown Egypt, Saudi Arabia Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates have imposed on Qatar for supporting terrorist groups like the Palestinian extremist Hamas.

Therefore, Hamas leader Yahya Sanwar had little to expect from his mission to Cairo last weekend to persuade the El-Sisi government to ease its restrictions on the Gaza Strip. He arrived with a large mission heavily represented by Hamas's military arm, Ezz e-Din El-Qassam. Their appeals to Maj.-Gen Khaled Fawzy, director of Egyptian General Intelligence, met with a list of tough conditions. When the Palestinian delegation balked, Cairo acted to tighten its blockade on the Palestinian enclave.

The Hamas rulers of the Gaza Strip found themselves in the same boat as their old friend, Qatar, in the week that their internal rival, Mahmoud Abba, docked payment for the electricity Israeli supplies the Gaza Strip. The power supply was cut by 40%.

From 2015, the emir of Qatar remained the only Arab ruler backing the Palestinian extremist Hamas with occasional cash donations to Gaza City and permission for its top officials to set up shop in Doha. This flow of aid was abruptly cut off by the land, sea and air blockade Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt clamped down on Qatar last week over its support for terrorist groups and ties with Tehran.

Sheikh Tamim bin-Hamad Al-Khalifa defied the ultimatum they presented him, and so Qatar's banks and international assets have been losing dollars, its currency has plummeted and there is no money to spare for the Gaza Strip.

Qatar and Hamas are being pushed into the same corner. The small Gulf island, which is the world's largest supplier of natural gas, was been told by the four leading Arab governments to expel Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas officials from its soil, after years of providing them with hospitality plus pensions generous enough for them to live a life of ease and plenty, while also running their terrorist networks across the region and beyond.

Qatar was also told to discontinue its propaganda campaigns against Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and shut down its main platform, the Al Jazeera TV channel; and hundreds of Egyptian and Saudi dissidents granted political asylum deported forthwith. With nowhere else to go, these dissidents could potentially head for sanctuary in the Gaza Strip, making it a "little Qatar," which is why Cairo further tightened the Palestinian enclave's isolation by blocking all routes of access.

The Hamas delegation was likewise confronted in Cairo with tough demands by the Egyptian intelligence chief: 1. To turn in the Muslim Brotherhood fugitives they were sheltering in the Gaza Strip. 2. Not just to sever cooperation between the Hamas military arm and the Islamic State networks in the Sinai Peninsula, but to surrender to Egypt all the intelligence they possessed about the jihadists and their activities. 3. To discontinue weapons smuggling operations through Sinai.

After balking at the Egyptian demands, Yahya Sanwar was forced to leave Cairo empty-handed regarding eased restrictions and humanitarian aid - only to find on his return home that the Egyptians had raised their biggest gun against the Gaza Strip: They had cut off power. A humanitarian catastrophe now hangs over the two million inhabitants of the tiny Mediterranean enclave. Hospitals are cutting back operations, refrigerators are switched off, clean water supplies are dwindling because desalination plants are without power, raw sewage is dumped into the sea and sanitary conditions deteriorating.

Cairo asked the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and the Israeli government not to relent, but to keep the pressure on the Hamas regime high. Ramallah must continue to hold back payment to cover Israel's electricity bills, which suits Mahmoud Abbas' campaign for bringing Hamas to heel.

But for Israel, there is a dilemma. Nonetheless, the Netanyahu government is extremely wary of breaking away from the anti-terror line taken by Arab governments, because this could put paid to the delicate ties established with them – especially in the military domain - through long and laborious effort.

In Jerusalem, it is therefore ardently hoped that the Qatar crisis is quickly resolved and Hamas and Cairo can reach terms exponentially for easing the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

For the time being, there is no sign of this happening. On the contrary, there are indications of the crisis moving onto a military plane. Sources in the Middle East are not ruling out possible military action by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE against Qatar.

A military crisis centering on Qatar would be a catalyst for an outbreak of violence from the Gaza Strip. And indeed, after the failed Sanwar mission to Cairo and the reduction of electric power to the Gaza Strip, Hamas spokesmen warned that an “explosion” was imminent.

## ***Israel Holds School Earthquake Drill***

*By YnetNews.com*

The Home Front Command held an earthquake drill on Tuesday morning in 2,300 schools throughout Israel as well as at the Knesset and the President's Residence. The students and teachers drilled leaving buildings quickly via escape routes to open areas.

As part of safety measures taken in the Education Ministry, earthquake detections systems have been installed over the past year in educational institutions built before 1980. An additional 600 systems will be installed in the coming year. The system identifies ground movements caused by an earthquake and sets off an alarm at the school. The entire project cost NIS 12 million. In addition, 59 structures in educational institutions have been fortified to better withstand earthquakes, while 200 additional institutions are in the process of similar fortification work.

The Education Ministry said 10th graders throughout the country will undergo training during the next school year on minor extraction measures in the case of an earthquake. “The students will be trained for minor rescue missions with basic and simple measures,” the ministry said in a statement. “The training will significantly increase the number of civilians who could aid in the immediate rescue operations in the different municipalities, educational institutions, work places and more.”

In addition to Tuesday's drill, students in the 5th-12th grades received lessons on earthquakes during February and March to increase knowledge and awareness among the students. Education Ministry Director-General Shmuel Abuab said the education system is putting an emphasis on “the immediate evacuation of preschool- and school-aged children to safety.” Furthermore, Abuab said, “the education system would aid rescue teams in affected cities, with psychologists, teachers-in-training and teenage volunteers, among other things.”

While in the past students were instructed to dive under their desks in case of an earthquake, this year students are called to evacuate out of the building. “We've been learning about safe environments throughout the year,” said a teacher at the Yahalom School in Afula. “Since the beginning of the year, we've been drilling, watching Home Front Command instruction videos with the students, locating the safe place in any type of event—shelters, emergency exits, open areas, and more.”

As the students headed out of the school building during Tuesday's drill, 5th grade students served as stewards, stretcher bearers and even firefighters. After all the students evacuated the building, stewards searched the hallways to ensure no one was left inside, while teachers took attendance to account for all students.

The drill was supervised by a lieutenant colonel from the Home Front Command and a security officer from the municipality who oversees educational institutions. School principal Perach Bar-Cohen said, “The goal is to teach security and safety, while preparing for any emergency. Even when a student is not at school, he'll know what to do in any situation.”

In the southern city of Dimona, rescue forces drilled a scenario in which crowds began looting local food stores after an earthquake. Additional scenarios drilled were aftershocks that caused damage to infrastructure and buildings in the city and a freight train transporting chlorine getting off track near the city, causing a leak of hazardous materials.

Rescue forces in Be'er Sheva drilled a scenario of a powerful earthquake hitting the scene, at the Dead Sea the scenario being drilled was hotels collapsing, while in Arad rescue forces drilled a scenario of thousands of homes collapsing. In Ashkelon and Ashdod, the entire coastal area was evacuated as part of a tsunami drill.

All throughout the southern district, rescue forces rehearsed scenarios in which water and electrical grids collapsed, along with sewage flowing in the streets and blocking major traffic arteries. The exercise also attempted to simulate a scenario in which there are dozens of deaths, hundreds of wounded and thousands who lost their homes. Police also reviewed a situation in which hospitals collapsed. “These are complex scenarios that are likely to occur in the event of an earthquake and police need to be able to handle the situation,” explained Haim Bublil, a southern district operations officer.

## ***Israel to Test Fire Anti-Missile System.... in Alaska***

*By The Jerusalem Post*

Israel is set to carry out a joint test of its Arrow 3 intercontinental ballistic missile defense system in the United States next year, the first time such a test will occur outside of Israeli territory. The exercise, which will be carried out in cooperation with the US Missile Defense Agency, is set to take place on the Alaskan island of Kodiak where the system will be tested against targets simulating advanced ballistic missiles being developed by Iran.

Israel and the United States are concerned that Iran has continued to work on both its nuclear program as well as its ballistic missile program despite international criticism. Considering the perceived missile threat, the two allies have worked together to develop several missile defense systems, including the Arrow 3, which was co-managed by the US Missile Defense Agency and IMDO, a division of the Israeli Ministry of Defense.

***The advanced systems provide Israel with a comprehensive protective umbrella ... to counter threats (by) terror groups in Gaza and Hizbullah as well as ... by more sophisticated long-range Iranian ballistic missiles***

Considered one of the world's best interceptors due to its breakthrough technological capabilities, the Arrow 3 is a highly maneuverable system designed to provide ultimate air defense by intercepting ballistic missiles when they are still outside the Earth's atmosphere.

MDA Director US Navy Vice Admiral James Syring was quoted by Alaskan media as telling a congressional meeting last week that the “[Arrow 3] has significant range constraints within the Mediterranean. One of the better places to test is in Alaska, from Kodiak, and we intend to do that next year.” But according to Craig Campbell, the CEO of Alaska Aerospace Corp, the deal to carry out the test has not yet been finalized.

“The Missile Defense Agency, MDA, has approached us about doing the Israeli program out of Kodiak, and we are in the process of negotiating that contract today,” Campbell is quoted by Alaska's KTOO news as saying.

According to KTOO news, the test would be part of the \$80 million contract between MDA and the Alaska Aerospace Corp. The Israel Air Force officially received Arrow-3 interceptors from the Israel Missile Defense Organization in January and according to IMDO Director Moshe Patel, further trials of the system were expected as Israel will continue to work with the United States in developing additional capabilities for the system.

In addition to the Arrow system, Israel's air defenses currently include the Iron Dome, designed to shoot down short-range rockets, and the David's Sling missile defense system designed to intercept tactical ballistic missiles, medium- to long-range rockets, as well as cruise missiles fired at ranges between 40 to 300km.

The advanced systems provide Israel with a comprehensive protective umbrella able to counter threats posed by both short and mid-range missiles used by terror groups in Gaza and Hizbullah as well as the threat posed by more sophisticated long-range Iranian ballistic missiles. The first use of the Arrow system occurred in April when the system was launched to intercept a Syrian regime air defense fired three surface-to-air missiles towards IAF jets.

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# Israel News Faxx

June 15, 2017 Vol. 25, No. 116, 2017\_06\_15)

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## ***Tillerson: Embassy Move Both 'If' & 'When'***

By *The Jerusalem Post*

President Donald Trump has not decided whether to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, despite White House assurances that the move will occur in a matter of time, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said on Wednesday. "He has not made that decision yet, to my knowledge," Tillerson told the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Trump signed a six-month waiver of a congressional requirement earlier this month compelling the embassy move. Tillerson said the administration plans to use that six months to review the policy. After issuing that waiver, the president's spokesman said he hoped to maximize his chances of rebooting peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians. "The question is not if that move happens, but only when," Press Secretary Sean Spicer said on June 1.

Israel unified Jerusalem 50 years ago during the Six Day War and considers the ancient city its eternal capital, but Palestinians say that parts of the city must be free of Israeli control in any future peace agreement. The Trump administration has not taken either side on the matter, although Trump campaigned for president on a promise to move the US embassy in Israel there.

## ***Exposed: Medical Experiments Were Performed on Missing Yemenite Children***

By *Israel Hayom*

The Knesset Special Committee on the Disappearance of Children from Yemen, the East and the Balkans met Wednesday morning, after Israel Hayom published an exclusive report exposing doctors' testimonies that unauthorized medical tests were performed on children who went missing in the early years of the state and whose fates were unknown to their families. The documents also revealed that children who died were autopsied without the consent of their parents.

Committee members were presented with the protocols of previous government committees of inquiry into the missing children, as well as proof that some of the children died after being subjected to experimental medical treatments.

Committee Chairwoman MK Nurit Koren (Likud) said at Wednesday's meeting: "In the very place they should have been protected, the children disappeared. Some of the children disappeared and their parents never received a death certificate; they were informed only that their children had died. Although they asked to see the bodies, they got nothing and could not hold funerals. It is increasingly apparent that the bodies of the children were used for research."

Koren said that one of the protocols from the committee of inquiry showed not only that autopsies had been conducted without the parents' consent and without respect for the dead, but that medical tests had been carried out on live children.

"The team of doctors was condescending to new immigrants and did not acknowledge the basic rights of the patient, or of the parents to give permission for their children to receive certain treatments," Koren said. "There was a great crime here that was never reported. The committee's conclusions never discussed any experiments or any autopsies. Everything was before them, and it is inconceivable that we will ignore it."

Meir Broda from the Health Ministry's legal bureau said the reports were very serious and must be condemned, but "we are looking at things from the perspective of today, in today's reality, which was not the reality of those days. There was an atmosphere of research. Reports from that time show that 50% of bodies in hospitals were autopsied to determine the cause of death."

The disappearance of hundreds of mostly Yemenite children who arrived in Israel in the early days of the state has been an open wound in Israeli society for years, one that erupts from time to time in pained demonstrations and demands that the truth be revealed.

Three government committees have been appointed over the years to probe the affair: the Bahlul-Minkowski Committee of 1967, the Shalgi Committee of 1988, and the Cohen-Kedmi state commission of inquiry, which was appointed in 1995 and submitted its report in 2001. All the committees found that no children had been kidnapped, as is frequently alleged, although the Cohen-Kedmi committee pointed out that the dozens of cases in which children supposedly died but for whom no death certificates were issued indicated that they could have been put up for adoption without their families' knowledge or consent.

Israel Hayom has obtained protocols that record testimonies of experiments that were conducted on the children without their parents' knowledge or consent; of experimental treatment that caused the deaths of at least four children; of the abduction of one girl from the Rambam Hospital in Haifa; and of one member of the Rambam medical staff adopting a baby girl.

Israel Hayom has also obtained pictures that have never been published that appear to document some of the medical experiments conducted on the children. In what appears to be an attempt to teach anatomy, one picture shows the word "spleen" written on a naked child's abdomen. All of this material was presented in Wednesday's Knesset Committee meeting.

One page of the findings of the investigative committee describes how doctors carried out an experimental treatment on four undernourished babies in which they injected dry protein into the babies' veins, a treatment that killed them.

The protocol records attorney Drora Nahmani-Roth attempted to jog the memory of Dr. George Mendel, the former head of the children's hospital at Rosh Haayin in central Israel. When pressed, Mendel said, "I remember one or two cases in which Dr. Matot gave instructions to give an injection of dry protein that we would separate. Serum, dry plasma ... and the results were not good."

The protocol includes a letter from Dr. Kalman Jacob Mann, deputy medical director of the hospital, to Mendel, dated Nov. 21, 1949, saying: "I visited our hospital in Rosh Haayin, and found that that morning four babies who had received active treatment had died. These babies were in more or less balanced condition according to their physio-pathological condition, but after they were injected with various solutions, the balance was upset and they died."

Another piece of evidence describes how a Yemenite girl was adopted at Rambam Hospital, which could confirm long-standing suspicions that Yemenite children who were brought in for medical treatment were taken away from their biological families, who were then informed that their children had died.

Prof. Gali Baruch, a staff doctor at Rambam in the years in question, testified to the investigative committee: "I knew one doctor in Haifa whose family adopted a Yemenite girl at the Rambam Hospital."



Mendel told the committee about another such case: "After I started working at Ram-bam, we moved to Kfar Shmaryahu. We rented a little house and one of the neighbors had an adopted daughter who didn't look like them at all. She was dark-skinned and I was reminded I had seen that ... I don't know too much about them."

In another piece of testimony, Mendel told the committee that he had also conducted medical testing on live Yemenite children in which doctors tried to discover whether they had sickle cell anemia.

"There was a famous guy named Prof. Damascus who was a well-known hematologist. He looked at the Yemenites and thought that they must have African blood. He said, why don't we check? Prof. Fritz Dreyfuss was responsible [for the testing]. He gave instructions, and we carried them out. Dreyfuss was excited and wrote an article in one of the medical journals, theorizing where the Yemenites had come from and where they had moved around the world, all very nice," Mendel said.

When asked what the testing consisted of, Mendel said, "We took blood and a blood count, etc. One time a doctor came who in London had carried out special testing on hemoglobin, Dr. Lyman, and found that everything was incorrect. Everything collapsed, and we had already told the Yemenites they had African blood!"

Mendel said there "was no need" to ask the children's parents for permission to conduct any of the testing. "They took children who died for various reasons and checked their veins, checked their hearts," he said.

When Nahmani-Roth asked him whether the unapproved autopsies had caused problems with the parents who wanted to see their children's bodies, Mendel replied, "I don't think so, since after the autopsies we'd fix up the baby, so they [the parents] could see its face, so it looked undamaged ... but it was completely legal. There were no problems."

The lawyer shot back: "Not legally, but morally, and out of a sense of the parents' feelings. Isn't it possible that consistently, you would conduct autopsies on children and then not show the bodies to their parents?"

Mendel also told the committee that all the testing had been meticulously documented, but that he had heard rumors that "someone destroyed them [the records] seven years later."

## ***Neo-Nazi in Florida Planned to Bomb Synagogues, Nuclear Plants***

*By IsraelNationalNews.com*

A self-proclaimed white supremacist planned to bomb synagogues and nuclear facilities with home-made explosive devices, federal prosecutors said. Brandon Russell, 21, a resident of Pinellas County, Florida, was reportedly the founder of a neo-Nazi group called Atomwaffen. Russell planned attacks on many targets, including nuclear power plants and Jewish houses of prayer, authorities claimed in court documents submitted on Monday.

Prosecutors say Russell, a member of the Florida National Guard, had begun building explosive devices with the expressed intent to "kill civilians and target locations like power lines, nuclear reactors, and synagogues."

Police discovered Russell's bomb-making operation in May, after his former friend and roommate, Devon Arthurs, murdered Jeremy Himmelman, 22, and Andrew Oneschuk, 18, both of whom had been roommates in the same unit. Arthurs reportedly murdered the two after the mocked his recent conversion to Islam. Devons, 18, took three hostages after the murders, and later admitted to killing his two roommates.

When investigators searched the apartment, they uncovered explosive material in Russell's room, along with a framed picture of Timothy McVeigh, the man responsible for the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995; an attack which killed 168.

While prosecutors claimed Monday that Russell posed an immediate threat to the public if released, the rejected their request to deny Russell bail and hold him in custody until the end of his trial. The bail was set at \$200,000.

"I am unable to conclude there is clear and convincing evidence that Defendant represents a threat to any other person and the community should he be released," Judge Thomas McCoun III wrote in response to the prosecution's request.

## ***'Google Bus' Arrives in Jerusalem***

*By IsraelNationalNews.com*

The "Google Escape Bus" has arrived in Jerusalem. It was designed and planned specifically for that purpose and includes an "escape room." Escape rooms are a new trend in which participants work to solve various riddles and



challenges. Unlike a regular escape room, the Google Bus tours Israel, hosting adventure- and challenge-lovers of all ages and occupations. In their fascinating and challenging half-hour visits, participants solve challenges without outside assistance and without their mobile phone.

Jerusalemites will be able to enjoy the Google Bus on June 18-19, at the city's First Station. Hundreds of participants have tried to solve Google's riddles by using one of the company's five free apps: translation, pictures, maps, search, and drive. The bus' purpose is to expose participants to previously unknown features of these apps, and to enlarge their knowledge base in the process.

An area around the Google Bus will offer challenges and puzzles on various topics, as well as prizes for those who succeed.

## ***Monument to Honor Man Who Secretly Reported Auschwitz Atrocities***

*By JTA*

A monument to a non-Jewish Polish resistance fighter Captain Witold Pilecki was recently unveiled in Warsaw. The monument to the man who during World War II allowed himself to be captured and sent to the Nazi's Auschwitz death camp so that he could report on the atrocities there was unveiled in the presence of Pilecki's son and daughter and other descendants, the Associated Press reported.

Hei allowed himself to be captured by German troops in 1940 to provide the anti-Nazi underground and their allies with reports from the camp. Pilecki wrote and smuggled out secret reports from Auschwitz to his superiors before fleeing in April 1943, where he headed to Warsaw and fought in the Polish resistance.

After the war, he went to Italy but returned to Soviet-dominated Poland, where he was executed in 1948 for espionage and treason by the communist authorities. His body was buried in a mass grave.

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June 16, 2017 Vol. 25, No. 117, 2017\_06\_16)

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## *Will U.S. President Donald Trump Make a Peace Breakthrough in 2018?*

By DEBKAFfile

President Donald Trump's goal of generating a rapid improvement of Israel's ties with the Arab world, including the Palestinians in 2018, is not just up to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, but depends largely on how the Trump administration handles the continuing conflict between Qatar and its powerful Arab opponents, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Up until the end of this week, Trump had turned down the efforts of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Defense James Mattis to resolve the Gulf conflict by diplomacy. Instead of heeding them, the president took the advice of the Saudi defense minister, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, who visited Washington this week. Tillerson and Mattis tried to arrange a conference between Saudi Arabia and Qatar to gradually ease the tensions, but Trump torpedoed the initiative by adopting Riyadh's tough line.

A complex situation has arisen in the last few days regarding the US diplomacy for bringing Israel and the Palestinians aboard a peace process. The signs of movement on this score fluctuate between crises and some progress:

The Gaza electricity row falls under the first heading. Some circles contend that the crisis is artificial, since the Palestinian enclave is receiving as much power now as before. What is different is the new, intensified pressure by Egypt on the one hand and the Palestinian Authority on the other in the hope of toppling Hamas rule in the Gaza Strip or squeezing its leaders into toeing their lines.

Neither Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi nor the Palestinian Authority chairman has made headway. Hamas stubbornly refuses Cairo's demand to sever ties with Qatar, while launching a counter-offensive to draw Israel into the dispute by making an empty threat of an "explosion."

Israel responded with a counter-threat on Thursday, June 15: a proposal to transfer one hour's worth of power from West Bank Palestinian towns to boost the supply to Gaza. This maneuver kept the entire electricity issue in the court from it was tossed, Ramallah.

A shower of Israeli concessions is landing on the Palestinians judging by almost daily reports. Some are true and others false. But in sum, they are designed to impress Trump with the Netanyahu government's good will towards his peace initiative and readiness to take steps in its support. In fact, the prime minister is preparing the ground for the forthcoming arrival of Jason Greenblatt, Trump's envoy on the Israel-Palestinian issue.

Secretary of State Tillerson this week informed the Senate that the Palestinian Authority had agreed to halt its payments to the families of Palestinian terrorists who were killed while carrying out attacks against Israelis. Palestinian officials no doubt let this be understood to demonstrate their willingness to go along with Trump's peace initiative, without, however, have any real intention of following through.

Media reports and the findings of Arab research institutes add up to the following predictions on the fate of the negotiations generated by the Trump administration between Israel and the Arab world:

A. Sometime during 2018, a showcase summit will be staged for Trump, Netanyahu and leading Arab rulers like Saudi King Salman, Egyptian President El-Sisi and the UAE's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan.

They will publish a joint declaration signaling the phased normalization of relations with Israel by such preliminary steps as the exchange of economic and business delegations, the opening of trade offices and of Arab skies to Israeli commercial flights. None of these researchers is clear about the Palestinian role in this event.

B. Meanwhile, Israel will make concessions towards improving the lives of ordinary Palestinians, such as removing checkpoints, issuing building permits for Palestinian towns and more jobs in Israel.

C. Israel and the Palestinian Authority will expand their security cooperation. The Palestinians will be persuaded to cease their incitement against the Jewish State and stop payouts to the families of convicted Palestinian terrorists and other security offenders.

D. Direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations will ensue, without preconditions on either side, and expand, with Arab governments sitting in.

E. At the end of a period of some years, this process will mature into a discussion of the core issues of the dispute, Palestinian statehood, future borders, settlements, Jerusalem and refugees. In other words, the year 2018 will see the building of normal relations between Israel and Arab countries to be followed later by the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. President Trump has clearly seized on relations with Riyadh, Cairo and Abu Dhabi as a lever for pushing Israel and the Palestinians into peace talks.

The idea is simple. Israel's improved ties with the Arab world will resonate positively on Israeli-Palestinian relations. That appears to be Trump's formula for peace. But there is a catch. It depends heavily on the US President maintaining good relations with the Arab world in the long term.

## *Muslim Police Officer Heads Israeli Delegation to Poland*

By Israel Hayom

Amid tensions between the Israel Police and Israel's Arab population, a beacon of coexistence emerged from Poland, of all places, on Wednesday, as Deputy Commissioner Jamal Hareh, the highest-ranking Muslim to serve in the police force, headed an Israel Police delegation to Poland. Hakoosh, 59, was promoted in April, and currently oversees a new department established to improve policing in the Arab sector.

"I advise everyone, including local leaders in the Arab sector, to come to Poland," Hakoosh told Israel Hayom. "When you see with your own eyes what happened in the past, you come back home more humane and able to see the other better."

Hakoosh's historic promotion to the rank of deputy commissioner, one rank below the national police chief, was partially the result of recommendations presented by the Or Commission, tasked with reviewing the relationship between the police and an Arab sector, still largely perceived as hostile to the state.

Hakroosh's promotion also corresponded to objectives set forth by Public Security Minister Ilan Eldan and police chief Roni Alsheikh to step up law enforcement in Arab areas, where the population is deeply suspicious of the police and mostly view them with hostility and trepidation.

The Israeli delegation landed in Poland on Sunday. "My mission is to form connections between people on behalf of one another. I specifically call on leaders of the Arab sector to come visit Poland," Hakroosh said.

## Exposé: Female IDF Combat Soldiers are at Health Risk

By IsraelNationalNews.com

The public debate over integrating women into IDF combat roles continues to dominate the public agenda, with the IDF itself exacerbating the trend. An up-to-date military document received by Arutz Sheva reveals a worrisome picture of the physiological costs paid by women in combat roles.

The document was written at the headquarters of the Chief of Staff's Gender Advisor, called "Gender Standards." Distribution of the document in units that serve women in combat roles began about two months ago. It is the most updated official document in this field in the IDF, and is intended to help integrate women in combat roles. However, reading the document presents disquieting realities.

The document sheds light on the way the IDF integrates women into the combat force, despite the serious medical consequences caused to female soldiers, and despite the damage to the operational level of the units in which women are integrated as combatants.

"Women are no different from men in motivation, command ability, leadership, personal abilities, mental and cognitive functioning," the introduction to the document states. The main difference, according to the document, "is body structure and physiology, which is reflected in differences in women's physical ability from that of men in many aspects, the most prominent of which is cardio-strength, strength (especially strength of the upper body), and speed."

Under the heading "Women's Characteristics relative to Men," the Advisor notes that body weight, muscle mass, and muscle strength are significantly lower in women, and therefore, during training as fighters, they suffer far more from "weight-bearing capability" and "muscle-skeletal injuries."

The key word for dealing with these medical problems is "adjustment": Adjustment of the duffel bag to each female soldier's weight, the adjustment of an effort bar so that it is lower for female fighters than men's, and fitting roles to match the physical characteristics of the girl fighters. It amounts to a drastic lowering of combat achievement requirements to accommodate female fighters.

Women in combat have lower bone density and lower aerobic capacity than men, and women have a "higher sweating threshold and a lower sweating rate," the study notes. The implications of this fact, as they appear in the IDF document, are: "higher stress fractures, lower aerobic performance (running and trekking) and increased risk of heat injuries."

The solution established by the army for this reality is: "Adequate nutrition, adequate sleep, strict stress management, and adjustment of job requirements and the training bar." To avoid heat injuries, "follow the safety department's recommendations and on adequate sleep hours."

From the document: Common injuries and medical recommendations: 1. Stress fractures: "Stress fractures are common in both sexes during training, but they are more common in women, and women are more exposed to stress fractures than male fighters, and there are specific types of stress fractures that are very rare in men and are at times observed in women, such as pelvic bone fractures."

The IDF notes that stress fractures do not lead to severe illness or long-term consequences, except for hip fractures that sometimes progress to full fractures with serious consequences.

With this, "Sickness due to stress fractures interferes with training, leads to a great loss of training days among female combat soldiers, and mainly indicates that this is an 'unhealthy framework' with too much stress on the female fighters" (emphasis A7s). The IDF stresses that "the frequency of stress fractures is influenced by many factors, including nutrition (mainly calcium and vitamin D), the stress bar, and the amount of sleep time."

The solution found by the Advisor for this common injury is "seven hours of sleep a night, a balanced diet + stress bar should be observed." Men are given six hours of sleep per

night, and only in the mixed battalions is an additional hour of sleep possible.

2. Lower back pain and knee pain: "Lower back pain and knee pain are a common complaint among male and female fighters. In most cases, this is an unspecified pain that passes with time. In a few cases, investigation raises problems that require lowering the profile and removing the female soldier from combat duties."

The IDF notes that with most female soldiers who dropped out of the training process, low back pain and knee pain were among the factors that prevented the completion of the training. The solution found by the Advisor for this common injury is: "Lowering weight bearing to the minimum required, adjusting heavy duffel bags to female fighters who are able to carry them, and physical training that emphasizes strengthening the core muscles and leg muscles."

3. Anemia: "Anemia is much more common in female fighters than in male fighters. Usually due to lack of iron due to reduced dietary intake and blood loss from the menstrual cycle." The IDF notes that blood loss causes a decrease in aerobic fitness and increases the chance of stress fractures. The solution found by the Advisor for this common injury: "A blood test should be performed to detect anemia and iron deficiency in female fighters at the beginning of recruitment, and treatment accordingly."

4. Urinary tract infection: "While in the field, many female fighters refrain from emptying or complain about lack of sufficient time, combined with poor hygienic conditions, increasing the risk of infection of this kind." The solution found by the Advisor for this health phenomenon: "Maintaining hygiene and providing optimal access to facilities will reduce urinary tract infections."

In the document received by Arutz Sheva, the Advisor provides a unique medical response to female fighters: Keeping appointments for orthopedic specialists and gynecologists for fighters on Sundays and Thursdays in the clinics, increasing physical therapy hours, checking for anemia before starting basic training and supplementing missing nutrients (iron) as necessary, "Unit Disposal Procedure" - in units with female combat soldiers.

Nutrition adjusted to female combat soldiers: In the mess hall at training bases where female fighters are found, "the values of calcium, protein and iron were enhanced by the introduction of high-quality foods" such as cheeses, fish, eggs, and tahini from whole sesame. The diet menu contains 2,300 calories per day on average, with fighters eating an average of 3,250 calories a day.

"The amount of protein in the female fighter's menu should be about 72 grams a day (compared with 91 grams per day in men). The amount of iron required for women is 50% higher than the amount needed for men." In addition, "Female vegetarian fighters must be adequately addressed in terms of alternative protein sources, including the replacement of meat products with canned fish or cheeses, soy products, tofu, and legumes in the mess hall."

Under the heading "Building the Female Fighter" there are instructions for the training process that requires "work according to an approved training program adjusted to the female fighter's effort curve." Also, "in mixed companies, there is a need to work according to different measures of standards for male and female fighters. A training program must be approved with an emphasis on the mixed companies."

In the process of training the command hierarchy, emphasis should be placed on the physiological differences between men and women in the physical aspects of the training. In addition, the female fighters should be allowed seven hours of net sleep, to ensure the presence of logistical details suitable for female fighters such as clothing, menstrual needs, weapons, and more.

The document also states that "lowering weight burdens" should be performed, and specifies, for example, the use of lighter radio equipment, and "four cartridges in the vest instead of six." It was also determined that the maximum weight allowed for females is 33% of body weight compared to 40% for fighting men. "Injuries should be closely monitored in mixed battalions, with the cooperation of the medical corps, physical fitness personnel, and commanders."

### Dry Bones Dept. of Stupid Explanations



Courtesy of Yaakov Kirschen

www.drybones.com