

ISRAEL REPORT

To provide greater exposure to primary Israeli news sources and opinions in order to become better informed on the issues, and to gain a better understanding of the wide range of perspectives that exist in Israeli society and politics.

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REPORT: JORDANIAN MPs DEMAND REVIEW OF PEACE TREATY WITH ISRAEL (Israel Hayom 10/24/18)

Members of the Jordanian Parliament on Tuesday demanded a special session be held to review the 1994 peace treaty with Israel, and some hawkish lawmakers urged King Abdullah to cancel the agreement altogether, local media reported.

The move followed an announcement by Abdullah on Sunday that he has decided to pull out of clauses in the agreement that allow Israel to lease two small areas – Baqura, known as Naharayim in Hebrew, in the northern Jordan Valley, and Ghamr in the south – from the Jordanians for 25 years.

The leases expire next year and the deadline for renewing them is Thursday. Naharayim, a small parcel of land also called the "Isle of Peace," has become the center of recent friction between the longtime peace partners.

The 1994 peace treaty, signed between then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Abdullah's father, King Hussein, is vastly unpopular in Jordan, where pro-Palestinian sentiment is widespread.

Activists and politicians have been vocal against a renewal of the lease clauses, which they say is "humiliating" and perpetuates "Israeli occupation" of Jordanian territory.

Tensions between Israel and Jordan have mounted in recent months over such issues as the contested status of Jerusalem and its holy sites, the stalled Middle East peace talks, and last year's shooting of two Jordanian citizens by an Israeli Embassy guard in Amman, which ignited a diplomatic crisis. Relations thawed after Israel replaced its ambassador.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that his government will enter negotiations with Amman on the issue, but Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said Tuesday that there would be no negotiations with Israel over Jordanian sovereignty in the area.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and anti-Israel activists plan to hold a mass march in the Jordanian capital on Friday, demanding Abdullah nixes the peace deal with Israel.

A mass demonstration was held in Amman last week as well, demanding the same thing. "The people want national honor," the masses chanted.

ISRAEL STRIKES EIGHT HAMAS TARGETS AFTER GAZA ROCKET LANDS IN SOUTH (Ha'aretz 10/25/18)

The Israeli military struck eight Hamas targets in three different military compounds in the Gaza Strip late Wednesday night after a rocket fired from Gaza landed in an unpopulated area.

The targets included a military compound in the northern Gaza Strip, a training base and a weapon production and storage site in the southern Gaza Strip.

Rocket sirens sounded in the southern Israeli regional councils of Merhavim and Eshkol near the Gaza border late on Wednesday evening. Residents in the communities reported hearing explosions.

Media outlets in the Gaza Strip reported that Hamas evacuated its positions out of fear of an Israeli response.

In an official statement, the IDF blamed Hamas responsible for "everything happening in and out of the Gaza Strip." Going on to say that Hamas will "bear the consequences for the terrorist acts carried out against the citizens of Israel."

The Israeli military said earlier on Wednesday that it struck a Hamas outpost in southern Gaza after incendiary balloons were launched from the Strip toward Israel.

NETANYAHU PUSHES FOR FREE TRADE WITH CHINA (JPost, 10/25/18)

Israel wants to finalize a free trade agreement with Beijing within the next year, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan when the two met on Wednesday in Jerusalem.

"China is Israel's second largest trade partner reaching \$10 billion in 2017 and it is already up 30% in 2018. I know for China this isn't the biggest trading partner. But for us it is very important," Netanyahu said.

He first proposed the idea in 2013 and the two governments began talks on the matter in 2016. The discussions are now in an advanced stage. Netanyahu spoke in the Foreign Ministry at the start of the fourth meeting of the China-Israel Joint Committee on Innovation Cooperation, designed to advanced Israeli-Chinese business ties.

"I believe that we can get more from trade and from free-trade because free-trade between us would accelerate joint ventures, would accelerate the recognition of mutual expertise by Israeli companies and their Chinese market partners," Netanyahu said.

It's important to make it easy for Israeli companies to be in China and for Chinese companies to be in Israel, Netanyahu said.

The two countries have talked about visas and increasing direct flights, of which there are already 50 a week, Netanyahu said.

Tourism is also important, although given China's size perhaps it would be best if no more than 1% of the population came to Israel, "I am not sure the country is big enough," Netanyahu joked. "I believe our cooperation has no limits. It extends to the fields of science, entrepreneurship, cultural exchanges, research and more," he said.

"China is the second largest economy in the world, growing rapidly. Israel is among the leading innovation nations in the world. It's a global technological power. The sustained growth of both our countries and both our economies

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requires two things, which the vice president spoke about just an hour ago. It requires innovation and it requires scale," Netanyahu said.

"When we look at our histories, 5,000 years for China, 4,000 years for the Jewish people, we are very proud of our past, very conscious of our traditions and very connected to our homeland but equally eager to develop new approaches," Netanyahu said.

"We have two ancient civilizations that seize the future," he said.

Minister and deputy ministers took part in the meeting. Eight joint agreements were signed in the fields of science and technology, the life sciences, innovation, digital health and agriculture. The Innovation Conference of 2018-2021 action plan was also signed. The committee has met in Jerusalem and Beijing.

Wang said that "cooperation" between the two countries needs to be taken to a new level. China is at a crucial stage of transition from quantitative to quality growth, Wang said adding that tighter economic ties with Israel is part of the desire for quality growth.

NETANYAHU: FORMER LIKUD MINISTER SEEKS TO OVERTHROW ME (YNet, 10/24/18)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made severe accusation on Wednesday, claiming a former minister from the Likud party, which he heads, is plotting to overthrow him after the Likud wins the 2019 elections.

While the former official was not named, he is believed to be former Interior Minister Gideon Sa'ar.

"It has come to my knowledge over the past few weeks that a former Likud minister is speaking with coalition members in an attempt to undermine me.

"He wants me to lead the Likud to an overwhelming victory in the upcoming elections, and then see to that I'm no longer the prime minister, against the will of the Likud voters, against the will of the public and against democracy," Netanyahu lashed out.

"I travel across the country and see the huge support me and my wife receive. Support in a magnitude I haven't witnessed since I entered politics.

"Therefore I know this plot doesn't stand a chance because the public will not allow it to realize. However, it did expose a loophole in the law and we will figure out how to handle it," he went on to say.

Earlier, Netanyahu's close associates accused a former senior Likud party member—also believed to be Sa'ar— of attempting to convince President Reuven Rivlin not to task him with creating the government after the next elections because of "personal score settling."

Sa'ar vehemently denied the allegations made against him. "Normally, I don't comment on delusional claims, particularly when there's no one willing to stand behind these claims and make them openly. But since my name came up, I want to say in the clearest manner: There is no basis for the reports. They're completely farfetched. I'm bothered by the thought there is someone who whispers such nonsense in the prime minister's ear," Sa'ar said.

The President's Residence dismissed the claims as "paranoia that is not based on a concrete move or thought that happened in reality."

In response, coalition Chairman MK David Amsalem (Likud) said he intends to submit a bill proposal that would require the president to task the leader of the party with the largest number of seats in the Knesset with the construction of the government.

At present, Basic Law: The Government gives the president the authority to task any MK who agrees to it with the formulation of the government.

Amsalem seeks to change the law so the president would only be able to task the "head of the party" or "the candidate," thus ensuring no other MK in the winning party can put together the new government.

ISRAELIS WIN GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE AT 2018 YOUTH OLYMPICS (Israel21c, 10/24/18)

Three Israeli teens came home with medals from the 2018 Youth Olympic Games held in Buenos Aires earlier this month.

On the first day of the 12-day event, October 6, 15-year-old swimmer Anastasya Gorbenko won a gold medal in the women's 200-meter individual medley. She set a new Israeli record, completing the race in 2:12.88.

On October 15, acrobatic gymnasts Yonatan Fridman, 15, and Noa Kazado Yakar, 14, won the silver medal in the mixed-pair category.

And on October 16, 18-year-old swimmer Denis Loktev won the bronze medal in the men's 200-meter freestyle.

ISRAEL AEROSPACE WINS \$777 MILLION INDIAN DEFENSE CONTRACT (Israel Hayom, 10/24/18)

Israel Aerospace Industries has won an additional \$777 million contract to supply long-range, surface-to-air missile defense systems to seven ships in the Indian navy, the company said on Wednesday.

The system is part of the Barak 8 family of air defense systems and has long-range water and land engagement capabilities allowing it to intercept all types of aerial targets, such as subsonic and supersonic missiles, fighter aircraft, maritime patrolling aircraft, helicopters, and sea-skimming missiles.

According to IAI, the Barak 8 interceptor can engage multiple targets simultaneously, "in severe saturation scenarios" and independent of the weather, making it one of the most advanced projectiles of its kind.

The system was developed by the IAI in collaboration with Israel's Defense Ministry, India's Defense Research and Development Organization, the navies of both countries, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and local industries in India and Israel.

With this deal, sales of Barak 8 over the past few years total over \$6 billion, IAI said.

"IAI's partnership with India dates back many years and has culminated in joint system development and production," IAI CEO Nimrod Sheffer said.

"India is a major market for IAI and we plan to reinforce our positioning in India, also in view of increasing competition.

"Israel Aerospace Industries will continue to develop the company's business strategy and its core growth engines, like Barak 8, alongside the development of new air defense systems," he said.

IAI Executive VP Boaz Levy said, "We thank our partners in India for choosing the IAI. This project reflects the close technological cooperation between Israel and India and ... is another badge of honor to the capabilities of this advanced weapon system, which is the company's main growth engine."

ISRAEL MARKS 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST DIPLOMATIC OUTPOST (YNet, 10/23/18)

Israel marked the 70th anniversary of its first diplomatic mission as a new nation Tuesday with a re-enactment in the city that hosted the outpost—Warsaw, Poland.

Israeli Ambassador Anna Azari, flanked by other diplomats, hung the Israeli flag from a balcony of the historic Bristol Hotel in central Warsaw.

Just as in 1948, a small crowd on the street below applauded and sang the Israeli national anthem.

Israel chose the Bristol as the seat for its mission because the hotel was one of the few buildings that had not been destroyed by Germany during World War II. The Israeli Embassy in Poland is in a leafy residential neighborhood.

The modern state of Israel was created in 1948, and many of its early leaders and settlers were Jews from Poland—the heartland of European Jewry before the war.

During the ceremony, embassy officials showed a brief video of the 1948 ceremony establishing the mission. One key difference: while all the diplomats then were men, the ambassador and many other Israeli diplomats in Warsaw today are women.

Holocaust survivor Marian Kalwary attended Tuesday's reenactment of an event he witnessed as an 18-year-old at his mother's urging.

The Star of David on the Israeli flag he saw raised with pride that day was the

same symbol that Warsaw's Jews were forced to wear a few years earlier while confined to a ghetto a few blocks away and sent to death camps by Nazi German forces.

Kalwary said his mother was very moved by the ceremony recognizing Israel's place on the world stage, describing it as a moment he could never forget.

The anniversary re-enactment follows efforts by Poland and Israel to repair their typically strong ties after a Polish law that sought to regulate what could be said publicly about the Holocaust caused tension early this year. A presidential adviser read out a letter of greeting from President Andrzej Duda on Tuesday.

EISENKOT: SOMEDAY THE IDF WILL BE UNDER ONE CYBER COMMAND (JPost, 10/24/18)

Someday the IDF will unite its cyberoffense, cyberdefense and cyber collection abilities under one cyber command as the US has done, IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Gadi Eisenkot said on Wednesday.

Eisenkot was speaking from the Academic Center for Law and Science in Hod Hasharon's cyber conference being held jointly with the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), marking the publishing of a major book on cyber regulation by INSS fellow Col. (res.) Gabi Siboni. Eisenkot appeared to imply some regret that he was unable to make the change.

Even before Eisenkot became chief of staff, there was a major internal debate within the IDF about whether to unite or keep separate the key cyber functions – and the “uniters” seemed to have the advantage.

However, after an extensive process of consultation and negotiation, Eisenkot decided to allow the newer cyberoffense and collection units within IDF intelligence to remain separate from the traditional cyber and technological defense units.

His speech on Wednesday indicated that he personally believed there should be one cyber command like in the US, but that presently the conditions were not ripe for that, either because of the conceptual or technological disagreements between the disparate cyber units.

Earlier, Israel National Cyber Directorate Chief Yigal Unna said that until a disaster of global proportions occurs, the world will not succeed in its efforts to have a united cyber defense. This means that “the chaotic race for data will continue at a crazy pace,” he said.

Unna asked: “What can we do to confuse cyberhackers? We need to keep changing fast in an adversarial artificial intelligence cyber arms race, adding that “a main critical infrastructure we need to defend is public confidence.”

Giving examples of disastrous fake news, including when hackers injected a fake story onto the Associated Press news feed that then-president Obama was hurt by a bomb in the White House, he said that the phenomenon needed to be fought on a range of levels.

In addition, he said that his authority would continue to invest in Israel's cyber ecosystem – including education, science and development – as a critical long-term way of ensuring Israel can keep up with the cyber arms race.

High Court vice president Hanan Melcer said that cyber has changed the basic set up of rights debates which usually balance the government versus its citizens.

Melcer said that social media and other data holders are now a third party in this balance, adding that there were some circumstances where the government, following legal rules, might even need to hack into a private company to gain access to a terrorist's phone when the company refuses and a full litigation process would take too long.

He also said that any new cyber regulation should be very careful about any new cyber powers it gives to the private sector due to the high risk of some private companies abusing the authority.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett told the conference that Israel must tailor its cyberdefense efforts wisely to the level of risk involved.

Giving Israel's profiling at airport security as an example, he said such an

approach would ensure that normal businesses continued to function while providing security.

A number of speakers debated the suggestions in Siboni's book about incentivizing private companies to increase cyberdefense with tax incentives.

Some believed that negative incentives connected to the consequences of lax defense was a better idea, while others said there needed to be more thought about defending individuals and not just companies.

All of the speakers said that Siboni's book had provoked discussion over cyber regulation to a new and necessary level of detail.

CAN POSITIVE EMOTIONS SHRINK CANCER TUMORS? (Israel21c, 10/23/18)

Artificially activating the “reward system” in the brains of mice with two types of cancer led to a dramatic reduction in the size of their tumors, according to authors of a study conducted at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

“The relationship between a person's emotional state and cancer has been demonstrated in the past, but mainly in relation to negative feelings such as stress and depression and without a physiological map of the action mechanism,” said Assoc. Prof. Asya Rolls of the Technion Rappaport Faculty of Medicine, who supervised the study.

“Several researchers, for example Prof. David Spiegel of the Stanford University School of Medicine, showed that an improvement in the patient's emotional state may affect the course of the disease, but it was not clear how this happened. We are now presenting a physiological model that can explain at least part of this effect,” she said.

The results were published in the journal *Nature Communications* by Rolls along with doctoral students Tamar Ben-Shaan and Maya Schiller, as well as Hilla Azulay-Debby, Ben Korin, Nadia Boshnak, Tamar Koren, Maria Krot, Jivan Shakya and Michal A. Rahat, and Technion Asst. Prof. Fahed Hakim, medical director of the Scottish EMMS Hospital in Nazareth.

According to Hakim, “Understanding the brain's influence on the immune system and its ability to fight cancer will enable us to use this mechanism in medical treatments. Different people react differently, and we'll be able to take advantage of this tremendous potential for healing only if we gain a thorough understanding of the mechanisms.”

The authors emphasized that the study is preclinical and that they tested only two cancer models (melanoma and lung cancer) and only two developmental aspects – tumor volume and weight.

However, this breakthrough may allow doctors to realize the physiological role the patients' mental state plays in the development of malignant diseases. By artificially activating different parts of the brain, in the future it might be possible to encourage the immune system to block development of cancerous tumors more effectively.

Rolls explained that although the immune system has been proven able to fight cancer effectively if given the right tools, “the immune cells' involvement in cancerous processes is a double-edged sword, because certain components in these cells support tumor growth. This is done by blocking the immune response and creating an environment that is beneficial to growth.”

Rolls has been studying the brain's effect on the immune system for several years. In a study she published in 2016 in *Nature Medicine*, she showed how the immune system can be stimulated to work more effectively by manipulating the brain's reward system – which operates in positive emotional states and in anticipation of the positive.

The main breakthrough in the present study is the dramatic contraction of cancerous tumors in response to the activation of the brain's reward system.

Rolls cautioned, however, that the findings are not necessarily applicable to all types of cancer and that the experiments have not been done on humans at this point.

The artificial manipulation that worked on mice “most probably works differently” in humans, she said, “especially because other systems are also involved. For example, stress may counteract these reward system effects.”

Rolls said it's not as simple as thinking positively to get better. "People are very different in their reactions, and until we fully understand how this works, it merely offers a potential."

ON ISRAEL, PLEASE DON'T BLOW IT, MR PRESIDENT (Jack Engelhard, Arutz Sheva, 10/25/18)

This is not a good time, Mr. President, to talk about cutting Israel in half, especially now that Saudi Arabia is proving itself a burdensome ally...which leaves us only Israel to protect our interests in the Middle East. Only from the Israelis do we expect, and receive, a strong, reliable presence in a chaotic region and an alliance based on shared goodwill and values.

There is no one else within a thousand miles that America can count on, outside of Israel.

So what in the world is going on...I mean this talk, these hints being scattered, that the Israelis will have to pay "a very high price" because you took Jerusalem "off the table."

The Israelis haven't paid enough? They pay the "very high price" every day to hold the front line against worldwide Islamic expansion as practiced through Palestinian Arab terrorism.

That was last May, at a rally in West Virginia, when you dropped that first shoe. I did a double-take when I heard that, as if maybe I had tuned into the Obama channel.

Because that did not sound like a Donald Trump rally. (For a minute, I thought it was the old days, when you'd be schmoozing with pals at the 2nd Ave Deli, and the time you introduced me as, "Hey, a hand for this guy who wrote the second greatest book 'Indecent Proposal.'" Only your own "The Art of the Deal," published a year earlier, was "greater.")

The Donald Trump that I know, and whom I have fully supported from day one, MAGA all the way, would never put the Israelis in a spot like that...unless.

Please, you tell me, Mr. President, because we've been friends for a long time, speaking personally and of patriotic Americans who support a sovereign Israel. What gives?

I am talking Conservatives, like myself, who got you over the finish line and to this moment are thrilled with your performance for our country, America.

We then waited for you to come through on Jerusalem. You did. That took guts. You made the right choice and so did we, choosing you.

Finally, we said, we have a president who fully understands that the United States and Israel are part of the same team...except that the Israelis play our road and away games.

Out there, there is no second place. Win, or else. Or less you're done. "It's a nasty part of the world," you remarked moments ago.

Your words and actions illustrated your knowledge of Israel's lonesome position. You knew who was David. You knew who was Goliath.

You knew – or so it appeared – that the Israelis owe the insatiable Palestinian Arabs, nothing.

But now what? Roundabouts, you are taking it all back?

Please, let there be no regrets that we celebrated you in haste.

Have we lost you? Did someone get to you? That is impossible to believe.

Yet here it came again, a message that should be fake news, but happens to be true since it came from your envoy to Israel Jason Greenblatt.

He has you saying, Mr. President, that it is time to "unite the territories between Gaza and the West Bank."

Who came up with that one?

That sounded to me, on first reading, as uniting the **TERRORISTS** of Hamas and the PLO/Fatah, caravans of Islamic terrorists, one and all.

That cannot be part of your peace plan, Mr. President, chopping the Jewish State down the middle to provide more elbow room for that murderous crowd.

On top of that, there's the matter of Iran supplying Hezbollah with state-of-the-art rockets and missiles to finish the Jewish State – as is their dream of "Death to Israel."

"Death to America" as well from these mullahs and their Hamas/PLO charmers.

If anything, this is the time to strengthen the Jewish State, if only for America's security, and no time to talk about "getting tough on Netanyahu."

We are with you. Domestically and overseas, you have proven yourself a winner. Please don't blow this one, Mr. President.

JORDAN DESERVES A STRONG RESPONSE (Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Israel Hayom, 10/24/18)

Jordan's King Abdullah announced on Sunday that he initiated and passed a decision not to continue leasing land in the Arava and at Naharayim to Israel – two clauses of the 1994 peace treaty between the two countries. The cancellation was presented by the king himself, and it's clear the purpose of the move was to dampen the peace accord with Israel.

In response to the decision, Shimon Sheves, director general of the Prime Minister's Office under then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said the lease agreement was signed for 25 years in the hope that it would be upgraded upon its expiration, not downgraded. The king's decision, which was unveiled on the 23rd anniversary of Rabin's assassination, proves that agreements between states, and particularly concessions on sovereignty, must not be based on hopes that appear realistic at the time of the signing but are susceptible to erosion over time.

In this case, the vagaries of time included, among other things, then-King Hussein appointing his son Abdullah as the new crown prince and heir apparent, replacing his brother, Hassan, who supported the accord. The Arab Spring and the emergence of the Islamic State group in the arena can also be counted. Regarding ISIS, the group's primary enemy is the Hashemite king, who is considered in the religious hierarchy the direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and therefore precedes the leader of ISIS – who anointed himself caliph, the heir to the prophet.

But with all due respect and understanding to the king's problems, he assumes that cooperation between Israel and his regime is assured regardless and that he can therefore inflict a modicum of damage to its citizens (in this case the farmers of the Arava region), without a response from Israel.

The Israeli government now has a choice between trying to appease the king at its own expense and an aggressive response that will preserve the letter of the accord in the driest sense.

Today, Jordan receives from Israel far more than what the accord stipulates. Israel provides these things because it wants to strengthen the relations, which Rabin was so hopeful about and which led him to sign the temporary lease, according to Sheves.

In the field of water, for example, the accord stipulates that Israel must provide Jordan 50 million cubic meters of water a year, while in actuality it provides almost twice that amount yearly. The difference can be drastically reduced if the Sea of Galilee continues to dwindle beyond all the predefined emergency levels. The plunging water level is critical; natural water aquifers could be contaminated. Once they are salinized, it won't be possible to reverse the process. Salinization of the Sea of Galilee will be a hydrologic catastrophe for us and Jordan alike.

The government has to be proactive and examine the process of supplying more than the agreed-upon amount of water to Jordan in order to avoid this hydrologic disaster. There's no question that a serious assessment of this sort will quell the king's enthusiasm about adhering to the strict letter of the accord while abandoning the hopes upon which it was predicated.

According to the current predominant paradigm in Israel, a Hashemite king presiding over a dictatorship is preferable to a representative government. This paradigm or conception rather, motivated Israel in September 1970 to intervene on behalf of the Hashemite rulers and help them stave off a coup attempt by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. Perhaps the time has come to examine whether this conception endangers us in a changing Middle East.