



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending April 22, 2016

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

U.S. Army tests Iron Dome interceptor missile against drones

The U.S. Army this week carried out a first successful trial of an interceptor air-defense missile made by Israeli defense company Rafael. According to [The Jerusalem Post](#), Rafael Advanced Defense Systems said the U.S. Army fired the Tamir interceptor, which is used by Iron Dome batteries in Israel to shoot down Gazan rockets, at a target drone. "This is the first time that a trial of the Iron Dome interceptor against a drone target was held on U.S. soil," the company stated. The Tamir, a multi-mission interceptor, struck and destroyed its target, Rafael added. Lt.-Col. Michael Fitzgerald, who heads the interceptor program in the U.S. Army, said the successful trial was part of a program examining several air-defense options. The trial was conducted with the cooperation of major U.S. defense contractor Raytheon. "Ahead of the launch, special adaptations were made to the Iron Dome interceptor, so that it fits the launcher," Rafael added.

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

Innovative sensors uncover Hamas tunnel into Israel

A new system of detectors has discovered an assault tunnel beneath the Israel-Gaza border fence. Using an innovative system of sensors, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has uncovered an assault tunnel dug by Hamas from the center of the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory. 30 meters deep, the tunnel cut several dozen meters beyond the border fence into Israel close to villages near the southern Gaza strip. After the tunnel was found, it was destroyed. According to [Globes](#), defense sources believe that the tunnel would have been used by Hamas in future hostilities with Israel, as was the case in the 2006 abduction of IDF soldier Gilad Shalit, or perhaps as part of a terror attack targeting local villages. It is believed that the tunnel was dug after Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014, in which the IDF discovered and destroyed 32 such assault tunnels dug into Israel. The latest tunnel was uncovered by an alert from an innovative technological system developed to warn that tunnels have been found along the border with Gaza and along other borders. The new system was first deployed more than a year ago and the tunnel found today using the innovative technology was the first such tunnel discovered since Operation Protective Edge.

Jerusalem bus bombing work of Hamas operative, police say

A Hamas operative was responsible for Monday's terror bombing of a bus in Jerusalem that wounded nearly two dozen people, Israeli police said Thursday. According to [CNN](#), the suspect, Abdel Hamid Abu Srour, 19, died of his injuries Wednesday evening after he was critically wounded in the attack. "Israel police and the IDF, 24 hours after the attack, arrested a number of suspects who are Hamas operatives in the Bethlehem area who helped plan the operation and execute it," said a statement from police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld. Hamas said

Wednesday in a statement on Hamas-run al-Aqsa TV and on the Hamas Twitter account that the bombing was conducted by a member of its military wing, Izzedine al Qassam. But the organization stopped short of a full claim of responsibility. The Hamas statement referred to Abu Srour, a resident of the Aida refugee camp near Bethlehem, as "our son."

IRAN

U.S. Supreme Court: \$2B to Families of Iranian-backed Terror Victims

On April 20, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that nearly \$2 billion in frozen assets held by Iran's Central Bank—located in a Citibank trust account in New York—must be turned over to the families of American victims of Iranian terrorism. The 6-2 ruling upheld a key provision in the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012, which stated that the funds should go toward satisfying a \$2.65 billion judgment won by the families against Iran in U.S. federal court in 2007. "[The law] provides a new standard clarifying that, if Iran owns certain assets, the victims of Iran-sponsored terrorist attacks will be permitted to execute against those assets," wrote Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in the ruling. "Applying laws implementing Congress' policy judgments, with fidelity to those judgments, are commonplace for the Judiciary." Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and co-author of the 2012 provision, praised the decision. "Today is a huge victory for the victims of Iranian terror, for their families and for justice. Iran has long evaded justice for its role in some of the most horrific terror attacks perpetrated against America, but today that has changed," said Rep. Ros-Lehtinen. Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ), who spearheaded the Senate legislation, also released a statement on the Supreme Court ruling. "By confirming Congress' prerogative to enact legislation that provides for appropriate and fair compensation to victims of Iranian terrorism, the Supreme Court has also delivered a clear warning to Iran: So long as Iran continues its support for terrorism, its regime will be held liable for its actions," said Sen. Menendez. Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-WI) said that the Supreme Court made the "right decision" to provide financial assets to the victims' families.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

A year after quake, Israelis still helping Nepal recover

April 25, 2015, an earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale devastated Nepal. Just over two weeks later, the country was rattled again by a magnitude 7.3 quake centered northeast of Kathmandu. Nearly 9,000 people were killed, 22,000 injured and hundreds of thousands of homes destroyed or damaged in the twin quakes. As with most international disasters, Israel was among the first countries to send humanitarian aid in many forms. The lifesaving and rehabilitation activities of the Israeli government, military and various NGOs were so significant that the Nepalese came to see Israel as a source of inspiration. A year later, Israeli nonprofits Tevel b'Tzedek (The Earth in Justice) and IsraAID are still on the scene helping Nepali villagers get back on their feet, and expect to be there for some time to come. According to [Israel21c](#), currently, a variety of Tevel recovery programs in agriculture, education, disaster-risk reduction, resilience, crisis intervention and income generation are benefiting some 25,000 villagers in six of Nepal's most impoverished regions.