



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending February 26, 2016

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Largest U.S.-Israel Military Exercise Held

The IDF and U.S. EUCOM (United States European Command) combined exercise, “Juniper Cobra 16,” whose goal is to improve the cooperation and coordination between the forces and to improve readiness for defense from ballistic missiles, officially began Sunday. According to the [Israeli Air Force \(IAF\)](#), during the course of the exercise, over 1,700 soldiers from the U.S. will participate together with the IDF in addressing computer simulated challenges that Israel could face. The JC (Juniper Cobra) exercise which has been held biennially since 2001 is a large scale training exercise which is considered the peak of the U.S. Armed Forces and Israeli Aerial Defense Division's cooperative relations. Throughout the exercise, Americans and Israelis together, shoulder to shoulder will simulate war, exercise, debrief and draw conclusions. The exercise, which commenced with a celebratory ceremony, will simulate a week of war, and every Aerial Defense Systems will take part Iron Dome, Patriot, David's Sling and Arrow. “In this exercise, you can see the full architecture that builds the active defense world. This exercise is a significant mile-stone in the strategic relationship between the two countries, a security alliance unmatched by any other country in the world,” exclaimed Brig.-Gen. Zvika Haimovich, Aerial Defense Division Commander. General Mark Loeben, Director of Exercises and Assessments at Headquarters said, “Support for Israel's defense has been an integral part of U.S. policy in the region for decades and this exercise has, and will, continue to directly support that policy.”

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

Update: Palestinian and Arab Terrorism against Israel

Palestinian and Arab terrorist attacks against Israel have left at least 30 dead and over 300 wounded. Below is a timeline of major attacks since February 21, 2016.

Feb. 24: A knife-wielding Palestinian man charged at an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) reserve officer at the Gush Etzion junction in the West Bank. In the attempt to subdue the Palestinian terrorist, the Israeli officer was hit by gunfire and later died of his wounds. The Palestinian attacker was shot and wounded.

Feb. 21: Palestinians attempted three stabbing attacks in the West Bank. A knife-wielding Palestinian was arrested at the Tapuah Junction. Near Hebron, a Palestinian was arrested after he attempted to stab IDF soldiers. Near Nablus, a Palestinian was shot and killed as he tried to stab IDF soldiers.

IRAN

Another American citizen arrested in Iran

An elderly U.S. citizen whose son was arrested in Iran last fall has also been detained in Tehran, his family said Wednesday, reports [The Washington Post](#). Baquer Namazi, 80, was arrested Monday evening and apparently taken to Tehran's Evin prison, according to a Facebook posting by his wife, Effie. Their son, Siamak, an Iranian American businessman based in Dubai, has been held by Iranian security authorities since October. It is not clear what crime he is accused of committing, and no charges in his case have been announced. In an open Facebook message to friends and relatives, Effie Namazi wrote that neither she nor a family lawyer has been able to get more information about the circumstances behind her husband's arrest. "Now both my innocent son Siamak and my Baquer are in prison for no reason," she wrote. "This is a nightmare I can't describe."

Gay Iranian poet said to seek asylum in Israel

Iranian poet Payam Feili's three month visa to Israel is coming to an end, and he now seeks asylum in the country he says he "fell in love" with. According to a report in [The Times of Israel](#), the openly-gay Feili is requesting asylum from Israeli authorities due to the danger posed to his life if he were to ever return to Iran. Feili fled his native Iran last year because of the persecution he faced over his sexuality. The 30-year-old poet stands out not only because of his arrival in a country so at odds with his own, but because of his professed adoration for the state some Iranian leaders have dubbed a cancer and have called to be wiped off the map. Homosexuality is a taboo topic in Iran, where gays and lesbians can face lashings or death sentences if convicted. Human rights groups estimate that over 4,000 gays have been executed since the Islamic Revolution. Famously, former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told a crowd at New York's Columbia University in 2007 that "in Iran, we don't have homosexuals like in your country."

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli-developed 'nano-nose' can sniff out bombs, drugs

An Israeli-developed "nano-nose" could help homeland security officers sniff out explosives—as well as drugs, large amounts of cash, and even small metal items that are banned from planes. "And we do it with far less false positives than dogs or other technologies that are being used now to analyze the odor of explosives and other items," said Matan Barami, chief chemist at Israeli nanotech start-up Tracense. Although most people don't realize it, "smell" is just a manifestation of specific molecules, with each smell giving off its own specific chemical qualities. Detecting an odor, thus, is just a matter of figuring out which molecules are being "smelled"—no biggie for modern science, with several systems in use to do just that, using analytical chemistry-based equipment. Dogs have a much better record than most "artificial noses," but deploying them on a wide basis makes people uncomfortable, "and you can't have a dog sniff every person or every piece of luggage." With a Tracense device unobtrusively stationed at the appropriate place in the airport, people won't even know they are being inspected, Barami continued. According to [The Times of Israel](#), the system should be available commercially "soon," said Barami. "We are putting the finishing touches on our odor profile library, and I imagine it will be very popular, considering that we are able to do something that no one else can."