



# Rabbinic Recap

The week ending September 9, 2016

## ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

### **Netanyahu and Abbas agree 'in principle' to meet, Russia says**

The Russian foreign ministry on Thursday said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and PA President Mahmoud Abbas had agreed "in principle" to meet in Moscow. According to [The Times of Israel](#), the two leaders were willing to sit down for a face-to-face meeting in a bid to revive peace talks. According to ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova, Moscow has heard from the offices of Abbas and Netanyahu that the two agreed to meet in the Russian capital, though it's not clear when that will happen. "The most important thing is to pick the right timing," Zakharova told reporters. "Intensive contacts on this are ongoing." There was no immediate response from the Prime Minister's Office in Israel or officials in the PA. But a source close to the prime minister told the Walla news website that Netanyahu was willing to meet Abbas "anytime, anywhere, on the condition that there are no preconditions." The PA leader's top political adviser said Wednesday Abbas had forgone his long-held preconditions and was planning in earnest to meet Netanyahu in Moscow this Friday, but the summit was spiked by Israel. While in Poland on Tuesday, Abbas declared he was willing to meet Netanyahu in Moscow, though he did not explicitly mention the preconditions in his statement. The last substantial public meeting between Abbas and Netanyahu is thought to have been held in 2010, though there have been unconfirmed reports of secret meetings since then.

### **Building starts on underground Gaza barrier**

Residents of the Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council will be able to look out their windows and watch the IDF work on a new project meant to restore the feeling of security to the residents of the south. The IDF has been working on a project called "barrier," which will see a giant above and underground wall completely encircle the Gaza Strip. The barrier, which is estimated to cost approximately NIS 2 billion, will reach several stories underground, and will also be several stories above ground. This barrier will defend against Hamas' cross-border attack tunnels. IDF Chief of Staff Gadi Eizencott has called the project the "largest project" ever carried out in the history of the IDF. According to [Ynet](#), the residents of the south are following the project closely, knowing that this is the most ideal solution to prevent against the terror tunnels.

## IRAN

### **Updated: Iranian Boats Harass Another U.S. Navy Patrol Coastal Ship In Persian Gulf**

A U.S. Navy patrol coastal ship was harassed by seven Iranian vessels on Sunday and narrowly avoided colliding with one, in the latest in a string of incidents in the Persian Gulf. Seven Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy (IRGCN) fast in-shore attack craft (FIAC) approached USS Firebolt (PC-10) while it was operating in international waters in the central Persian Gulf on Sept. 4, a defense official told [U.S. Naval Institute News](#). Three of the FIACs maneuvered close to Firebolt, mirroring the ship's course and speed at a distance of about 500 yards for about eight

minutes before leaving. Another FIAC then sped towards Firebolt and stopped directly in front of the ship, causing the Firebolt crew to maneuver to avoid a collision. The U.S. ship and Iranian FIAC came within 100 yards of one another, the defense official said. U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) called the interaction unsafe and unprofessional due to the lack of communication and harassment at close range, which increases the chance of collision, the defense official said. "The Iranian's unsafe maneuvers near a United States ship operating in accordance with international law while transiting in international waters created a dangerous, harassing situation that could have led to further escalation including additional defensive measures by Firebolt," the official told USNI News. "This type of incident would have led NAVCENT to recommend that the State Department deliver a diplomatic message of protest if this interaction had been with a country with which the United States had an official diplomatic relationship."

## ISRAEL AND THE WORLD

### **Netanyahu says Netherlands, Israel to improve water, gas supply to Gaza**

The Dutch government will assist Israel in improving water and gas supplies to energy-strapped Gaza, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday during a visit to the Netherlands. Netanyahu said that while his government is in a conflict with "terrorists" in the occupied territories, Israel still wishes to improve the quality of life for most people living there. "We have no battle, no qualms with the people of Gaza", he said. "The first step is to improve the supply of energy and water to Gaza, including laying a gas pipeline." He said he was publicly committing to making it happen. A gas pipeline from Israel could allow Gaza's power plant to double generation from around 200MW at present. According to [Reuters](#), water supplies to Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank have long been a point of tension between the neighbors, with the Palestinians saying Israel prevents them from accessing adequate water at an affordable price. Netanyahu did not elaborate on details of the gas pipeline plan, saying only the Dutch, with their long history of water management, would help.

## ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

### **Grocery shopping gets a high-tech makeover**

After serving as a cybersecurity officer in the IDF and founding a few startups, Yair Cleper, a 28-year-old computer engineer with a Technion degree, returned to his childhood supermarket a couple of years ago and saw that nothing had changed despite the passing of two decades. So he and some friends from army tech units started Supersmart to revolutionize supermarket checkout. They shopped the idea around to Israeli supermarket chains and won funding from Osher Ad, which introduced the system in its Tel Aviv branch two months ago following a trial at other locations. The startup, based in Rosh Ha'ayin, uses cutting-edge technologies such as deep-learning algorithms, sensors and image processing to build a two-part system: a smartphone app (iOS and Android) that shoppers use to scan product barcodes before placing items into their cart; and a standalone unit under which shoppers pass their full cart to verify the purchase (and ensure no additional items are hiding inside on purpose or by accident) and authorize payment through a mobile platform. The second part of the process takes less than 30 seconds, Cleper tells [ISRAEL21c](#), which means no more squirmy kids on boring checkout lines.