



Rabbinic Recap

The week of November 24, 2017

SYRIA

Filmed crossing into Israel with sick kid, mother says all Syrians want to come

In unprecedented footage, the IDF allowed an Israeli TV crew to film it opening the border gates to Syria, and allowing in a group of mothers and their children, who were then transported to an Israeli hospital for medical treatment, as [reported by the Times of Israel](#). The footage, broadcast on Sunday night by Hadashot News (formerly Channel 2), also included interviews with several of the Syrian mothers, who expressed profound appreciation to Israel for the medical assistance. Israel, which also maintains a field hospital on the border and has sent humanitarian aid to Syria, has treated 3,000 Syrians since it began offering medical assistance in the course of the civil war across the border, of whom almost 1,000 were children with chronic conditions. "The rationale" behind the outreach "is clear," the report noted: "A humanitarian imperative alongside a security need. Someone whose family or friend is given medical treatment in Israel will presumably change his attitude to the enemy." "It has become unremarkable" for Syrian civilians to come to Israel for treatment," one mother told the TV interviewer. "Everyone wants to come here. Adults too; not just the children." None of the faces of the Syrians were shown in the report, since the mothers and children will return to Syria when doing so is medically possible, and could face deadly repercussions if their treatment in Israel were to become known. The TV report said 21 mothers and 23 children crossed the border on the recent night when the camera crew was allowed to film, and that the cases for treatment were selected by doctors in Syria. Several of the children were suffering with shrapnel wounds. One had severe asthma, for which his mother said no effective treatment was available in Syria... "This must be very strange for them," an IDF officer named Gil Giladi said at the border. "They're dealing with 'the enemy.'" Speaking to the TV reporter, one Syrian mother said that, in the past, "Israel was thought of as the enemy... Now that you are helping us, most [on the Syrian side of the Golan] are with you. They love Israel. They see the true face... the reality."

IRAN

U.S. Treasury Sanctions 'Large-Scale' Iran Counterfeiting Ring

The [Wall Street Journal notes](#) that the Trump administration on Monday imposed sanctions on what the Treasury Department describes as a "large-scale" Iranian counterfeiting ring that it says is run by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and potentially worth hundreds of millions of dollars. The action against the network affiliated with the IRGC, an elite military wing that has taken over swaths of the Iranian economy, is part of a broader strategy by the administration of President Donald Trump to escalate sanctions pressure on Tehran. Monday's designations also are likely to bolster Washington's case in Europe for governments to strengthen their own sanction regimes against Tehran amid growing tensions with allies over the Trump

administration's criticism of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran. Treasury officials said the network used deceptive means to bypass European export-control restrictions, buying advanced equipment and materials to print counterfeit Yemeni bank notes potentially worth hundreds of millions of dollars for the IRGC and the group's overseas branch, the Quds Force. "This scheme exposes the deep levels of deception the IRGC-Quds Force is willing to employ against companies in Europe, governments in the Gulf, and the rest of the world to support its destabilizing activities," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said. "Counterfeiting strikes at the heart of the international financial system, and the fact that elements of the government of Iran are involved in this behavior is completely unacceptable." Officials at Iran's United Nations mission didn't respond to a request for comment.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Mexico says it will henceforth vote with Israel in international bodies

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu tweeted a message of gratitude to Mexico following its announcement that it would not vote against the Jewish state in upcoming votes at the United Nations, the [Times of Israel reported](#). "Thank you President of Mexico @EPN and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Videgaray for refusing to go along with one sided anti-Israel resolutions at the UN. Deeply value your friendship," Netanyahu tweeted last week. The tweet included emojis of the Israeli and Mexican flags. EPN stands for Enrique Pena Nieto, Mexico's president. Mexico reportedly has announced that it will change its voting strategy at the UN and other international bodies by putting a stop to votes in favor of Palestinian resolutions, reported the UnitedWithIsrael website last Wednesday. Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Figari contacted Israeli Ambassador to Mexico Yoni Pelad and told him of the shift in strategy for upcoming voting related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel's Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper reported. The declaration was made two months after Netanyahu visited Mexico during a trip to Latin America that also included Argentina and Colombia. In mid-September, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu became the first sitting Israeli prime minister to visit countries in Latin America. He met with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto in Mexico City and signed several agreements that bolster the ties and cooperation between the two countries.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli Parliament Celebrates 40th Anniversary of Historic Sadat Speech

Forty years after Egyptian President Anwar Sadat paid a historic visit to Israel, the Knesset is holding a series of special events marking the occasion, which led to the establishment of the first peace agreement between Israel and an Arab state, according to [a Jerusalem Post report](#). "Dozens of foreign heads of state visited the Knesset both before and since Sadat's visit. Every visit has its memorable moments, but what happened here 40 years ago was extraordinary, if only because of what came afterwards. It was a real breakthrough," said Knesset Speaker Yoel 'Yuli' Edelstein in his opening remarks. Edelstein recalled details from the visit, which culminated in a historic address by the Egyptian President, who, just four years earlier, had led a bloody war against the Jewish state. Edelstein noted in particular a statement by former president Shimon Peres, who said at the time that "In Israel, there is no opposition to peace." "Despite all the difficulties and challenges that we faced then, and will likely face in the future, we need to remember that sentence today, too," said Edelstein.