



Rabbinic Recap

The week of March 2, 2018

IRAN

Israeli Satellite Images Reveal: Iran Builds Military Base Near Damascus

Iran has established a military base outside Syria's capital city of Damascus, as [reported by Haaretz](#). Fox News published the Israeli satellite photos showing the base eight miles northwest of Damascus on Wednesday. The images reportedly show two warehouses storing missiles capable of hitting all of Israel. According to the report, members of the Iran Revolutionary Guard's special operations Quds Force are operating the base. Last week, the New York Times reported the locations of dozens of bases in Syria operated by Iranian forces, including a map showing the location of a T4 airbase near Tadmor. Also in the map was the airport of Damascus, which Israel has reportedly attacked on multiple occasions. Iranian officials openly claim that they are working to build an axis of resistance to Israel and the U.S. in the region.

4 powers condemn Iran for violating arms embargo on Yemen

The four Western powers that are parties to the Iran nuclear deal are condemning Iran for violating an arms embargo on Yemen, a day after Russia vetoed a Security Council resolution that took aim at Tehran over its failure to abide by the U.N. sanctions, the [Associated Press reported via the Washington Post](#). France, Germany, the United Kingdom and United States issued a joint statement Tuesday saying Iran's non-compliance, as described by a U.N. panel of experts, "poses serious risks to peace and stability in the region." The experts said Iran failed "to take the necessary measures" to prevent the direct or indirect supply of missiles and drones to Houthi Shiite rebels. The four countries called on Iran to immediately halt all activities that would violate or are "inconsistent with" the 2015 council resolution authorizing the arms embargo.

PALESTINIANS

Liberman: IDF Foils 20 to 30 Terrorist Attacks a Week

The IDF has thwarted many terrorist attacks in the West Bank in recent months, Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman said on Tuesday during a visit to assess the security situation in Hebron ahead of Purim, as [reported by the Jerusalem Post](#). Due to "extensive counterterrorism activities in the Central Command and especially in the city of Hebron, the [IDF] in the past months has foiled between 20 and 30 terrorist attacks a week," said Liberman. It has relied in part on advanced technology to work against increased terrorist efforts, he said. The security services "are working hard so we can celebrate the Purim holiday quietly," said Liberman.

U.S.-ISRAEL ALLIANCE

U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem to open in May – in time for Israel’s 70th anniversary

The new U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem will open in May 2018 to coincide with the 70th anniversary of Israel declaring independence, two Trump administration officials said Friday. At first, the embassy will operate out of the U.S.’s current consular premises in Arnona, south Jerusalem. [...] The State Department confirmed the timing of the move, with an official telling [The Times of Israel](#): “We are planning to open the new U.S. Embassy to Israel in Jerusalem in May. The Embassy opening will coincide with Israel’s 70th anniversary.”

Israeli and American Troops Gear Up for Joint 12-Day Juniper Cobra Drill

The [Jerusalem Post](#) noted that Israel is gearing up for an extensive aerial drill with troops from the U.S. European Command set to begin in early March. The ninth annual Juniper Cobra drill scheduled to take place from March 4-15 will be the largest IDF and U.S. European Command joint exercise this year, with more than 2,500 U.S. troops deployed in Europe participating alongside 2,000 Israeli Aerial Defense troops, logistics units, medical forces, and additional IDF units, the IDF announced on Thursday. The last Juniper Cobra, which occurred in June 2016 and was seen as the “premier exercise in this region,” saw over 3,000 American troops taking part. The drill is also considered the “flagship” exercise of the Israel Air Force’s Aerial Defense Division. Additional joint exercises between Israeli and American troops will continue after the completion of the drill through the end of March, said the IDF’s Spokesperson’s Unit.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Likud MK Berko lends counter-terrorism expertise to Europe

Likud lawmaker Anat Berko, by profession a criminologist focusing on Palestinian terrorism, lent her expertise to a meeting in Vienna of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on Thursday, [the Jerusalem Post reported](#). The meeting marked the first time Israel participated as a full member of the organization’s Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, after having been an observer in the past. Berko was invited last month by a letter “acknowledging [her] keen interest and valuable expertise in the field of countering terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism.” However, she refused to participate unless Israel became an equal member of the committee. “I had the privilege of being Israel’s representative and the head of the delegation to the committee,” Berko said. “It is clear to the Europeans that they need our experience...We see how Europe understands that Israel is the canary in the coal mine when it comes to dealing with and fighting terror.” The committee meeting dealt mostly with Iranian funding of and involvement with terrorism in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and other places.

U.S. firefighters and police turn to an Israeli app to save lives

When Hurricane Irma hit the Florida Keys in September 2017, the new First Response app from Israeli-American company Edgybees helped first-responders identify distress calls in flooded areas, according to [Israel21c](#). When wildfires hit Northern California a month later, the app steered firefighters away from danger. This lifesaving augmented-reality app—designed only months before as an AR racing game for drone enthusiasts—is now used by more than a dozen fire and police departments in the United States, as well as the United Hatzalah emergency response network in Israel.