



Rabbinic Recap

The week of March 16, 2018

U.S.-ISRAEL ALLIANCE

IDF Paratroopers Teach U.S. Marines ‘Lost Art’ of Tunnel Combat

Israeli paratroopers and U.S. marines completed a series of exercises over the past week and a half aimed at sharing techniques and knowledge on beach-landings and aspects of urban warfare, as part of the joint Juniper Cobra exercise, officers said, as reported by the [Times of Israel](#). For the Americans—specifically the U.S. Marine Corps’ 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment—it meant learning how to fight in tunnels, something marines haven’t had to do since the Vietnam War, said battalion commander Lt. Col. Marcuz Mainz. “It’s a lost art for us,” he said. For the Israelis—the Paratroopers’ Brigade’s Reconnaissance Battalion—it meant seeing how the marines use light armored vehicles in combat, according to Lt. Ron Semel, the battalion’s training officer.

U.S., IDF Troops Train to Protect Israel from Ballistic Missiles Together

Thousands of American and Israeli soldiers are preparing for the real possibility that they will have to fight “shoulder to shoulder” against a massive ballistic attack on the State of Israel, officials from both countries said Thursday, the [Times of Israel also reported](#). On Sunday, the two militaries launched the nearly-month-long Juniper Cobra exercise, which will simulate such a missile barrage. The biennial drill is this year’s premier exercise for the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and one of the most important for the Israel Defense Forces, with approximately 2,500 soldiers from each army taking part. “For more than four weeks, they will train shoulder to shoulder, the same as we will fight in times of crisis. It’s not just about an exercise,” Brig. Gen. Tzvika Haimovitch, Israel’s air defense commander, told reporters on Thursday.

IRAN

Iran’s Russian Anti-Aircraft Missile Now Operational, U.S. Says

Iran tested and deployed a Russian-made anti-aircraft missile system last year that has long worried U.S. and Israeli military officials because it gives the Islamic Republic a “generational improvement in capabilities,” the Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency disclosed, according to a [Bloomberg report](#). Russia delivered the SA-20c SAM system in 2016, providing Iran with its most advanced air-defense system. Now, Iran has “the flexibility of a highly mobile, long-range, strategic surface-to-air missile,” Lieutenant General Robert Ashley, the DIA director, said in written testimony submitted Tuesday to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

HEZBOLLAH

Former Syrian General: Hezbollah Is in Possession of Chemical Weapons

Iran is building and testing short- to medium-range missiles armed with chemical warheads in Syria, former Syrian general Zuhair al-Saqit told [The Jerusalem Post's](#) sister publication Maariv. Saqit, who heads the Center for the Detection and Monitoring of the Use of Chemical Weapons in Belgium, also said that Iran's Lebanon-based proxy Hezbollah is in possession of chemical weapons, mostly handed to it by the Assad regime in order to hide their existence from international monitors. In an interview in Paris, Saqit said that a large part of Syria's chemical-weapons stockpiles that was hidden from international inspection bodies has been transferred to Hezbollah. Tehran continues to be a major supplier of chemical weapons to the regime of President Bashar Assad and continues to develop chemical weapons in Syrian territory, he said. Iranian scientists, technicians and military personnel are developing missiles with chemical warheads with ranges of between 5 and 35 kilometers that can be carried in vehicles or by small army units within Syria – or beyond the border, he said.

PALESTINIANS

Palestinian Prime Minister Survives Gaza Assassination Attempt

An explosion went off Tuesday morning near a convoy carrying Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah, who is visiting the Gaza Strip, [Haaretz](#) reported. The Palestinian Authority initially blamed Hamas for the explosion, which it said targeted Hamdallah's convoy. Later Tuesday, however, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh spoke with Hamdallah and the two agreed that Israel and its collaborators are responsible. The Palestinian leaders also agreed that General Tawfiq Abu Naim, head of Gaza's Interior Ministry, will lead the investigation into the incident. According to reports, several people were lightly wounded in the incident. Gaza's Interior Ministry said several suspects have been arrested and a manhunt is underway.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israelis Awarded for Paramedic Training in Ecuador

Israel's Magen David Adom (MDA) was awarded a Shield of Appreciation by the Ecuadorian Red Cross at a ceremony celebrating 14 years of existence of the Higher Technological Institute of the Ecuadorian Red Cross (ISTCRE), according to [Israel21c](#). Israeli Ambassador in Quito Edwin Yabo and MDA accepted the awards of appreciation for MDA's ongoing support of ISTCRE's activities and cooperation with the Ecuadorian Red Cross. With the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV), MDA assists Ecuador's Paramedic Training Institute with preparing and training for mass casualty incidents and advanced paramedic training programs. As part of the cooperation between the two organizations, senior staff from ISTCRE participated in MDA paramedic training programs and workshops, joined MDA crews on mobile intensive care units, and participated in a large mass casualty incident drill organized together with local Red Cross personnel.