



# Rabbinic Recap

The week of July 6, 2018

## IRAN

### **Austria to Lift Immunity of Iranian Diplomat in Bomb Plot**

Austria plans to revoke the legal immunity of an Iranian diplomat who is suspected of involvement in a plot to bomb an Iranian opposition rally in France, officials said Tuesday. The Iranian government was notified that the man's diplomatic status would be canceled within 48 hours unless Tehran does so first, Matthias Forenbacher, a spokesman for Austria's foreign minister, told the [Associated Press](#). The diplomat, Assadollah Assadi, was detained Sunday near the German city of Aschaffenburg on a European arrest warrant after a couple with Iranian roots was stopped in Belgium and authorities reported finding powerful explosives in their car.

### **New Unrest Roils Iran as U.S. Ramps Up Pressure**

Spreading unrest in Iran raises the prospect of broader antigovernment protests as the political leadership in Tehran faces mounting pressure from a Trump administration effort to cut the country's oil sales, the [Wall Street Journal](#) noted. Hundreds of people took to the streets in the southwestern city of Khorramshahr over the weekend in a demonstration prompted by anger at dirty drinking water that turned into an expression of broader grievances against the government in Tehran. The upheaval came after thousands of people swarmed Tehran's Grand Bazaar last week, as the government of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani struggles to deal with soaring unemployment, a collapsing currency and other economic woes.

## U.S.-ISRAEL ALLIANCE

### **Netanyahu Speaks with U.S. Congress Members Over Iran's Aggression**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met Tuesday with a bipartisan delegation of U.S. Congress members at his office in Jerusalem, [Ynet News](#) reported. It was said Netanyahu showed his appreciation for their support of Israel's security and discussed regional issues and Iran's aggression.

## PALESTINIANS

### **Abbas Is Key Obstacle to Gaza Rehabilitation, Top Israeli Security Brass Warns**

The Israeli security establishment sees opposition from Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas as the main obstacle to taking steps toward improving the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, as reported in [Haaretz](#). Despite the tough rhetoric by Israeli leaders, the past few weeks have seen a greater readiness among them to advance projects that would rehabilitate Gaza's infrastructure. But Abbas' vehement opposition, due to the ongoing tension

between the PA and Hamas, is making it difficult to move anything forward. Qatar, meanwhile, disclosed on Sunday that there have been indirect contacts between Israel and Hamas aimed at preventing an escalation of violence in the strip and facilitating reconstruction.

### **Australia Ends Direct Aid to PA Over Payments to Terrorists**

Australia has ended direct aid to the Palestinian Authority over fears its donations will be used to pay Palestinians convicted of terrorism and their families, the [Times of Israel](#) noted. Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said Monday that funding to a World Bank trust fund was cut after she wrote to the Palestinian Authority in late May seeking assurance that Australian funding was not being misspent. In a statement, Bishop expressed concern that providing further aid would allow the PA to use the funds for activities that “Australia would never support.”

### **Israel Penalizes Palestinians for Payments to Prisoners and ‘Martyrs’**

Israel will begin withholding funds from the Palestinian Authority to penalize it for paying stipends to Palestinian prisoners in Israel, their families and the families of Palestinians killed or wounded in confrontations with Israelis, as reported by the [New York Times](#). In an emotionally charged vote that crossed party lines, the Israeli Knesset approved legislation on Monday night requiring the Israeli authorities to withhold a portion of the monthly transfers of tax revenues that Israel collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, under previous interim peace accords.

## **ISRAEL IN THE NEWS**

### **Israeli Technology Providing Vital Communications Link to Cave-Trapped Thai Boys**

Rescuers working to save a Thai youth soccer team trapped deep inside a flooded cave are using an Israeli technology to maintain communication with the 12 boys and their coach. Maxtech Networks told the [Times of Israel](#) Thursday that its system is providing a voice, data, and video link to the boys who have been stuck in the cave for nearly two weeks, and were only located earlier this week. [...] In the Israeli system, a string of small devices, similar to handheld radios, pass wireless communications between each other, enabling a link in places regular radios won't work, such as where there are major obstacles blocking the line-of-sight between the two ends of the line.

### **Global Summit Invites 10 Israeli Digital-Health Startups**

Only 14 digital-health companies, out of more than 600, reviewed by GlobalSTL, the international company recruitment initiative of BioSTL, were invited to present to stakeholders and investors at the second annual GlobalSTL Health Innovation Summit on June 27 at Washington University in St. Louis, according to [Israel21c](#). Ten of those 14 companies are Israeli. [...] The highly curated event introduces transformational technologies to the St. Louis healthcare industry that can improve quality and access while lowering costs by solving challenges in patient care, health care delivery and hospital operations. Each international company that applied to the summit was subjected to a thorough vetting process to identify the companies that had the best chance for getting a deal done. Last year's inaugural summit directly resulted in five deals, including three for Israeli startups.