

Ynet-News, December 07, 2020 – Monday

12.07.20

Ben-Gurion letter found framed in home to Swede journalist of Israel articles

12.07.20 – Mo - - - News Placed in Dec 07 spot – Monday

Iran top nuclear scientist killed by remote-controlled gun placed on a pick-up

12.07.20

Ben-Gurion letter found framed in home to Swede journalist of Israel articles

12.07.20

Ben-Gurion letter outlining his vision for Israel discovered after 69 years

Rare 1951 missive penned by Israel's first prime minister letter to Swedish journalist was revealed by recipient's granddaughter, in which he says 'humanity needs at this time peace, cooperation and friendship between peoples'

Itamar Eichner | Published: 12.07.20 , 17:38

A previously unknown letter written by Israel's first prime minister David Ben-Gurion describing his vision for the nascent state was recently discovered, approximately 69 years after it was first sent.

The 1951 missive to a Swedish journalist was kept by the recipient's granddaughter, who is the current Swedish ambassador to Finland Nicola Clase.

Clase shared the letter with Israeli Ambassador to Finland Hagit Ben-Yaakov at a meeting between the two.

In his letter, Ben-Gurion wrote in Hebrew: "In establishing the State of Israel, the dream of generations of Jews for a national revival has been realized.

"We are at the beginning of our journey, the state was established not only for the hundreds of thousands of Jews who lived in the country before - but for all the masses of scattered Israelis, who need and aspire to an independent homeland... Most of all, humanity needs at this time peace, cooperation and friendship between peoples. True friendship will thrive solely on the basis of mutual recognition."

"[Clase's] grandfather was a journalist in his youth who worked for the Swedish magazine Världshorisont," says Ben-Yaakov.

"The magazine wrote a special issue on Israel and sent a draft of it to David Ben-Gurion, then the prime minister of the young State of Israel. Ben-Gurion wrote back to the magazine with a letter in which he presented in Hebrew his vision."

According to Clase, her grandfather framed the letter and hung it in his home. After his death, she took the letter, which now accompanies her wherever she goes.

"I held the letter in my hand and began to translate Ben-Gurion's words for her," says Ben-Yaakov. "When I finished reading we were both teary-eyed from excitement." In 2019, another letter written by the country's first prime minister was uncovered, in which Ben-Gurion asks his political rival MK Esther Razieli-Naor to delete from the Knesset's protocol things she said regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities.

12.07.20

Iran top nuclear scientist killed by remote-controlled gun placed on a pick-up

12.07.20

Iran says 'satellite-controlled machine gun' killed top nuclear scientist

Yoav Galant, a security cabinet minister, tells Army Radio Iranian explanation is an attempt to save face and says he's 'not aware' of whether the remote-operated targeting technologies described by Iran existed

Reuters| Published: 12.07.20 , 13:49

The killing of Iran's top nuclear scientist last month was carried out remotely with artificial intelligence and a machine gun equipped with a "satellite-controlled smart system", Tasnim news agency quoted a senior commander as saying.

Iran has blamed Israel for the assassination of Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh, who was seen by Western intelligence services as the mastermind of a covert Iranian programme to develop nuclear weapons capability. Tehran has long denied any such ambition.

Israel has neither confirmed nor denied responsibility for the killing, and one of its officials suggested that the Tasnim report of the tactics used was a face-saving gambit by Iran.

In the past, however, Israel has acknowledged pursuing covert, intelligence-gathering operations against the nuclear programme of its arch-enemy.

The Islamic Republic has given contradictory details of Fakhri-zadeh's death in a daytime Nov. 27 ambush on his car on a highway near Tehran.

"No terrorists were present on the ground... Martyr Fakhri-zadeh was driving when a weapon, using an advanced camera, zoomed in on him," Tasnim, a semi-official agency, quoted Ali Fadavi, the deputy commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, as saying in a ceremony on Sunday.

"The machine gun was placed on a pick-up truck and was controlled by a satellite."

SECURITY GAPS

Fadavi spoke after Iranian authorities said they had found "clues" about the assassins", though they have yet to announce any arrests. Shortly after Fakhri-zadeh was killed, witnesses told state television that a truck had exploded before a group of gunmen opened fire on his car.

Last week Ali Shamkhani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, said the killing was carried out with "electronic devices" with no people on the ground.

Experts and officials said last week Fakhrizadeh's killing exposed security gaps that suggest its security forces may have been infiltrated and that the Islamic Republic was vulnerable to further attacks.

"Some 13 shots were fired at martyr Fakhrizadeh with a machine gun controlled by satellite... During the operation artificial intelligence and face recognition were used," Fadavi said. "His wife, sitting 25 centimetres away from him in the same car, was not injured."

Education Minister Yoav Galant, a security cabinet member, said he was "not aware" of whether the remote-operated targeting technologies described in the Iranian accounts existed.

"What I see is a great deal of embarrassment on the Iranian side," Galant, a former naval commando and deputy chief of Israel's military, told Army Radio. "It would appear that those who were responsible for his (Fakhrizadeh's) security are now coming up with reasons for not having fulfilled that mission."

Fakhrizadeh, identified by Israel as a prime player in what it says is a continuing Iranian quest for a nuclear weapon, was the fifth Iranian nuclear scientist killed in targeted attacks since 2010 inside Iran, and the second slaying of a high-ranking Iranian official in 2020.

The commander of the Revolutionary Guards' elite Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani, was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Iraq in January. Tehran retaliated by firing missiles at U.S. military targets in Iraq.