

Ynet-News, November 17, 2022 – Thursday

11.17.22 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Iran decries alleged French & British agents, attempt to incite a civil war

11.16.22 – We- - - News Placed in November 17 spot – Thursday

British investigating oil tanker hit by Iranian bomb-drone off Oman

11.16.22 – We- - - News Placed in November 16 spot – Wednesday

Israel robotic guns in West Bank for significant accuracy & soldier safety

11.14.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in November 15 spot – Tuesday

Ben-Gvir presents campaign promise; death penalty law for terrorists

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Abbas says PA must deal with Israel & UK despite they occupy my land

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Israeli missile attack on Syria weapons disguised as civilian convoy from Iran

11.13.22 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Istanbul terror attack & ongoing manhunt; prompts travel warning for Turkey

11.13.22 – Su- - - News Placed in November 12 spot – Saturday

Gvir seeks only-Orthodox Aliyah, to wedge out Reform and Conservative Judaism

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Israel set to hike funding for yeshivas by 100% to study Torah as full-time job

11.17.22

Iran decries alleged French & British agents, attempt to incite a civil war

11.17.22

Iran decries alleged Israeli attempts to incite a civil war

Tehran's top diplomat Hossein Amirabdollahian evokes other Islamist regimes toppled in the past, says his country 'is not Libya or Sudan'

Reuters|10:25

On Thursday, Iran accused both Israeli and western intelligence services of fermenting a possible civil war inside the Islamic Republic, which has been plagued with mass riots and civil activists demanding free speech and self-determination on a scale not seen since the Iranian revolution of 1979.

Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amirabdollahian, tweeted: "Various security services, Israel and some Western politicians who have made plans for civil war, destruction and the disintegration of Iran, should know that Iran is not Libya or Sudan."

The current wave of unrest in Iran began on September 16 with the beating and killing of Kurdish-Iranian woman Mahsa Amini by Iranian police. She was arrested for alleged violation of the strict Islamic dress code.

On Wednesday, a barrage of attacks struck Iran. An attack in the southwestern city of Izeh killed seven people and a separate incident in Isfahan saw a motorcyclist speeding through and shooting several, killing two and injuring an additional eight. State TV had blamed rioters for the attacks, which have gone unclaimed up until now.

Amini's death sparked nationwide riots and unrest, most notably from women who are forcefully demanding an end to religiously-sanctioned violence against them, as well as free speech in general, a rare commodity in the Islamic Republic.

Both France and the United Kingdom accused Iran of threatening their citizens, after Iran claimed to have arrested two French Intelligence agents, allegedly connected to the riots.

11.16.22

British investigating oil tanker hit by Iranian bomb-drone off Oman

11.16.22

Israeli-owned oil tanker hit by bomb-carrying drone off Oman

The attacked vessel belongs to Singapore-based Eastern Pacific Shipping, a company owned by billionaire Idan Ofer; UK's military organization in the region say they are aware of the incident and its being investigated
Associated Press|Yesterday | 03:27

An oil tanker associated with an Israeli billionaire has been struck by a bomb-carrying drone off the coast of Oman amid heightened tensions with Iran, an official said on Wednesday.

The attack happened Tuesday night off the coast of Oman, the Mideast-based defense official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity as they did not have authorization to discuss the attack publicly.

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, a British military organization in the region monitoring shipping, told the AP: "We are aware of an incident and it's being investigated at this time."

The official identified the vessel attacked as the **Liberian-flagged oil tanker** Pacific Zircon. That tanker is operated by Singapore-based Eastern Pacific Shipping, which is a company ultimately **owned by Israeli** billionaire Idan Ofer. A phone number for Eastern Pacific rang unanswered Wednesday.

While no one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, **suspicion immediately fell on Iran**. Tehran and Israel have been engaged in a yearslong **shadow war in** the wider **Middle East**, with some drone attacks targeting Israeli-associated vessels traveling around the region.

The **U.S. also blamed Iran** for a **series of attacks** occurring off the coast of the United Arab Emirates **in 2019**. Tehran then had **begun escalating** its nuclear program following the U.S.' unilateral withdrawal from its atomic deal with world powers. Iranian state media did not immediately acknowledge the attack on the Pacific Zircon.

11.16.22

Israel robotic guns in West Bank for significant accuracy & soldier safety

11.16.22

Israel deploys remote-controlled robotic guns in West Bank

The IDF says the system is being tested at this stage and fires only **'non-lethal'** weapons used **for crowd control**, such as **sponge-tipped bullets and tear gas**

Associated Press|Yesterday | 06:44

In **two volatile spots** in the West Bank, Israel has **installed robotic weapons** that can fire **tear gas, stun grenades and sponge-tipped bullets** at Palestinian protesters.

The **weapons, perched over a crowded Palestinian refugee camp** and in a flashpoint West Bank city, **use artificial intelligence to track targets**. Israel says the technology saves lives — both Israeli and Palestinian. But critics see another **step toward a dystopian reality** in which Israel fine-tunes its **open-ended occupation** of the Palestinians while keeping its soldiers out of harm's way.

The **new weapon** comes **at a time of heightened tensions** in the West Bank, where unrest has risen sharply during what has been the deadliest year since 2006. The victory **by** former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's **hard-line alliance**, which includes an extreme right-wing party **with close ties to the settler movement**, has raised concerns of more violence.

Twin turrets, each equipped with a watchful lens and a gun barrel, were recently **installed atop a guard tower** bristling with surveillance cameras overlooking the Al-Aroub **refugee camp** in the **southern West Bank**. When young Palestinian **protesters** pour into the streets **hurling stones and firebombs** at Israeli soldiers, the robotic **weapons unleash tear gas or sponge-tipped bullets on them**, witnesses say.

About a month ago, the military also placed the robots in the nearby city of Hebron, where soldiers often clash with stone-throwing Palestinian residents. The army declined to comment on its plans to deploy the system elsewhere in the West Bank.

Palestinian activist Issa Amro said Hebron residents fear the new weapon might be misused or hacked with no accountability in potentially lethal situations. People also resent what they say is a weapons test on civilians, he added.

“We are not a training and simulation for Israeli companies,” he said. “This is something new that must be stopped.”

There are no soldiers next to the machines. Instead, the weapons are operated by remote control. At a touch of a button, soldiers nestled inside a guard tower can fire at selected targets.

The army says the system is being tested at this stage and fires only “non-lethal” weapons used for crowd control, such as sponge-tipped bullets and tear gas. Residents of Al-Aroub say the turrets have repeatedly drenched the hillside camp in gas.

“We don’t open the window, we don’t open the door. We know not to open anything,” said shopkeeper Hussein al-Muzyeen.

Robotic weapons are increasingly in operation around the world, with militaries expanding their use of drones to carry out lethal strikes from Ukraine to Ethiopia. Remote-controlled guns like the Israeli system in the West Bank have been used by the United States in Iraq, by South Korea along the border with North Korea, and by various Syrian rebel groups.

Israel, known for its advanced military technologies, is among the world’s top producers of drones capable of launching precision-guided missiles. It has built a fence along its boundary with the Gaza Strip equipped with radar and underground and underwater sensors. Above ground, it uses a robotic vehicle, equipped with cameras and machine guns, to patrol volatile borders. The military also tests and utilizes state-of-the-art surveillance technology such as face recognition and biometric data collection on Palestinians.

The turrets in Al-Aroub were built by Smart Shooter, a company that makes “fire control systems” that it says “significantly increase the accuracy, lethality, and situational awareness of small arms.” The company boasts contracts with dozens of militaries around the world, including the U.S. Army.

Speaking at the company’s headquarters in Kibbutz Yagur in northern Israel, Chief Executive Michal Mor said the gun requires human selection of targets and munitions.

“They always have a man in the loop making the decision regarding the legitimate target,” she said.

She said the system minimizes casualties by distancing soldiers from violence and limits collateral damage by making shots more accurate.

In a densely populated area like Al-Aroub, she said soldiers can monitor specific people in a crowd and lock the turret onto specific body parts. The system fires only after algorithms assess complex factors like wind speed, distance, and velocity.

The military said such safeguards minimize the risk to soldiers and improve supervision over their activities. It also said the technology allows soldiers to target “less sensitive” areas of the body to minimize harm and avoid shooting bystanders.

“In this way, the system reduces the likelihood of inaccurate fire,” it said.

But Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch, said Israel is on a “slide toward the digital dehumanization of weapons systems.” By using such technologies, Shakir said Israel is creating “a powder keg for human rights abuse.”

In Al-Aroub, residents say the machines fire without warning.

“It is very fast, even faster than the soldiers,” said Kamel Abu Hishesh, a 19-year-old student. He described almost nightly clashes where soldiers storm the camp as the automated gun fires tear gas up and down the hill.

Paul Scharre, vice president of the Washington think tank Center for a New American Security and a former U.S. Army sniper, said that without emotion and with better aim, automated systems can potentially reduce violence.

But he said the absence of international norms for “killer robots” is problematic.

Otherwise, he said, it’s just a matter of time before these automated systems are equipped to use deadly force.

11.14.22

Ben-Gvir presents campaign promise; death penalty law for terrorists

11.14.22

Ben-Gvir to demand death penalty for terrorists in coalition negotiation

Far-right legislator, who is slated for a ministerial position in the incoming right-wing and religious coalition, says courts to be forced to sentence terrorists convicted or murder to death. - Moran Azulay|02:17

Far-right lawmaker Itamar Ben Gvir will on Monday make a demand for a legislation to allow death penalty for terrorists in his negotiations to join Benjamin Netanyahu's emerging coalition.

Such a law had been discussed in previous administrations, but was ruled out by members of the coalition at the time, although supported by some members of the Likud party. Now, with a secure right-wing and religious government set to be formed, it is likely to win a majority support.

Ben-Gvir named putting terrorists to death as part of his campaign promises, and hopes to include the legislation in his coalition agreement along with other moves he described as bolstering sovereignty and the rule of law.

"In recent years we are witnessing a growth and expansion of murderous terrorism directed at Jews just because they are Jews, and in an effort to harm Israel and the revival of the Jewish People in their homeland," Ben Gvir's proposal said.

"After each terror attack, leaders in the security agencies promise the 'long arm of Israel will settle the account with the murderers,' when in fact most receive improved conditions in prison, a pay check from the Palestinian Authority and are ultimately released in a prisoner exchange."

"The object of the law is to cut terror down at its source and issue a clear warning. No longer jail with benefits, no prisoners' early release," the proposal said.

"In our proposal – a terrorist who is convicted of murder who acted out of a racist or nationalistic motivation, will be put to death by law."

11.14.22

Abbas says PA must deal with Israel & UK despite they occupy my land

11.14.22

Abbas says must deal with Netanyahu despite no peace prospects

PA president says there must be a peaceful resolution to the decades-long conflict adding as Israel occupies his land he must deal with the elected prime minister despite peace talks suspended since 2014

Reuters|00:35

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said on Sunday he would have to deal with Benjamin Netanyahu, the former Israeli Prime Minister who won reelection this month, even though he believed Netanyahu was not interested in making peace.

"I knew Netanyahu for a long time, since the 1990s ... He is a man who doesn't believe in peace but I have no other choice but to deal with him," Abbas told Palestine Television.

The Palestinian leader, whose authority has limited control in the West Bank, said there must be a peaceful resolution to the decades-long conflict.

The interview, which was also broadcast by Egyptian television, was recorded on Friday.

"I have a problem with Israel, Israel occupies my land and my country. Who is the prime minister? Netanyahu. I am forced to deal with him," said Abbas.

Netanyahu, who in his previous term forged normalization with United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco, said on Sunday he sought to reach peace deals with other Arab countries, something that could eventually help end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israeli-Palestinian peace talks have been stalled since 2014.

Where does new UK premier Rishi Sunak stand on Israel and Jewish issues?

Incoming British leader has shown willingness to discuss moving embassy to Jerusalem, says there is a 'very strong case' which would imply UK's recognition of Jerusalem as Israeli capital

Ynet News

11.13.22

Israeli missile attack on Syria weapons disguised as civilian convoy from Iran

11.13.22

Syria reports Israeli missile attack on central Homs area

Opposition war monitor says strong blasts heard when four Israeli missiles hit Shayrat airbase in Syrian province, targeting the positions of Iran-backed fighters; state TV reports 2 soldiers dead, 3 wounded

Associated Press|Updated:Yesterday | 11:32

Israel fired missiles toward Syria's central province of Homs Sunday evening targeting an airbase and positions of Iran-backed fighters, an opposition war monitor reported.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which is based in London, said strong explosions were heard when four Israeli missiles hit the Shayrat airbase in Homs province. It said the missile attack targeted the positions of Iran-backed fighters in the area.

The group claimed that this was the 29th Israeli attack on Syrian territory since the beginning of the year.

State news agency SANA said Syrian air defenses were responding to "hostile targets" over Homs province adding that some missiles were shot down.

Syrian TV said that "an Israeli aggression" was targeting the province adding that air defenses were responding to the attacks.

A Syrian military source told SANA two soldiers were killed and another three wounded in the attack on the Shayrat airfield.

The strikes occurred after Israeli warplanes were seen flying over neighboring Lebanon whose airspace Israeli air forces sometimes cross to carry out attacks on Syria.

The latest attack in Syria attributed to Israel took place on the Iraqi border last Tuesday.

Sources among the militias operating in the area told the Associated Press that at least ten people were killed in an attack on an Iranian convoy that included fuel trucks.

London-based paper Asharq Al-Awsat reported Friday that Israeli military officials admitted that the attack on the convoy was carried out by Israel.

According to the report, the convoy was carrying weapons and ammunition, and not just fuel as Tehran claims.

The sources told the newspaper that "after Iran suffered harsh blows that destroyed arms convoys at several Syrian airports, especially at Damascus International Airport, they reverted to transporting equipment via land."

"Iran tried to disguise the weapons by using a civilian convoy, hoping to avoid detection by Israeli intelligence," the sources added.

The assumption in Israel, according to the sources, is that the Syrian regime asked Iran to stop arms shipments because "the Israeli attacks hit most of Syria's military industries, but Iran insists on continuing to send missile warheads to its industries in Syria and Lebanon, to ensure the continued production of missiles and improve their accuracy."

Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets inside government-controlled parts of Syria in recent years, but rarely acknowledges or discusses such operations. Israel has acknowledged, however, that it targets bases of Iran-allied militant groups, such as Lebanon's Hezbollah, which has sent thousands of fighters to support Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces.

Daniel Salami contributed to the report. First published: 19:19, 11.13.22

11.13.22

Istanbul terror attack & ongoing manhunt; prompts travel warning for Turkey

11.13.22

Israel issues travel warning for Turkey after Istanbul attack
Security officials advise Israelis to avoid non-essential trips to country; Israelis in Istanbul urged to remain in their hotels until situation cleared up
Itamar Eichner|Yesterday | 14:40

Israeli security officials issued on Sunday a travel warning for Turkey following a suspected terror attack in Istanbul that left 6 people dead and another 81 wounded.

Jerusalem urges Israelis who are already in Istanbul to stay in their hotels and follow Turkish law enforcement's instructions.

"The recommendation is to remain in their hotels until things are clear and listen to the recommendations and guidelines of the Turkish security forces," an official said. "The inquiry into the terror attack is ongoing, the Turkish security forces launched a manhunt to find the suspects."

The Israeli National Security Council (NCS) issued a level 3 travel warning for Turkey, which is considered a medium threat level. Thus it is generally recommended to avoid non-essential trips to the country.

In addition, the NSC recommended to all Israelis in countries with a level 3 travel warning be on alert.

The recommendations include notifying relatives of current whereabouts during the trip, avoiding sharing location on social media and staying away from demonstrations or gatherings. Israeli tourists were also advised to conceal their national identity and refrain from going into unidentified vehicles.

Despite the travel warning, all the check-ins for flights to Turkey at the Ben Gurion Airport were full, and at least six flights were expected from Israel to Turkey on Sunday.

11.13.22

Gvir seeks only-Orthodox Aliyah, to wedge out Reform and Conservative Judaism

11.13.22

Ben Gvir seeks to end Aliyah for non-Orthodox converts, report says
Far-right lawmaker wishes to overturn High Court ruling that recognizes conversions to Judaism through liberal movements for those who wish to make immigrate to Israel
i24NEWS|Yesterday | 10:42

Otzma Yehudit leader Itamar Ben Gvir calls to overturn a High court of Justice Court decision that recognizes non-Orthodox converts as eligible to make Aliyah under the Law of Return, Hebrew media reported Sunday.

According to the reports, the firebrand lawmaker — who is poised to become a minister in the incoming government — intends to put forward his demand to Prime Minister-Designate Benjamin Netanyahu during coalition talks.

Last year's High Court ruling effectively recognized conversions to Judaism through liberal movements, such as Reform and Conservative Judaism, for those who wish to make Aliyah and immigrate to Israel.

Since 1970, Israel's Law of Return has applied to Jews of all movements, including Reform and Conservative, although such conversions are not recognized by the Chief Rabbinate in Israel.

According to the report by public broadcaster Kan, Ben Gvir wishes to return to the status quo ante which granted the right to immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return only to those who had an Orthodox conversion.

Otzma Yehudit has lobbied other members of the emerging coalition to present Netanyahu with a similar request in negotiations.
Diaspora Affairs Minister Dr. Nachman Shai said overriding the Reform Conversion Recognition Clause would "drive a wedge between us and the wealthiest and strongest Jewish community in the world," referring to the American Jewish community, which is largely Reform.

"It threatens the delicate relations that bind Israel and the Diaspora at their most sensitive point," said Reform Rabbi Uri Regev, who heads the organization Hiddush – For Religious Freedom and Equality.
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11.13.22

Israel set to hike funding for yeshivas by 100% to study Torah as full-time job

11.13.22

Israel's new government set to hike funding for yeshivas by 100%

Netanyahu apparently caves in to ultra-Orthodox parties' demands as part of his efforts to form a coalition; Bennett, Liberman criticize the decision, saying it goes 'against public interest'

Kobe Nachshoni, Yuval Karni|Yesterday | 07:45

The new government is expected to increase funding for yeshivas and their students in Israel by as much as 100%, which could potentially lead to widespread public criticism.

The increase in funding is said to have been agreed upon during negotiations between ultra-Orthodox parties and Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who attempts to form a new coalition.

Haredi yeshiva, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu (Photo: Amit Shabi, Shaul Golan)
Israel has so far subsidized married and unmarried Haredi yeshiva students, using a set amount of the state's budget without factoring in the physical numbers of such students in total, causing the funding to increase as the population continues to grow.

Now, as part of the negotiations with Netanyahu, the ultra-Orthodox party leaders are asking for a set amount of NIS 730 for Haredi youth yeshiva students, and NIS 1,314 for adult ones.

An estimate made by Shas, United Torah Judaism and Religious Zionism on the total number of the ultra-Orthodox and religious students in the Haredi population suggests that new annual funding will stand at NIS 2.5 billion – twice the current amount.

A source involved in the coalition talks said the budget will likely balloon as years go by due to the rapid demographical growth rate of the ultra-Orthodox communities. "It will reach NIS 3 billion very fast," he said.

The funding for single yeshiva students who still live with their parents will not be transferred to them directly, but will instead be used for the operation of other ultra-Orthodox bodies. Funding for married students will be given to them as a stipend under the condition they will study Torah as their full-time job.

Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman criticized the decision to double the funding, saying, "The priorities are reversed. I've increased the income of IDF soldiers by 50% as the finance minister, while the emerging government will double the income of yeshiva students. We'll work for those serving in the IDF, working and paying taxes from the opposition."

Former Prime Minister Naftali Bennett also protested the decision. "The program to increase funding for ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students is an ethical and economic misstep, which will harm Haredi youth and the future of Israel.

"The increased funding will encourage more Haredi youth not to enter the workforce, or acquire a profession, since it's easier to stay in their yeshiva."

"Throughout the years I have worked to increase the rate of employment in the ultra-Orthodox community, and was the first to build a real plan which we enacted under my government."

Ephraim, a resident of Jerusalem, has justified the upcoming dramatic increase in funding. "I understand that reading the headlines and reading of a 100% increase - it seems bad, but it is due to population growth, nothing more. We, the students, won't get an increase."

He also said: "When it comes down to it, I'll have to live frugally with NIS 2,000-2,500 per months, which is a ridiculous sum."

There also members of the ultra-Orthodox community who fear that increasing the budget will harm the yeshiva students. "Basically, the increase in budget is justified, especially after the former government, who gave dozens of billions to the Arab community," a Haredi activist said.

"But this could also lead to criticism in the future," he added. "You need to admit, sometimes the appetite of ultra-Orthodox party leaders is much larger than their minds."

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Ynet-News, November 11, 2022 – Friday

11.11.22 – Fr- - - News Placed in November 11 spot – Friday
UN Court voted in favor of Israel right to self-defense in PA perpetual conflict

11.08.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in November 09 spot – Wednesday
Council of sages insist their laws must not be struck down by the courts

11.08.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in November 10 spot – Thursday
Netanyahu will form a government first before coalition agreements or policies

11.07.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in November 07 spot – Monday
Far-right Smotrich under fire after accusing Shin Bet of Rabin's death in 1995

11.06.22 – Su- - - News – Sunday
 Hamas arrests two for rockets at Israel last week, not coordinated with factions

11.06.22 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Netanyahu calls for MK unity to serve the people of Israel