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8.20.23 – Su

Israeli in Sinai jail after altercation with local resident

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Israeli in Sinai jail after altercation with local resident

The fight reportedly follows the Israeli man wrapping himself in a flag of the Chabad Hassidic group announcing the pending arrival of the Jewish Messiah

Itamar Eichner|11:13

According to reports, the Israeli was wrapped in a yellow flag announcing the arrival of the Jewish Messiah, a flag adopted by the Chabad Hassidic movement that believes in the coming of the Messiah in the person of its deceased leader Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

The flag caused anger among local Egyptian residents resulting in the fight and the ultimate arrest of the Israeli, who will likely now be fined by a court and deported back to Israel.

The Foreign Ministry said they were aware of the incident. "We were advised of an Israeli who was arrested after an altercation with a local Sinai resident.

The matter is being addressed by the Israeli consulate in Cairo and the ministry's department for Israelis abroad, which is in contact with the man's family.

8.20.23 – Su

Court releases violent Arab drug dealer with Star of David wound on face

8.20.23 – Su

Court releases Arab suspect with alleged Star of David brand on face

The man arrested for drug trafficking saying officers branded a Star of David onto his face during arrest; police fail to provide sound explanation to judge

Alexandra Lukash, Nir Cohen|05:24

Judge Adi Bar-Tal released Arwah Sheikh Ali from the Shuafat refugee camp in east Jerusalem to house arrest on Sunday. The alleged criminal claimed that a Star of David symbol was branded onto his face during his arrest by police officers for drug trafficking charges.

Prior to the court hearing, Attorney Akram Abu-Libdeh from the Public Defenders Office, representing the suspect, argued that contrary to the court's decision that a doctor would examine the suspect, police left him in a holding cell instead of transferring him to a proper facility.

The judge justified the suspect's release by pointing out the police's misconduct since the suspect was held in police custody for four days, and was only transferred to a detention center on Saturday.

According to Bar-Tal, there was hardly any significant investigative action taken during this time. She also clarified that, from looking at images of the suspect, "It's evident the detention was accompanied with the use of severe violence," and confirmed the man hadn't seen a doctor despite the previous court's decision.

Last week, police issued an unusual response to the detainee's allegations, saying the suspect resisted his arrest, and the Star of David wound on his face was most likely caused by an "article of clothing" worn by one of the officers – specifically his shoe laces. However, Dr. Avner Rosengarten, head of the Forensic Science Institute - a private organization providing legal expertise - said on Sunday that there was no match between the alleged shoe and laces and the mark on the suspect's face.

"It's not this shoe, and it's not these laces. It seems that the markings were created by a metallic tool or instrument," he said.

Rosengarten explained why the shoe presented by the police did not leave an imprint resembling the Star of David: "First of all, the width of the laces is not suitable. Secondly, the laces can't leave this kind of imprint, as the edges are bleeding; it must be a straight, solid instrument."

"The laces also don't have the pressure and force required to create this mark, because laces are flexible and soft, and remain the same no matter how much pressure one might put into a shoe," he added.

Rosengarten clarified that he can't definitively say that the mark on the suspect's face is a Star of David, despite the resemblance. He emphasized that the arrangement of the markings corresponds to "a single metallic instrument that was used in a single event." He added the police were hasty in their response and rushed to issue an incorrect statement.

Attorney Danny Bar-David, deputy director of the Public Defense's Detention Division, clarified that the arrest was conducted by a team of highly trained officers, and it's highly unusual that 16 officers chose not to activate their body cameras in order to document the operation.

The police's claim can't be verified, as despite the involvement of 16 officers in the arrest, it was revealed in court that no body camera was active, as happened in other cases of allegations of police violence.

The mark on the suspect's face was clearly visible during the hearing held a day after the arrest. Even if the shoe belongs to a police officer and the mark is a non-intentional Star of David, it's unclear why there would be a need to kick his face forcefully or tightly hold a shoe to it.

The police claimed that "during a court-ordered search at the suspect's home, substances suspected to be illegal drugs were found in a large quantity, with 1 kg of substances suspected as hashish, ecstasy and methadone, among others."

"At a certain point, the suspect began resisting his arrest and violently attacked the officers. Several officers were required to complete his arrest, which was carried out legally," they added.

The police spokesperson issued a statement about the arrest last week, saying that illegal drugs were located in the apartment - but made no mention of violent resistance by the suspect and the force that the officers had to use.

The statement also mentioned that "during the operation, stones and glass bottles were thrown at officers, leading the forces to use riot gear in response. No injuries or damage were caused."

The suspect himself claimed that during his arrest, the officers beat him all over his body and covered his face with a cloth strip. Judge Amir Shaked was alarmed by the mark on the suspect's face and ordered the case details to be immediately transferred to the Police Internal Investigations Department (PIID).

"Due to the severe injuries on the respondent's body, I order the hearing's protocol to be transferred to the PIID. This is an event that, without reasonable explanation, wasn't documented by the officers' body cameras," the judge said.

8.20.23 – Su

IDF shot masked settler, throwing rocks at PA vehicles in act of revenge, others ran

8.20.23 – Su

IDF shoots Jews throwing stones at Palestinian vehicles

Only after the arrest, including shooting the masked man in the legs, did it become clear that it was masked Jews and not Palestinians; the settler was taken to the hospital in moderate condition

Yoav Zitun, Elisha Ben Kimon|00:31

Israel Defense Forces soldiers shot at a settler who was wearing a mask and was throwing rocks at Palestinian vehicles on Route 60 in the West Bank early on Sunday morning. The settler who was shot was taken to the hospital in moderate condition.

A patrol force from Golani's 12th Battalion, operating in the sector north of Ramallah, was sent to the northern area of Ma'ale Levona after receiving a report about masked men coming to throw stones. The soldiers positioned themselves and identified the masked men, who were suspected of being Palestinian terrorists. One of the masked men threw another rock and then the suspects began to run away, so the soldiers carried out a suspect arrest procedure that included shooting him in the lower body.

After the shooting, the soldiers approached the wounded man, then it was discovered that he was a settler. His friends fled. A rock was also thrown at the soldiers.

The IDF says that the incident took place around 3:00 a.m., when the IDF force was dispatched to a point where there were several masked suspects. "The injured man is receiving medical treatment at a hospital. The incident is being investigated and its details are under review," according to the IDF.

The early morning incident occurred Saturday's shooting attack in Hawara and against the background of the army's preparations for revenge actions by Jews. Aviad Nir, 28, and his father Shai Silas Nigreker, 60, from Ashdod, were killed in the attack. The two arrived in Huwara to fix their car's air conditioning, then headed to a nearby car wash, where a terrorist opened fire at them..

The attack took place at a time when there were many warnings of attacks in northern Samaria, some of which were thwarted. During Shabbat, IDF forces are less of a presence on route 60 near Huwara due to the small presence of Jews there at that time.

In the wake of Saturday's attack, the IDF was prepared for acts of revenge against Palestinians by Jewish settlers, and had already increased the number of police and military troops in the Huwara-Yitzhar area.

IDF Chief of Staff Maj. Genl Herzi Halevi arrived on Saturday at the scene of the attack in Huwara together with the division commander and the commander of the Samaria Brigade, and there was a preliminary investigation into the attack. The commanders also conducted a situation assessment, during which the chief of staff was shown the deployment of forces and blockades in the area and the intelligence efforts to apprehend the terrorist.

8.17.23 – Th

Russians facility 500 miles east of Moscow to produce self-detonating drones

8.17.23 – Th

Russians nearly fall victim to Israeli strike on Iran, report

A delegation of engineers visiting Iran to obtain knowledge and expertise on the production of self-detonating, attack drones told to shelter in place amid Israeli strike on Isfahan precision weapons facility

Ynet|12:38

A Russian delegation visiting Tehran last January was told to shelter in their hotel rooms after an Israeli strike on a weapons facility in Isfahan, the Washington Post reported on Thursday. The Russians traveled to the Islamic Republic in order to gain expertise in the production of drones as part of Russia's plan to build a massive production line that would supply the military with 6,000 UAVs, by 2025 - variants of the Iranian Shahed-136 attack drone, that is capable of traveling more than 1,000 miles.

The report quoted an unnamed source who said the Mossad carried out a strike on a site believed to be a production hub for drones and missiles, "leaving flames billowing from the facility," prompting the Iranian officials to forbid the managers and engineers, to leave their hotel, fearing that Israel might strike facilities the group was supposed to tour.

In the article, the Washington Post revealed documents showing the Russian effort to establish a production facility in the Tatarstan region, 804 kilometers (500 miles) east of Moscow that would work around the clock on a massive production line.

"Engineers are trying to improve on Iran's dated manufacturing techniques, using Russian industrial expertise to produce the drones on a larger scale than Tehran has achieved and with greater quality control. The engineers also are exploring improvements to the drone itself, including making it capable of swarm attacks in which the UAVs autonomously coordinate a strike on a target," the Post said.

Russia and Iran struck a deal last November, to produce self-detonating drones at the Albuga Special Economic Zone, in the Tatarstan region. "The cooperation included the transfer of designs, training of production staff and provision of increasingly hard-to-source electronic components," the post said. "Tehran agreed to sell Moscow what is

effectively a franchise, with Iranian specialists sharing project documentation, locally produced or reverse-engineered components and know-how.

8.17.23 – Th

Largest arms deal in Israel's history: US approves sale of Arrow 3 to Germany

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Defense Ministry announces Washington gives go-ahead to massive deal valued at \$3.5 billion; Gallant: 'In the eyes of every Jew, there is a special significance to the fact that Germany is relying on the State of Israel for its defense'

Yoav Zitun|00:57

Washington has approved the sale of Israel's Arrow 3 missile defense system to Germany, the Defense Ministry announced Thursday morning.

Representatives from the Israeli and German defense ministries and Israel Aerospace Industries will convene to sign off on the largest security deal in the country's history, valued at \$3.5 billion, or approximately NIS 14 billion.

The announcement from the U.S. State Department regarding the administration's decision to approve the massive deal was received Wednesday night by Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, Defense Ministry Director-General Major General (Res.) Eyal Zamir and Head of the Defense Research and Development Directorate Brigadier General (Res.) Dr. Danny Gold.

The Arrow 3 system, jointly developed and produced by Israel's Defense Research and Development Directorate and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA), and led by Israel Aerospace Industries, is the world's most advanced anti-ballistic missile system, designed to intercept ballistic missiles outside the atmosphere.

Arrow 3 is an exo-atmospheric interceptor, and it has the capability of long-range interceptions at a high altitude above the atmosphere, a feature that makes it the best of its kind in the world. Its operating principle is based on a direct physical hit on the target (hit-to-kill).

Following the nod from Washington, senior officials in the German and Israeli defense ministries will convene to ratify the deal. Berlin will pay a \$600 million advance payment to enable the immediate commencement of work on the project.

All details of the contract have been agreed upon between the German and Israeli defense ministries and are submitted for final approval by the German government and the legislature. The signing of the full contract is expected toward November.

8.16.23 – We

US sanctions Hezbollah group under the guise of environmental activism

8.16.23 – We

U.S. sanctions Lebanon group linked to Hezbollah

IDF says Green without borders (GWB) funded by Hezbollah aiding Iran-backed group's efforts along the Lebanon Israel border; State Department says move means to prevent terror in Lebanon, Israel and around the world

Ynet| 14:14

The U.S. Department of the Treasury on Wednesday said it was sanctioning Green Without Borders, a Lebanese group linked to the Hezbollah terror organization.

"The United States rejects Hizballah's cynical efforts to cloak its destabilizing terrorist activities with false environmentalism," said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. The group had been providing support to and cover for Hizballah's operations in southern Lebanon along the "Blue Line" between Lebanon and Israel, under the guise of environmental activism, according to the U.S. government.

"We will continue to support the many Lebanese civil society groups protecting Lebanon's unique and sensitive natural environment while also relentlessly pursuing Hizballah and their support networks," a statement read.

Israel had accused the GWB of being funded by Hezbollah. "The organization has established several outposts used by Hezbollah in the Western sector of the Israel-Lebanon border," the IDF said.

The group's leader Zouher Nahli, who was also sanctioned, told the Associated Press last January that his non-governmental organization was not political and worked for all people.

"Under Nahla's leadership, GWB has functioned as a cover for Hizballah's terrorist activities. GWB sites have been used to conduct Hizballah's weapons training, to provide support for Hizballah's activities along the Blue Line in southern Lebanon, and to impede the freedom of movement of the UN Security Council-mandated United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the state department said.

"We are taking this action as part of our efforts to prevent and disrupt financial and other support for terrorist attacks in Lebanon, Israel, and around the world. The United States is committed to denying funding and resources to these terrorist support networks and will continue countering the threats they pose both locally and internationally."

8.16.23 – We

US Gulf of Oman deployment increases after 20 oil tanker seizures by Iran

8.16.23 – We

US beefs up Gulf deployment over Iran oil tanker threat

Move comes as Iranian seizures threaten oil tankers plying the Gulf, after long-made demands by Arab nations in the area, who accuse Washington of retreating from the region

AFP | 13:43

Three thousand additional US personnel on troop-landing warships have already passed through the Red Sea, and US-led maritime forces are warning ships against approaching Iranian waters.

The moves follow a spate of capture and attempted capture of ships in and around the Strait of Hormuz, the U-shaped gateway to the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea that carries a fifth of world oil output.

"There is a heightened threat, a heightened risk to regional mariners in terms of seizures" by Iran in the strait, said Commander Tim Hawkins, spokesman for the US Navy's Fifth Fleet.

"Right now, our focus is on... increasing our presence in and near the Strait of Hormuz to ensure security and stability in a very critical waterway," Hawkins told AFP at the US Naval base in Bahrain.

The attacks on tankers came at a time of troubled relations between Washington and its wealthy Gulf allies, who have long relied on US protection for their oil assets and chafed at a perceived military drawdown.

The US military says Iran has either seized or attempted to take nearly 20 internationally flagged ships in the region in the past two years.

Most recently, Washington said its forces blocked two attempts by Iran to seize commercial tankers in international waters off Oman on July 5. In April and early May, Iran seized two tankers within a week in regional waters.

'Robust forces'

On Saturday, a US-led naval coalition issued an advisory for commercial ships to "transit as far away" from Iran's waters as possible in what Hawkins called a "prudent step" in light of recent seizures.

Less than a week earlier, 3,000 US Marines and sailors arrived in the Red Sea on board the USS Bataan and USS Carter Hall warships, which can ferry troops ashore by aircraft and landing craft.

Washington had already promised fighter jets and said it deployed A-10 Warthog warplanes.

The buildup, according to Hawkins, affords Washington "more robust forces where needed".

An Iranian fast boat, top left, approaches a mockup aircraft carrier built by Iran in the Strait of Hormuz

They are in addition to the more than 30,000 US troops already in the Middle East.

Although Washington has previously sent troop reinforcements to the Gulf, including in 2019 as a response to Iran tensions, the US is now considering unprecedented measures. It is preparing to put Marines and Navy personnel aboard commercial tankers transiting the Gulf as an added layer of defence, a US official told AFP in early August.

Hawkins said that although no formal announcement has been made about manning tankers, "we have sailors, we have Marines that are trained here in the region to carry out whatever mission they are tasked with".

But at the same time, the United States military buildup coincides with the first deal between President Joe Biden's administration and Iran's clerical leadership.

The delicate agreement would see Iran free five American prisoners in exchange for the unblocking of Iranian funds frozen in South Korea under US sanctions.

It followed exhaustive diplomacy between the Biden administration and longtime US adversaries Iran. Experts and diplomats said the deal could bring further, quiet efforts to address concerns -- but tensions persist.

The spokesman for Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Ramazan Sharif, last week said his country "can reciprocate any vicious act by the US, such as seizing ships", according to state news agency IRNA.

'Bolster alliances'

Washington's Gulf allies -- reliant on the shipping lane to deliver their oil to global markets -- have long demanded stronger US security commitments, especially after an uptick in seizures by Iran since 2019.

With Biden's increased emphasis on Asia adding to their frustrations, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have boosted engagement with American rivals China and Iran. Dina Arakji, an associate analyst at Control Risks consultancy, called the increased US presence a "shift in posture".

"The move by the US likely aims to reassure Gulf Arab states that Washington remains committed to the region's security," Arakji said.

"Increased Iranian hostility and Chinese engagement with the region has caught Washington's attention," she added, noting the US "now aims to bolster its alliances".

Despite the prisoner deal earlier this month, separate attempts to revive a landmark 2015 nuclear pact with Tehran have effectively collapsed.

"With no sign of a diplomatic agreement between the US and Iran, the only alternative is more effective deterrence," said Torbjorn Soltvedt of the risk intelligence firm Verisk Maplecroft.

But "the perception that the US isn't doing enough to deter Iranian attacks against international shipping will persist" as long as incidents continue.

8.16.23 – We

IDF to relocate five West Bank bases, making way for Jewish settlement expansion

8.16.23 – We

Government allots 1 billion shekel to fund settlements

New drafted plan by Minister Orit Strock aims to remove five IDF bases in the West Bank to make way for Jewish settlement expansion as per the coalition agreement signed by Netanyahu, with the far-right Religious Zionist Party
Amitay Gazit/Calcalist|| 09:42

The government is advancing an unprecedented plan with a budget reaching nearly a billion shekels, which will be invested in Jewish settlements in the West Bank. Leading the plan is National Missions Minister Orit Strock.

According to data obtained by "Calcalist," the plan's current financial scope stands at 672 million shekels from the 2023-2024 budget, but the cost of some clauses within it have yet to be determined.

Certain aspects of the plan were included in the coalition agreement signed by Benjamin Netanyahu with the Religious Zionist Party and would require the government to redirect funds originally allocated for other purposes to support the new plan. One-third of the funds will come from Strock's ministry budget, while the rest will come from various other ministries, primarily from the Finance, Interior, and National Security Ministries. Over half a billion shekels to the West Bank

The funds, however, will be invested solely in Jewish residents in Area C of the West Bank, and will not include the Palestinians living nearby, Gaza border communities, or cities in the periphery which are historically underfunded. Government officials estimate that now, following the approval of the reasonableness clause, it will be easier for the government to pass such allocations of funds without judicial review.

The rationale behind the plan is to strengthen the resilience of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The plan's stated goal is to provide assistance to Jewish settlements facing terror threats in the area. However, contrary to this official explanation, there are numerous clauses within the plan that appear to be aimed at expanding Jewish settlement in the region, and their relations to the defense against terror are difficult to ascertain. The plan has a particularly notable section proposing the conversion of five IDF bases in the West Bank for the purpose of constructing new neighborhoods and industrial zones. The exact budget required for this is still unknown but is estimated at hundreds of millions of shekels.

So far, the removal of IDF bases inside Israel has been mainly funded by state revenue generated through the sale of land for the construction of new neighborhoods. This process is regulated by the Shoham 3 agreement, through which approximately 18 billion shekels were invested to relocate the bases.

Those military bases are situated in the heart of the country in areas where housing is in high demand, and so marketing the land has earned Israel billions of shekels. In contrast, development of land vacated by the IDF bases on the West Bank, will likely not generate sufficient income to cover the costs.

According to the draft plan currently being promoted by the government, the removal of West Bank IDF bases will be integrated into the Shoham 4 agreement, currently under

negotiation between the Finance Ministry, Defense Ministry, and the Israel Land Authority. In such a case, the income from the bases inside Israel, including in Jerusalem, would cover the **potential shortfall** that might arise from transferring the **bases** from the West Bank.

More settlements, Olim, and Jewish education

The **removal of five IDF bases is just one clause** aimed at **promoting settlement growth** in the West Bank. It also includes an **entire section dedicated to bolstering settlements**. The budget for this section hasn't been finalized, but it also **includes preparing construction plans** by the Housing & Construction Ministry, the **establishment of industrial zones** by the Economy Ministry, and the **planning of roads** by the Transportation Ministry.

In another clause, a budget of **100 million shekels** is **allocated for community support, construction of public buildings, development of parks, fostering small-scale employment and entrepreneurship, and assistance to newly arriving settlers**. The **Immigration and Integration Ministry will allocate 12 million shekels** for promoting Jewish settlement among potential new immigrants abroad, exposing them to **opportunities in the West Bank**.

Another section of the plan is focused on **promoting education** and supporting religious **boarding schools in West Bank settlements**, with a cost of 137 million shekels. The funds will be used, among other things, for maintaining the schools, the **construction of new buildings**, and securing **transportation in and between the settlements**.

The money will enable the expansion of existing settlements and the development of new ones around these educational institutions. Additionally, 37 million shekels will be invested in the infrastructure of what is **called the "young settlement,"** referring to Jewish settlements that were previously considered unauthorized outposts until being recently approved by the government.

Another 184 million shekels are **designated for covering security expenses**, in addition to the funds that West Bank settlements already receive for the purpose of **maintaining their security**.

Approximately 220 million shekels of the plan's budget will come directly from the National Missions Ministry, headed by Strock constituting more than half of the ministry's total budget. The ministry will invest 120 million shekels in West Bank municipalities and **regional councils** that meet a few **conditions** set by the plan, claiming that **due to their distance from Israel's center, they require help** in bolstering their population.

This part of the plan includes a clause allocating 30 million shekels for renovating buildings used as Jewish study centers. Some 40 million shekels from the ministry's budget will be invested in upgrading infrastructure and public facilities in local municipalities, and 50 million shekels will be allocated for programs to increase the population.

The plan also includes a budget of 45 million shekels for establishing a **new hospital in the West Bank**, described as a "**medical center**," but it will include departments such as **orthopedics, dialysis, imaging, emergency services, gynecology, pediatrics, audiology,**

ophthalmology, and specialized physician services, essentially forming an advanced medical complex.

Decisions dealing with dedicated budgets for cities, or as in this case, for a distinct geographical and political region, raise a legal dilemma, if it cannot show that the allocation of funds is done in a way that prevents discrimination between cities associated with a specific political party over other cities, between ultra-Orthodox over secular communities, or between Arab over Jewish communities.

Principles of equality and justice dictate that funds should be distributed based on clear and uniform criteria. There are also legal criteria for areas designated as a national priority that give a head start in resource allocation to border area communities and those with a low socio-economic status. The program led by Strock goes against these criteria, and its contents don't align with those intended goals.

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Ynet-News, August 16, 2023 – Wednesday

8.16.23 – We- - - News Placed in August 16 spot – Wednesday
Air Force & Intelligence commanders compromised by protests, clash with PM

8.16.23 – We- - - News Placed in August 15 spot – Tuesday
64th Aliyah flight; over 200 new immigrants from US & Canada land in Israel

8.15.23 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Terrorists attempt to fire rocket from Jenin, but it fails to launch

8.15.23 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Main suspect in killing of Palestinian in Burqa released to house arrest

8.14.23 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Hezbollah leader responds: 'If we go to war - Israel will also return to the Stone Age'

8.14.23 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Israel breaks up Hamas terror cell last month plotting to kidnap Israeli soldiers

8.14.23 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Forces demolish homes in WB outpost; where heroic shepherd defended himself

8.14.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in August 14 spot – Monday
Hawaii wildfires, Maui 2,200 buildings & three more mountain fires 544 buildings

8.13.23 – Su- - - News Placed in August 12 spot – Saturday
Iranian munitions storage facility completely destroyed in attack attributed to Israel