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Israel said to alert embassies worldwide of possible Iran threats

Israel has warned its missions around the world of a possible Iranian terror threat following an arrest in an alleged plot to assassinate one or more Israeli businesspeople in Cyprus, The Times of Israel reports.

According to Channel 12 news, Israeli diplomats across the globe have been told to remain on high alert.

The network also said three suspects in the foiled attack attempt in Cyprus, revealed earlier this week, are suspected of fleeing the island nation.

Iran has been behind repeated threats against Israelis and Israeli missions worldwide over the years. Last March, Israel's National Security Council warned Israelis that they could be targeted by the Islamic Republic abroad. It said Iran was behind a bombing attack near the Israeli embassy in India in January, which did not cause casualties.

The Israeli government has blamed "Iranian terror" for last week's reported plan to kill billionaire Teddy Sagi in Cyprus.

Meanwhile, an array of Iranian cyber networks has been responsible for the online hacking of various Israeli entities in recent months, including insurance companies and at least one university, Israeli cybersecurity firms announced on Wednesday, Israel Hayom reports.

The hackers were identified by Israeli cybersecurity companies, and in at least one instance the hackers tried to create the impression of a ransomware attack in order to breach the secure systems.

Another hacker group managed to use cyber means to spy on Israel and obtain important information on key landmarks in the country, as well as in the Middle East, the US, Russia and Europe.

Iran not getting bomb soon, IDF intelligence head says

Despite enriching uranium at a level not seen before, Iran still has a long way to go before acquiring a nuclear bomb, Israel's Military Intelligence head Maj.-Gen. Tamir Hayman said.

According to Hayman, while the levels of enriched uranium are "disturbing," the Islamic Republic still has a long way to go before acquiring a functioning nuclear bomb that can threaten Israel.

"There is an enriched amount [of uranium] in volumes that we have not seen before and it is disturbing," he said. "At the same time, in all other aspects of the Iranian nuclear project, we see no progress."

Hayman added that "the period of time that still remains of two years has not changed -- because even from the moment you have a breakout, there is still a long way to go before a bomb."

'Green Pass' easing to start

Israel's coronavirus cabinet on Wednesday reportedly lifted the requirement to have a Green Pass to access open-air attractions, outdoor dining, and swimming pools, starting next week, The Times of Israel reports.

Effective Monday, the Green Pass — a document that grants access to public venues for those who are either inoculated against COVID-19, or have recovered from it, or have recently tested negative — won't be needed to gain entry to open-air attractions and swimming pools,

including those indoors, and also not for sitting at restaurant tables that are outside. The pass will continue to be required at gyms.

The Health Ministry is also expected to further delay the launch of new rules to gain access to public venues amid the coronavirus pandemic, putting off the start of the updated Green Pass system by 10 days.

New Green Passes were supposed to start at midnight on Oct 2 with the revoking of existing passes held by some 2 million Israelis. But a rush of Israelis trying to download the fresh permits the next day crashed systems, prompting the ministry to say old passes would still be valid until Thursday.

Under new rules, Green Passes will only be issued to those who have had either the first two or all three vaccine shots, and will only be valid for six months, starting a week after the last dose. In addition, those who have recovered from COVID-19 can get a Green Pass valid for six months after their recovery date, or for six months after receiving a single follow-up vaccine dose.

A temporary Green Pass can also be obtained through a negative virus test, which must be paid for unless the individual is not eligible for vaccination. It is only valid for a few days at most.

The developments came as Israel continued to see a slide in COVID-19 infections that officials hope indicates the country's fourth wave of coronavirus cases is waning. Health Ministry figures published Wednesday showed there were 2,514 new cases diagnosed the day before. Three weeks ago, the daily numbers were consistently around 10,000 cases. The number of serious cases, seen

as a key indicator of the virus outbreak, was at 472 on Wednesday, after stubbornly remaining at over 650 for several weeks until the beginning of the month.

The death toll from the virus since the start of the pandemic continued to tick upward, however, hitting 7,863 on Wednesday, 19 more than the day before.

Despite the waning infection rate, Health Ministry officials balked when Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said Wednesday that he wants schoolkids in cities with low rates of infection to be exempt from quarantine after coming in contact with confirmed virus cases, and instead to conduct testing inside schools.

The method is currently being tested in hundreds of classrooms across the country and ministry sources told media they prefer to wait until the pilot ends in 10 days before making any changes to the national policy.

Court OKs limited Jewish prayer on Temple Mount

A Jerusalem judge has backed the right of Jews to engage in silent prayers on the Temple Mount, marking the first time a court has endorsed Jewish prayer on the holy site since authorities quietly began rescinding their de facto ban on all non-Muslim prayers, Arutz Sheva reports.

On Tuesday, the Jerusalem Magistrates Court ruled that silent prayers on the Temple Mount cannot be construed as a criminal act, and ordered police to drop a restraining order imposed on Rabbi Aryeh Lippo, who had been barred from the Mount over his silent prayers.

A lawyer for Rabbi Lippo lauded the court for its ruling.

“It is unthinkable that Jews of all people should be banned from whispering prayers even silently on the Temple Mount, while Muslims on the Temple Mount can do whatever they want – pray, give religious lectures, play soccer, and even to riot, while the police do nothing to prevent any of this, but Jews are made to feel like outsiders in this holy place.”

Jordan condemned the ruling and

Palestinian terror groups warned of an escalation in hostilities.

Sa'ar to bring anti-Netanyahu bill to a vote

Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar, the Minister of Justice, said Wednesday that he expects to bring to a vote as early as next week a law that prohibits a defendant from forming a government, Arutz Sheva reports.

On the claim that this is a law designed to protect the government from opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, Sa'ar replied that “if mayors and ministers are not allowed to serve with an indictment, then what is personal here?”

Previously classified Yom Kippur War docs released

Israel's national archive on Wednesday published previously classified protocols from the Yom Kippur War on the 48th anniversary of the outbreak of the surprise attack by the armies of Egypt and Syria, Ynetnews reports.

The newly published documents include 14 stenograms from government meetings during the fighting which took place October 6-25, 1973.

The war — one of the bloodiest in Israel's history — ended with 2,656 Israeli dead, 7,251 wounded and 294 captured.

One protocol from the morning of October 7 — less than a day after Egyptian and Syrian forces began their coordinated attack, shows Meir grappling with the size of the catastrophe.

“They won't hunker down, they will attack. Move from one line to another and keep attacking,” she said. “The little help we have from the global community will be gone; they will throw us to the dogs.

They don't like Jews, let alone weak Jews.”

On October 31, about a week after the end of the war, Meir commented on a proposal made by Egypt earlier in the war that would see Israel completely withdrawing from the Suez Peninsula in exchange for a total ceasefire. She said that “this could have been achieved without a war.”

The full materials can be found on the archives' website: www.archives.gov.il.

Royal flush

A 2,700-year-old private toilet dating back to the days of the First Temple was recently discovered during an archaeological excavation in Jerusalem, according to the Israel Antiquities Authority, The Times of Israel reports. The limestone toilet cubicle was unearthed at a digging site in the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood of Jerusalem.

“A private toilet cubicle was very rare in antiquity, and only a few were found to date, most of them in the City of David,” said Yaakov Billig, director of the Israel Antiquities Authority excavation. “In fact, only the rich could afford toilets. A thousand years later, the Mishnah and the Talmud raised various criteria that defined a rich person, and Rabbi Yossi suggested that to be rich is ‘to have the toilet next to his table.’”

The bathroom had a carved stone toilet with a hole in the center, positioned over a deep septic tank, said the IAA. The find dates back to the First Temple Period and is believed to belong to an “ancient royal estate” that operated in the 7th century BCE, the Antiquities Authority suggested.

