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Firebomb threats

Australian Jews detail their plight to Royal Commission

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Significant find

First Temple-era figurine mold unearthed in J'lem

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Sadness and anger

Rock band Eifo Hayered releases new album

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Trump: US-Tehran talks are 'good,' drones hit Iran's neighbors

• By BO ERICKSON, NAYERA ABDALLAH and ELWELY ELWELLY

WASHINGTON/DUBAI (Reuters) – US President Donald Trump said on Monday that the United States was

having “good talks” with Iran and there was a chance of a deal over their conflict, but warned that US strikes would resume if the negotiations failed to deliver.

Washington abruptly suspended

a two-week campaign of air strikes against Iran on Saturday in the president's latest strategic U-turn in the five-month-old conflict.

“We're talking right now,” Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One.

“We're having good talks... I think there's a good chance that something could happen, and if it does, good. If it doesn't, we go back to doing what we were doing two days ago.”

In contrast to the president's

remarks, Tehran appeared to quickly test the pause in the US's military campaign, with Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq reporting drone attacks on Monday.

Saudi Arabia said it shot down

drones aimed at petroleum targets, including in the capital, Riyadh. It said the drones had been launched from Iraq by Iran-backed armed

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'Turkey seeks to meddle in vote with social media'

Shin Bet chief Zini to present information on foreign interference in Israeli elections

EXCLUSIVE

• By AMICHAEL STEIN

Turkey is attempting to interfere in Israel's upcoming election through activity on social media, senior Israeli security officials told *The Jerusalem Post* on Monday. According to the officials, the activity is intended to influence Israeli public opinion, disrupt the election campaign, and deepen divisions between different groups within Israeli society.

The officials did not provide details about the social media accounts, platforms, or organizations involved. They also did not say whether the operation was directed by the Turkish government.

The assessment places Turkey alongside Iran among the foreign actors Israeli security authorities suspect of attempting to influence the election and exploit divisions within Israeli society.

Further, the disclosure comes as Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) Director David Zini prepares to present information about indications of foreign election interference to a classified Knesset subcommittee on Monday, Israeli public broadcaster KAN News reported earlier on Monday.

Zini is also expected to brief lawmakers on Israel's ability to track covert flows of money intended to finance political activity inside the country, according to the report. Central Elections Committee Chairman and Supreme Court Deputy President Noam Sohlberg is also expected to attend the hearing.

The National Cyber Directorate told previous Knesset hearings that indications of attempted election interference had already been detected, KAN reported. For-



RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN, president of Turkey, holds a press conference at Bestepe Presidential Compound during the NATO Summit in Ankara earlier this month. (Serdar Ozsoy/Getty Images)

ign attempts to influence the vote have become a growing concern ahead of Israel's October 27 election, the country's first national election since the October 7 massacre and the war that followed.

President Isaac Herzog warned last week

about threats to the integrity of the election after meeting with Zini and Sohlberg.

Herzog urged law-enforcement authorities to act firmly against the threats and called on Israelis to exercise caution when consuming and sharing material on social media.

“Elections are a test for Israeli democracy, and they are also a test for the unity and cohesion of Israeli society,” Herzog said.

A State Comptroller's Office report published earlier in July found that Israel had no national policy or designated govern-

ment body responsible for coordinating the response to foreign online influence campaigns, despite authorities having identified the threat years ago.

State Comptroller Matanyahu Englman warned that hostile actors, including the Iranian regime, were using social media to deepen divisions, spread panic, and manipulate Israelis' understanding of events.

Former Central Elections Committee chairman Hanan Melcer also warned this month that Israel must prepare for attempts by foreign and domestic actors to interfere in the election, including through artificial intelligence (AI) and anonymous social media activity.

Likud MK Amit Halevi identified Iran and Turkey as the primary orchestrators of a strategic effort to sow internal division and achieve “regime change” in Jerusalem in an interview with the *Post* on Monday. Halevi, a member of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, issued a stark warning regarding what he describes as sophisticated foreign intervention in Israel's domestic process.

While Israel's use of paper ballots makes direct mechanical tampering with elections nearly impossible, Halevi emphasized that foreign actors can still influence the outcome.

“You can influence,” Halevi said. “And as long as it is an Israeli citizen, that is excellent and desirable. But when it involves a foreign country with foreign interests and a hostile state is behind the influence, it becomes fundamentally invalid.”

Halevi detailed what he described as the

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IDF boosts W. Bank deployment to 26 battalions amid rising violence

Iran claims Hormuz control as drones target Jordan, Saudi Arabia • Israel kills Hamas security chief in Gaza

• By SARAH BEN-NUN and Reuters

The IDF has increased its deployment across the West Bank to 26 battalions, adding two battalions amid a sharp escalation marked by Palestinian terrorist attacks and attacks from settlers, *The Jerusalem Post* learned on Monday.

The figure represents the number of battalions operating across the West Bank rather than a disclosed number of soldiers. The deploy-

ment is not static, with forces routinely moved between areas according to operational assessments and changing security needs.

It is unclear whether the additional deployment will remain in place throughout the summer and ahead of the High Holy Days as the military continues to reassess a rapidly shifting situation.

The *Post* was not provided with a separate breakdown of forces assigned to prevent attacks by extremist Israelis

against Palestinians. Their distribution is determined by broader situational assessments.

The reinforcement comes after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered increased troop deployments, additional checkpoints, and expanded counterterrorism operations following Friday's deadly shooting near Gilad Farm. Security forces arrested more than 70 terror suspects

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Likud votes to allow Netanyahu to expand his control over party list, allocate top slots

• By KESHET NEEV

The Likud Central Committee voted Monday on granting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the authority to determine eight slots within the first 30 spots on the party list, ahead of internal primaries before the upcoming elections.

If approved, the proposal would mark a significant shift in Likud's primary system, granting Netanyahu expanded control over the party's Knesset list. More than 4,000 Central Committee members were eligible to vote on the

changes, with turnout reaching 72% before polls closed at 8 p.m. The results were expected to be announced late Monday evening.

The party has for years prided itself on conducting primaries in which its over 100,000 registered members are eligible to vote for the Knesset list. Netanyahu has pushed for the system to be changed in recent weeks ahead of the primaries, which were set for August 17.

The changes to the party's primaries have led to fierce

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A LIKUD member votes at a party polling station during the internal election in Tel Aviv yesterday. (Avshalom Sassoni/Flash90)

Syria, Lebanon tracks: Security before peace

ANALYSIS

• By HERB KEINON

Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa said in an Al Jazeera interview on Sunday that he is working to reach a security arrangement with Israel that could eventually lead to a comprehensive peace agreement.

That's the good news.

The less good news is that such a peace, he said, would come about “without compromising Syria's right to the occupied Golan.”

Considering that no Israeli

government in the foreseeable future is likely to consider ceding the Golan – especially in view of the endemic chaos and instability in Syria – a peace agreement conditioned on an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights would seem out of reach.

A lot has happened in Syria and the region since Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Ehud Barak, Ehud Olmert, and even Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu flirted in the 1990s and the early 2000s with the idea of letting the Syrians dangle their toes in the Kinneret.

But that does not make Sharaa's statement insignificant – even if it is one he has



SYRIAN PRESIDENT Ahmed al-Sharaa attends a summit of the European Union and regional partners' leaders in Nicosia in April. (Yves Herman/Pool/Reuters)

A-G asks court to freeze law separating PID from prosecution

• By SARAH BEN-NUN

The High Court of Justice should temporarily freeze a law separating the Justice Ministry's Police Investigation Department (PID) from the State Attorney's Office, Attorney-General Gali Baharav-Miara argued on Monday, warning that it would create a “political prosecution unit” capable of intimidating police officers, investigators, prosecutors, and journalists.

In a 47-page response to requests for an interim order,

the Attorney-General's Office said the law was not merely an organizational reform that could be reversed if later accepted. Rather, it would immediately begin dismantling PID, in its current form, and creating a new investigation and prosecution body with sweeping powers and direct dependence on the political level.

Baharav-Miara asked the court to block all steps toward

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