

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Oral Answer

Business of the House

Ian Mearns (Labour): This is a day when I do not like being away from home, because back home my friends, neighbours and my whole Haredi Jewish Orthodox community are going bonkers because it is Purim. So may I wish my whole Orthodox Haredi Jewish community a very happy Purim, because they love it; it is a great time of year for them?

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-21/debates/949BD54E-75E0-4611-B1F5-CC06295BC84A/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-22BF0C4D-C092-49A5-A4DB-98CD2D7EC5AF>

TOP

Holocaust

House of Commons Written Answer

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [231906] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the provisions of section 8(1) of the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900 had an effect on the (a) Government's decision to locate the proposed Holocaust Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens and (b) development of plans for the Memorial and Learning Centre.

Heather Wheeler: The Government decided to locate the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens so that the view of Parliament from the Memorial will serve as a permanent reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences. The development of plans will take proper account of relevant legislation and regulations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-13/231906/>

Israel

House of Commons Oral Answer

Business of the House

Louise Haigh (Labour): In a recent answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Northfield (Richard Burden), a Minister of State at the Foreign Office told him that the UK Government did not normally disclose how they intend to vote ahead of United Nations Human Rights Council meetings. However, this morning, writing in the *Jewish Chronicle*, the Foreign Secretary has confirmed that they intend to vote against all proposals under item No. 7 relating to the occupied Palestinian territories. Does the Leader of the House agree that if Ministers are telling Members of this House that the Government do not disclose their voting intentions, it is therefore completely inappropriate for them to announce those intentions elsewhere? Will she help to secure an urgent statement tomorrow from the Foreign Office on the Government's voting intentions at this crucial meeting?

Andrea Leadsom: I would certainly agree that it is always preferable for Ministers to come to this House, as is the convention, to make any important statements in the Chamber. I am not aware of the specific circumstances of what the hon. Lady mentions, so I cannot comment on that. However, we have Foreign Office questions on 2 April, and she could certainly raise the matter there, or perhaps seek an urgent question if it is something of a more urgent nature.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-21/debates/949BD54E-75E0-4611-B1F5-CC06295BC84A/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-756DDE51-2965-494D-9F14-F511264E7F75>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-14/232512/>

The article referred to above can be read at

<https://www.thejc.com/comment/comment/jeremy-hunt-un-human-rights-council-ignored-our-concerns-on-its-israel-approach-now-we-must-act-1.481829>

House of Commons Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

Gaza: Zoos

Andrea Jenkyns (Conservative) [232054] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in Gaza on the treatment of animals in Rafah Zoo.

Andrea Jenkyns (Conservative) [232055] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government can take to (a) provide support to and (b) if necessary re-house the animals in Rafah Zoo, Gaza.

Alistair Burt: We have not had any discussions on the specific issue, as the UK retains a no contact policy with Hamas in its entirety. We remain very concerned about the humanitarian and economic situation in Gaza and regularly raise our concerns about Gaza with the Israeli authorities, urging them to work together with the Palestinian Authority and Egypt to see long-term improvements.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-13/232054/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-13/232055/>

Foreign Investment in UK: Technology

David Davis (Conservative) [231362] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of foreign direct investment in the UK tech sector.

Graham Stuart: The latest release showed the UK's tech sector attracted more venture capital investment than anywhere else in Europe, with £6.3bn (\$7.9bn) in funding from investors in 2018. This is ahead of Germany, France and Israel. This is yet more evidence of the UK's continued attractiveness to investors across the globe

The government continues to support the tech sector. Through the AI Sector Deal, launched last Spring, the government is actively supporting the development of talent, nationwide, to ensure this position is maintained and enhanced in the years to come. Investment in the AI business has exceeded £3.8 billion and continues to grow.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-12/231362/>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/internationaldevelopmentassistancepalestiniannationalauthoritieschools.html>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

Online Forums Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

Scottish Parliament

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 9 days**

Scottish charity law (closing date 1 April 2019)

<https://tinyurl.com/y9ln88df>

TOP

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438