



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Hate Crime: Educational Institutions

Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op) [179340] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer of 31 March 2021 to Question 174230, on Hate Crime: Young People, when her Department last undertook a review of the efficacy of its policies on the prevention and reporting of hate crimes in schools and colleges.

Kevin Foster: The government, alongside schools and teachers, is committed to supporting children and young people to thrive and reach their potential in a safe and respectful environment.

Schools continue to play an important role in preparing children and young people for life in modern Britain, supporting them to understand the society in which they are growing up and teaching about respect for other people and tolerance.

We continue to work with colleagues across government, as well as those in the school sector and communities to better understand issues around discrimination, hatred and prejudice on an ongoing basis. For example, the Department for Education has provided funding to anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying, including projects targeting bullying of particular groups, such as those who are victims of hate related bullying.

These grants ended in March 2021, and grant holders are currently working to finalise independent evaluations of their programmes, which will be published in due course.

The Department for Education has considered next steps for anti-bullying support in schools, working closely with external stakeholders, and will shortly be running a procurement exercise to fund activity in 2021-22.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179340>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-23/174230>

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House of Commons Oral Answers

Trade Relationship with the Middle East

Robert Halfon (Conservative): What steps she is taking to strengthen the UK's trade relationship with the middle east. (914117)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Trade (Ranil Jayawardena): Britain has strong bilateral trading relationships with our friends in the middle east and a clear ambition to deepen them. As my right hon. Friend knows, we are undertaking a joint trade and investment review with the Gulf Cooperation Council, with which total trade stood at over £33 billion in the year to September 2020. The Government have also signed trade agreements with Jordan and Lebanon, and just last month we entered into an agreement with the sovereign wealth fund of Abu Dhabi to provide £1 billion of investment into British life sciences.

Robert Halfon: Today is Yom Ha'atzmaut—Israeli independence day—so I hope that my hon. Friend will wish Israel happy independence day. The normalisation of ties between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain last year was a hugely positive step not only for regional peace but for commerce, tourism and cultural exchanges. Does my hon. Friend agree that the United Kingdom is well placed to support our ally Israel in developing ties in the region, and will he explore the opportunities that these new trade relationships could bring to our country?

Ranil Jayawardena: Indeed I do join my right hon. Friend in wishing all Israelis a happy independence day. He is right to recognise the strong relationships that we have with the state of Israel. We welcome the normalisation of relations, which creates many opportunities for increased trade, tourism and cultural links as well. Britain is well placed to support Israel in this endeavour. Total trade between us was £4.9 billion in the year to September 2020, up from the previous year. We are building a framework for a new bilateral science partnership. In addition, the tech hub based in the British embassy in Tel Aviv continues to partner Israeli expertise with British companies, delivering significant benefits to the British economy.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-04-15/debates/C97F9901-FC46-40EC-8AB9-1B9306E9DF74/TradeRelationshipWithTheMiddleEast>

House of Commons Written Answers

West Bank: Humanitarian Aid

Stephen Timms (Labour) [178771] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make representations to the Government of Israel to provide (a) compensation and (b) restitution for the destruction of UK-funded humanitarian aid structures in the occupied West Bank which led to the displacement of people in the community of Khirbet Humsah al-Foqa in February 2021.

James Cleverly: The UK regularly raises the demolition of Palestinian property with the Government of Israel, including over the repeated confiscation and demolition of donor-funded assistance and structures at Humsa al Bqai'a. We continue to monitor the situation in Humsa al Bqai'a closely. Officials from the British Consulate General in Jerusalem most recently visited on 16 February. UK and European UN Security Council members delivered a joint statement on 25 February, calling for unimpeded access for the delivery of vital humanitarian aid to the community. The UK Ambassador alongside European Ambassadors urged an end to demolitions in Humsa Al-Baqai'a in a meeting with Israeli authorities on 25 February. There have been no further demolitions or confiscations in the community since 22 February.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/178771>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://onu.delegfrance.org/middle-east-we-reiterate-our-call-on-israel-to-halt-demolitions-and>

Israel: Palestinians

Stephen Timms (Labour) [178772] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the sexual violence reportedly committed against a Palestinian child in Israeli detention on 13 January 2021.

James Cleverly: The UK continues to make representations to the Israeli authorities on reports of ill-treatment of Palestinian minors in Israeli military detention. In instances where there have been accusations of ill-treatment, we advocate swift, transparent investigation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/178772>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2622>

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

**** Domestic Abuse Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709>

Commons consideration of Lords amendments

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-04-15/debates/0E322BD7-571C-4DC5-A8C8-7B29806DE067/DomesticAbuseBill>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Freedom of Speech (Universities) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2820>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

Marriage (Authorised Belief Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2795>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19

(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

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