



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Office for National Statistics

Coronavirus and vaccination rates in people aged 40 years and over by socio-demographic characteristics, England: 8 December 2020 to 15 May 2021

Includes estimates for factors such as ethnic and religious group.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/datasets/covid19vaccinationratesandoddsratiosbysociodemographicgroup/40yearsandover8december2020to15may2021/ratesandoddsratios40.xlsx>

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Israel

House of Commons Oral Answer

Prime Minister's Questions

Keir Starmer (Labour): ... The G7, bilateral discussions with President Biden and the possibility of a new Government in Israel also provide a real chance to restart a meaningful middle east peace process. The appalling violence recently, which killed 63 children in Gaza and two children in Israel, shows just how urgent this is. For too many people in Palestine, the promise of an end to the occupation and a recognised sovereign Palestinian state feels more distant than ever, so will the Prime Minister take the opportunity this weekend to press for renewed international agreement to finally recognise the state of Palestine, alongside a safe and secure Israel; to stop the expansion of illegal settlements; and to get a meaningful peace process back up and running?

The Prime Minister: It has been a long-standing objective of this Government, and I think it is common ground across the House, that the solution for the middle east peace process is a two-state solution. We continue to press for that, and I have made that position plain in my conversations with both the Palestinian Authority and of course with Israel. ...

House of Commons Written Answers

Iran: Israel

Scott Benton (Conservative) [8750] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of reports of Iran-linked attacks against Israeli-owned naval vessels.

James Cleverly: The UK is committed to ensuring the safety of shipping and to maintaining the principle of freedom of navigation. Growing tensions around strategic maritime choke points threatens the ability of trade to safely pass through international waters. The UK continues to underline the need for a reduction in tensions on all sides.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-27/8750>

Arms Trade: Israel

Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) [7933] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2021 to Question 4015, what assessment he has made of whether any of those exported land rover vehicles were used by Israeli (a) military or (b) police forces in response to protests in Ramallah on Tuesday 18 May 2021.

James Cleverly: HM Government takes its export control responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. We consider all export applications thoroughly against a strict risk assessment framework. HM Government will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-26/7933>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-19/4015>

Israel: Coronavirus

Julie Elliott (Labour) [10382] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Israeli government on covid19 vaccinations in that region.

James Cleverly: The British Embassy Tel Aviv and the British Consulate-General Jerusalem are in regular contact with the relevant parties and continue to raise the issue of timely access to vaccines. The Foreign Secretary most recently raised this during his visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 26 May. The UK is committed to global equitable access to effective vaccines as demonstrated by our £548 million contribution to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines. We are pleased that the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) were among the first to benefit from the COVAX scheme with delivery of over 61,000 doses that arrived on 17 March 2021. Since that initial shipment, we are pleased that several further deliveries have arrived in the OPTs, including most recently on 1 June 2021.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10382>

Hamas

John Howell (Conservative) [10313] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the

role of the political leadership of Hamas in its military activities.

James Cleverly: The UK welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza on 20 May, which is an important step to ending the cycle of violence and loss of civilian life. The UK unequivocally condemns the firing of rockets at Jerusalem and locations within Israel. We strongly condemn these acts of terrorism from Hamas and other terrorist groups. The UK retains a policy of no contact with Hamas in its entirety.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10313>

Occupied Territories: Violence

Dan Carden (Labour) [10603] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to UN Security Council Resolution 2286 (2016), what steps his Department is taking to pursue accountability for attacks on health workers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

James Cleverly: We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, and urge restraint in the use of live fire. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance to bring those responsible to justice.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10603>

The Resolution referred to above can be read at

https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/827916/files/S_RES_2286%282016%29-EN.pdf

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Dan Carden (Labour) [10604] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support the unimpeded delivery of fuel and emergency humanitarian relief to Gaza.

James Cleverly: Access for humanitarian purposes into and out of Gaza remains critical. We are urging the Government of Israel to ensure access is maintained to ensure delivery of humanitarian supplies, including fuel. I announced on 20 May that the UK is providing £3.2 million to the UN Relief and Works Agency's (UNRWA) emergency flash appeal, which launched on 19 May. The emergency appeal by UNRWA focuses on meeting the immediate humanitarian needs of vulnerable Palestinians living in Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10604>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-aid-package-to-help-provide-emergency-relief-for-civilians-in-gaza--2>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867>

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875>

Charities Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878>

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Online Safety Bill (Draft)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 7 days**

Race Equality Action Plan: An Anti-racist Wales (closing date 17 June 2021)

<https://gov.wales/race-equality-action-plan-anti-racist-wales>

Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) (closing date 30 June 2021)

<https://evensurvey.co.uk/>

Protect Duty (closing date 2 July 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protect-duty>

Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in the EU (closing date 5 July 2021)

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13068-Strategy-on-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-Jewish-life-in-the-EU_en

Curriculum for Wales Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) guidance (closing date 16 July 2021)

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-05/consultation-document-curriculum-for-wales-religion-values-and-ethics-guidance.pdf>

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