



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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£28 million funding will help keep places of worship safe

Places of worship will receive £28 million in funding to help keep them and their attendees safe, the Security Minister announced today.

The funding is available this year through two schemes, with applications now open.

The funding is part of the government's commitment to ensure that faith communities in England and Wales are protected from the threat of hate crime and terror attacks, and can practise their faith freely and without fear.

The money is for physical protective security, such as CCTV, intruder alarms and secure fencing to help protect mosques, churches, temples, gurdwaras and other places of worship. Mosques will also be able to access a new security guarding scheme later in the year.

Security Minister, Tom Tugendhat said: Freedom of religious belief and the freedom to worship are fundamental.

We will defend against any form of hatred targeting our communities, and are committed to protecting all faiths.

I encourage any place of worship that feels they would need assistance to apply under the schemes.

To apply for funding, applicants should submit evidence of their vulnerability and experience of hate crime. The application window is open for 8 weeks, and we will notify successful sites from November 2023.

In 2021/22, two in five (42%) religious hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales were targeted against Muslims. This year, up to £24.5 million will again be available to protect mosques and Muslim faith schools.

This protection will be through a new scheme called the 'Protective Security for Mosques Scheme' and a scheme for Muslim Faith schools launched directly to teachers of eligible schools earlier in the year. An additional £3.5 million funding will also be available for all other (non-Muslim and non-Jewish) faiths through the 'Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme'.

The Jewish community continues to receive funding for Jewish schools, synagogues and

other community sites through a separate scheme called the [Jewish Community Protective Security Grant](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/28-million-funding-will-help-keep-places-of-worship-safe), which was increased by £1 million earlier this year.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/28-million-funding-will-help-keep-places-of-worship-safe>

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Holocaust

Welsh Senedd Debate

Legislative Consent Motion on the Illegal Migration Bill

477 Sioned Williams (Plaid Cymru): ... One of the most powerful appeals amongst the countless made by organisations against the passing of the [Illegal Migration] Bill was made by Jewish refugee groups. The Wiener Holocaust Library is the world's oldest and Britain's largest collection of original archival material on the Nazi era, and this year marks its ninetieth birthday. The library has its origins in the work of Dr Alfred Wiener, who campaigned against Nazism in the 1920s and 1930s and gathered evidence about antisemitism and the persecution of Jews in Germany. It also holds unique collections relating to the experiences of Jewish refugee families who came to Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. In a rare political intervention, the library, together with the Association of Jewish Refugees, said both organisations are concerned about the impact of the Government's proposed Illegal Migration Bill and the discourse and language surrounding its formulation. While the library's collection attests to the agony experienced by those who had to flee persecution, the AJR has continuously supported refugees and survivors.

478 'If "Never Again" is to become reality rather than a refrain, we must show leadership to open our doors to bring those at risk out of harm's way.

479 When we say 'never again', we must mean it, we must live it, we must enforce it; we must never undermine it. ...

<https://record.senedd.wales/Plenary/13381#C513398>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Iran: Palestinians

Jeff Smith (Labour) [189007] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the extent of Iran's influence on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

David Rutley: The UK Government regularly assesses the impact of Iran's activity throughout the Middle East, including its political, financial and military support to several militant and proscribed groups. We work closely with our partners to deter destabilising Iranian activity in the region, including through a range of sanctions designations. We are aware of the activities of Iranian-backed militant organisations and we are working hard to de-escalate tensions in order to achieve a peaceful negotiated solution for Israel and the Palestinians.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-12/189007>

Department for Business and Trade

Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Israel

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1163357/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2023-06-21.pdf

Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Occupied Palestinian Territories

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1163413/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2023-06-21.pdf

United Nations

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

The Secretary-General is deeply troubled by yesterday's decision by the Israeli Government to amend settlement planning procedures. The changes can be expected to expedite the advancement of Israeli settlement plans in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. He is also deeply alarmed by the anticipated advancement next week of over 4,000 settlement housing units by Israeli planning authorities.

The Secretary-General reiterates that settlements are a flagrant violation of international law. They are a major obstacle to the realization of a viable two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. The expansion of these illegal settlements is a significant driver of tensions and violence and deepens humanitarian needs. It further entrenches Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory, encroaches on Palestinian land and natural resources, hampers the free movement of the Palestinian population, and undermines the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and sovereignty.

The Secretary-General urges the Government of Israel to halt and reverse such decisions and to immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to fully respect its legal obligations in that regard. He further calls for concrete steps to be taken to implement the commitments made in the Joint Communiqués in Aqaba, Jordan and Sharm al-Sheik, Egypt, respectively.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2023-06-19/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory>

The communiqués referred to above can be read at

<https://www.state.gov/aqaba-joint-communicue/>

and

<https://il.usembassy.gov/joint-communicue-from-the-march-19-meeting-in-sharm-el-sheikh/>

Israel-Palestine: UN envoy 'deeply alarmed by continuing cycle of violence'

Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Tor Wennesland was [reacting on Twitter](#) to the news of a shooting attack reportedly by two Palestinian gunmen, who opened fire at a petrol station on a road outside an Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank.

News reports quoting the Israeli military said both of the gunmen had been shot dead, one at the scene by an armed civilian and the other by Israeli security forces.

The UN envoy urged "all sides to refrain from steps that could further enflame an already volatile situation." ...

Tuesday's violence followed a day of bloodshed on Monday, when at least five Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces during an operation inside the Jenin refugee camp prompting Mr. Wennesland to voice his deep concern over the escalating violence.

He [tweeted that](#) the Israeli operation and ensuing exchange of fire with Palestinian

militants in the occupied West Bank city resulted in five dead including a child. Scores of Palestinians and seven Israeli security personnel were reportedly wounded. ... "Such escalations threaten to plunge Palestine and Israel deeper into a deadly crisis", he said. "All sides must refrain from actions that would further escalate the situation and take steps to reengage on a political path." ...

Israel has been intensifying raids in the West Bank for months now carrying out searches, arrests and home demolitions, amid a reported rise in attacks from Palestinian militants targeting Israelis. More than 160 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the start of the year, with 21 Israeli deaths. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1137932>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Bill of Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

**** Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3475>

Explanatory Notes

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0325/en/220325en.pdf>

Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186>

Holocaust Memorial Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325>

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

Nakba Commemoration Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3461>

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217>

Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188>

Same Sex Marriage (Church of England)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3438>

Schools Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-draft-bill-overarching-documents>

Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163>

Universal Jurisdiction (Extension)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3454>

Scottish Parliament

Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill>

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 2 days**

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill (closing date 23 June 2023)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/3146/>

Charities tax compliance (closing date 20 July 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/charities-tax-compliance/consultation-charities-tax-compliance>

A Human Rights Bill for Scotland (closing date 5 October 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/equality-and-human-rights/a-human-rights-bill-for-scotland-consultation/>

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