

Holy Jewish site of Esther and Mordechai set ablaze in Iran - reports

'Disturbing reports from Iran that the tomb of Esther & Mordechai, a holy Jewish site, was set afire overnight,' ADL National Director Jonathan Greenblatt tweeted.



BERLIN - National Director of Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Jonathan Greenblatt announced Friday on Twitter that the tomb of Esther and Mordechai in Iran was torched.

"Disturbing reports from Iran that the tomb of Esther & Mordechai, a holy Jewish site, was set afire overnight. We hope that the authorities bring the perpetrators of this antisemitic act to justice & commit to protecting the holy sites of all religious minorities in Iran," Greenblatt tweeted.



Jonathan Greenblatt@JGreenblattADL

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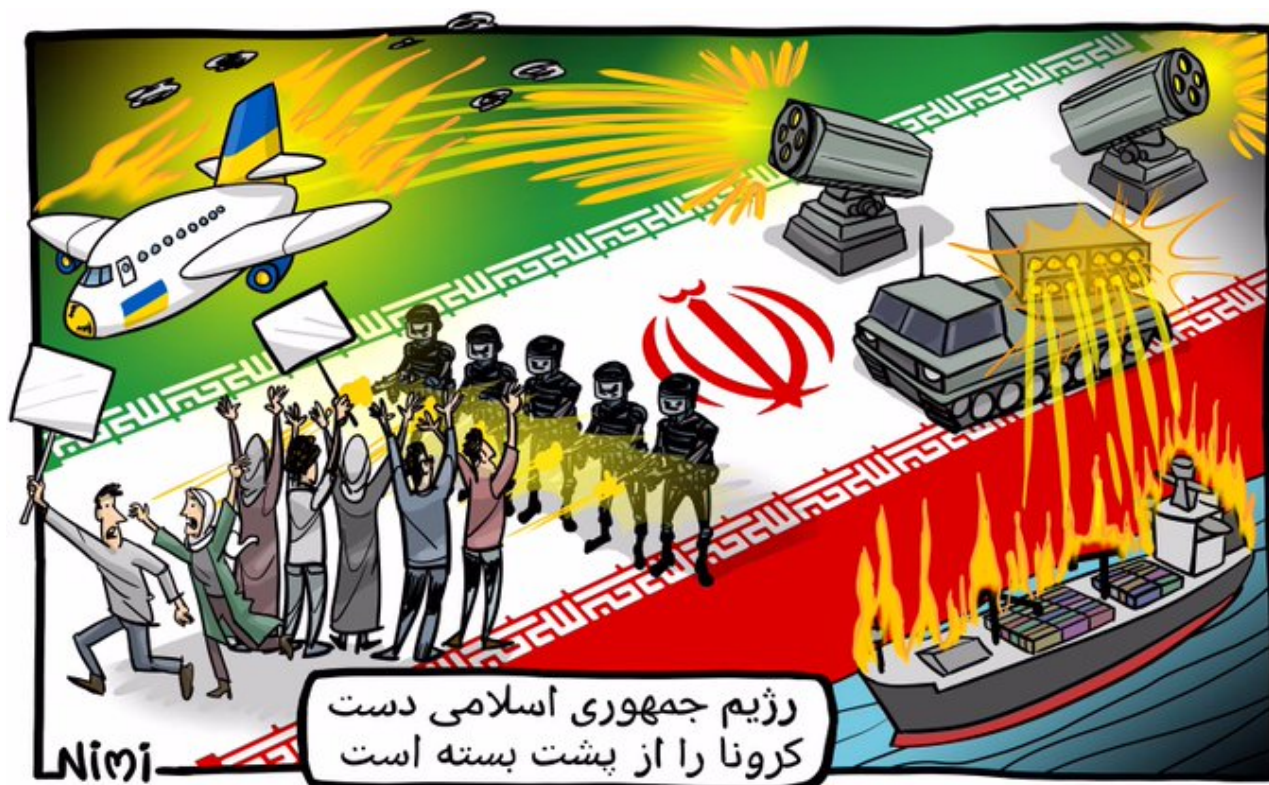
The Jerusalem Post is seeking to obtain the reports cited by Greenblatt in his tweet. Greenblatt has termed Iran's regime the top state-sponsor of antisemitism and Holocaust denial.

Prior to the arson of the tomb, one Twitter user named Mohammad Mahdi Akhyar threatened to destroy the holy site on May 14 in response to a tweet by the Israel's Foreign Affairs' Farsi Twitter page.



· May 14, 2020

رژیم جمهوری اسلامی در هوا، زمین و دریا کُشنده است، حتی بیشتر از کرونا. #هواپیمای_اوکراینی
#اعتراضات_سراسری #ناوچه_کنارک



mohammad mahdi akhyar@mamad0939

ببین لجن

اینو یکی می‌گه که تو تاریخشون به دستور #استر و #مردخای فقط چند هزار نفر ایرانی رو تو یه روز
نکشته باشن

از همین تریبون اعلام کنم اگر دوباره بیش از دهنتون حرف بزنند و جفتک بندازید جوونای اتیش به
اختیار همدان مزار استوره هاتونو (#استر و #مردخای) با خاک یکسان میکنن

It is unclear if the arson is connected to Israel's Independence Day.

US Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism Elan Carr strongly condemned the attack on the Tomb of Esther and Mordechai and said "Iran's regime is the world's chief state sponsor of antisemitism."

He called on the Islamic Republic to "stop incitement" and "protect its Jewish community" and its other minorities.



U.S. Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism@USEAntiSemitism

We strongly condemn the attack on the Tomb of Esther & Mordechai in Hamedan #Iran, which follows a threat last Feb. against the site. Iran's regime is the world's chief state sponsor of #Antisemitism. It must stop incitement and protect its #Jewish community and other minorities.

The Iranian American Jewish Federation of New York and Los Angeles and the members of the Iranian Jewish community in the United States said in a statement that they "are shocked and truly saddened by the news of fire in the ancient and official Iranian Heritage Site, the Tomb of Esther and Mordechai in Hamedan."

The statement continued that "We hereby ask the responsible members of the government of Islamic Republic of Iran to apprehend the perpetrators and bring them to justice for this barbaric act of insult to this holy site and take steps to protect other sites of religious and historic significance."

Arthur Stark, Chairman, William Daroff, CEO, and Malcolm Hoenlein, Vice-Chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, issued a joint statement on the incident.

"This abhorrent and unconscionable act represents not only a blatantly antisemitic assault on Jews and Judaism but an assault on all people of faith. It must be unequivocally condemned by the international community. The government of Iran must act to prevent further attacks and bring to justice those responsible," the statement said.



Conf Of Presidents@Conf_of_Pres

Jewish Leaders Outraged by Desecration of Tomb of Esther and Mordechai



CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS
of Major American Jewish Organizations

Jewish Leaders Outraged by Desecration of Tomb of Esther and Mordechai

New York, NY, May 15th, 2020 . . . Arthur Stark, Chairman, William Daroff, CEO, and Malcolm Hoenlein, Vice Chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, issued the following statement:

"We are outraged by reports that the Tomb of Esther and Mordechai in Hamedan, Iran, was desecrated by arson last night.

Since February, members of the Iranian Basij militia have once again threatened to raze the tomb of historic Jewish heroes Mordechai and Queen Esther. It appears that these domestic terrorists attempted to carry out this outrageous act of desecration with this premeditated attack.

This abhorrent and unconscionable act represents not only a blatantly antisemitic assault on Jews and Judaism, but an assault on all people of faith. It must be unequivocally condemned by the international community. The government of Iran must act to prevent further attacks and bring to justice those responsible."

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"As Chair of Muslims Against Antisemitism, I unequivocally condemn such barbaric acts by the Tehran regime. The international community must immediately move to investigate & hold the regime responsible for any damage that may happen to the site of the Tzadikim," prominent human rights activist, Ghanem Nuseibeh, tweeted.



Ghanem Nuseibeh@gnuseibeh

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<https://twitter.com/benweinthal/status/1261331144219471872> ...

Benjamin Weinthal@BenWeinthal

Breaking: Holy Jewish site of Esther and Mordechai set ablaze in Iran - reports. 'Disturbing reports from Iran that the tomb of Esther & Mordechai, a holy Jewish site, was set afire overnight,' ADL @adl National Director @JGreenblattADL said.
<https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Holy-Jewish-site-of-Esther-and-Mordechai-set-ablaze-in-Iran-reports-628165> ...

The Post reported in February that the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom condemned the Iranian regime for its reported threats to raze the tomb of Esther and Mordechai in Hamadan.

Karmel Melamed, an Iranian-American expert on the Jewish community in the Islamic Republic of Iran, tweeted: "My sources who have contacts with Iran's Jewish community have confirmed that there was an 'attempt' to burn the synagogue at the Tomb. Some smoke damage but the fire was minimal. No arrests of suspects have been made yet by the Ayatollah regime."



Karmel Melamed@KarmelMelamed

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jpost.com

The Iranian regime-controlled The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported on Saturday that a suspect sought to enter the tomb. Radio Farda, the US government-funded news outlet that reports on Iran, wrote that IRNA "confirmed that there had been an attempt to break into the tomb of Esther and Mordechai, a holy Jewish site in Hamedan, but removed the report from its website two hours after its publication."

IRNA said the perpetrator tried to enter the building through an adjacent bank but was not successful, wrote Radio Farda, adding that IRNA claimed that the shrine did not suffer damages and that the suspects faced was captured on CCTV video. IRNA said the police are searching for the perpetrator.

The Voice of America reporter Michael Lipin tweeted: “BREAKING: An eyewitness in #Iran’s Hamadan city told @VOAIran/@VOANews he saw several fire trucks going to the Tomb of Esther and Mordechai after an apparent arson attack on Jewish holy site Thursday night, but authorities didn’t allow people to get close.”



Michael Lipin@Michael_Lipin

BREAKING: An eyewitness in #Iran’s Hamadan city told @VOAIran/@VOANews he saw several fire trucks going to the Tomb of Esther and Mordechai after an apparent arson attack on Jewish holy site Thursday night, but authorities didn’t allow people to get close <https://bit.ly/3626mXg>



واکنش چند سازمان یهودی در آمریکا به آتش زدن مقبره «استر و مردخای» مکان مقدس یهودیان ایران و جهان در...

رهبران چند سازمان یهودی در آمریکا، به آتش کشیده شدن مقبره «استر و مردخای» مکان مقدس یهودیان ایران و جهان را محکوم کرده و خواستار برخورد مقامات ایران با عوامل این اتفاق شدند.
آرتور استارک، ویلیام دار (photo credit: WIKIMEDIA Commons/PHILIPPE CHAVIN)

“USCIRF is troubled by reported threats to the tomb of Esther and Mordechai in Hamadan, Iran, and emphasizes the Iranian government’s responsibility to protect religious sites,” tweeted the US agency.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is an independent, bipartisan, federal government entity that monitors, analyzes and reports on threats to religious freedom.

The Alliance for Rights of All Minorities (ARAM) in Iran tweeted on Sunday that, “according to covering reports, members of the Iranian Basij attempted to raid the historic [tomb of Esther and Mordechai] site yesterday in an act of revenge against the [Israeli-Palestinian] peace plan by US President Donald Trump.”

ARAM noted that “Iranian authorities are threatening to destroy the historic tomb

of Ester and Mordechai in Hamadan and convert the site to a consular office for Palestine.”

The Post could not confirm the “covering reports” cited by ARAM.

Esther and Mordechai “were biblical Jewish heroes who saved their people from a massacre in a story known as Purim. Their burial site has been a significant Jewish landmark for Jews and history buffs around the world,” wrote ARAM.

The Iranian Christians News Agency (Mohabat) reported in early February that the Basij issued threats to the tomb. “The Council for the Exploration of Student Mobilization of Hamadan Universities said in a statement to the United States, Israel, and the Arab countries in the region that they will turn the tomb into a Palestinian Consulate if any action is taken.”

ARAM promotes equal rights for women and religious and ethnic minorities in Iran, as well as the Iranian LGBT community.

Source:

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/holy-jewish-site-of-esther-and-mordechai-set-a-blaze-in-iran-reports-628165>

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