

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"Hayinu k'cholmim" — "We were like those who dream" (Psalm 126:1, the psalm traditionally sung throughout Sukkot before grace after meals — fitting words as the holiday, and the Hebrew year that came before it, draw to a close.)

- As Sukkot winds down, so does the Hebrew year 5786 — and by most measures, it was a good one to close the books on, from the trading floor to the race track to the lab bench.
- Most readers will already have heard about this week's FlyDubai flight bound for Tel Aviv, where a mid-air struggle in the cockpit came within moments of catastrophe. Despite being stabbed, Captain Smit Machchhar fought back and opened the cockpit door, letting passengers and crew — among them Yaniv Hayun — rush in and subdue the attacker before the plane could be brought down, allowing a safe emergency landing in Saudi Arabia and the safe return home of everyone aboard. The investigation will take its course, but one plain fact is already worth pausing on: when it mattered most, ordinary instinct and extraordinary courage both showed up, and they worked.
- The numbers are in, and the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange had a year for the ages: the Tel Aviv 35 Index rose 40.5% over the Jewish year just ended, more than double the S&P 500's 16% gain over the same stretch. The total value of stocks on the exchange climbed from NIS 1.7 trillion to NIS 3.1 trillion, crossing NIS 3 trillion for the first time — pushing Tel Aviv past the \$1 trillion mark and into the small club of the world's biggest stock exchanges. Thirty-three companies joined the exchange this year, 26 of them through new share offerings, nearly double the year before.
- A team of engineering students has put Israel on the map in an unlikely category: solar-powered endurance racing. AFEKA Racing, from Tel Aviv's Afeka Academic College of Engineering, became the first Israeli team ever to compete in Belgium's iLumen European Solar Challenge, the world's only 24-hour solar car race. Their car, carrying a Star of David and the number 18 for "chai" — life — completed 197 laps and nearly 800 kilometres on the track at Circuit Zolder. Three years ago the team didn't exist; now they're eyeing Australia's 3,000-kilometre Bridgestone World Solar Challenge next.
- And in the lab, researchers at Bar-Ilan University and the Weizmann Institute have found a cleverer way to point the immune system at cancer. By using computer-designed protein modifications to stabilise a key receptor on T cells, the team built an enhanced version — nicknamed SET — that produced substantially stronger immune responses against both cancer and viral targets. In mice carrying human tumours, cells treated with the new receptor shrank tumours to roughly a third smaller than untreated cases after 83 days. It's still early-stage work, but a genuinely elegant piece of science: let the computer design the fix, then let the immune system do what it already knows how to do, only better.
- On the business pages, Haifa-based RealSense — the computer-vision and robotics company Intel spun off just fourteen months ago, reportedly after weighing whether to shut it down altogether — is being bought by US machine-vision giant Cognex for around \$600 million. That's roughly a 500% return for the investors who backed the spinout barely a year ago at a \$102 million valuation, and RealSense's Israeli operations are set to become Cognex's development hub going forward. Not every corporate castoff gets a second act; this one got a very good one.
- And at the President's Residence in Jerusalem, Isaac and Michal Herzog kept up one of the nicer fixtures on the Israeli calendar, opening their sukkah to the public for a day of sport-themed shows, activities and a souvenir mug for every visitor. The tradition dates back to Israel's second president, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, built around the Sukkot custom of welcoming guests in — and a smaller turnout than in some past years didn't make it any less what it's always been: a day when the President's gates swing open and anyone can walk through them.
- A quiet news week by this year's standards, which, after a year like 5786, might be exactly the kind of good news worth noting.



In Loving Memory

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