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Ultra-Orthodox opted to ignore lockdown restrictions & riot with police

10.06.20 – Tu - - -  
Haredim in Beit Shemesh caught pelting soldier's car, bus with stones  
Police forces attempting to enforce coronavirus lockdown directives came under verbal and physical attack from residents of the ultra-Orthodox city, who called them 'Nazis' and hurled rocks, objects at law enforcement  
Haim Golditch ,Gilad Cohen,Elisha Ben Kimon| Published: 10.06.20 , 19:14

Ultra-Orthodox protesters in Beit Shemesh on Tuesday hurled stones at passing cars, including a soldier's vehicle, and busses as police forces were attempting to enforce coronavirus restrictions in the Haredi city.

Clashes have been erupting in Haredi cities and neighborhoods across the country for the past week as police officers are trying to enforce the nationwide lockdown in ultra-Orthodox communities, known for disregarding the health directives to conduct prayers.

On Tuesday afternoon riots broke out in Beit Shemesh when a group of men exited a synagogue belonging to an extreme Hassidic sect and were confronted by police.

Police who attempted to close down a sukkah near the synagogue but came under a verbal and physical attack from the locals. As a result, clashes erupted at the scene and spread throughout the neighborhood, which houses other fanatical Haredi sects.

Footage from the scene shows the rioters calling officers Nazis and damaging some police vehicles as well as city busses passing by.

In one instance, a soldier who mistakenly entered the neighborhood, had his car pelted with rocks and was called a "Hardak", an insult thrown at religious Jews who opt to enlist to the IDF.

Many Haredi residents refuse to serve in the military and chastise anyone who choose to enlist in the IDF over continuing religious studies at yeshivas.

Three men were arrested for their part in the rioting. "During the operation against the lockdown violators, three of the rioters were arrested and taken for questioning," said the police in a statement.

Israel Police added its officers will continue enforcing the law across all sectors. Members of the Haredi community have been rioting and clashing with police over lockdown restrictions that require synagogues and religious institutions to shut down, after community leaders opted to ignore government mitigation directives.

The ultra-Orthodox community makes up 40% of latest COVID-19 cases, coronavirus czar, Professor Ronni Gamzu, said last week.

10.06.20 – Tu - - -

Czar Gamzu says lockdown must remain in place for at least another week

10.06.20 – Tu - - -

Gamzu: Infections drop due to 'very effective' lockdown

Coronavirus czar says lockdown must remain in place for at least another week before government can start mulling easing the curbs; he also called out a minister who traveled 150 kilometers and violated health directives

Adir Yanko | Published: 10.06.20 , 18:27

Israel's coronavirus czar on Tuesday said there is a slight decline in the number of new COVID-19 infections in the country due to the "very effective" nationwide lockdown.

The government imposed a nationwide lockdown over two weeks ago after a massive surge in coronavirus infection, resulting in over 9,000 new cases being discovered on a daily basis.

Gamzu told reporters in a press briefing that he is not yet convinced the R rate has dropped low enough in all parts of Israel. "I cannot say definitively the infection is down everywhere," he said.

"I spoke to a doctor at the Sharon Medical Center (in Petah Tikva) soon after she performed a dramatic resuscitation of a young man and a relatively young woman, both with no pre-existing health conditions, who suffered a respiratory failure," Gamzu said.

"Anyone who compares COVID to flu does not know this disease, which poses many unknown challenges to us and has wreaked havoc on medical systems all over the world." The czar said lockdown restrictions should be kept in place at least for another week including the closure of schools and non-essential businesses. "We will make a decision next week when we have a better sense of the infection spread."

Gamzu implored the public to continue observing health directives especially during the holiday of Sukkot, with synagogues as well as beaches remaining off limits. "We owe it to ourselves to get out of this situation," he said.

Responding to reports that Environmental Protection Minister Gila Gamliel had violated health restrictions and traveled 150 kilometers from her Tel Aviv home and attended services at a synagogue in Tiberias, Gamzu said everyone including politicians must adhere to the restrictions with full compliance.

"A person elected to be a public servant must understand the rules apply to him or her even more than to ordinary citizens, and must behave responsibly. Such violations diminish public trust in the government," the professor said, calling on politicians to understand the example they must set.

Gamzu estimated there will be no effective vaccine for coronavirus before the new year at the earliest.

On Monday 5,647 new cases of the virus were confirmed, with 1,650 people hospitalized for treatment. At least 875 people are in serious condition, with 220 of them on ventilators.

The contagion rate of the 52,059 tests conducted stood on 11%.

10.06.20 – Tu - - -

Never again, vows UAE minister as he joins Ashkenazi at Berlin Holocaust memorial

10.06.20 – Tu - - -

'Never again,' vows UAE minister as he joins Ashkenazi at Berlin Holocaust memorial  
Gabi Ashkenazi and Emirati counterpart Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan meet for first time to further cement bilateral treaty signed last month; Germany says 'courageous peace agreement' is 'first good news from Mideast in long time'  
Associated Press,AFP| Updated: 10.06.20 , 17:27

The foreign ministers of Israel and the United Arab Emirates visited the Holocaust Memorial in central Berlin during their "historic" first meeting in the German capital on Tuesday.

Gabi Ashkenazi and Emirati counterpart Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan were meeting in Berlin for talks that Germany hopes will strengthen nascent ties between the two nations and bolster broader Middle East peace efforts.

Accompanied by their host, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, the pair walked through the sombre monument, a vast undulating labyrinth of more than 2,700 grey concrete blocks spread over an area equivalent to three football fields.

It commemorates the slaughter of six million Jews by Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime. The visit by Sheikh Abdullah to the Holocaust Memorial is a highly symbolic step, marking the shift in attitudes in the Arab world towards Israel and Jews.

Maas said it was a "great honor that the Israeli and Emirati foreign ministers have chosen Berlin as the location for their historic first meeting" since the two countries agreed to normalize relations earlier this year.

"The most important currency in diplomacy is trust and I am personally thankful to both my colleagues that they are placing this trust in Germany,' Maas said in a statement. "We are doing everything we can to be good hosts for the dialogue between the two countries on how to shape their future bilateral relations."

The agreement, signed at a White House ceremony last month, reflects the changing politics of the Middle East, in which shared concerns about archenemy Iran have largely overtaken traditional Arab support for the Palestinians, who reject the deal as a betrayal. Ashkenazi and bin Zayed Al Nahyan were meeting, along with Maas, behind closed doors at a secluded government guest house on the outskirts of the German capital.

Maas said the "courageous peace agreement" between the two countries is "the first good news from the Mideast in a long time, and at the same time an opportunity for new movement in the dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians."

Germany is a strong supporter of Israel, but at the same time has been critical of its settlement policies and also works closely with the Palestinians and is in favor of a Palestinian state as part of the two-state solution.

Maas said "courage and trust" are what is needed in the Middle East peace process.

"We must seize this opportunity, and Germany and Europe want to help," Maas said. "I hope that Berlin can offer a good framework to discuss further steps on this path."

Bahrain and the UAE became the first Arab nations to establish relations with Israel since Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994.

10.05.20 – Mo - - -

**IDF strikes Hamas target in Gaza Strip after a single rocket launch**

10.05.20 – Mo - - -

**IDF strikes Hamas target in Gaza after rocket launch**

This is the first launch since 13 rockets were fired at Israel during the White House signing ceremony of the Abraham Accords establishing normalized relations between Israel and Bahrain and the UAE; no damage or injuries reported

Matan Zuri, Yoav Zitun | Updated: 10.05.20 , 22:57

The IDF attacked a Hamas target in the Gaza Strip following a rocket launch towards Israeli border communities.

There was no report of damage or injuries after the projectile was believed to fall in an open field.

The IDF Spokesperson said one rocket launch was detected and residents of the area were not instructed to take any special measures.

IDF strike on Gaza following the launch of 13 rockets at Israel during Abraham Accords ceremony at the White House

This is the first time a rocket was launched from the Strip since September 16 when 13 rockets were launched during the White House signing ceremony of the Abraham Accords, the agreement to normalize relations between Israel, Bahrain and the UAE

10.05.20 – Mo - - -

**Top rabbis & US envoy pray at Wall for healing Donald John, son of Fred “Trump”**

10.05.20 – Mo - - -

**Top rabbis, U.S. envoy pray for Trump at Western Wall**

'May He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon send healing to Donald John, son of Fred,' says Rabbi Shmuel Rabinovitch during Birkat Kohanim ceremony pared down due to lockdown

Reuters | Published: 10.05.20 , 16:37

Israel's senior rabbis prayed for U.S. President Donald Trump to recover from COVID-19 on **Monday**, invoking his name at the Birkat Kohanim (Priestly Blessing) ceremony for Sukkot at Jerusalem's Western Wall.

Support for Trump, who recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moved the U.S. Embassy to the city, is strong among Israelis, who mark the Jewish High Holidays this year while under a second coronavirus lockdown.

"May He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon send healing to Donald John, son of Fred," intoned Shmuel Rabinovitch, rabbi of the Western Wall, a remnant of the Second Temple and one of Judaism's holiest sites.

"May the Holy Blessed One overflow with compassion for him, restore him, cure him, strengthen him, enliven him," he said, reciting the traditional prayer for those in ill health, to amens from Israel's two chief rabbis and U.S. Ambassador David Friedman.

They were attending a ceremony, coinciding with the Sukkot festival, in which members of Judaism's priestly Kohanim caste bless the public in a chant at the Western Wall. Sephardic Grand Rabbi Shlomo Amar embraces a Torah scroll during the annual Birkat

With Israel struggling against a surge in coronavirus cases, attendance was drastically pared down this year.

Heading to the event as an invited guest, Friedman tweeted that it was "**normally attended by thousands, today just 20.**"

"I will pray for God's mercy and healing upon all those throughout the world afflicted with Covid-19," he said.

**10.05.20** – Mo - - -

**PM can apply sovereignty to settlements in West Bank & finish 5,000 housing units**

**10.05.20** – Mo - - -

**Israel seems set to resume West Bank settlement construction**

Building work would mark **first** advancement of settlement activity **since Israel signed treaties with UAE and Bahrain** in September; **PM pledged** last week **to reconvene** the body responsible for issue as de facto **freeze seems over**

Elisha Ben Kimon | Published: **10.05.20** , 13:44

Construction looks set to resume in West Bank settlements after the Higher Planning Council for Judea and Samaria, which oversees such building, on Monday set a date for resumption of its activities.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged last week to reconvene the council, which last met in February.

The council is expected to advance the construction of 4,000-5,000 housing units across the West Bank, which are in various stages of development. Hundreds of homes are also expected to receive final approval.

Netanyahu's decision to reconvene the council came after weeks of pressure from settler groups, including the heads of the Yesha Council, who claimed that the prime minister had instituted a de facto settlement freeze.

In recent days, representatives of the settlers met with various government officials and demanded that approval be granted for the housing units, especially in light of the halt to plans to annex parts of the West Bank.

The new construction would mark the first advancement of settlement activity since Israel signed normalization deals with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain last month. Officials from both Gulf states have stated that the normalization deals were based on an Israeli agreement to suspend its plans to annex portions of the West Bank.

Despite Israeli denials to the contrary, Bahraini and Emirati officials maintain that a complete halt of Israel's plan to claim sovereignty over parts of the West Bank was critical to the deal.

Under the peace plan unveiled by the Trump administration in January, Israel can eventually apply sovereignty to all its settlements in the West Bank, although American officials suggest that such a step would be far off.

10.05.20 – Mo - - -

Cabinet meets Monday & Thursday on effectiveness of lockdown & exit strategy

10.05.20 – Mo - - -

One out of every 8.5 virus tests returns positive, says Health Ministry

Health officials report testing continues to be lower than average, with only 26,332 tests conducted Sunday, which is reflected in lower than average infection rate; cabinet to convene later to discuss effectiveness of current lockdown

Ynet| Published: 10.05.20 , 09:46

One out of every 8.5 coronavirus tests conducted Sunday returned positive, lower than the national average reported in recent weeks, the Health Ministry said.

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Health officials reported on Monday morning that they conducted only 26,332 tests a day prior, 2,905 of which returned positive. The figures put the contagion rate at 11.7%, similar to the number reported on Saturday, a slight drop from the figures seen in recent weeks.

The ministry said 1,624 patients are currently being treated in hospitals. At least 878 patients are in serious condition, of whom 215 are ventilated. The official death toll has gone up to 1,719.

The number of patients who have recovered from the illness now stands at 201,392. There are 65,063 active patients, currently ill with the disease, more than 90% of whom are fighting the virus at home.

Jerusalem boasts the highest number of active patients with 7,474 cases, followed by Bnei Brak with 5,397, Ashdod with 2,948, Modi'in Illit with 2,309, Tel Aviv-Yafo with 2,212, Petah Tikva with 1,878, Netanya with 1,732, Be'er Sheva with 1,411, Beit Shemesh with 1,403, Rishon Lezion with 1,377, El'ad with 1,268, Holon with 1,265, Rehovot with 1,241, Beitar Illit with 1,154 and Ashkelon with 1,003.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet is set to meet later on Monday to discuss the effectiveness of the current nationwide lockdown as well as the exit strategy. The cabinet is expected to convene again on Thursday to mull whether to ease or tighten the lockdown curbs.

10.06.20 – Tu - - -

Trump in White House after a three-days in hospital & stocks closed higher Monday

10.06.20 – Tu - - -

Don't be afraid' of COVID, Trump says as he returns to White House

After a three-day stay in hospital, U.S. president poses for pictures without a mask at the executive mansion after doctor warns president not yet 'out of the woods' and more aides diagnosed with coronavirus

Reuters| Published: 10.06.20 , 09:03

U.S. President Donald Trump told Americans "to get out there" and not fear COVID-19 as he returned to the White House on Monday after a three-night hospital stay to be treated for the virus and removed his white surgical mask to pose for pictures.

Asked how he felt on arrival at the White House, where his staff has been hit by infections and his re-election campaign shadowed by the pandemic, Trump said: "Real good," according to a pool report by a journalist covering his return on behalf of other media.

Trump wore a mask as he walked out of the helicopter that flew him back from a military hospital outside Washington and climbed the stairs of the White House South Portico, where he removed it and posed for pictures, waving, saluting and giving thumbs-up signs.

Clashes erupt as police disperse thousands at funeral of rabbi who died of coronavirus



He then turned to walk into the White House, his mask still in his pocket, TV footage showed.

The Republican president, running for re-election against Democrat Joe Biden in the Nov. 3 U.S. election, was admitted to the Walter Reed Medical Center on Friday after being diagnosed with the disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

"Don't let it dominate you. Don't be afraid of it," Trump said in a recorded video message. "We're going back, we're going back to work. We're going to be out front. ... Don't let it dominate your lives. Get out there, be careful."

The disease has killed more than 1 million people worldwide and more than 209,000 in the United States alone - the highest death toll of any country.

Trump, 74, has not had a fever in more than 72 hours and his oxygen levels are normal, his medical team told reporters in front of the hospital. The doctors declined, however, to discuss any toll the disease could have on the president's lungs or disclose when Trump last tested negative for coronavirus.

The team added that the president had received supplemental oxygen twice in recent days.

"He may not entirely be out of the woods yet," Dr. Sean P. Conley, the White House physician, said. "If we can get through to Monday with him remaining the same or improving, better yet, then we will all take that final, deep sigh of relief."

But Conley said the medical team believed Trump was ready to leave the hospital, stressing he would have world-class medical care around the clock at the White House. Conley said doctors were in "uncharted territory" because Trump had received certain therapies so early in the course of the illness.

The severity of Trump's illness has been the subject of intense speculation, with some medical experts noting that, as an overweight, elderly man, he was in a category more likely to develop severe complications or die from the disease.

Doctors also have been treating him with a steroid, dexamethasone, that is normally used only in the most severe cases.

Trump has frequently downplayed the threat of the pandemic. In recent days, he released a series of videos to reassure the public he was recovering from COVID-19.

He was reluctant to go to the hospital last week and was eager to get out, a source familiar with the situation told Reuters earlier on Monday.

U.S. House of Representatives Democrat Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she hoped Trump's decision to return to the White House was not politically motivated and she expressed concern that he could become a "long hauler," a term that refers to those who suffer COVID-19 complications over an extended period.

Trump's medical team said he had not placed any pressure on the doctors treating him.

Even being discharged, Trump will need to continue treatment as he is still undergoing a five-day course of an intravenous antiviral drug, remdesivir, and will have to isolate himself for a certain period of time.

The coronavirus outbreak around Trump widened on Monday when White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said she had tested positive for the virus.

McEnany, who is at the forefront of the White House's often combative dealings with the media, held a briefing for reporters on Thursday in which she did not wear a face mask. Chad Gilmartin and Karoline Leavitt, who work in the White House's press office, also have tested positive, a source confirmed to Reuters.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Sunday showed Trump trailing Biden, 77, nationally by 10 percentage points. About 65% of Americans said Trump would not have been infected had he taken the virus more seriously.

Trump has repeatedly flouted social-distancing guidelines meant to curb its spread. He also mocked Biden at last Tuesday's presidential debate for wearing a mask at events, even when he is far from other people.

Biden, who has tested negative for the disease several times since the debate, said on Monday he was willing to participate in the next presidential debate scheduled for Oct. 15 in Miami if health experts deemed it safe.

Trump intends to take part in the debate, his campaign said.

A return to the White House might help Trump project a sense of normalcy. Before falling ill, he tried to pivot the campaign toward the U.S. economic recovery and the upcoming confirmation hearings for his Supreme Court nominee, Amy Coney Barrett.

But the growing number of COVID-19 cases in the White House as well as in Congress - three Republican senators have tested positive for the virus in the past week - threatens to draw further attention to Trump's pandemic response.

Major U.S. **stock markets closed higher on Monday** before Trump's departure from the hospital and amid signs of progress with a new fiscal stimulus bill in Congress. Wall Street's main indexes **slumped on Friday after Trump's COVID-19 diagnosis**.

**10.06.20** – Tu - - -

**Saudi experts & diplomats shifting public discourse on Israel away from Palestine**

**10.06.20** – Tu - - -

**Ex-Saudi spy chief slams Palestinian leadership's criticism of UAE-Israel deal**

In scathing interview, **Prince Bandar bin Sultan** labels Palestinian outcry 'transgression' and '**reprehensible** discourse', calls advocates of Palestinian cause 'failures'

Reuters| Published: **10.06.20** , 11:07

**Saudi** Arabia's **former intelligence chief** and ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz, **slammed** the **Palestinian leadership for criticizing** the decision of some **Gulf states** to normalize ties with Israel.

In an interview with Saudi-owned Al Arabiya television aired on Monday, the prince labeled the Palestinian authorities' criticism a "transgression" and "reprehensible discourse".

"The Palestinian cause is a just cause but its advocates are failures, and the Israeli cause is unjust but its advocates have proven to be successful. That sums up the events of the last 70 or 75 years," he said in the first of a three-part airing of the interview.

"There is something that successive **Palestinian leadership** historically share in common: they **always bet on the losing side**, and that comes at a price."

The United Arab Emirates agreed to a historic deal to normalize relations with Israel in August, and the Gulf state of Bahrain, a close Saudi ally, followed suit in September. Palestinians fear the moves will weaken a long-standing pan-Arab position - known as the Arab Peace Initiative - that calls for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory and acceptance of Palestinian statehood in return for normal relations with Arab states.

President Mahmoud Abbas said the Palestinian leadership regarded the UAE's move as "a betrayal". Veteran Palestinian negotiator Hanan Ashrawi told Reuters the deal was "a complete sell-out".

Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, has not directly commented on the normalization deals but has said it remains committed to peace on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative. Prince Bandar noted the decades-long support of successive Saudi kings to the Palestinian cause and said the Palestinian people should remember that the kingdom has always been there for them to offer help and advice.

"This low level of discourse is not what we expect from officials who seek to gain global support for their cause," he said.

While **Saudi** Arabia is not expected to follow the example of its Gulf allies any time soon, **experts and diplomats** believe the kingdom has started **shifting the public discourse on Israel**.

Prince Bandar's daughter, Princess Reema, is the current Saudi ambassador to the United States.

**10.05.20** – Mo - - -

**Palestine looking for business opportunities with UAE & Bahrain to press Israel**

**10.05.20** – Mo - - -

**Palestinian business leader hopes UAE, Bahrain will press Israel to stop settlements**

While Palestinian leaders have called the Arab agreements to normalize relations with Israel a blow to their cause, the chairman of two of the largest Palestinian holding companies reckons they could be used to the advantage of the Palestinians

Reuters| Published: **10.05.20** , 23:48

A **top Palestinian** business executive said on Monday that **new Gulf Arab ties** with Israel, condemned by Palestinian leaders, could also be **an opportunity to apply fresh pressure to halt Jewish settlement** in occupied land.

Bashar Masri, a Palestinian-American who runs two of the Palestinians' largest holding companies, said the Palestinians must find a way to turn agreements Israel struck last month with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain into "a positive thing for us".

Under the U.S.-brokered diplomatic push, Israel agreed to suspend plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

Palestinian leaders have called Arab agreements to normalize relations with Israel a blow to their quest for an independent state in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, territory Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day-War.

Masri, 59, said the Palestinian message to the UAE and Bahrain should now be: "Hey, why don't you pressure Israel, who you're talking to, to stop the settlements?".

"I hope they can turn these agreements to pressure Israel into concessions for the Palestinians," he said.

But Masri, chairman of Massar International, told Reuters he was uncertain that halting settlement expansion in the West Bank would be a priority for Gulf Arab states that agreed to official ties with Israel in part over shared concern over Iran.

Israel has hailed ties with the UAE and Bahrain as a major business opportunity, and Masri said Palestinian enterprises would not be inherently opposed to accepting investment from the two Gulf nations.

Massar International oversees and manages more than 30 subsidiaries and investments in finance, tech, agriculture, media and real estate, including Rawabi, the first planned Palestinian city in the West Bank.

Masri said that now that emotions over the deals have calmed down - "we burned the flags" - Palestinians have "no choice but to be optimistic".

"Our enemies want us to give up hope. If we give up hope, they have exactly what they want, and there will be no Palestine, and no Palestinian people," he said.