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Vaccine immunity for flights and mass events: Israel mulls 'green passports'

According to the Health Ministry's outline presented at the Knesset committee, the passports will be given to Israelis a week after they receive the second coronavirus vaccine shot, will be in place for six months; won't be valid in schools, synagogues  
Nina Fuchs | Published: 01.04.21 , 13:33

Health officials on Monday made their case for the government to issue "green passports" to Israelis who had been vaccinated, allowing them to travel freely abroad and attend mass events, among other benefits.

The debate was held at the Knesset's Constitution, Law and Justice Committee and was attended by Health Minister Yuli Edelstein and coronavirus czar, Prof. Nachman Ash.

According to the Health Ministry's outline, the passports will be given to Israelis a week after they receive the second coronavirus vaccine shot and will be in place for six months. Alternatively, a similar passport, which would be in effect for 72 hours, could be issued to those who had undergone a coronavirus test, which came back negative.

"The passport is important for three reasons: herd immunity, a protective layer for going back to our daily routine and reopening of the economy," said Prof. Ash at the meeting. "In order for us to achieve herd immunity in Israel, we need 70% [of the population] vaccinated. We want to use the green passport to manage the routine as the number of those recovering [from the virus] increases."

The passport exempts its owner from mandatory quarantine and could be downloaded from either the Health Ministry or HMOs' websites. It can be downloaded in English in order to ease on the passport carrier during international travel.

Israelis who weren't vaccinated but **who recently recovered** from COVID-19 or tested **positive for antibodies** would **also** be able to apply for the passport.

According to the outline, the green **passport will not be valid within the education system**, workplaces, street shops, public transport and places of worship. It will be valid, however, at mass cultural and sporting events, conferences, restaurants, cafes, malls, hotels, gyms and swimming pools.

01.04.21

**Gantz desires third squadron of F-35's added to 50 planes already ordered**

01.04.21

**Gantz favors buying one more F-35 squadron for now**

Defense minister also tells Ynet he will vote **against the shutdown of the education system** when the cabinet meets on Tuesday to discuss the tightening of the coronavirus lockdown

Reuters, Ynet | Published: **01.04.21**, 10:49

Defense Minister Benny **Gantz** said on Monday that he **wants** the country to buy a **third squadron of stealth F-35** warplanes from the United States, and that he hoped a deal could be clinched **before** President Donald **Trump steps down** on Jan. 20.

Israel has been in talks with Washington on how to preserve its military advantage after the Trump administration approved a possible F-35 sale to the United Arab Emirates last year. The plane was previously available only to Israel in the region.

"Without doubt, we need to **expand the F-35 array**. Right now **we have two squadrons**. I reckon we will expand that. That is what I requested of the Americans," Defense Minister Benny Gantz told Ynet TV.

Defense officials have said the **two squadrons already ordered** by Israel consist of **50 planes**. "I would **buy another F-35 squadron** and then examine what to do with the balance - continuing to expand the F-35 (procurement), going for F-15s?"

Asked if Israel might complete a defense procurement deal with the United States before Trump steps down, he said: "I hope so. I think the defence budget needs to be handled properly, to be safeguarded. It is a kind of active insurance policy."

He added that **he will vote against the shutdown of the education system** when the **cabinet meets** on Tuesday to discuss the tightening of the coronavirus lockdown.

"This is the most important thing in my eyes, and we will do everything to keep the education system open," he said. "Most of the **cases among the students did not originate within the education system** ... why should the education system pay the price?"

01.03.21

PM Case 4000 to remove family articles from influence of favorable media

01.03.21

Prosecutors file revised indictment against PM in Case 4000

Amended charges list hundreds of incidents in which Netanyahu allegedly requested more favorable coverage in favor of promoting regulations worth hundreds of millions of dollars to media mogul

Associated Press, Ynet | Published: 01.03.21 , 21:32

Prosecutors on Sunday released an amended indictment against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu removing any mention of his family in a corruption charge in which he is accused of trading favors with a powerful media mogul.

Netanyahu has been charged with fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in three corruption cases. One of them alleges that Netanyahu promoted regulations worth hundreds of millions of dollars to the owner of the Bezeq telecom company, Shaul Elovitch, in exchange for positive coverage on its popular Walla news site.

In response to a request from Netanyahu's lawyers for more details, prosecutors released a letter Sunday alleging there had been 315 incidents of Walla being requested to make its coverage more favorable for Netanyahu and his family. They said there were indications that Netanyahu was personally involved in 150 of those incidents. It said the requests included giving more time or prominence to positive articles about Netanyahu and his family, changing headlines and lowering or even removing unfavorable stories. It also included alleged requests for negative coverage of Netanyahu's rivals.

On Jan. 17-19, 2013, for instance, it said a Netanyahu associate persuaded Elovitch to publish stories saying that the wife of Naftali Bennett, head of rival Yamina party, worked in a non-kosher restaurant.

Several weeks later, Netanyahu, through the same associate, allegedly pressed Walla to remove critical articles about a lacy dress his wife had worn to the swearing-in of the new parliament and replace it with favorable reviews. The site consented to both requests, it said.

On another occasion, Elovitch, at Netanyahu's request, allegedly ordered Walla to halt a live broadcast of a rally by Netanyahu's opponents during the country's 2015 election campaign.

Netanyahu's trial began last year and is scheduled to resume next month. He denies all charges against him, saying he is the victim of a witch hunt orchestrated by a hostile media, police and prosecutors.