

Ynet-News, Dec 15, 2021 – Wednesday

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Guards will scan Green Pass & issue bracelet to allow shopper's throughout the mall

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Israeli ministers continually monitor Syria for chemical weapons stockpiles

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Bennett enters quarantine after contact with COVID patient on UAE flight

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Israeli airstrikes in 2020 targeted Syria chemical weapons facilities, US report says

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Boy, 6, dies after COVID recovery; sisters suffered shortness of breath and vomiting

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PM Bennett met crown prince in UAE on cyber security, health, education, aviation

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West Bank near-daily arrest raid clashed as explosives thrown from PA rioters

12.12.21 – Su- - - News Placed in Dec 12 spot – Sunday

Israel hosts 70th Miss Universe of 80 countries; despite no Muslim contestants

12.07.21 – Tu- - - News Placed in Dec 107 spot – Saturday

UAE introducing liberalized laws, longer visas & Friday-noon to Sunday weekend

12.14.21

Guards will scan Green Pass & issue bracelet to allow shopper's throughout the mall

12.14.21

Israel moves to restrict access of unvaccinated to shopping malls

Israelis will now have to present their Green Pass upon entering a mall and will receive hand bracelets that will allow them to move freely; national mall lobby decries decision as 'unreasonable'

Nina Fox, Itamar Eichner | Published: 12.14.21, 20:31

For the first time since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Israel will expand its Green Pass mandate to include shopping malls, restricting access to citizens who are not fully protected against the disease as fears of the spread of the Omicron coronavirus variant mount.

As per a decision by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz, Israelis will now have to present their Green Pass — a document which grants access to public accommodations to either those who received three shots of a coronavirus vaccine or those who received two doses or recovered from the virus within the last six months — upon entering a mall.

Security guards will scan each shopper's Green Pass and will hand bracelets upon receiving digital approval that will allow them to move freely throughout the mall.

Exemption from presenting a Green Pass will be given to those who wish to enter the mall to use one of several essential services that will be stipulated by health professionals and Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit.

A person who enters a mall for the purpose of receiving an essential service will not receive a bracelet and will only be allowed to enter the mall for the purpose for which they came.

Israel's mall and shopping center lobby opposed the move, saying that marking patrons using bracelets is unreasonable and will not pass constitutional muster.

In addition, officials also decided to grant a provisional Green Pass to those who have received their first coronavirus vaccine that will be good for 30 days.

Both decisions are pending government and Knesset's approval.

Furthermore, the Health Ministry is mulling restricting travel to and from Germany among other countries as they come to grips with a mountainous COVID-19 upsurge.

12.14.21

Israeli ministers continually monitor Syria for chemical weapons stockpiles

12.14.21

Israeli minister says Syria must not have chemical weapons

Elazar Stern did not comment on reports regarding two separate strikes made in bid to block rebuild of its chemical weapons stockpile, but said that Jerusalem will not accept such weapons in the hands of its northern enemy

Associated Press | Published: 12.14.21, 15:30

Intelligence Minister Elazar Stern said Tuesday that Syria cannot be allowed to obtain chemical weapons, after a report emerged that Israel targeted the country's chemical weapons facilities.

In an interview with Israeli **Army Radio**, Stern would not directly comment on the **report** in the Washington Post that said that **Israel struck Syria on two occasions — once this year and once last year** — in a bid **to block** attempts to rebuild its chemical weapons **stockpile**. But the retired military general hinted that Israel could not accept such weapons in the hands of its enemy to the north.

“We have a neighbor who has already proved that it doesn’t hesitate to use chemical weapons even against its own people,” he said. “(Syrian President Bashar) Assad must not have chemical weapons.”

Israeli officials have declined to comment on the Washington Post report.

Military affairs commentators in Israel, who often are briefed by top defense officials, said the timing of the report was not a coincidence and comes as negotiators are meeting with Iran in Vienna to try to revive a 2015 nuclear deal.

Iran has close ties with Syria and has sent troops to back the forces of Syrian President Bashar Assad in his country's decade-long civil war.

Israel has long opposed the 2015 nuclear deal between global powers and Iran, which granted Iran relief from economic sanctions in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program.

Instead, it has called for an accord with even **tighter safeguards** on **Iran's nuclear** program and addresses other Iranian military behavior, such as its missile program and support for anti-Israel militant groups like Lebanon’s Hezbollah. Israel also supports a “credible” military threat against Iran as leverage.

Israel believes Iran is trying to develop a nuclear weapon — a charge Iran denies.

One of the strikes cited by the Washington Post, on June 8, was reported by Syrian state media as an Israeli aerial attack near the Syrian capital Damascus and in the central province of Homs, that prompted a response from Syrian national air defenses. There was no mention in official media of what was targeted in the strikes, although loud explosions were heard in Damascus.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British-based group that closely monitors the war in Syria, reported Israeli planes struck military targets in the countryside of Homs and Damascus. It said the targeted sites included a scientific research center in the vicinity of the village of Khirbet al-Tineh, northwest of Homs, in addition to an ammunition depot likely to belong to Hezbollah, south of Homs. The strikes killed 11 soldiers, including a colonel, it said.

Unconfirmed reports published by pro-Assad media at the time identified the colonel as a leading chemist at the Scientific Studies and Research Center, Gen. Ayham Suleiman Ismail.

The center is a government agency described by the Syrians as a facility for the advancement of scientific research in the country but has been long described by **Syria** watchers as an outfit for the **development of chemical, biological and other weapons**.

Israel is believed to have struck facilities associated with the SSRC on numerous occasions in the past.

Syria joined the Chemical Weapons Convention in September 2013, pressed by Russia after a deadly chemical weapons attack that the West blamed on Damascus. By August 2014, the Assad government declared that the destruction of its chemical weapons was completed, but its initial declaration of chemical stockpiles and production sites to the OPCW has remained in dispute. OPCW investigators have blamed three chemical attacks in 2017 on President Bashar Assad's government.

Earlier this year, the UN's disarmament chief, Izumi Nakamitsu, told the Security Council that **Damascus'** declaration of its chemical **stockpiles** and **chemical weapons** production sites nearly eight years ago remains incomplete.

12.14.21

**Bennett enters quarantine after contact with COVID patient on UAE flight**

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**Bennett enters quarantine after contact with COVID patient on UAE flight**

**PM and his entire entourage enter immediate isolation** after person on a flight back from diplomatic visit to Gulf state **tested positive** for coronavirus; not clear whether he also tested for the Omicron strain

Itamar Eichner, Associated Press | Updated: **12.14.21**, 11:30

A person who was on Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's flight back from the United Arab Emirates has tested positive for COVID-19, his office said Tuesday.

**Bennett returned to Israel on Monday** from a historic two-day trip to the **Gulf Arab** state, the first by an Israeli leader to the country, which recently normalized ties with Israel.

He was in a **three-day quarantine on Tuesday** as per Health Ministry regulations, which require all returning travelers, even those vaccinated, to self-isolate. He was expected to take a coronavirus test on Wednesday, also in line with health regulations, and then end his quarantine if he tests negative, the prime minister's office said.

Bennett's office did not specify who the person was who tested positive or whether he also tested for the new Omicron coronavirus strain.

Bennett was meant to be accompanied by a phalanx of Israeli and foreign journalists and a sizeable entourage on the visit. But a day before his departure, journalists were notified that because of concerns over Omicron they would not be joining and that Bennett's entourage would be downsized.

Since the Omicron strain emerged, Israel has sealed its borders to foreign travelers and placed limits on Israelis flying abroad. It has barred travel to all countries in sub-Saharan Africa and imposed self-quarantine requirements for all returning travelers.

**Bennett's trip this week to the UAE** came against the backdrop of **nuclear talks** between world powers and regional archrival Iran over its tattered nuclear deal.

The trip also cemented the **normalization** agreement signed by Israel and the **UAE** under the U.S.-brokered Abraham Accords, which also saw similar deals between Israel and Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. First published: 10:32, 12.14.21

**12.13.21**

**Israeli airstrikes in 2020 targeted Syria chemical weapons facilities, US report says**

**12.13.21**

**Israeli airstrikes in Syria targeted chemical weapons facilities, report says**

The Washington Post reports **Israeli** fighter jets **bombed chemical weapons facilities** this **June and March 2020** as the **Assad** regime **is believed to try to rebuild its chemical weapons** capabilities

Ynet| Published: **12.13.21**, 20:34

Israel attacked two chemical weapons facilities in Syria **over the past two years**, the Washington Post reported Monday

The facilities were reportedly used by the Bashar al-Assad regime to manufacture chemical weapons, and according to intelligence sources, the **attacks** were intended to **thwart a Syrian attempt** to resume the production **of nerve gas**.

"There were more signs of them going back into production," said one of the intelligence officials. Following the first attack, which took place in March 2020, Israeli intelligence discovered additional sites producing chemical weapons, and according to two Western officials, Israel believed this was an effort by Syria to rebuild its chemical warfare capabilities.

The Washington Post report said that the Israeli military refused to respond to the report, but Western intelligence officials immediately noticed that these attacks were unusual in relation to other attacks in Syria attributed to Israel. While previous attacks targeted pro-Iranian militias or Iranian arms shipments, these attacks were directed against targets part of Syria's chemical weapons program.

The aircraft fighters that took part in the attack were deep within Syrian soil, **near the border with Turkey**. The latest **attack on June 8** included three targets that were bombed in Damascus and Homs area, killing seven Syrian soldiers, including a senior officer, and an engineer who worked at a top-secret Syrian military lab.

Israel carried out a similar attack one year prior which was also based on intelligence that Assad's regime had obtained chemical substances and other means necessary to rebuild its chemical weapons capabilities, on which it is believed to have given up eight years earlier.

"It is a strategic weapon for the regime," said a Western intelligence official.

The report was based on four U.S. and Western intelligence sources that were exposed to sensitive intelligence during the attacks and were interviewed on condition of anonymity. On June 8, Syria reported on an alleged Israeli attack coming from Lebanon. According to Syrian media, the explosions were heard in Damascus and in the Homs area, and the announcement was published after the Lebanese media reported that Israeli aircraft were circling in the country's airspace.

12.13.21

Boy, 6, dies after COVID recovery; sisters suffered shortness of breath and vomiting

12.13.21

Boy, 6, dies suddenly after recovering from COVID

Yosef Naim from Netivot was found without a pulse in his bed by his parents; he was taken to the hospital where he was pronounced dead; doctors examining whether his death was connected to Omicron or PIMS

Matan Tzuri | Published: 12.13.21, 18:38

A six-year-old boy died suddenly in southern Israel on Monday after he recovered from COVID-19.

Medical staff at Barzilai Medical Center, where the boy — Yosef Naim from Netivot — has been taken to, said that he contracted coronavirus a month and a half ago and had recovered since.

According to Naim's parents, he started to feel unwell Sunday, and they decided to stay at home with him instead of going to a family event.

On Monday, Naim's parents found him without a pulse in his bed and called an ambulance. He was taken to Barzilai Medical Center and despite doctors' best efforts to resuscitate him, they had to call his death.

The hospital's director and former Health Ministry director-general Prof. Hezi Levi said that the cause of Naim's death was unknown and that doctors were examining whether his death had something to do with the Omicron coronavirus variant or pediatric inflammatory multisystem syndrome (PIMS) — a condition mainly targeting children that happens weeks after someone has had the virus and causes swelling throughout the body and can be fatal.

Three of the boy's sisters were also taken to the hospital on Monday suffering from shortness of breath and vomiting. Another sister has been hospitalized for several days.

Four of Naim's siblings, as well as their father, had contracted coronavirus and recovered from it.

"He was a happy and active child who did not suffer from any diseases and even had a Green Pass after recovering from coronavirus," Naim's grandfather told Ynet, referring to

a document that grants access to public venues for those who have either been fully inoculated against COVID-19 or have recently recovered from it.

"He was a strong boy, jumping from place to place, like a normal child, full of energy and joy of life. He was the **only son** in the family. This **disaster came to us from nowhere.**"

Mourning the passing of his son, the boy's father — Yehuda Yogev Naim — said that "we have been privileged to raise such a pure holy soul for six and a half years."

**12.13.21**

**PM Bennett met crown prince in UAE on cyber security, health, education, aviation**

**12.13.21**

**Bennett meets with UAE crown prince in Abu Dhabi with Iran on agenda**  
PM was set to emphasize economic ties between the two states **following normalization agreement last year**, which he described as 'new, deep and solid structure' for further cooperation and region's prosperity

Itamar Eichner, Liad Osmo | Published: **12.13.21**, 10:46

Prime Minister Naftali **Bennett** on Monday **met** with the **UAE's leader** Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on the **first-ever visit to the country by an Israeli leader**, with the two expected to discuss Iran as well as bilateral ties.

Shared concern about Iranian activity was reportedly among the reasons for the formalization of Israel-UAE relations last year under a U.S.-led regional initiative known as the Abraham Accords.

With world powers now trying to renew an Iran nuclear deal, Abu Dhabi last week sent a top envoy to its Persian neighbor. A U.S. delegation is due in UAE this week to **warn Emirati banks against non-compliance with Iran sanctions.**

The premier was welcomed on Sunday to the kingdom by the ruler's younger brother — Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan — and the two held a short meeting, in which they discussed the importance of tolerance and religious moderation.

Sources on the trip said the Emiratis have expressed interest in the prime minister's background as a hi-tech entrepreneur, adding that Bennett's meetings will seek to emphasize economic ties between Israel and the UAE.

The prime minister is **also set to meet with the UAE's Industry and Advanced Technology Minister** Dr. Sultan Al Jaber and Culture Minister Noura Al Kaabi on Monday, as well as a possible meeting with Khaldoon al Mubarak, CEO of the Mubadala Investment Company, the Emirati sovereign wealth fund.

In an interview with Emirati state media WAM, Bennett said the Abraham Accords established a "new, deep and solid structure for diplomatic, economic and cultural relations" in the region based on cooperation.

"In my opinion, this is what the peace and the new reality this region is witnessing, and we are working together to ensure a better future for our children," he said.

"The relations between the two countries have strengthened in all fields, and I am very satisfied with that, as many cooperation agreements were concluded in the fields of trade, research and development, and **cyber security, health, education, aviation** and more, and I look forward to the continued development and consolidation of relations. Our cooperation provides unprecedented economic opportunities not only for us, but for more countries, which is another element for enhancing stability and prosperity in this region." At the end of the interview, Bennett concluded that "the message that I wish to deliver to the **UAE leaders and Emirati citizens** is that mutual **partnership** and friendship are natural. We are neighbors and cousins. **We are the grandchildren of Prophet Abraham.** The period since the signing of the Abraham Peace Accords is the best evidence."

**12.13.21**

**West Bank near-daily arrest raid clashed as explosives thrown from PA rioters**

**12.13.21**

**Palestinian killed in clashes with Israeli troops during West Bank operation**

Military says Jamil Kayyal was **shot while carrying a weapon** and has previously taken part in attacks on Israeli troops; **clashes erupted after** Border Police and IDF troops had **entered Nablus to arrest a wanted person**

Associated Press, Ynet| Updated: **12.13.21**, 10:34

A Palestinian man was killed early Monday during clashes with Israeli troops that erupted in the West Bank city of Nablus early **Monday**, Palestinian officials reported.

Citing medics, the Palestinian Wafa news agency identified the man as Jamil Kayyal, 31, adding that he was hit by a gunshot in the head.

Israeli media reported that Border Police, aided by army soldiers, entered Nablus to arrest a wanted Palestinian and the clashes erupted when a group of **Palestinians threw explosives toward the forces.** There were no casualties among the Israeli troops, which arrested the wanted man.

The IDF Spokesperson's Unit said that Kayyal was carrying a weapon when he was shot and had previously participated in shooting attacks on Israeli soldiers.

"When the forces finished the operation and left the place, **explosives were thrown from close range by rioters,** who endangered the lives of the forces. The forces responded by firing at the militants and apparently hit one of them, who was wounded and evacuated by The **Palestine Red Crescent Society.**"



The Israeli military often conducts arrest raids in the West Bank, even in territories that are under control of the Palestinian Authority, the internationally recognized entity that has limited autonomy in parts of the area. The near-daily raids are in search for Palestinian militants, and are often followed with clashes that are sometimes deadly. The Palestinians want the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which Israel captured and annexed in 1967, as part of a future state. Peace negotiations between the two sides ground to a halt more than a decade ago.

First published: 09:07, 12.13.21

12.12.21

Israel hosts 70th Miss Universe of 80 countries; despite no Muslim contestants

12.12.21

Israel hosts Miss Universe finale despite boycott calls

Annual pageant's 70th edition held in Israel for the first time much to the chagrin of pro-Palestinian groups, and despite pandemic-related issues, winner set to be crowned at roughly 0300 GMT Monday

AFP| Published: 12.12.21, 18:22

Women from 80 countries vied for the Miss Universe crown in the southern Israeli resort town of Eilat on Sunday, with several contestants defying pressure to boycott in support of the Palestinians.

Among those challenging for the top prize are Miss Morocco Kawtar Benhalima and Miss Bahrain Manar Nadeem Deyani, whose majority Muslim nations normalized ties with Israel last year.

South Africa's Ministry of Sports, Culture, and Arts had urged its contestant to stay away from Eilat, citing "atrocities committed by Israel against Palestinians."

The call echoed Palestinian groups who pleaded with contestants to avoid the event.

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel wrote: "We urge all participants to withdraw, to avoid complicity in Israel's apartheid regime and its violation of Palestinian human rights."

Despite those calls, Miss South Africa Lalela Mswane was in the Red Sea resort city, where the final competition gets underway overnight before the 2021 winner is named at roughly 0300 GMT Monday.

In an interview with AFP in Jerusalem late last month, reigning Miss Universe Andrea Meza, of Mexico, said the pageant should steer clear of politics.

"Miss Universe isn't a political movement, nor a religious one. It's about women and what they can offer."

Muslim-majority Indonesia and Malaysia, nations that do not have diplomatic relations with Israel, have not sent contestants but both cited complications related to the pandemic, not Israel's rights record.

The United Arab Emirates, which also normalized ties with Israel last year and where Prime Minister Naftali Bennett was to make a historic visit Sunday, has also not sent a candidate.

But the UAE said that was "due to time constraints," in selecting its national winner. Contestants for the pageant landed in Israel late last month and have since toured sites, sometimes coming under criticism for cultural insensitivity.

In one stop in the Bedouin city of Rahat, the candidates wore robes with traditional Palestinian embroidery while rolling grape leaves — which Miss Philippines Beatrice Luigi Gomez tweeted was a "Day in the life of a Bedouin."

The Bedouin are traditionally nomadic people who belong to the community of Palestinian citizens of Israel. They have long complained of discrimination in housing and education.

"Colonialism, racism, cultural appropriation, patriarchy, whitewashing, all in one place," tweeted Ines Abdel Razek of the advocacy group the Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy.

Participants in the pageant, which was co-owned by Donald Trump before he became U.S. president, must be between the ages of 18 and 28 and may never have married or had a child.

According to organizers, the coronation ceremony will be watched by 600 million viewers in 172 countries.

12.07.21

UAE introducing liberalized laws, longer visas & Friday-noon to Sunday weekend

12.07.21

UAE to shift to Saturday-Sunday weekend to align with global markets

Gulf state currently has a Friday-Saturday weekend due to Friday being a holiday in many predominantly Muslim countries, but the government is certain the move will facilitate stronger international business links and opportunities

Reuters|Published: 12.07.21, 15:13

The United Arab Emirates said on Tuesday it would shift to a four and half-day working week with a Saturday-Sunday weekend from next year to better align its economy with global markets.

The oil-producing Gulf state, a regional commercial, trade, and tourism hub, now have a Friday-Saturday weekend. As of Jan. 1, 2022, the weekend would start on Friday afternoon.

The UAE has in the past year taken measures to make its economy more attractive to foreign investment and talent at a time of growing economic rivalry with neighboring Saudi Arabia.

The working week for government entities would start on Monday and end on Friday at 12 noon, before Muslim prayers, the government said in a statement, adding this would improve the work-life balance for employees.

The government said the move would “ensure smooth financial, trade and economic transactions with countries that follow a Saturday-Sunday weekend, facilitating stronger international business links and opportunities for thousands of UAE-based and multinational companies.”

Mohammed Ali Yasin, chief strategy officer at Al Dhabi Capital, said the financial sector would benefit from being able to make simultaneous payment settlements with developed markets and the tourism industry would also be a beneficiary. “It could be a good experiment for other countries in the region,” he said.

Friday is a weekly holiday in many predominantly Muslim countries. Monica Malik, an economist at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, said she expected many private sector companies in the UAE to follow the Saturday-Sunday weekend, describing the move as a “very meaningful development” alongside other recent reforms.

The UAE has liberalized laws regarding cohabitation before marriage, alcohol, and personal status laws in addition to introducing longer-term visas as a way to attract and retain talent and encourage more businesses to invest.