

Ynet-News, Jan 06, 2022 – Thursday - First of 2022

01.06.22 – Th- - - News Placed in Jan 06 spot – Thursday

Netherlands ends aid to PA over terrorist ties using a variety of forgery and deceit

01.05.22 – We- - - News

IDF tanks fire at Syrian position on Golan Heights at suspects nearing the frontier

01.05.22 – We- - - News

Israeli housing committee approves 3,500 housing units in East Jerusalem

01.05.22 – We- - - News

UN peacekeepers attacked & vandalized in south Lebanon near Israel border

01.05.22 – We- - - News Placed in Jan 05 spot – Wednesday

Gantz meets with Jordan's king in effort to expand two-state solution

01.02.22 – Su- - - News Placed in Jan 04 spot – Tuesday

Officials fear overcrowding at Omicron testing hubs may be hotbed for infections

01.02.22 – Su- - - News

Hamas fires anti-aircraft missile at IDF helicopters attacking Gaza

01.06.22

Netherlands ends aid to PA over terrorist ties using a variety of forgery and deceit

01.06.22

Netherlands ends aid to Palestinian NGO over terrorist ties

Investigation into agricultural organization, which was slapped with a terror label by Israel last year, finds 34 employees had links to PFLP, Dutch ministers announce |24NEWS| Published: 01.06.22, 11:00

The Netherlands is pulling funding from a Palestinian NGO after an investigation found links to an EU-designated terrorist group, the country's foreign ministry announced on Wednesday.

Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Minister Tom de Bruijn and Foreign Minister Ben Knapen sponsored the decision to cut funding from the group.

The ministers wrote in a letter to the Dutch parliament that 34 employees of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) were shown to be active in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) from 2007 to 2020.

The UAWC is one of six Palestinian civil society groups that Israel last year labeled as terrorist organizations over accusations of funneling donor aid to the PFLP.

The Dutch investigation found that 12 UAWC employees held leadership positions with both UAWC and PFLP over the same period.

"The large number of board members of UAWC with a dual mandate is particularly worrying," De Bruijn and Knapen wrote.

The investigation also found links "at an organizational level," although did not find any financial connections or "organizational unity with or control by the PFLP."

Israel in justifying its decision to label UAWC and other Palestinian NGOs as terrorist groups, said at the time of the announcement that they "received large sums of money from European countries and international organizations, using a variety of forgery and deceit."

The Netherlands had already temporarily suspended \$24.3 million in aid to UAWC in 2020 after two senior UAWC officials were indicted in a bomb attack that killed 17-year-old Israeli girl Rina Shnerb in August 2019. Their salary was partly paid from Dutch aid money to the UAWC.

In a statement posted to Twitter, UAWC slammed the decision, saying that they were "shocked and saddened" to hear of the Dutch decision, accusing the government of "not just abandoning UAWC, but Palestinian civil society at large."

Dutch daily newspaper The Telegraph reported that the cabinet wants to start a new land and water program in the West Bank with other Palestinian organizations soon.

01.05.22

IDF tanks fire at Syrian position on Golan Heights at suspects nearing the frontier

01.05.22

IDF tanks fire at Syrian position on Golan Heights

military spokesperson says suspects seen in Syrian position near the border; troops on the ground bolstered to prevent infiltration as aircraft patrol Syrian Golan skies

Yoav Zitun, Liad Osmo | Published: 01.05.22, 22:57

IDF tanks on Wednesday, fired at a Syrian position east of the Israel-Syria border that was directed at suspects who were seen nearing the frontier, the military said.

There were no injuries reported in the incident on either side of the border, and the IDF deployed more troops to the area in anticipation of a further infiltration attempt, including ground forces and aircraft.

Earlier the Lebanon based Al Mayadeen network said a fire was caused from the Israeli tank fire.

The network said the Israeli fire was directed at a Syrian army position near the city of Quneitra and the village of Al Huria **on the Syrian Golan Heights.**

In a statement, the IDF Spokesperson's unit said that after an IDF lookout post identified suspects inside Syrian military positions, flares were fired along with tank fire in order to prevent infiltration.

The IDF has opened **fire at suspects** nearing the border in the past including **in August** of 2020 when **four** suspected terrorists were **killed** when they **attempted to lay explosive devices near the border fence.**

According to foreign media reports the IDF had also attacked targets near Quneitra in the past, as part of the effort to prevent Iranian entrenchment on the Syrian Golan.

01.05.22

Israeli housing committee approves 3,500 housing units in East Jerusalem

01.05.22

Israeli housing committee approves 3,500 housing units in East Jerusalem

Construction plan will see housing units **built between two especially controversial settlements**, and further **cut off East Jerusalem's Palestinian residents from the West Bank** and the Palestinian city of Bethlehem

Associated Press| Published: 01.05.22, 22:12

The Jerusalem municipal **committee** on Wednesday **approved** plans for the construction of more than **3,500** housing **units** for Jewish Israelis in east Jerusalem, nearly half in a particularly controversial area, according to Peace Now anti-settlement monitoring group.

Peace Now said the construction of the homes would largely cut off the city from the southern part of the West Bank, further complicating any efforts to create a functioning Palestinian state. The United States has repeatedly urged Israel to refrain from such construction projects.

The projects will be considered by a district committee on Jan. 17. It would likely be **years before any construction takes place**, or if the government adds its approval, but Peace Now says once the approval process is underway, it becomes increasingly difficult to stop.

One plan would build 1,465 housing units between Givat Hamatos and Har Homa, two especially controversial neighborhoods, further cutting off East Jerusalem from the Palestinian city of Bethlehem and the southern West Bank. Another 2,092 homes would be built elsewhere in East Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem municipality says it is committed to building in all parts of the city for the benefit of Jewish and Arab residents. But discriminatory policies had made it nearly impossible for Palestinians to legally build new homes or expand their neighborhoods. Authorities are advancing "far-reaching plans that post facts on the ground that undermine the possibility of peace," Peace Now said in a statement.

Israel's current government, which includes parties from across the political spectrum, has ruled out any major initiatives to resolve the decades-old conflict but has taken limited steps to improve living conditions in the Palestinian territories.

A similar plan to build some 9,000 housing units on the site of an abandoned airport in east Jerusalem was placed on hold late last year.

01.05.22

UN peacekeepers attacked & vandalized in south Lebanon near Israel border

01.05.22

UN peacekeepers attacked in south Lebanon near Israel border

Local media says scuffle erupted when residents of the Hezbollah controlled town of Bint Jbeil noticed UN peacekeepers taking photographs of residential homes; UN says peacekeepers were on routine patrol

Associated Press| Published: 01.05.22, 17:16

Unknown perpetrators attacked a group of UN peacekeepers in southern Lebanon, vandalizing their vehicles and stealing official items from them, a UN official said Wednesday.

Such scuffles with UN peacekeepers are not uncommon in southern Lebanon since the peacekeeping force was expanded following the 2006 war between Israel and the Lebanese terrorist group Hezbollah.

Kandice Ardiel, a press official for the UN force - known as UNIFIL - called on Lebanese authorities to "investigate quickly and thoroughly, and prosecute all those responsible for these crimes." She added that the attack occurred on Tuesday night.

Local media reported that residents of the southern town of Bint Jbeil scuffled with Irish peacekeepers who they said were taking photographs of residential homes. The reports added that the UN force was not accompanied by Lebanese troops.

Bint Jbeil is a Hezbollah stronghold and large parts of its were destroyed during the 2006 Second Lebanon War.

Ardiel said that contrary to the disinformation being spread, the peacekeepers were not taking photos and were not on private property. She added that the peacekeepers were on their way to meet members of the Lebanese army for a routine patrol.

“UNIFIL condemns attacks on men and women serving the cause of peace, which are violations of both Lebanese and international law,” Ardiel said, adding that UNIFIL also condemns those who manipulate local residents to serve their purposes.

A similar incident with peacekeepers in south Lebanon late last year was condemned by Lebanon’s Foreign Ministry.

UNIFIL was originally created to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli troops after a 1978 invasion. The mission was expanded in Lebanon under a U.N.-brokered truce after the monthlong war between Israel and Hezbollah militants in 2006.

01.05.22

Gantz meets with Jordan's king in effort to expand two-state solution

01.05.22

Gantz meets with Jordan's king in effort to expand ties

Defense chief stresses strategic importance of Jerusalem's close ties with Amman; Abdullah II calls for maintaining calm in Palestinian Territories and taking measures to create horizon needed to achieve comprehensive peace based on two-state solution
Liad Osmo, Yoav Zitun | Published: 01.05.22, 15:26

Defense Minister Benny Gantz met on Wednesday with Jordan's King Abdullah II in the capital of Amman, part of a reset of ties between the two countries.

During the meeting, the defense chief stressed the strategic importance of Jewish state's close ties with the Hashemite Kingdom, which benefits both countries, a press release from Gantz's office stated.

"The two discussed security and policy matters, and Gantz thanked Abdullah for his work to safeguard stability in the region and to bolster peace and normalization with Israel," the statement continued.

"Gantz also praised the improved ties between the two countries since Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's government came to power, and expressed his commitment to continuing to strengthen Israel and Jordan's security, economic and civil ties."

The Jordanian king stressed the importance of maintaining calm in the Palestinian Territories and taking all measures "to create the horizon needed to achieve just and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution," the Royal Hashemite Court said in a statement following the meeting.

The meeting is part of revamped ties between Israel and Jordan, which became strained under the leadership of former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. It follows a secret meeting last year between Abdullah and Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, as well as a separate meeting between the countries' foreign ministers.

Last week, Gantz met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for a meeting at his private home to discuss economic and security issues.

The meeting in Rosh Haayin was the Palestinian leader's first formal meeting in Israel since 2010, and the second with Gantz under the current government, after an August meeting in Ramallah.

01.02.22

Officials fear overcrowding at Omicron testing hubs may be hotbed for infections

01.02.22

Omicron surge strains Israel's testing capacity with endless lines

Disgruntled citizens report waiting in queue for hours for a PCR test; health officials fear overcrowding at testing hubs may serve as a hotbed for mass infections

Eitan Glickman, Sivan Hilaie, Gilad Cohen | Published: 01.02.22, 19:03

Seemingly endless queues stretched across overcrowded coronavirus testing centers all around Israel on Sunday as the spread of the highly transmissible Omicron variant continues to fuel a sharp spike in cases.

The public's rush to the testing complexes came after various health officials issued predictions the spread of the new strain will peak in the coming weeks.

In Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Caesarea, Herzliya, among other localities, people waiting to get tested were left waiting for two hours or more.

At Herzliya's drive-through testing complex, meanwhile, the sheer mass of cars waiting in line prompted the police to ask the public to take alternative routes so as not to aggravate the traffic jam in the area.

"The line is very long but we have no choice because my daughter's teacher had tested positive," said one Tel Aviv resident who waited in line with her toddler to get tested for more than an hour.

[The line] is hardly orderly. People sneak in from the flanks, there are no numbers and no control. Being stuck here in line with hundreds of people is also a sure way to contract COVID."

In Jerusalem, the queues weren't any better.

"I was here with my son not a week ago and it took barely a minute," says one man who took his daughter to one of the drive-through testing complexes in the capital due to exposure to a confirmed virus carrier. "I think we will be here for at least another two hours."

Meanwhile, not only PCR testing complexes were busy Sunday, as rapid antigen testing stations have registered a heavy workload.

"I was exposed in my school," says one woman waiting in line at an antigen testing hub in Jerusalem. "The only thing that went through my mind when I saw the line was 'help me'."

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett warned at a Cabinet earlier Sunday of an exponential increase in coronavirus cases.

"We are all feeling the rise in infections, and we are likely to see them doubling, and then see a doubling of the doubling, already in the coming days. This is how it works," said Bennett, sounding the alarm over Israel's so-called fifth wave.

"The healthcare system, as well as the rest of the country, is bracing for this wave while closely monitoring the Omicron's behavior in South Africa, the United States and Europe. Our end goal is always the same — allow our economy to function as much as possible while protecting those among us who are most vulnerable."

01.02.22

Hamas fires anti-aircraft missile at IDF helicopters attacking Gaza

01.02.22

Hamas fires anti-aircraft missile at IDF helicopters attacking Gaza

Israeli strike comes after rocket fire at Tel Aviv, which Hamas claims was triggered by lightning storm; Israeli officials believe Islamic Jihad was behind rocket attack; terror group's firing of Sam-7 at IAF considered rare response

Yoav Zitun, Elinor Levy | Updated: 01.02.22, 08:55

Israel struck Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip, late on Saturday in response to rocket fire earlier in the day, prompting the terror group to fire anti-aircraft missiles at Israeli helicopters.

According to the IDF, the strike targeted Hamas' rocket production sites as well as military posts along the border, claiming the Gaza rulers were responsible for all violent attacks originating from the enclave.

In a rare move, Hamas fired two anti-aircraft Sam-7 missiles at the Israeli helicopters carrying out the strikes.

"IDF fighter jets, helicopters and tanks struck a rocket manufacturing site, and military posts belonging to the Hamas terror organization," said the IDF Spokesperson's Unit.

"Hamas is responsible and bears the consequences for all activity in and emanating from the Gaza Strip."

The uptick in the violence came after two rockets had been fired from Gaza, which in the Mediterranean Sea, west of Tel Aviv.

Hamas claimed the rocket launch was triggered by a lightning storm and was not instigated by the terror group but officials in Israel said they believed the Islamic Jihad was behind the incident.

Saturday, January 1 marked the anniversary of the founding of the Palestinian Fatah organization and the Islamic Jihad's rocket fire could be seen as a message to the Palestinian Authority that while its president - Mahmoud Abbas - was willing to meet with Defense Minister Benny Gantz, the Islamist group was willing to attack Tel Aviv, according to some observers.