

Ynet-News, May 25, 2022 – Wednesday

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05.25.22
Lieberman mulls sanctions on southern university over Palestinian flag rally
Finance minister considers cutting funding to Ben Gurion University after it approved demonstration in which students sang anti-Israel chants, 'violating fundamental Jewish values country's laws seek to protect'
Moran Azulay | Published: 05.25.22, 20:55

Finance Minister Avigdor Lieberman on Wednesday ordered to examine the option of cutting funding to Ben Gurion University in Be'er Sheva after the institution hosted a rally on its premises earlier this week during which participants waved Palestinian flags and sang anti-Israel chants.

On Monday, hundreds of Bedouin students participated in an event on the occasion of last week's Nakba Day on campus. Nakba, Arabic for catastrophe, is a day of commemoration for the Arab defeat in the 1948-1949 war around the creation of Israel.

According to Liberman, the conduct of the southern university violated the fundamental Jewish values that the country's laws seek to protect.

"The rally marked the events known to the Arab students as the 'Nakba' events, during which things were said and flags were flown in a manner crossing what is acceptable in such demonstrations," associates of the minister said.

"During the demonstration, things were said that equate Israel's Independence Day... to a day of mourning, that deny the existence of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, that incite racism and violence, that support an armed struggle against the state as well as alleged lawlessness."

The participants and organizers later emphasized that they were merely acting upon their right to free speech.

The rally garnered nationwide criticism, including from Be'er Sheva Mayor Ruvik Danilovich, who called on university president Prof. Daniel Haimovich to take action against students who took part in the rally.

In response to the criticism, the university said that it had approved the rally since it had no legal basis to prohibit it as Israel holds official ties with the Palestinian Authority. However, some claimed that the administration prohibited students from entering campus grounds with Israeli flags while the rally was ongoing.

05.25.22

Mossad reveals Iran tricked nuclear watchdogs by having check list 3-days earlier

05.25.22

Iran used classified UN records to skirt scrutiny of nuclear program, WSJ reports
Report claims documents — retrieved in audacious Mossad operation — reveal how Tehran hoodwinked atomic watchdog inspectors about questions pertaining to nuclear arms development two decades ago

Ynet| Published: 05.25.22, 18:23

Iran has used classified documents from the UN's nuclear watchdog to cover up and conceal work on nuclear weapons, the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported on Wednesday, citing Middle East intelligence officials and documents examined by the New York-based daily.

According to the report, the documents — which were retrieved in an audacious clandestine operation of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency and exposed by then-prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in 2018 — reveal how the Mullah regime in Tehran tried

to hoodwink the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors who sought to scrutinize its nuclear weapons program about two decades ago.

The WSJ claims that the documents examined by it have not yet been made public. Intelligence sources who spoke to the newspaper said the Iranians managed to secure access to classified internal IAEA reports and circulated them among various officials in its nuclear program, along with other Iranian documents, between 2004 and 2006.

Former IAEA inspector and current president of the Institute for Science and International Security David Albright told the WSJ that the leaks gave the Iranians foreknowledge of what information was available to the IAEA and allowed them to formulate answers that would only provide existing information without divulging new one.

The report lays out several instances of Iran using internal IAEA documents. In one such case, Iranian intelligence services circulated one such report among senior Iranian officials on May 19, 2004, to prepare them for an IAEA inspection at a nuclear facility in Arak three days later.

The report included detailed satellite imagery, evidence obtained from open sources regarding Iran's activity at the site and a list of 18 questions that the IAEA intended to ask about said activity.

One of the officials made privy to the information was Ali Shamkhani, then the Islamic Republic's minister of defense and currently the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council.

However, the report stressed that the IAEA over the past decade determined that Iran has led a "coordinated effort" to develop nuclear weapons at least until 2003. Israel claims that Iran never ceased pursuing nuclear arms. Tehran denies its nuclear program ever had a military dimension and is strictly for peaceful purposes.

The report comes against the background of protracted talks between Tehran and world powers to revive a 2015 pact aimed at bridling its nuclear program, with IAEA inspections remaining one of the main sticking points.

In that agreement, Iran has agreed to significant restrictions on its nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of much of the West's financial sanctions imposed on it but is now violating it in response to the U.S. withdrawal from the agreement in 2018 under the Donald Trump administration.

Talks have come to a standstill, among other things due to the Iranian demand that its powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) be removed from the U.S. Foreign Terrorist Organizations list, a demand that President Joe Biden rejected.

Iran also demands that the IAEA investigations into its previous nuclear activities be closed before signing any agreement.

Iran and the IAEA have agreed to hold intensive talks with the aim of answering the unresolved questions of nuclear inspectors — such as the source of the processed

uranium particles found at some old and undeclared sites — but the atomic energy agency claims Tehran continues to evade answering these questions.

05.25.22

Dismantling Jewish Homesh settlement will dissolve government; Gantz to decide

05.25.22

Evacuation of Homesh settlement may be final nail in government's coffin'

A coalition official warns if Defense Minister Benny Gantz decides to okay the clear-out of dismantled settlement, right-wing government members will not have a choice but to topple it; decision set to be made by next week

Yuval Karni | Published: 05.25.22, 14:58

A coalition official warned Wednesday if the dismantled settlement of Homesh will be evacuated as ordered by the court, it will be the final nail in the coffin of the ramshackle government.

The official told Ynet if Defense Minister Benny Gantz does not appeal the decision of the Supreme Court and goes ahead with the evacuation, the right-wing members of the coalition will have no choice but to resign from the government, effectively triggering its dissolution.

In the past 24 hours, senior coalition members, including Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked and MK Nir Orbach from the Yamina party, have been in contact with Gantz ahead of his appeal to the court, which has to be submitted by next week.

According to coalition officials, MK Orbach has said behind closed doors that evacuation of the settlement would be a "red line" for the right-wing elements in the government. "Those who are familiar with Orbach know such an event will surely lead to his withdrawal," a coalition official said. Orbach refused to immediately comment on the remarks.

Gantz has apparently not made a decision on which position to take during his appeal, and sources within his political party argued that some of the threats from the Right were intended to try and influence his final choice.

In his appeal to the court, Gantz can potentially back the immediate evacuation of Homesh, in which case the coalition will likely fall apart. However, the defense minister also has the option of ordering the evacuation without setting a timeline, thus buying some time and avoiding a political crisis.

A Blue & White member accused Tuesday the Yemina party of deliberately hinting at coalition's demise in the event the Homesh is evacuated, thus making Gantz responsible for the government's overthrow.

Some coalition officials claimed Tuesday that the crisis over the settlement significant, but at the same time, senior members of the right-wing party are negotiating with Gantz to try and reach an agreement on the issue.

05.25.22

Lapid meets Turkish minister on visit to Abbas, West Bank & Mosque

05.25.22

Lapid meets Turkish counterpart in Jerusalem in effort to normalize ties

Foreign minister says current visit's goal is to expand bilateral economic and civil cooperation; Cavusoglu says improved relations could have 'positive impact' on resolution with Palestinians

Ynet, Associated Press | Published: 05.25.22, 12:50

Foreign Minister Yair Lapid met on Wednesday with visiting Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu in Jerusalem as two countries attempt to normalize ties after years of diplomatic tensions.

Mevlut Cavusoglu spoke in Jerusalem as part of the first visit by a senior Turkish official to Israel in 15 years. He arrived in Israel on Tuesday and immediately departed for the West Bank where he met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and other officials.

Speaking at a joint press conference, Cavusoglu said that "working on a positive agenda can also help us to address our disagreements in a more constructive manner."

Communications between President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Israeli counterpart helped calm tensions between Israel and the Palestinians in Jerusalem during Ramadan, he added.

Lapid said that the two countries "have always known how to return to dialogue and cooperation."

The foreign minister also spoke of Turkey's long historic relations with the Jewish people, beginning with the biblical father of the Nation Abraham - believed to have originated from Turkey.

"Nations with long histories always know how to close one chapter and open a new one. That is what we are doing here today," he said. "This could mean all Jews could apply for Turkish passports," he joked.

"The goal is to form and expand economic and civil cooperation between our countries to create business to business and people to people and to leverage our two countries, comparative advantages regionally and globally, even during the pandemic, and even in times of political tension," he said.

Cavusoglu said that the normalization of ties between Turkey and Israel will have a "positive impact" for a "peaceful" resolution to the Palestinian conflict.

In a news conference after his meeting with Lapid, Cavusoglu said the two countries agreed to "re-energize" relations in many areas, including resuming talks on civil aviation. The Turkish minister will on Wednesday visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum and later tour the Old City of Jerusalem and visit the Al Aqsa Mosque, a sight of increased Israeli Palestinian tension.

Turkey and Israel were close allies, but relations grew tense under Erdogan, who is a vocal critic of Israel's alleged mistreatment of the Palestinians.

The countries withdrew their ambassadors in 2010 after Israeli forces stormed a Gaza-bound flotilla carrying humanitarian aid for Palestinians that refused to turn away after entering the Gaza waters illegally. The incident resulted in the deaths of nine Turkish activists and injuries to IDF soldiers.

Turkey recalled its ambassador in 2018 after the United States moved its embassy to Jerusalem, prompting Israel to respond in kind. The two countries have not reappointed their ambassadors.

05.24.22

US sanctioned Hamas finances in Sudan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Algeria & UAE

05.24.22

U.S. sanctions Hamas official and financial network, Treasury Dept. says
Sanctions target Hamas' Investment Office which holds assets estimated to be worth some \$500 million; there was no immediate comment from the terror organization
Reuters| Published: 05.24.22, 23:08

The United States on Tuesday imposed sanctions on a Hamas finance official and a network of financial facilitators and companies that have generated revenue for the Palestinian militant group, the Treasury Department said.

The sanctions target Hamas' Investment Office, which holds assets estimated to be worth more than \$500 million, including companies operating in Sudan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and the United Arab Emirates, the department said in a statement.

"Hamas has generated vast sums of revenue through its secret investment portfolio while destabilizing Gaza, which is facing harsh living and economic conditions," said Elizabeth Rosenberg, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes.

There was no immediate comment from Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip and is deemed a terrorist group in the West and by Israel.

The Hamas official sanctioned is Abdallah Yusuf Faisal Sabri, a Kuwait-based Jordanian national and accountant who has worked in Hamas' finance ministry for several years, the Treasury Department said.

The companies sanctioned included Sudan-based Agrogate Holding, Algeria-based Sidar Company, UAE-based Itqan Real Estate JSC, Turkey-based Trend GYO and Saudi Arabia-based Anda Company, the department added.

05.24.22

Ramadan attacks revealed terror cell leadership guided by Hamas money

05.24.22

Hamas planned to target far-right lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir, security officials say
Shin Bet and Israel Police say East Jerusalem-based terror cell also helped fan al-Aqsa riots during Ramadan, planned to manufacture explosive devices, kidnap soldiers, and carry out attacks on light rail in the capital

Yoav Zitun | Published: 05.24.22, 10:28

A Hamas terror cell based in East Jerusalem planned to carry out attacks against Israelis, including against far-right lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir, security officials revealed Tuesday.

According to sources, a joint operation by the Shin Bet domestic security agency and Israel Police saw the the Jerusalem-based terror cell uncovered back in April.

The group reportedly planned to manufacture explosive devices, kidnap soldiers and carry out a drone attack on Jerusalem's ever-populated light rail.

The cell operated under the leadership of Rashid Rashek - a prominent Hamas operative living in Jerusalem's Old City - and was guided by Hamas operative Mansour Safadi from the capital's Abu Tor neighborhood, both of whom planned a shooting or suicide attack in Jerusalem.

The investigation also revealed that Rashek was in charge of fanning the flames of unrest in the capital by recruiting activists to stir up riots in the city's Palestinian neighborhoods and on the Temple Mount during the holy month of Ramadan

According to the Shin Bet and the Israel Police, the activists transferred fireworks as well as Hamas flags and bands to the city's eastern neighborhoods and to the Temple Mount for use during the pre-planned Ramadan riots.

Alongside the arrest of the suspected terrorists, the police also seized a drone that was intended for the attack on the light rail in the capital, a camera designed to document potential Israeli hostages, money and organizational equipment belonging to Hamas.

"We will continue to act resolutely in order to bring to justice those involved in all terrorist activities in general and in the city of Jerusalem in particular," the Shin Bet and police said in a joint statement.

Ben Gvir, meanwhile, blamed the planned attack on his life on Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and the Left, all of whom he accused of incitement. "I call on Lapid, Bennett and the Left to stop the incitement against me." Ben-Gvir, known as a provocative and extremist far-right lawmaker, was recently given a sizable personal security detail, which accompanies him at all times and secures his private residence 24/7 due to numerous death threats.

05.24.22

Netanyahu's demand passes 100% scholarships to soldiers after military service

05.24.22

Israel passes veterans scholarship bill after caving in to opposition's demands
Opposition's Likud, which demanded bill must cover 100% of scholarships to troops instead of proposed 60%, approves law after Gantz offers to cover 75% of tuition
Ynet, i24NEWS | Published: 05.24.22, 09:33

Israel overnight Monday passed the bill that seeks to subsidize the majority of academic tuition for discharged IDF soldiers, after the opposition accepted a compromise offered by the government.

The proposal would grant tuition scholarships to combat soldiers, lone soldiers and troops from lower socioeconomic status following their service in the military.

The legislation - translated from the Hebrew roughly as "From Uniforms to Studies," - was approved by a majority of 55-6.

The remaining 61 MKs, both from the opposition and the coalition, did not participate in the third Knesset reading, which the Joint List faction turned into a no-confidence vote. The bill has slammed by opposition's Likud, which threatened to vote against it and have the legislation fall through. The Likud, led by former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, demanded the bill cover 100% of the tuition, and not just two-thirds. The Likud eventually agreed to accept the compromise proposal presented at the last minute by Defense Minister Benny Gantz, according to which the government will fund 75% of the tuition fee, as opposed to the originally proposed 60%.

"I'm not willing to allow politics to hurt the IDF," Gantz said. "I ask everyone, both coalition and opposition, to vote in favor of this proposal in coordination with the prime minister and foreign minister."

After the compromise was reached, Netanyahu tweeted: "After this fraudulent government proved that it depends on the [Islamist] Ra'am party, only then did Gantz admit his failure and agree to our demand to raise scholarships for IDF troops". "This is proof that we were right from the beginning, that our soldiers deserve more, and that this government is dangerous to Israel and needs to be replaced immediately."

05.23.22

Hamas will launch rockets if Sunday flag march passes West Wall

05.23.22

Gaza sources: terror groups preparing for attack on Israel next week

Palestinian enclave's terrorist groups brace for next week's controversial flag march, as all regional actors on high alert; 'We will confront and never allow harm to Al Aqsa,' Hamas official says

TPS| Published: 05.23.22, 22:25

Sources in Gaza warned Israel the Palestinian enclave's terrorist groups are preparing for possible confrontations, including the launching of rocket fire, if Israel's nationalist flag parade goes through next Sunday.

“Hamas’ military wing is on high alert and ready to carry out the leadership’s orders for a possible confrontation with Israel if the flag parade, expected on the 29th of the month [Sunday], moves very close to the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Western Wall plaza,” a source in the Gaza Strip said on Monday.

The source said that the military wing is now on high alert, recruiting militants, checking communication systems, and preparing outposts. He emphasized that “this is not an idle threat.”

According to the source, the threats voiced on Sunday by Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas Politburo, to the “The Sword of Jerusalem – Unity of the Uma and People” conference in the Gaza Strip, made clear beyond doubt that rocket fire on Israel should be the response to Israel's traditional flag parade on Jerusalem Day.

Haniyeh stressed that the “resistance” would confront the Israeli flag march and would respond by all means, and called on its people to be prepared.

“We are following the threats to storm the Al-Aqsa Mosque on May 29 and organize a march of flags, which were torn by the rockets of the resistance a year ago.”

Building up tensions last year, which culminated in Jerusalem’s Day parade, led to Hamas firing rockets at Jerusalem and the subsequent Gaza war while Muslims rioted for days in cities across the country.

“Our decision is clear, do not get confused, we will confront and never allow harm to Al-Aqsa,” he warned.

Another source in the Gaza Strip said that Egyptian mediators are on high alert and that the Egyptians are also criticizing Israel’s intention to allow the flag parade to go through the Old City.

The Jerusalem Day celebrations, marking Israel's victory during the 1967 Six-Day War and the reunification of East and West Jerusalem, include a parade in which tens of

thousands of Israelis march with flags through the city's center and then through the Old City while entering it through the Damascus Gate. The parade and its scheduled route were approved by all the relevant security bodies in Israel. The march does not include, and has never included, the Temple Mount.

" Hamas is now giving last chance to Egyptian mediation," the Gaza source said, but " Hamas is in a situation where it must prove a match between its threats and statements to its actions on the ground, and prove that what its senior officials said is not meaningless."

A Palestinian source, relying on messages from Hamas' military wing, said that "the organization's strategy remains and is still based on military pressure and long-term attrition alongside the dispersal [of attacks] in all Palestinian arenas fighting in Israel while leaving the Strip out of the conflict," adding that the military arm believes a limited response, or an attack carried out by one of the other terror organizations in the Gaza Strip, which will not harm deep inside Israel, will serve this strategy and will not lead Israel to a significant military response.

Referring to the question of the Gaza Strip's involvement in an upcoming conflict, the Gaza Strip said that Hamas is committed to the Iranian-led "Jerusalem Axis" and is backed by Iran in its threats against Israel in launching a regional campaign outside the Gaza Strip.

Senior Hamas figures recently spoke out about launching a regional campaign, declaring that in the next round of fighting against Israel from the Gaza Strip, external forces will also participate alongside terror groups in Gaza.

The new axis was established a year ago, following the recent Gaza war, and with its establishment, an internal debate in Hamas over joining Iran ended, with the military wing deciding in favor of supporting Iran. Hamas says that the war has awakened "dormant fronts" and that the "Axis of Jerusalem" is expected to participate in the next round of fighting and launch rockets at Israel.

One of the tasks of the extremist axis is to break the naval blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip. In Yahya Senwar's recent surprise speech, the Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip said that Hamas would soon begin coordinating the breaking of the siege with the help of the "Jerusalem Axis."

A Hamas source in the West Bank said that there is an agreement among all factions in the Gaza Strip to "a very significant response" against Israel if the flag parade passes near the mosque in East Jerusalem.

"If the march passes through al-Aqsa Square (Western Wall), Hamas will launch rockets and even if the mediators press it to prevent escalation, other factions will launch their missiles," he said, pointing to the Islamic Jihad.

The Islamic Jihad organization sent a message to Israel through mediators that the flag parade on Jerusalem Day is a "defiant and aggressive move" that will have a response." The Gaza Strip estimates that even if the mediators press Hamas not to escalate the situation, it is likely that Islamic Jihad will launch rockets at Israel if the flag parade passes through the Old City. "Islamic Jihad is committed to responding to the

assassination of the senior Iranian official both under expected pressure from Egypt and at the cost of dragging Hamas into another campaign against Israel.”

On Sunday, the Palestinian Authority’s presidency warned of the “provocative flag march” and of the Israeli Magistrate’s Court’s decision to allow Israelis to pray on the Temple Mount.

A Palestinian Authority source estimated that “if the march goes ahead, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad have no choice but to respond militarily, and to this must be added the fact of the assassination of the Iranian colonel who is responsible for Hezbollah’s missile reservoirs in the past, as a factor that will lead to a regional escalation if Hamas opens a front in the south.”

The Jordanian Foreign Ministry opposed the court decision allowing prayers for Jews on the Temple Mount and said that “the decision is null and void and violates all international laws regarding Jerusalem, and is a dangerous violation of the existing historical and legal status quo in the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The kingdom does not recognize Israeli court jurisdiction on occupied Jerusalem. The mosque on all its territory is a place of worship for Muslims only.”

A source in eastern Jerusalem said, “I think the Israeli government will not implement the court decision that allows Jews to pray on the mountain, since the decision means a coup against Hashemite guardianship, and in this matter, the government cannot bear the heavy responsibility of creating a dangerous escalation.”

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Ynet-News, May 23, 2022 – Monday

05.23.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in May 23 spot – Monday
Bedouin students wave PA flags at Ben Gurion U; security did not allow Israeli flags

05.23.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in May 22 spot – Sunday
Gan Tzvi, Bennett's chief of staff resigned, after a decade at Bennett's side

05.23.22 – Mo- - - News
Israeli chief justice: inciteful public discourse leading to 'dangerous places'

05.23.22 – Mo- - - News
Israel Police prevent entering Temple Mount; magistrate rule will be appealed

05.23.22 – Mo- - - News
Israel claims assassinated Iranian official behind plot to abduct Israelis

05.22.22 – Su- - - News Placed in May 21 spot – Saturday
Magistrate Judge Zion Saharai overturned ban of Jewish prayer on Temple Mount

05.22.22 – Su- - - News

Senior Iran Guard officer assassinated in Tehran, by two on a motorcycle

05.19.22 – Th - - News

Jordan's king puts half-brother under house arrest for offending the nation

05.20.22 – Fr - - News Placed in May 20 spot – Friday

Fictional account of Netanyahu family History in America wins Pulitzer Prize