

Ynet-News, May 29, 2022 – Sunday

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Bennett says Iranian 'immunity' is over, using terror tactics by proxies

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Police lock some PA inside mosque as Jewish visitors arrive for daily tours

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Israeli defense opposes reroute of Sunday flag march & will overwhelm Hamas

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New ISIS jihadist group leader captured in Istanbul, following police surveillance

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Israeli appeal court overturned lower magistrate ruling on Temple Mount prayer

05.29.22

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Bennett says Iranian 'immunity' is over

Prime minister accuses Iran of repeatedly targeting Israeli and regional interests using terror tactics by proxies; Iran which attributes killing of IRGC official to Israel, vows to retaliate for his death

Reuters| Published: 05.29.22, 15:19

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Sunday Iran would not go unpunished for instigating attacks through its proxies, speaking a week after the assassination in Tehran of a Revolutionary Guards colonel that has been blamed on Israel.

Hassan Sayad Khodai, accused by Israel of plotting attacks against its citizens worldwide, was shot dead at the wheel of his car by two people on a motorcycle. The tactic echoed previous killings in Iran that focused on nuclear scientists and were widely pinned on Mossad.

Iran's semi-official ISNA news agency said members of an Israeli intelligence service network had been discovered and arrested by the Guards immediately after the Tehran shooting.

Bennett's office, which oversees intelligence agency Mossad, has declined to comment on the assassination.

However, in broadcast remarks to his ministers on Sunday, Bennett accused Iran of repeatedly targeting Israeli interests.

"For decades, the Iranian regime has practiced terrorism against Israel and the region by means of proxies, emissaries, but the head of the octopus, Iran itself, has enjoyed immunity," Bennett said.

"As we have said before, the era of the Iranian regime's immunity is over. Those who finance terrorists, those who arm terrorists and those who send terrorists will pay the full price," he added.

Iran has promised to retaliate for Khodai's death and pointed the finger at Israel.

05.29.22

IDF jets to patrol Gaza during flag march; PA silent for the time being

05.29.22

IDF jets to patrol Gaza during Jerusalem flag march over rocket threats

Israeli military believes while Hamas officials outside of Gaza attempt to encourage violence, silence from the leadership in the Strip signals it wants to keep the enclave's borders quiet for the time being

Yossi Yehoshua | Published: 05.29.22, 14:56

Israeli planes are set to patrol the skies of the Gaza Strip during the contentious Jerusalem flag march, prepared to respond immediately to any potential rocket launches from the Hamas-controlled enclave, military said Sunday.

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh last week warned Israel about going ahead with the nationalistic march marking the Jerusalem Day, which could potentially re-ignite violence in the capital. Israel has given the go-ahead for flag-waving Jewish nationalists

to march through the Damascus Gate, the Palestinian thoroughfare in Jerusalem's Old City, which Palestinians see as unacceptable.

The IDF, however, warned the terror organization that any attacks against Israel in retaliation to the march would lead to great consequences.

While Hamas representatives outside of Gaza keep leveling threats, the group's military's wing chief Mohammed Deif and its leader in the Strip Yahya Sinwar have remained relatively reserved. Deif, who called the shots in last year's 11-day May war, is staying silent for the time being, and Sinwar has not explicitly threatening escalation.

Meanwhile, Khaled Mashal - one of Hamas' leaders abroad - called on all "people of the Islamic and Arabic nation" to embark on a day of rage alongside the flag march on Sunday.

"We must do something big, so that the occupation and its supporters understand that harming Al-Aqsa will lead to an earthquake," said Mashal.

Despite the ominous tone from Mashal and other Hamas officials, the IDF believes that Hamas is not interested in another military confrontation akin to that of last year. It appears the Gazan leadership wants to verbally incite violence from afar, while maintaining stability inside its borders. Hence, the chances of missile launches are low, but casualties and violence in Jerusalem could alter the circumstances.

The IDF also believes the turmoil in Jerusalem could spark a symbolic missile launch from Lebanon. Another scenario would see the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement shooting rockets separately from Hamas, in which Israel will have to consider the nature of its response.

Additionally, throughout the last few weeks a host of violent clashes took place in Huwara, a Palestinian town south of Nablus in the northern West Bank, between Palestinians and Israeli forces.

Tensions began to fester when a group of settlers arrived at Huwara to take down Palestinian flags. More so, on Friday, a group of masked settlers opened fire toward a Palestinian café in Huwara and shattered its windows. Luckily, no deaths were reported in the event.

This front is drawing the IDF's attention, given it could be a focal point of violence which would be difficult to dismantle and keep under control.

Throughout the last ten days, over 40 cases of nationalist crimes have been carried out by extreme right-wing Jews against Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the West Bank. Officials at the defense establishment are worried that incidents like these could ignite the whole West Bank region and create an additional front.

05.29.22

Police lock some PA inside mosque as Jewish visitors arrive for daily tours

05.29.22

Clashes at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque before contested Israeli flag march  
Palestinians throw stones, fireworks towards police, who respond with stun grenades and arrest 21 rioters; more than 2,000 Jews allowed to visit Temple Mount during Jerusalem Day celebrations

Associated Press | Published: 05.29.22, 14:26

Israeli police faced off with Palestinians holed up inside Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque on Sunday as more than 2,000 Jews visited the holy compound ahead of a contentious Jewish nationalist march through the Old City.

The annual Jerusalem procession celebrates Israel's capture of the Old City in the 1967 Six Day War and draws thousands of cheering, chanting participants to its narrow, stone streets.

Palestinian factions have warned that the flag-waving parade through the city's Muslim quarter could re-ignite their decades-old conflict with Israelis at a time of highly charged tensions.

Hours before the procession was due to kick off, police locked some Palestinians inside a mosque on the Al-Aqsa compound as Jewish visitors arrived for daily tours of the compound, which is revered by both Muslims and Jews. Palestinians threw stones and shot fireworks towards police, who responded with stun grenades.

Jerusalem police said 21 people were arrested for hurling stones in and around the Old City.

Among the Jewish visitors were a dozen or so young men, wearing religious garb, who smiled, sang and clapped in the direction of the protesters. As the crowds grew, other Jews held up Israeli flags and sang the national anthem.

The Islamist group Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, condemned videos posted online suggesting that Jews had prayed at the site, in violation of a long-standing ban.

"The Israel government is fully responsible for all these irresponsible policies and the following consequences," senior Hamas official Bassem Naim said.

In recent years Hamas has cast itself as a defender of Muslim Jerusalem. After weeks of confrontations last year over Palestinian evictions in the city, Hamas fired rockets into Israel during the march, triggering an 11-day war that killed at least 250 Palestinians in Gaza and 13 people in Israel.

Shrugging off calls for a rethink of the route from some of his coalition allies, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett confirmed on Sunday that the parade would go ahead as planned. "Waving the Israeli flag in the capital of Israel is perfectly acceptable," he said. "I ask the participants to celebrate in a responsible and dignified manner."

Israel sees all of Jerusalem as its eternal and indivisible capital, while Palestinians want the eastern section as capital of their future state. Hamas, deemed a terrorist organization by Western governments, sees all of modern-day Israel as occupied.

Palestinians view Sunday's march as an Israeli show of force and part of a broader campaign to bolster Jewish presence across the city.

Repeated clashes took place between Palestinians and Israeli police in the Al-Aqsa compound in April, during the holy month of Ramadan, with Muslims angered by the rising numbers of Jewish visitors to the mosque esplanade.

Two weeks ago, the funeral of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, killed during an Israeli army West Bank raid, descended into chaos when police charged the mourners and yanked away Palestinian flags.

Al-Aqsa is the third holiest site in Islam. It is also revered by Jews as the Temple Mount - a vestige of their faith's two ancient temples.

Sunday's procession is due to culminate at the Western Wall, a Jewish prayer site that sits below the Al-Aqsa mosques.

05.27.22

Iraq legislators celebrate law; death or life imprisonment if any ties with Israel

05.27.22

Iraqi lawmakers pass bill criminalizing any ties with Israel

Passed with overwhelming majority, legislation says violation punishable by death or life imprisonment; U.S. laments bill 'jeopardizing freedom of expression and promoting environment of antisemitism'

Associated Press| Published: 05.27.22, 18:54

Iraqi lawmakers on Thursday passed a bill criminalizing normalization of ties and any relations, including business ties, with Israel.

The legislation says that violation of the law is punishable with the death sentence or life imprisonment.

The law was approved with 275 lawmakers voting in favor of it in the 329-seat assembly. A parliament statement said the legislation is "a true reflection of the will of the people."

Influential Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, whose party won the largest number of seats in Iraq's parliamentary elections last year, called for Iraqis to take to the streets to celebrate this "great achievement." Hundreds later gathered in central Baghdad, chanting anti-Israel slogans.

It was unclear how the law will be implemented as Iraq has not recognized Israel since the country's formation in 1948; the two nations have no diplomatic relations. The

legislation also entails risks for companies working in Iraq and found to be in violation of the bill.

The United States said it was deeply disturbed by the Iraqi legislation. “In addition to jeopardizing freedom of expression and promoting an environment of antisemitism, this legislation stands in stark contrast to progress Iraq’s neighbors have made by building bridges and normalizing relations with Israel, creating new opportunities for people throughout the region,” State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a statement.

05.26.22

US intelligence leak to New York Times is a breach of trust to Israel

05.26.22

Israel tells U.S. administration it is angered by leak to New York Times  
The paper quotes intelligence source saying Israel informed U.S. of responsibility for assassination of IRGC official in Tehran; Jerusalem concerned Iran now forced to avenge the killing after ambiguity compromised  
Itamar Eichner | Published: 05.26.22, 22:26

Israeli officials on Thursday, expressed their anger at a report in the New York Times, quoting U.S. sources, that Israel was responsible for an assassination in Tehran earlier in the week.

The New York Times reported that Israel informed the Biden Administration of its operation inside Iran, in which Sayyad Khodaei, a senior member of the Revolutionary Guard Corps was shot dead outside his home by gunmen who escaped from the scene on a motorcycle.

The Israeli officials described the leak as a breach of trust between Jerusalem and Washington, who cooperate closely in matters of security and intelligence, and warned that Israelis may be put at risk of Iranian vengeance.

In an earlier report, the Wall Street Journal said, Khodaei was behind a plot to assassinate French Jewish philosopher, Bernard-Henri Lévy.

Officials in Israel believe the leak to the New York Times originated with administration officials who oppose Israel's actions against Iran out of concern that they would be harmful to the negotiations on a return to the 2015 nuclear deal.

The Israelis are especially angered because their policy of ambiguity when it comes to a response to Iranian aggression, was compromised.

Israel had not assumed responsibility for Khodaei's assassination, in order to allow the Iranians deniability and minimize their ambition to avenge his death by targeting Israeli interests.

Israeli officials said Khodaei was the deputy commander of Unit 840, and was involved in planning cross-border plots against foreigners, including Israelis.

They said that he was in charge of the unit's operations in the Middle East and countries neighboring Iran and had been involved over the past two years in attempted terrorist attacks against Israelis, Europeans and American civilians and government officials in Columbia, Kenya, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates and Cyprus. Iran has never acknowledged the existence of Unit 840.

05.26.22

Israel rejects US, Egypt & UN to reconsider Flag March route

05.26.22

Israel rejects U.S. ask to amend Flag March route

American Ambassador appeals to Barlev and Lapid to avoid Muslim Quarter and possible friction with Palestinians; Israeli officials say Palestinians making false claims march intended to pass through Muslim holy site  
Itamar Eichner | Published: 05.26.22, 19:56

Israeli officials rejected a request by the U.S. Ambassador Thomas Nides, to amend the route of the controversial Flag March so that it avoids the Muslim Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem.

The March will take place on Sunday, on the occasion of Jerusalem Day.

The Ambassador said the march as it was approved, could cause further friction and asked officials in Jerusalem to reconsider their decision.

The annual event, marking the 'reunification' of east and west Jerusalem after the 1967 Six Day War has become a demonstration of Israeli sovereignty over the city by the right-wing and religious population, and includes organized groups of school children from religious schools.

Public Security Minister Omer Barlev said last week that the police will approve the march based on recommendations from security agencies.

Nides related the American request in meetings with Barlev and with Foreign Minister Yair Lapid

"I understand your concerns," Barlev told Nides, "We are doing all we can to prevent friction and provocations. This march is a 30 year long tradition," he said. "Jerusalem is Israel's capital," Barlev said and even reminded the ambassador that his father who was then deputy chief of staff, participated Israel's conquest of the Old City.

Officials in Jerusalem rejected claims by Palestinians that the march will pass through Muslim holy sites and the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, saying that those claims were meant to incite violence.

Egypt the UN and some European countries also asked Israel to reconsider the decision to allow the march to enter the Old City through the Damascus Gate.

The U.S. embassy in Jerusalem said it was forbidding its staff and their families from visiting the Old City on Sunday and in fact ordered them to refrain from entering the ancient city's walls from Thursday through Monday.

The embassy also published a warning to all Americans in the area to be especially vigilant.

Israel's security agencies and the IDF recommended the route remain unchanged from past years in order not to cause the appearance of weakness after Hamas threatened violence in response to it.

In discussions, the officials said that if Hamas initiates violence in the wake of the march like it did last year, Israel's response should be significant. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett was also decisive in the discussions and said the route must remain unchanged.

On Wednesday, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said participants in the march intend on destroying the mosque on top of the Temple Mount compound.

"The Palestinian resistance said the march will not go unanswered," leader of the Iran-backed terror group said.

05.26.22

Israeli defense opposes reroute of Sunday flag march & will overwhelm Hamas

05.26.22

Israeli defense officials oppose last-minute reroute of Jerusalem flag march

Military, security agencies warn any change at the wire would be perceived as a sign of weakness on Israel's part; Bennett adamant about maintaining traditional route and asserting Israeli sovereignty

Yossi Yehoshua | Published: 05.26.22, 11:55

The defense establishment on Thursday advised Prime Minister Naftali Bennett to stick to the approved route of next week's Jerusalem Day flag parade despite protests of extremist elements, warning that any last-minute change would be perceived as a sign of weakness on Israel's part.

During discussions on the matter, one senior defense official said that in case Hamas follows through on its threats of violence if the march goes ahead in its current format, the Israeli response must be overwhelming.

Prime Minister Bennett was also adamant about maintaining the traditional route and asserting Israeli sovereignty.

Military officials claimed that Hamas is deterred by Israeli forces and is not interested in widespread escalation, but rather further stoke tensions without getting Gaza involved.



While the military believes public discourse in Gaza mainly revolves around economic issues, Mohammed Deif, the supreme commander of Hamas's military wing will ultimately call the shots, rather than Hamas's political leader in Gaza Yahyah Sinwar.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah warned Wednesday against letting the nationalistic Jerusalem Day flag March pass through the capital's Damascus Gate and the Muslim Quarter, saying it could spark "a major explosion."

"I want to tell the Israeli government and everyone involved – any harm to al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock will lead to a major explosion in the region. This is a provocation against all Arab and Muslim peoples," Nasrallah said during a speech.

Meanwhile, the United States Embassy in Jerusalem instructed its employees and their families to avoid visiting Jerusalem's Old City starting Thursday up until Monday. American citizens in Israel have also been advised to remain vigilant.

On Wednesday, Police Commissioner Yaakov Shabtai ordered high alert in Jerusalem and other cities with mixed Jewish-Arab populations ahead of the nationalist rally. As per the order, more than 3,000 police officers will be deployed in Jerusalem and hundreds more in mixed cities as police fear violence might ignite in a repeat of last year's Jerusalem Day when high tensions eventually culminated in violent racially motivated riots across the country and the Gaza conflict.

05.26.22

New ISIS jihadist group leader captured in Istanbul, following police surveillance

05.26.22

New ISIS leader detained in Istanbul, Turkish officials say

Turkish OdaTV news outlet says Abu Hasan al-Kureshi arrested during a police raid following lengthy police surveillance of residence while no shots fired; Erdogan expected to announce capture in days

Ynet, Dennis Bihler | Published: 05.26.22, 19:35

Senior Turkish officials said Thursday that Islamic State's new leader was captured during a police raid in Istanbul.

The Turkish security forces said after they learned that Abu Hasan al-Kureshi was in Istanbul, they surveilled a house he had used for a number of days. According to media reports, no shots were fired in the raid.

As soon as they confirmed he was on the premises, a joint anti-terrorism police force with intelligence agents, moved in and apprehended the man they believe had led the jihadist group since the death of its former chief Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi in February.

al-Qurayshi, who died in a U.S. special forces raid on his compound in Syria's northwestern Idlib province, killed himself like his predecessor, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi had done when cornered, in 2019.

The Turkish website OdaTV, which reported on the arrest, also said that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was briefed on the capture of the Islamic State leader and is expected to announce it publicly in the coming days.

The Turkish news site said that al-Kureshi was taken into custody and would be questioned in order to gather information about the the Islamic State organization. The Islamic State announced the identity of its new leader in March, after it confirmed the death of the previous leader - which was more than a month after U.S. President Joe Biden said he had died in a raid.

ISIS did not release any details about their new leader, including his real name .

News of his detention comes as Turkey said it would launch a new military operation in Syria, against the Kurdish YPG forces. Ankara sees YPG as an extension of the PKK - a Kurdish group they characterized as a terror organization.

05.26.22

Israeli appeal court overturned lower magistrate ruling on Temple Mount prayer

05.26.22

Israeli appeal court quashes ruling on Jewish prayer at al-Aqsa compound

Right to freedom of Jewish worship at holy shrine 'not absolute, and should be superseded by other interests, among them the safeguarding of public order,' judge says in ruling

Reuters| Published: 05.26.22, 10:10

An Israeli appeal court overturned on Wednesday a ruling by a lower magistrate who had stirred Palestinian anger by questioning the legality of barring Jewish prayer at a contested Jerusalem shrine.

Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which Jews revere as a vestige of their two ancient temples, is at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Under a decades-old "status quo" arrangement with Muslim authorities, Israel allows Jews to visit only if they refrain from religious rites.

Three Jewish youths who received a restraining order after praying at the site successfully challenged the police decision at Jerusalem Magistrates Court, which ruled on Sunday that their actions had not constituted a breach of the peace.

That prompted protests from the Palestinian leadership, threats from Palestinian militants and a pledge from Israel that the status quo would be preserved.

The state filed a counter-appeal on Wednesday with Jerusalem District Court, which found in favor after nightfall.

"The special sensitivity of the Temple Mount cannot be overstated," Judge Einat Avman-Moller said in her ruling, using the Hebrew name for a site Muslims know as the Noble Sanctuary.

A right to freedom of Jewish worship there "is not absolute, and should be superseded by other interests, among them the safeguarding of public order," she said.

In a statement before Wednesday's ruling, Nati Rom, a lawyer for the defendants, said: "It is strange and regrettable that, in the 21st century, in a Jewish and democratic country, the basic human rights of Jews would be so harmed."

With Jewish visits increasing in number, including over the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan that coincided this year with the Jewish Passover festival, Palestinians have cried foul.

Jordan, a U.S.-backed Israeli security partner that serves as custodian of al-Aqsa, has also voiced concern.

Tensions have been further stoked by a flag march due to be held by nationalist Jews in Jerusalem's Old City on Sunday, marking its capture by Israel from Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War. The annual event is resented by Palestinians, who want the Old City and other parts of East Jerusalem as capital of their hoped-for future state.

"Our biggest fear is that the marchers will enter the al-Aqsa Mosque compound and harm it," said Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah during a speech on Lebanon's Liberation Day. "I want to tell the Israeli government and everyone involved – any harm to al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock will lead to a major explosion in the region. This is a provocation against all Arab and Muslim peoples."

Other Arab and Muslim elements have also expressed similar concerns regarding Israel's decision to allow the flag day march to pass through the Muslim Quarter, as well as through the volatile Damascus Gate area.

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Ynet-News, May 25, 2022 – Wednesday

05.25.22 – We- - - News   Placed in May 25 spot – Wednesday  
Ben Gurion U. fund may end after PA flags permitted & Israel flags prohibited

05.25.22 – We- - - News  
Mossad reveals Iran tricked nuclear watchdogs by having check list 3-days earlier

05.25.22 – We- - - News  
Dismantling Jewish Homesh settlement will dissolve government; Gantz to decide

05.25.22 – We- - - News

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

05.24.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in May 24 spot – Tuesday

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

05.24.22 – Tu- - - News

Ramadan attacks revealed terror cell leadership guided by Hamas money

05.24.22 – Tu- - - News

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

05.23.22 – Mo- - - News

Hamas will launch rockets if Sunday flag march passes West Wall