

Ynet-News, August 01, 2022 – Monday

07.31.22 – Su- - - News Placed in July 30 spot – Saturday
Lapid urges UN to dismantle Inquiry panel over antisemitic remarks

07.31.22 – Su- - - News Placed in July 31 spot – Sunday
Near unanimous vote to withhold PA tax going to terrorists & their families

07.28.22 – Th- - - News
Iran arrests five suspected Israeli-linked spies gathering information

07.28.22 – Th- - - News Placed in July 29 spot – Friday
Seeking new funds, Hamas raises destructive taxes in Gaza, some 600%

07.28.22 – Th- - - News Placed in July 28 spot – Thursday
Intentional West Bank PA head-on car crash, reckless & fatal to settler

07.27.22 – We- - - News Placed in July 28 spot – Thursday
Israel's High Court says settlers in illegal outpost can stay

07.26.22 – Tu- - - News
Israel warns Hezbollah the offshore gas field is operational in September

07.27.22 – We- - - News Placed in July 27 spot – Wednesday
EU puts forward new draft lifting sanctions to revive Iran nuclear deal

07.31.22
Lapid urges UN to dismantle Inquiry panel over antisemitic remarks

07.31.22
PM urges UN to dismantle rights panel over 'antisemitic' remarks
In appeal to UN chief, Lapid decries alleged anti-Israel bias after panel member quoted alluding to 'Jewish lobby' and questioning whether Israel deserved its UN membership
AFP| Published: 07.31.22, 22:58

Prime Minister Yair Lapid on Sunday upped pressure on the United Nations to disband a commission investigating Israel, appealing to the secretary-general over "antisemitic" remarks from a member of the body.

The Commission of Inquiry (COI) investigating abuses in Israel and the Palestinian territories was created by the UN Human Rights Council last year after an 11-day war between Israel and armed militants in Gaza.

Israel has flatly refused to cooperate with the commission, which has so far largely blamed Israel as it probes "all underlying root causes" in the decades-long conflict. On July 25, commissioner Miloon Kothari was quoted alluding to a "Jewish lobby" and questioning whether Israel deserved its UN membership, reigniting long-time allegations that the council is biased against the Jewish state.

"These anti-Semitic remarks are a stain on the entire United Nations and are not befitting of a person with such a position of responsibility," Lapid said in a letter to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The commission "has been fundamentally tainted by the publicly expressed prejudices of its leadership", Lapid added, demanding "the immediate removal of all three members".

Israel's ambassador in Geneva on Friday had urged the council's president to disband the commission.

Asked in an interview published Monday by online publication Mondoweiss about member states' criticisms of the commission, Kothari had pointed to wider efforts to undermine its investigations.

"We are very disheartened by the social media that is controlled largely by, whether it is the Jewish lobby or it is specific NGOs, a lot of money is being thrown into trying to discredit us," he said.

Several ambassadors, including from Britain and the United States, have also expressed outrage at the remarks.

Commission chair, Navi Pillay, a former UN rights chief, said Kothari's comments "seem to have deliberately been taken out of context" and had been "deliberately misquoted". She said his comments reflected the "commission's disappointment with the continued lack of cooperation" from Israel with its investigation.

Lapid called Pillay's defense of Kothari "false" and charged that the commission "fuels" anti-Semitism.

"Slurs about a 'Jewish lobby' that acts to 'control' the media, are reminiscent of the darkest days of modern history," Lapid said.

07.31.22

Near unanimous vote to withhold PA tax going to terrorists & their families

07.31.22

Israel to withhold Palestinian tax revenue over payments to terrorists

Ministers vote to offset hundreds of millions in taxes Jewish state collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority over controversial stipends paid out to terrorists and their families

Itamar Eichner | Published: 07.31.22, 22:14

Israeli ministers voted on Sunday to withhold hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue from the Palestinian Authority (PA) for its policy of paying out stipends to people killed or imprisoned in fighting with the Jewish state and their families.

Israel, which collects taxes on behalf of the PA, will offset approximately NIS 610 million (\$175 million) in 12 installments.

Israel also withheld a similar sum in Palestinian tax revenue last summer — this according to a 2018 law that requires the country to deduct stipends paid out by the PA to Palestinian terrorists and their families.

Israelis say the payments encourage violence, while the Palestinians say the funds assist distressed families.

The move was approved almost unanimously, with the exception of Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz who abstained.

Horowitz, who heads the dovish Meretz party, said that he considered the move 'unwise' since Israel repays the money to the Palestinians through loans, and that Israel has an interest in continued security cooperation with Palestinian authorities.

Transportation Minister Merav Michaeli said that the PA was willing more than ever to stop payments to terrorists and their families and that Israel could capitalize on that to secure a significant diplomatic achievement.

In April, the High Court of Justice ruled that the PA can be held liable for terrorist acts due to the controversial policy.

Justice Yitzhak Amit, setting out the majority ruling, found that the decision to pay convicted Palestinian terrorists and those killed as part of the "struggle against Israel" makes the PA liable for their actions.

"[The PA] expresses its consent to their actions, in a manner that takes responsibility for the acts. This justifies that [the PA] will be assigned personal and direct responsibility," Amit wrote.

07.28.22

Iran arrests five suspected Israeli-linked spies gathering information

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Iran arrests suspected Israeli-linked spies

Days after announcing Mossad linked operatives intend strike on defense plant, Tehran says five spy network receive payment to gather information 'from important areas across the country,' semi-official ILNA news agency reports

Reuters| Published: 07.28.22, 14:09

Iranian police have arrested the alleged leader and four other members of a spy network they suspect is affiliated to Israel's secret services, Iranian law enforcement authorities said on Thursday.

They did not give the nationality of those arrested but said they had received training for armed operations and sabotage.

"The arrested five members of this spy network were given various pledges from (Israel's) Mossad, including financial promises, to gather information from important areas across the country," the law enforcement intelligence organization said in a statement reported by the semi-official ILNA news agency.

In Israel, the Prime Minister's Office, which oversees the foreign intelligence agency Mossad, declined comment on the reported arrests.

Iran and Israel are longtime foes and are currently locked in dispute over Iran's nuclear program. Israel accuses Iran of backing militant attacks against it, while Iran says Israel has carried out a number of killings of Iranian officials, including that of a senior officer in May. Israel does not confirm nor deny such actions.

On Wednesday, Iran's minister of intelligence Esmail Khatib said Tehran had foiled subversive actions from the "Zionist regime" - its term for Israel. Iranian security forces have successfully carried out a number of operations against Israel over the last few months, he said without specifying what they consisted of.

Last week, Iran's security forces said they arrested a network of agents working for Israel who entered Iran from Iraq's Kurdistan to carry out sabotage and what they called "terrorist operations".

07.28.22

Seeking new funds, Hamas raises destructive taxes in Gaza, some 600%

07.28.22

Seeking new funds, Hamas raises taxes in impoverished Gaza

In rare protest of Gaza rulers, merchants say tax on imported goods to place unfair burden on consumers already burdened by economic difficulties and do not protect local manufacturers

Associated Press| Published: 07.28.22, 11:43

Gaza's Hamas rulers have imposed a slew of new taxes on imported clothes and office supplies just ahead of the new school year, sparking limited but rare protests in the impoverished coastal strip.

The move by the militant group comes at a time when Gaza's 2.3 million people are suffering not only from a 15-year Israeli-Egyptian blockade, but also from a new jump in prices caused by global supply-chain issues and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

"This is a wrong, oppressive decision that destroys the national economy," said Nahed al-Sawada, who imports clothes from China and Turkey.

A list by the Ministry of Economy includes planned taxes on items like packaged nuts, with an import tariff of 2,000 shekels (nearly \$600) per ton. In the past, nuts were imported tax free. The tariff on a ton of toilet paper rose from \$90 to \$580. The taxes are set to go into effect on Aug. 1.

The list also includes a tax of about \$3 on pair of jeans, and \$230 on a ton of plastic folders used to store papers. Demand for these items increases ahead of the school year. Emad Abdelhadi, a representative for Gaza's union of clothes' merchants, said a new pair of jeans sells for \$3 to \$10, and the new tax will pose an unfair burden on struggling consumers.

In a territory suffering from rampant poverty and unemployment approaching 50%, he said many Gazans already look for used clothes. The new taxes, he said, "will deprive them of the ability to buy."

Gaza's economy has been hit hard by the Israeli-Egyptian blockade, imposed when Hamas seized power in 2007. Israel says the blockade is needed to prevent Hamas from arming, but critics say the restrictions, which include tight limits on exports, amount to collective punishment.

Hamas' government is not internationally recognized and Israel and its Western allies consider the group, which opposes Israel's existence and has in the past staged deadly suicide bombings against Israelis, a terrorist organization.

Israel and Hamas have fought four wars since the Hamas takeover, further straining the territory's rundown infrastructure. Electricity is in short supply, tap water undrinkable and the health care system is in shambles.

With tens of thousands of civil servants to support, as well as its heavy spending on its military wing, it is no surprise that Hamas is seeking new sources of revenue. Still, the timing is questionable, coming at a time when the Russian invasion of Ukraine has driven up consumer prices worldwide.

Hamas authorities say the new taxes are meant to protect the local industries. But experts and business people challenge this argument, since badly needed raw materials are now being taxed.

Mohammed Abu Jyyab, an economist, said the taxes have failed to protect local manufacturers because the government still taxes raw materials and production lines.

A spokesman for the Economy Ministry did not return requests for comment.

Hamas doesn't release figures on its funding resources or budgets, but the latest steps are part of a series of taxes targeting a wide array of sectors, from street vendors selling hot drinks to restaurants, home building and cars.

The government offers few services in exchange, and most aid and relief projects are covered by the international community. The funds help Hamas operate a government and powerful armed wing.

Protests against Hamas are rare and often met by force. But earlier this month, about two dozen members of the clothes merchants' union expressed their frustration in public.

They stood inside the building housing their union in Gaza City and held new pairs of jeans, with the price tags still on them, in the air for about half an hour.

Two days later, the merchants gathered outside the offices of Hamas lawmakers. Police prevented the media from filming and ordered the protest to stop after allowing representatives of the union inside to talk to the lawmakers. The protest ended peacefully.

"The lawmakers acknowledged the taxes were high, and said they will look into it," said Abdelhadi, the union representative.

But he said he did not expect a positive outcome. "By these decisions, they have issued a death sentence against the industry."

07.28.22

Intentional West Bank PA head-on car crash, reckless & fatal to settler

07.28.22

Settlers claim road terror in fatal West Bank car crash

Initial investigation suggests the Palestinian car deviated from its lane and crashed head on into the car driven by settlers, killing 6-year-old boy; 'car accelerated, and I realized it was going to hit me, I lost my son to Arab road terror,' mother says

Elisha Ben Kimon, Einav Halabi | Updated: 07.28.22, 11:25

Leaders in the Israeli settlement community claimed Thursday a fatal car crash in the West Bank a day earlier was not an accident and was likely a Palestinian road terror plot.

A car driven by a Palestinian resident of the area, crossed out of its lane and crashed into a the vehicle belonging to a family from a nearby settlement, killing six-year-old Matan Zinman and wounding three of his siblings, as well as his mother.

"We were driving along Route 60 on the way to a family meeting in the Ariel settlement," Rivka Zinman said.

"Suddenly a white Palestinian car appeared, driving fast from the opposite lane, I slowed down the car, but the Palestinian vehicle accelerated. I realized it was going to hit me head-on and I couldn't stop. The collision was at an enormous speed. I lost my son to Palestinian road terror," she said.

The Palestinians involved in the crash were moderately wounded and were evacuated to the hospital as well.

"This is a terrible event perpetrated by Palestinians who were driving recklessly on the roads, while the State of Israel is neglecting the West Bank," the head of a regional council of settlements, Israel Gantz, said.

"There is no enforcement on our roads, by the police and we are paying the price in blood," he said.

07.27.22

Israel's High Court says settlers in illegal outpost can stay

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Israel's High Court says settlers in illegal outpost can stay
Judges reverse earlier ruling and allow 45 homes to remain despite being built on privately owned Palestinian land, base decision on provision allowing purchase made in good faith, to stand although true owners did not consent to sale
Gilad Morag, Elisha Ben Kimon | Published: 07.27.22, 18:57

The High Court on Wednesday ruled that settlers living in the outpost Mitzpe Kramim on the West Bank, and whose homes were built on privately owned Palestinian owned land, will not be evacuated.

The court relied on a provision of the law that specifies that if land was purchased in good faith and its true ownership was not known, the purchase remains in place.

The settler movement hailed the decision of the court.

Regional council mayor, Israel Gantz said he was overjoyed. "Now we must rebuild and expand the settlement, he said.

In the ruling, the judges said the homes will not be demolished but new homes in the outposts were not to be built. The court also ordered that Palestinians who can prove ownership of the disputed land, were to be compensated.

The decision cleared 45 homes in the outpost, that an earlier ruling demanded they be demolished.

But after the intervention of Defense Minister Benny Gantz, former attorney general Avichai Mandelblit and former justice minister Avi Nissenkorn, the court agreed to review the matter, and changed its ruling.

Left-wing organizations slammed the decision of the court claiming that the ruling will allow more land to be usurped by settlers at the expense of Palestinian owners.

"The provision used by the court should only be used in extreme cases," left-wing activists said.

07.26.22

Israel warns Hezbollah the offshore gas field is operational in September

07.26.22

Israel warns Hezbollah after threats on offshore gas field

Jerusalem says there will be severe response to any attack ; American mediator set to arrive in Lebanon this weekend, as Israel urges to end dispute before the Karish gas rig becomes operational in September

Itamar Eichner | Published: 07.26.22, 23:07

Israel issued warnings to the Lebanese Hezbollah warning any attack will be answered with force, officials said on Tuesday.

The warnings were delivered using French and American diplomatic and military channels.

The Iran backed terror group was told that if it will attempt to attack the Karish gas field once again, the response from the IDF will be harsh.

Hezbollah launched UAVs to the Karish rig earlier this month, which were shot down by the military.

According to the officials, the IDF has not raised its level of alert despite threats made by Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah, on Monday.

However, in September, when the gas field will become operational, the military will reinforce the defenses around it.

Hezbollah's secretary-general has been vocal about opposition to Israeli extraction of natural gas, which he claims is done from oil reserves within its maritime borders, specifically the Karish gas field.

"All of Israel's gas fields are under threat from our missiles - not just Karish," Nasrallah said. "The ships that extract the gas are Israeli, even if under a Greek banner."

Meanwhile, the American mediator Amos Hochstein is scheduled to arrive in Lebanon this weekend. Israel is urging the U.S. to complete the negotiations on the maritime borders before the offshore gas field is operational but demands the Lebanese position be accepted by Hezbollah, before any agreement is signed.

Israel said an agreement is in Lebanon's best interest and could prevent further deteriorate the crisis.

Hochstein will propose a compromise in which each party will drop half of what its demands, but the Karish offshore gas field will remain in Israeli waters.

The area in dispute between Israel and Lebanon is relatively small, and it is some 860 square kilometers (322 square miles).

For Israel, the disputed territory is less than 2% of its economic water, and for the Lebanese about 3%. In 2012, Israel signaled that it was ready to compromise, and divide the region in a ratio of 42:58. However, Beirut did not show any desire to accept the offer, thus no real progress has been made.

American mediated talks have been halted and restored periodically 2000.

Last week, Lapid and Gantz toured the Israel-Lebanon border with senior IDF commanders and security officials just a day after a Hezbollah drone was shot down after it entered Israeli territory.

"Hezbollah's actions are a threat to Lebanon," Lapid said at the border. "We are not interested in an escalation of violence, but **cannot accept Hezbollah's actions**, that can ignite the entire region at a time when Lebanon can begin to develop its energy resources," he said, adding that **Israel is prepared for any eventuality**.

"**Israel will continue to act against any Iranian terror proxy**," the prime minister said adding that the government will **cooperate with other Mideast nations to prevent Iran's efforts to destabilize the region**.

07.27.22

EU puts forward new draft lifting sanctions to revive Iran nuclear deal

07.27.22

EU puts forward new draft text to revive Iran nuclear deal

Continental bloc's Borrell says 'space for additional significant **compromises** has been **exhausted**'; Pentagon spokesman says **Washington reviewing 'draft understanding'** and would respond directly to EU

Reuters| Published: 07.27.22, 09:07

The **European Union's** foreign policy **chief said** on Tuesday he has proposed a new draft text to revive the 2015 **Iran nuclear deal**, saying there is **no room left for further major compromises**.

"I have now **put on the table** a text that addresses, in precise detail, the **sanctions lifting** as well as the nuclear steps needed **to restore the JCPOA**," the European Union's Josep Borrell wrote in an **essay** in the Financial Times. He was referring to the 2015 deal called the Joint **Comprehensive Plan of Action**.

"After **15 months of intense**, constructive **negotiations in Vienna** and countless interactions with the JCPOA participants and the U.S., I have **concluded** that the space for additional significant **compromises** has been **exhausted**," he added. Ali Bagheri Kani, **Iran's lead nuclear negotiator**, confirmed Borrell had put forth a **new proposal**, adding on Twitter, "We, too, have our own ideas, both in substance & form, to conclude the negotiations which would be shared."

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters that Washington was reviewing the "draft understanding" Borrell shared with Iran and other parties to the 2015 deal and would respond directly to the EU.

Borrell did not provide details about **his proposal**, but **he suggested** - as many Western officials have before - that time was running out to **restore the deal under which Iran limited its nuclear program in return for relief from economic sanctions**.

"It is now time for swift political decisions to conclude the Vienna negotiations on the basis of my proposed text and to immediately return to a fully implemented JCPOA," he

wrote. "If the deal is rejected, we risk a dangerous nuclear crisis, set against the prospect of increased isolation for Iran and its people."

Under the nuclear pact, Tehran limited its uranium enrichment program, a potential pathway to nuclear weapons, though Iran says it seeks only civilian atomic energy, in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

In 2018, then-U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the deal, calling it too soft on Iran, and reimposed harsh U.S. sanctions, spurring Tehran to begin breaching the nuclear limits in the pact about a year later.

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Ynet-News, July 26, 2022 – Tuesday

07.26.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in July 26 spot – Tuesday

Liberals ensure police are allowed to remove partitions at Western Wall plaza

07.26.22 – Tu- - - News

Hezbollah threat to offshore rigs in Lebanon claimed borders mediated by the US

07.25.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in July 25 spot – Monday

Two week cap on wheat price hikes, gradual to 21% & further hikes in December

07.25.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in July 24 spot – Monday

Moscow iron curtain rid of Western organizations may prohibit Jews from leaving

07.24.22 – Su- - - News

Israel estimating 6,000 teacher shortage as unions seek higher salaries

07.24.22 – Su- - - News Placed in July 23spot – Sunday

Iran reported arrest of Israeli spy ring with powerful explosives at nuclear facility

07.24.22 – Su- - - News

IDF sinks PA boat smuggling weapons & anti-tank rockets from Egypt to Gaza