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08.03.22
Iranian head of nuclear warhead project calls on US to provide treaty decisions

08.03.22
Iranian opposition site identifies head of nuclear warhead project
Sa'id Borji who worked closely under Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, who was killed in an attack attributed to Israel in 2021, is also responsible for fission chain reaction required in production of nuclear device, Saudi-backed Iran International news site reports
Itamar Eichner, Reuters | Published: 08.03.22, 18:16

An Iranian opposition news site on Wednesday identified Sa'id Borji as the man tasked by Tehran to build nuclear warheads and the fission chain reaction needed for the production of a nuclear device.

Saudi-backed UK-based Iran International news said Borji had worked under Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, head of the republic's nuclear program who was assassinated in an attack attributed to Israel in 2021.

He also held a senior position in SPND, a government linked research institute, believed to be involved in Project Amad, Iran's military nuclear program.
The news site said Borgi had worked at the Parchin nuclear site east of Tehran with Russian nuclear scientists to experiment in explosive cells connected to nuclear weapons. In 2011, he had been part of another project tied to the nuclear program at Ahmadabad, believed to be the Abada nuclear site.

The Iranian finance ministry revealed in 2019 that Borji was an explosives and metals expert working with a subsidiary of SPND, which develops bombs and missiles.

He has been on the U.S. Iranian sanction list since 2019.

Meanwhile Iranian negotiators departed to Vienna on Wednesday, where talks on a possible return to the 2015 nuclear deal were to resume after being suspended for months.

"Bagheri Kani will leave Tehran in a few hours ... In this round of talks, which will be held as usual with the coordination of the European Union, ideas presented by different sides will be discussed," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani was quoted in local media to have said.

"Iran is determined to reach a stable agreement that guarantees the rights and interests of the Iranian nation," Kanaani said, calling on Washington to "provide the conditions for the effective progress of the talks by taking the necessary decisions".

08.03.22

Netanyahu November campaign with promise of economic reform

08.03.22

Netanyahu launches campaign with promise of free education, lower taxes

Likud leader presents economic plan in campaign to return to role of prime minister claiming he can stop rising costs of housing and fight high cost of living; Blue & White and Yesh Atid parties running against him in November both criticize Netanyahu and reject his plan

Moran Azulay | Published: 08.03.22, 17:10

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday presented his economic reform plan as he launched his bid for re-election in the November ballot.

The former prime minister who served for 12 consecutive years, said in a press conference that he would lift regulations on imported goods and lower housing costs, which have soared by 16% in the past year.

"We all know there is a global financial crisis, it is caused by the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine," Netanyahu said. No one is denying this, but a global financial crisis is not an excuse for inaction. We will continue to develop the regulation we put in place, we will continue to reduce tariffs and quotas, which we also began, and we will continue to increase imports," he said.

Netanyahu did not say he would lower housing prices but said he would issue government bonds, linked to the housing price index to prevent a rush to purchase housing at a high cost, and expedite building permits to increase new housing sales.

The former prime minister also promised free education for ages 0-3 to "lower family expenditures and allow young mothers to return to the workforce," and to lower taxes. "We have huge tax surpluses, this year's forecast is for 60 billion NIS, and I intend to use some of that money to finance the economic plan. I will also reduce the state budget," he said.

Netanyahu was criticized by the Blue and White Party who had partnered with him in his last coalition which failed after the prime minister refused to pass a budget which would have seated Benny Gantz as prime minister under their coalition deal.

"After leaving the country without a budget for years, put his personal interests over the state, and severely harmed the Israeli economy, is not worthy and not capable of advancing any solution in economic matters," the party said in a statement.

Prime Minister Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid Party also criticized the Likud leader's promises: "The head of opposition is continuing with his disconnected fake news endeavor in order to hide the fact that for 15 years he carelessly neglected the Israeli economy."

08.02.22

Roads along Gaza border to remain closed after IDF capture WB Jihad Leader

08.02.22

Roads along Gaza border to remain closed as IDF fears Islamic Jihad attack
Gantz warns any threat on Israeli civilians will be met with 'forceful response' as tensions run high following arrest of senior Islamic Jihad operative in Jenin
Roi Rubinstein, Matan Tzuri, Yoav Zitun | Published: 08.02.22, 23:15

Most roads blocked by the military along the Gaza Strip border on Tuesday will remain closed throughout the following day as the IDF fears an impending attack from the Palestinian enclave due to the arrest of a senior Islamic Jihad operative.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz warned on Tuesday that any threat on Israeli civilians will be met with a "forceful response".

"Our policy is clear: whoever wants to work and live alongside us will, we extend a hand. With the second hand, we will smite whoever seeks to harm Israeli civilians and cause terror," the defense chief said during a tour of the southern border with IDF high command.

"The IDF, Shin Bet and Border Police will continue operational activity by the means and on every front. Any threat to Israeli civilians will be met with a forceful response and we will of course be prepared for any scenario."

Prime Minister Yair Lapid ordered the roads closed Tuesday morning following a situation assessment with defense establishment officials following the nighttime arrest of Basam al-Saadi, the leader of Islamic Jihad's West Bank arm.

Behind the scenes, Israel continues to apply pressure on Gaza rulers Hamas through Egyptian mediators to deescalate tensions and restrain Islamic Jihad.

Lebanon-based television channel Al Mayadeen, which is affiliated with Hamas, reported that Egyptian mediators were working to pour water on simmering tensions in Gaza and the West Bank.

Meanwhile, the IDF awaits a possible attack on the border or rocket fire that might spark swift bouts of cross-border fighting but has no intentions to further escalate the situation after months of relative calm.

Al-Saadi's arrest was accompanied by an exchange of fire between Israeli forces and Palestinian gunmen as he barricaded himself. One Palestinian was killed in the shootout, he was later identified as Dirar Saleh al-Kafrini, an Islamic Jihad militant. There were no casualties on the Israeli side.

Islamic Jihad's military wing threatened to avenge the arrest.

"We hereby announce high alert among our fighters and combat units in response to the aggression against senior commander Sheikh Basam al-Saadi and his family," the terror outfit said in a statement.

"We warn Israel from harming al-Saadi's life and are prepared to respond with force with this doesn't stop."

Al-Saadi is considered Islamic Jihad's ultimate authority in the West Bank and has been building the organization's military capabilities across the territory, especially in the city of Jenin — from which came out many terrorists who carried out attacks against Israelis over the last year.

08.02.22

Lapid meets US mediator Hochstein in Israel-Lebanon border dispute

08.02.22

Lapid meets U.S. mediator in Israel-Lebanon border dispute

Officials share optimism expressed by Amos Hochstein after his meetings with Lebanese officials; U.S. seeks quick resolution amid concerns Iran-backed Hezbollah could attack drilling in the Med.

Itamar Eichner | Published: 08.02.22, 15:27

U.S. envoy mediating between Israel and Lebanon on the maritime border dispute arrived in Israel late on Monday and met with Prime Minister Yair Lapid.

His visit was extraordinary after Amos Hochstein usually returns to Washington after visiting Beirut.

Israeli officials say his visit is indication of American resolve to end the border dispute quickly and avoid provocations by the Iran backed Hezbollah group.

The Biden administration is seeking to bolster the Lebanese moderates in government and weaken Hezbollah's political sway. But time is of the essence.

The security cabinet is set to convene in Jerusalem on Wednesday to discuss the status of the talks following Hochstein's latest meetings with Lebanese officials and on the threats posed by Hezbollah in the north.

Hochstein has already left for Washington after his brief and quiet visit, but officials understood that the talks were on a positive track and that an agreement could be finalized within weeks.

After meetings in Beirut on Monday, Hochstein said he was optimistic. The sentiment seemed to be shared by Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati who gave the thumbs up as he left the meeting.

But last week, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said he considers all natural gas fields in the Mediterranean Sea near the Lebanese coast, to be inside Lebanon's economic waters and that his organization would attack any drilling by Israel.

"We will not hesitate," Nasrallah said.

08.01.22

Chaos across Israel with public transport tariff reform; age discount not recognized

08.01.22

Chaos across Israel as public transport tariffs reform goes into effect

Transportation Ministry gets flooded with complaints of angry commuters on Monday as it launches its 'Equal Commute' reform; ministry officials attempt to reassure furious Israelis that 'everything will run like clockwork very soon'

Ilana Curiel ,Roy Rubinstein| Published: 08.01.22, 14:49

Chaos reigned across Israel on Monday as the new public transportation tariffs reform, meant to make commuting more affordable, went into effect.

Transport Ministry's "Equal Commute" reform was launched on Sunday at midnight, and Monday morning brought with it a wave of nationwide complaints of bugs in the dedicated tickets app.

According to the passengers, the joint fare collection system smart card that was supposed to offer discounts, was not working on buses, with electronic ticket monitor on buses asking the passengers to pay full price for rides.

Transport Minister Merav Michaeli addressed the matter during the opening event of the reform plan at the Be'er Sheva Central Station, promising, "everything will run like clockwork very soon."

The "Equal Commute" reform, drafted by Michaeli and Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman, aims to encourage the public to use public transportation instead of private vehicles, hoping to minimize traffic on the roads.

The new reform allows its passengers unlimited travel via any bus route in Israel for a constant price of NIS 225, and can also be used on light rails. After purchasing the dedicated card, the monthly fee is determined by how frequently the individual is using the train or the bus, and the amount of kilometers he or she travels. The fee starts at 99 NIS and capping at 610 NIS - for those who use the train more frequently and travel longer distances.

"The reform has certainly not gone underway, The SuperBus and Afikim devices do not recognize the card and aren't prepared for the reform," said one of the unsatisfied passengers. "We had to pay the full price for the ride."

Another woman told of her experience using the card for the first time, saying, "there is a national bug. Turns out that the transportation companies do not recognize the free monthly national card, so passengers are forced to also pay for the ride, in short - it's chaos."

Irena Pearl Caplan traveled to Haifa this morning, and reported similar problems. "They just didn't prepare for the reforms, their system isn't working," she said.

"I'm not satisfied with the reform because it makes my monthly pass cost 225 NIS instead of 208 NIS and I'm angry because I purchased the free monthly national card, I prepared, and apparently they didn't."

Michaeli said in the opening event this morning that "public transportation is our future. We're investing in order to save you all from the traffic and towards a worthwhile journey. "When about 12 thousand buses are given new data, new tariffs, several buses have bugs," she said, addressing the technical problems.

"We're fixing it. It makes sense that there's a bug. The farther away the destination the more worthwhile it will be to use public transportation. Only the peripheral areas offer a pass for 99 NIS a month."

Nava Kessler, a senior citizen, complained that the pass meant for people aged 75 and up is difficult to operate.

"The ministry isn't answering with any substantial answer. This is not a reform that elderly people can operate by themselves," she claimed.

As part of the "Equal Way" reform, senior citizens over age 75 can use public transportation for free. To do so, they have to issue a "golden pass" or update their online profile through the website or application. Due to expected complications, the transportation ministry has called on the inspectors to allow the elderly population to access this reform even if they have yet to update their profile until August 18.

Director General of Ministry of Transportation Michal Frank said: "It doesn't need to be called chaos, rather labor pains. We're talking about more than 3.3 million rides a day. This is very significant. It influences many populations of Israel."

In this morning's opening event at Be'er Sheva, Frank said that "like in every software update there is a process of implementation. Overall the system works well. There are a few reports of bugs, and the public needs to get used to it."

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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