

Ynet-News, February 19, 2023 – Sunday

2.19.23 – Su- - - News Placed in February 19 spot – Sunday
PA block roads, burned tires & dumpsters in Jerusalem over police activity

2.19.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday
PM blames Iran for Saturday attack on oil tanker in the Persian Gulf

2.19.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Blinken strongly opposes Netanyahu unilateral measures on settlements

2.19.23 – Su- - - News Placed in February 19 spot – Sunday
Israeli MK tells US Ambassador to 'mind his own business' amid judicial crisis

2.18.23 – Sa- - - News Placed in February 18 spot – Saturday
Rare attack in central Damascus on Iranian institutions within residential areas

2.13.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in February 13 spot – Monday
Two 7+ Earthquakes in Turkey, near Syria boarder, kill 45,000 over following weeks

2.13.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in February 12 spot – Sunday
 Hamas Rockets Sunday; In response, IDF cabinet voted in nine West Bank settlements

2.03.23 – Fr- - - News – Friday
Netanyahu in Paris: consensus on Iran, status quo on Israeli-Palestinian issue

2.02.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
Israel's AG says gov't judicial reform impacts system of checks and balances

2.01.23 – We- - - News – Wednesday
Iran blames Israel for Thursday industrial complex drone attack, vows revenge

2.01.23 – We- - - News Placed in February 01 spot – Wednesday
Israeli Air Force strikes in Gaza after rocket launch; sirens sound again in Sderot

2.01.23 – We- - - News Placed in January 31 spot – Tuesday
US mediation teams between Israel and PA on expulsions & withholding of taxes

2.19.23

PA block roads, burned tires & dumpsters in Jerusalem over police activity

2.19.23

Palestinian block roads in Jerusalem, strike over 'excess' police activity

East Jerusalem Palestinians declare strike to protest police actions that increased following terror attack in the Shuafat checkpoint last Monday; Ben-Gvir says police actions will continue

Einav Halabi|07:13

Palestinians in east Jerusalem took to the streets early on Sunday morning and blocked roads, burned tires, and stopped residents from going to work, after declaring a general strike.

The strike was in protest of police actions inside the Shuafat refugee camp after the repeated attacks on the checkpoint there, the most recent of which resulted in the death of Border Police Staff Sergeant Asil Sawaed.

Sawaed, a 22-year-old resident of the northern Bedouin village of Hussniyya, was killed last Monday when a local 13-year-old Palestinian lunged at him and stabbed him with a knife. The assailant was shot and killed by a security guard.

The residents blocked the road in-and-out of Shu'afat with burning tires and dumpsters, which caused a scuffle with some who wished to go to work. Police arrived on the scene and dispersed the rioters. Similar blockades followed in the neighborhoods of Isawiya, Jabel Mukaber and Silwan.

"We will continue to enforce a functional way of life for all east Jerusalem residents while maintaining law and order," a police communique said.

"We will not allow outlaws to undermine public safety and force collective punishment on peaceful residents. Any attempt to harm residents or police officers will be swiftly dealt with."

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir said: "I've instructed police to continue operations in the area, and they are working on removing the blockades. They have my appreciation and gratitude. Israel will not bend over to a handful of outlaws. They are breaking the law and creating anarchy and we won't allow it. Police will continue the efforts to maintain law and order by any means necessary."

Court orders brothers of fallen Border Police soldier to leave Israel

Population and Immigration Authority rejects appeal by family's lawyer to allow them to complete their conversion to Judaism, and orders them to leave by March

The commenter agrees to the privacy policy of Ynet News and agrees not to submit comments that violate the terms of use, including incitement, libel and expressions that exceed the accepted norms of freedom of speech.
send comment

2.19.23

PM blames Iran for Saturday attack on oil tanker in the Persian Gulf

2.19.23

Netanyahu blames Iran for attack on Israeli-owned oil tanker

PM points Islamic Republic responsible for drone attack on a shipping vessel owned by Israeli tycoon Eyal Ofer; 'Iran again attacked an oil tanker in the Persian Gulf and harmed the international freedom of navigation,' Netanyahu says

Reuters, Ynet|07:00

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday said that Iran was responsible for a reported attack on an oil tanker last week.

An attack on the Liberian-flagged Campo Square was confirmed on Saturday by the ship's captain, who said it was lightly damaged by an airborne object on Feb. 10 while sailing through the Arabian Sea.

Shipping databases linked the tanker to Zodiac Maritime, which is controlled by Israeli shipping magnate Eyal Ofer, who is the chairman of several shipping conglomerates, including Ofer Global and the Zodiac Group. Early last year, his net worth has been estimated at over \$16 billion.

"Last week Iran again attacked an oil tanker in the Persian Gulf and harmed the international freedom of navigation," Netanyahu said at a weekly cabinet meeting. Regional defense and security sources have said they suspected the assault was carried out by Iran, which did not comment on the incident.

Tehran has rejected accusations it was behind similar attacks in the past few years. British maritime security company Ambrey Intelligence said unmanned aerial systems had attacked two tankers and one bulk carrier in the Arabian Sea and assessed that Tehran had mounted the attack. Two of the merchant vessels were Israeli-owned and one was Emirati, it said.

2.19.23

Blinken strongly opposes Netanyahu unilateral measures on settlements

2.19.23

Blinken to Netanyahu: We strongly oppose unilateral measures on settlements

The Biden administration is scrambling to avert a diplomatic crisis over Israeli settlement activity that threatens to overshadow and perhaps derail focus on condemning Russia's war with Ukraine this week at the United Nations

Ynet, Agencies |00:57

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu late on Saturday, to express the administration's concerns over Israel's settlement policies.

Blinken told the prime minister the U.S. opposed any moves that would endanger a future two-state solution.

"The secretary underscored the urgent need for Israelis and Palestinians to take steps that restore calm and our strong opposition to unilateral measures that would further escalate tensions," the State Department said in a statement. "The secretary and prime minister also discussed broader regional challenges, including the threats posed by Iran, and the Secretary underscored our ironclad commitment to Israel's security," the statement read. Earlier, Blinken spoke with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to a negotiated two-state solution "and opposition to policies that endanger its viability," according to the State Department.

The remarks came less than a day after U.S. Ambassador Thomas R. Nides called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to "pump the brakes" on the judicial reforms sparking turmoil in Israel, which Blinken did not mention.

Thomas R. Nides calls on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to 'pump the brakes' on judicial reforms

"The one thing that binds our countries together is a sense of democracy and a sense of [the importance of] democratic institutions," Nides said in an interview to CNN's Dave Axelrod.

"When we believe that those democratic institutions are under stress and strain we're articulating [our concern]. That's what we're doing now," he said.

Neither of the State Department's statements on Saturday mentioned the proposed U.N. Security Council resolution demanding an immediate halt to Israeli settlements. The Palestinians want to bring that resolution to a vote on Monday. And neither statement gave any indication as to how the calls ended.

But diplomats familiar with the conversations said that in his call to Abbas, Blinken reiterated an offer to the Palestinians for a U.S. package of incentives to entice them to drop or at least delay the resolution.

"The secretary underscored the urgent need for Israelis and Palestinians to take steps that restore calm and our strong opposition to unilateral measures that would further escalate tensions," the statements said.

Those incentives included a White House meeting for Abbas with President Joe Biden, movement on reopening the American consulate in Jerusalem, and a significant aid package, the diplomats said.

Abbas was noncommittal, the diplomats said, but also suggested he would not be amenable unless the Israelis agreed to a six-month freeze on settlement expansion on land the Palestinians claim for a future state.

Blinken then called Netanyahu, who, according to the diplomats, was similarly noncommittal about the six-month settlement freeze. Netanyahu also repeated Israeli

opposition to reopening the consulate, which was closed during President Donald Trump's administration, they said.

The U.S. and others were hoping to resolve the deadlock on Sunday, but the diplomats said it was unclear if that was possible,

The drama arose just ahead of the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which will be the subject of special U.N. General Assembly and Security Council sessions on Thursday and Friday.

The U.S. opposes the Palestinian resolution and is almost certain to veto it. Not vetoing would carry a considerable domestic political risk for Biden on the cusp of the 2024 presidential race and top House Republicans have already warned against it. But the administration also fears that using its veto to protect Israel risks losing support at the world body for measures condemning Russia's war in Ukraine.

Senior officials from the White House, the State Department and the U.S. Mission to the U.N. have already engaged in frantic but fruitless diplomacy to try to persuade the Palestinians to back down. The dire nature of the situation prompted Blinken's calls on Saturday, the diplomats said.

The Biden administration has already said publicly that it does not support the resolution, calling it "unhelpful." But it has also said the same about recent Israeli settlement expansion announcements.

U.N. diplomats say the U.S. wants to replace the Palestinian resolution, which would be legally binding, with a weaker presidential statement, or at least delay a vote on the resolution until after the Ukraine war anniversary.

The Palestinian push comes as Israel's new right-wing government has reaffirmed its commitment to construct new settlements in the West Bank and expand its authority on land the Palestinians seek for a future state.

Ultrationalists who oppose Palestinian statehood comprise a majority of Israel's new government, which has declared settlement construction a top priority.

The draft resolution, circulated by the United Arab Emirates, the Arab representative on the council, would reaffirm the Security Council's "unwavering commitment" to a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side-by-side in peace as democratic states. It would also reaffirm the U.N. Charter's provision against acquiring territory by force and reaffirm that any such acquisition is illegal.

Last Tuesday, Blinken and the top diplomats from Britain, France, Germany and Italy condemned Israel's plans to build 10,000 new homes in existing settlements in the West Bank and retroactively legalize nine outposts. Netanyahu's Cabinet had announced the measure two days earlier, following a surge in violence in Jerusalem.

2.19.23

Israeli MK tells US Ambassador to 'mind his own business' amid judicial crisis

2.19.23

Israeli minister tells U.S. envoy to 'mind his own business' amid judicial crisis
Amichai Chikli responds to comments from Ambassador Tom Nides, who suggested government should 'pump the brakes,' in order to get a consensus on judicial reform; other coalition members also slam 'U.S. intervention' in internal affairs
Moran Azulay, Attila Somfalvi|04:03

Diaspora Affairs and Social Equality Minister Amichai Chikli on Sunday told U.S. Ambassador to Israel Tom Nides to "mind his own business" after criticism of the government's legislative push to change the nature of Israel's democracy.

Nides told CNN over the weekend that he urged the Israeli government to slow down and try to get a consensus on the proposed judicial reform.

"The one thing that binds our countries together is a sense of democracy and a sense of democratic institution. That's how we defend Israel at the UN, that's how we stand up for the values that we share," Nides said.

Nides doubled down on his remarks in the Axe Files podcast hosted by David Axelrod. "End of the day, the U.S. is not in a position to tell and dictate to Israel how to pick their Supreme Court. However, what binds our countries together is a sense of democracy and democratic institutions. That's how we defend Israel in the UN. As I've told Netanyahu a 100 times - We can't work on issues like Iran or the Abraham Accords if your backyard is on fire."

Speaking to Kan radio, Chikli said the U.S. under President Barak Obama also did not have Israel's back.

"In fact, they drove a knife into our back," Chikli said. "To Ambassador Nides I say this pure and simple - Mind your own business. You're not privy to discussions about judicial reform. We'd love to discuss foreign affairs with you if you wish. Respect our democracy."

MK Simcha Rothman, meanwhile, told Ynet that he did not think the ambassador should intervene in the internal business of Israel. Rothman is pushing the legislation through the Constitution, Law, Justice Committee which he chairs, despite calls to allow dialogue that could mitigate the public outcry against what is seen as an assault on Israeli democracy.

"I don't think it's legitimate to say [the legislation] endangers the state of Israel," Rothman said.

Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) legislator Yitzhak Kroizer also slammed the ambassador's comments. "I respect our American friends, but I don't recall us being another star on their flag. We're our own country with our own independent rule. We have a prime minister, a judicial system and a healthy apparatus that is self-sustaining and can listen to criticism from other countries."

2.18.23

Rare attack in central Damascus on Iranian institutions within residential areas

2.18.23

Missiles strike central Damascus in attack attributed to Israel

The rare, targeted strike damaged several buildings in the densely populated district close to Omayyad square in the heart of the capital, where multi-story security buildings and Iranian institutions

Reuters|Yesterday | 23:47

An Israeli rocket strike early on Sunday hit a building in central Damascus's Kafr Sousa neighborhood near a large, heavily guarded security complex close to Iranian installations, killing five people, witnesses and officials said.

A police official said on state media that there were several casualties and injured.

An Israeli military spokesperson declined to comment.

Citing a military source, state media said Israel had carried out air strikes targeting several areas in the capital shortly after midnight, causing five deaths and 15 injuries among civilians, and damage to several residential buildings.

"It caused damage to several civilian homes and material damage to a number of neighborhoods in Damascus and its vicinity," the army said in a statement.

The rare, targeted strike damaged several buildings in the densely populated district close to Omayyad square in the heart of the capital, where multi-story security buildings and Iranian institutions are located within residential areas.

It was not immediately clear whether the strike was aimed at a specific individual. Pro-Iran Hezbollah's top commander Imad Moughniyeh was killed in 2008 in a bombing in Kafr Sousa, a heavily policed area where residents say several Iranian security agencies are located, including a major cultural center.

For almost a decade, Israel has been carrying out air strikes against suspected Iranian-sponsored weapons transfers and personnel deployments in next-door Syria. Israeli officials have rarely acknowledged responsibility for specific operations.

Iran has expanded its military presence in Syria in recent years and has a foothold in most state-controlled areas, with thousands of members of militias and local paramilitary groups under its command, Western intelligence sources say.

Israel has also in recent months intensified strikes on Syrian airports and air bases to disrupt Iran's increasing use of aerial supply lines to deliver arms to allies in Syria and Lebanon, including Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah.

The strikes are part of an escalation of what has been a low-intensity conflict whose goal was to slow down Iran's growing entrenchment in Syria, Israeli military experts say. Iran's proxy militias, led by Lebanon's Hezbollah, now hold sway in vast areas in eastern, southern and northwestern Syria and in several suburbs around the capital.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government has never publicly acknowledged that Iranian forces operate on his behalf in Syria's civil war, saying Tehran has only military advisers on the ground.

2.13.23

Hamas Rockets Sunday; In response, IDF cabinet voted in nine West Bank settlements

2.13.23

Rockets shot into southern Israel; IDF strikes Hamas rocket production assets
Israeli jets and tanks pound Hamas' underground rocket production assets in Gaza Strip as sirens blare in southern communities; IDF 'holds Hamas responsible for all terrorist activity emanating from Gaza and it will face the consequences of the security violations against Israel'

i24NEWS|02.13.23 | 00:24

Israel's military said it had struck Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip early Monday in retaliation for a rocket shot at Israel from the Palestinian enclave over the weekend.

Shortly after the announcement, rocket sirens woke residents of Israeli communities near Gaza as they ran to safety in shelters.

Out of the four rockets shot into southern Israel, the IDF downed three.

At 4:11 a.m. Israeli time, rocket sirens went off in Sderot and nearby areas, followed by another siren in Ruhama several miles east at 4:38 a.m.

The Israel Defense Forces said fighter jets targeted an underground complex used to make rockets, responding to an earlier rocket over the weekend. A rocket was shot down by Israel's Iron Dome missile defense on Saturday, as residents in communities near Gaza fled to bomb shelters for safety.

After the barrage, Israeli tanks targeted another facility used to make rockets. The military said it "holds Hamas responsible for all terrorist activity emanating from Gaza and it will face the consequences of the security violations against Israel."

This comes amid a wave of terrorist attacks that have led to rockets launched from Gazan terrorist groups. A Palestinian rammed a bus stop on Friday in deadly Jerusalem attack that killed three, including children.

In response to the continuing terrorism, Israel's security cabinet on Sunday evening voted to legalize nine settlements built without the state's permission in the West Bank.

Reprinted with permission from i24NEWS.

2.03.23

Netanyahu in Paris: consensus on Iran, status quo on Israeli-Palestinian issue

2.03.23

Benjamin Netanyahu in Paris: consensus on Iran, status quo on Israeli-Palestinian issue
Netanyahu and Macron discuss regional crises, and in particular the Iranian nuclear program, which threatens Israel as well as France and Europe; Macron also took the opportunity to reiterate his desire to contribute to the dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians
i24NEWS|04:12

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived Thursday evening in Paris for a two-day official visit, received Thursday evening by French President Emmanuel Macron, who warmly welcomed him on the forecourt of the Élysée Palace.

The French leader was delighted that "Netanyahu had chosen France to make his first visit outside the Middle East since his re-election" as Israel's prime minister, stressing that this choice proved the "closeness between the two countries and the two peoples".

Macron expressed France's solidarity with Israel after the terrorist attack last Friday in Jerusalem, which claimed the lives of seven Israelis. At the same time, he reaffirmed his concern at the renewed violence in the West Bank and the growing tensions between Israelis and Palestinians, recalling the importance of avoiding any measures likely to fuel them.

"On both sides there is nothing to say or do about the Israeli-Palestinian issue, considered a frozen conflict with no future development," said Michaël Darmon, editorial writer at i24NEWS.

The French president welcomed the normalization of relations between Israel and several Arab States of the Middle East as a factor of stability and security in the region, but recalled that this dynamic will remain incomplete as long as it will not be accompanied by a "resumption of a political process towards a solution that meets the legitimate aspirations of both Palestinians and Israelis." Macron also took the opportunity to reiterate his desire to contribute to a resumption of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, a hand he has been trying to extend since the start of his first term, without much success.

"It's also a way for Netanyahu to show that he is still a credible partner and that he and Macron, who are ultimately the most senior officials in the democratic camp, can have a relationship that revives bilateral ties on the political front," Darmon noted.

Netanyahu and Macron also discussed regional crises, and in particular the Iranian nuclear program, which threatens Israel as well as France and Europe.

"What Netanyahu can get from this unity between France and Israel on the Iranian issue is to have a form of leniency with regard to the internal conflicts in Israel, in particular regarding planned reforms of the Israeli government", said Darmon.

Some rightly observe that the French president has refrained from openly criticizing Netanyahu on his plans to reform the judicial system, as Antony Blinken took the liberty of doing earlier this week. However, French newspaper Le Monde reported that behind

closed doors Macron warned the Israeli leader that the reform could harm the country's democracy.

The two men finally discussed their respective efforts to deal with the consequences of the conflict in Ukraine. They also expressed their desire to deepen the strategic partnership that binds the two countries, and to strengthen the bilateral relationship in all areas.

"It's also a way for Netanyahu to show that he is still a credible partner and that he and Macron, who are ultimately the most senior officials in the democratic camp, can have a relationship that revives bilateral ties on the geostrategical level", concluded Darmon. Reprinted with permission from i24NEWS.

2.02.23

Israel's AG says gov't judicial reform impacts system of checks and balances

2.02.23

Israel's AG says gov't judicial reform impacts system of checks and balances

Gali Baharav-Miara warns offered proposed legislation outside the norm compared to other democracies and could lead to distrust in the judiciary's role in Israeli democracy
Tova Zimuki | Yesterday | 10:10

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara on Thursday submitted her official opinion detailing her opposition to the controversial judicial reform sought by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Justice Minister Yariv Levin.

Baharav-Miara had already made her opposition to the planned reform clear in recent weeks, but had not until now submitted a binding legal opinion, in response to the proposed legislation presented by the coalition.

The reform would present significant changes to the separation of powers, autonomy of the judiciary, protection of individual rights, and the rule of law, the AG said.

"Accepting the proposed reform would lead to a structure of government where the legislative and executive branches have almost limitless authority," Baharav-Miara wrote. "This could lead to abuse of the law in the legislature allowing to bypass judiciary intervention and review, and compromise Israel's character as a democratic and Jewish state."

Baharav-Miara warned that the proposals are outside the norms compared to other democracies and could lead to the loss of faith in the judiciary as a professional and apolitical entity.

"No one denies majority rule is important to a democracy," Baharav-Miara said. "There is also an understanding in such states that the governing authorities cannot be allowed to hold limitless power, allowing them to violate human rights and due process. The proposal does not address these issues."

“Dramatic changes having to do with the democratic nature of the state need to be made in an orderly and thoughtful manner,” she added. “Changes should only be made based on a firm factual basis and broad consensus.”

The AG's office said Baharav-Miara was asked to present the AG's opinion on the legislation, three days after she met with Levin back in January, and warned that a proper evaluation could not be done properly in such a short time. “The review of the reform was made according to a schedule agreed to with Levin, with difficulty and professionalism,” her office said.

Earlier on Thursday, the AG informed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he must not be involved in any way, not directly or through others, in the judicial reforms because of his conflict of interest as a defendant in his corruption trial.

Coalition leaders said they rejected her opinion outright and would continue their legislative push regardless.

In a letter made public, the attorney general wrote: "You must avoid as part of your role as prime minister involvement in initiatives related to the legal system."

Under the proposed reform, a simple Knesset majority of 61 votes would be enough to override any Supreme Court ruling that deems laws passed by the legislature unconstitutional. Furthermore, it would allow government ministers to disregard the legal opinions of counselors.

Amir Fuchs, a senior researcher at the Israel Democracy Institute, a Jerusalem think tank, said Baharav-Miara's position would not affect the plan's progress.

He said the attorney general's position is binding, meaning Netanyahu won't be able to deal with the legal changes, and neither will any of his political appointees on his behalf. But ministers in his government should be able to, he said.

The proposed reform encountered fierce resistance from business leaders, top bankers, hi-tech workers, entrepreneurs, and large swaths of the general public, having staged a series of nationwide mass demonstrations against the reform every weekend for over a month.

Critics say the reform would render the system of checks and balances toothless and ineffective, leaving decisions pertaining to sensitive issues such as LGBT and minority rights at the whims of a highly-conservative majority.

Netanyahu has so far continued to press on in passing the reform despite calls by President Isaac Herzog to mediate differences in order to reach a wider consensus in the government and the Israeli public.

The prime minister promised that democracy in Israel will “remain strong” and emphasized that dialogue about the reform should be done alongside its passing in the Knesset.

2.01.23

Iran blames Israel for Thursday industrial complex drone attack, vows revenge

2.01.23

Iran blames Israel for Isfahan drone attack, vows revenge, ISNA reports
UN envoy says Tehran reserves right to 'give a firm response whenever and however it feels necessary', calls on international community to condemn attack which 'goes against international law'

Reuters, Daniel Salami/Ynet|02.01.23 | 23:17

Iran blamed Israel for a drone attack on a military factory near the central city of Isfahan, the semi-official ISNA news agency said on Thursday, vowing revenge for what appeared to be the latest episode in a long-running covert war.

In a letter to the UN chief, Iran's UN envoy, Amir Saeid Iravani, said primary investigation suggested Israel was responsible for the attack on Saturday night.

"Iran preserves the right to give a firm response whenever and however it feels necessary," Iravani said in the letter, adding, "This action undertaken by Israel goes against international law" and warrants condemnation.

Iravani called the facility, where according to reports Iran produced advanced weapons, an "industrial complex" belonging to the Defense Ministry in the city.

In his letter, the ambassador referred to various recent statements aired by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Isaac Herzog and outgoing IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi, and protested their threat to damage Iran's vital infrastructure.

He also called on the Security Council to condemn the "provocative and unjustified" statement of a Ukrainian official regarding the strike on Isfahan, in which he welcomed the attack on Iran's "vital infrastructure", according to him.

The attack came amid tension between Iran and the West over Tehran's nuclear activity and its supply of arms - including long-range "suicide drones" - for Russia's war in Ukraine, as well as months of anti-government demonstrations at home.

Arch-foe Israel has long said it is willing to strike Iranian targets if diplomacy fails to curb Tehran's nuclear or missile programs, but it has a policy of withholding comment on specific incidents.

Earlier this week, a Saudi TV channel reported that the explosion at the military facility in Isfahan was the result of an attack carried out by the U.S. Air Force and another unnamed country.

However, a few hours later, U.S. intelligence sources reported that the drone attack was carried out by Israel's intelligence agency Mossad.

Tehran claimed that the attack was foiled and that two of the three attacking drones were shot down. It was also reported that the drone that managed to strike the facility caused only minor damage and no casualties.

The New York Times quoted senior U.S. officials familiar with the details of the dialogue between Washington and Jerusalem about the action as saying that the purpose of the military facility is unclear at this point, and the extent of the damage caused by the attack is also unknown.

However, Isfahan is a major missile research and development hub for the Islamic Republic. The central Iranian city is home to several sites manufacturing medium-range Shahab missiles, which can reach Israel and targets beyond.

The attack came a few weeks after U.S. officials publicly announced Iran was the main supplier of drones to Russia for use in the war in Ukraine. However, the sources stated in the report that they believe the attack in Iran stemmed from Israel's concerns about its own security, and not because of the potential for exporting missiles to Russia.

The attack took place just as U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken began his visit to Israel, his first since Benjamin Netanyahu returned to the premiership after a year-and-a-half interregnum.

The head of the CIA William Burns visited Israel last week, but it is unclear whether the possibility of an attack on Isfahan was discussed during his visit.

Iran has released footage that it claims shows the remains of the "suicide drones" used in the "failed" attack on what it defined as an "ammunition factory" in the central Iranian city.

In the footage, small holes are seen on the roof of what is claimed to be the facility targeted in the attack, and an Iranian reporter spoke with the workers inside the building in a clear attempt to strengthen Tehran's claims that the attack had failed. In the report, the Islamic Republic's public broadcaster specifically stated that the activity at the facility continues as usual.

U.S. officials rushed to publicly deny Washington's involvement in the attack Sunday morning. One source confirmed that Israel carried out the attack but did not have details about its target.

Isfahan is home to four small nuclear research facilities operating nuclear reactors supplied by China many years ago. However, the targeted facility on Saturday is located in the city center and does not appear to be related to Tehran's nuclear program.

2.01.23

Israeli Air Force strikes in Gaza after rocket launch; sirens sound again in Sderot

2.01.23

Israeli Air Force strikes in Gaza after rocket launch; sirens sound again in Sderot
Attack comes hours after Iron Dome intercepts rocket fired by Islamic Jihad; alarms go off in border city and neighboring communities for second time in less than a day
Yoav Zitun|Updated:02.01.23 | 17:43

The Israeli Air Force struck two targets in the Gaza Strip linked to terrorist activity, the IDF Spokesperson's Unit said overnight Thursday.

Israeli fighters came under anti-aircraft fire but returned safely to Israeli airspace.

The attack came hours after a rocket launched from the Palestinian enclave was intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system in the early evening hours, triggering air raid sirens in the southern city of Sderot and neighboring communities. Terrorist group Islamic Jihad claimed credit for the rocket launch. The organization stated the rocket launch came in response to Palestinian prisoners being placed in soldiery confinement after celebrating a series deadly of terrorist attacks in Jerusalem that claimed the lives of seven people over the weekend.

Sirens blared again in Sderot and several other border communities overnight Thursday, just minutes before the Israeli strike in Gaza.

First published: 03:19, 02.02.23

2.01.23

US mediation teams between Israel and PA on expulsions & withholding of taxes

2.01.23

Palestinians say U.S. mediations underway for resumption of security coordination
Minister for social development Ahmad Majdalani says Palestinians demand assurances before reversing decisions including measures providing hope for future political settlement

Einav Halabi | 02.01.23 | 04:43

Palestinian minister for social development Ahmad Majdalani on Wednesday said that the American teams have begun mediating between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The talks seek to bring an end to the escalation of violence in Jerusalem and the West Bank and follow the suspension of coordination between Palestinian security services and the IDF.

The PA announced security coordination was stopped last week, after an IDF raid in Jenin, targeting Islamic Jihad militiamen and killing 10 of them. Over the weekend, two terror attacks against Jews in Jerusalem resulted in the killing of seven and injuries to at least five others.

Initially, the teams will meet with each side separately, Majdalani said adding that there is no direct contact between the sides.

"The American mediators are working to identify the core issues connected to Israel's one-sided moves," the minister said.

Among other things, the Palestinians want to discuss expulsions of Palestinians and the withholding by Israel of taxes collected for the PA.

Israel had said that it would not deliver the funds to the PA while it insisted on paying stipends to convicted terrorists and their families. The Netanyahu government also said it was diverting funds from the withheld taxes to support the families of victims of terror.

Majdalani said the steps decided on by the PA including suspending of security cooperation, would not be reversed without proper assurances. He also said there must be some change that would provide hope for a future political settlement.

==== ==== ==== ====
==== ==== ==== ====

Ynet-News, January 27, 2023 – Friday

1.27.23 – Fr- - - News Placed in January 27 spot – Friday
At least 7 Israelis killed, 10 wounded in Jerusalem synagogue drive-by shooting

1.26.23 – Th- - - News Placed in January 26 spot – Thursday
IDF responding to Gaza rockets, attack Hamas underground production facility

1.25.23 – We- - - News Placed in January 25 spot – Wednesday
Despite Netanyahu promises, state-funded Shabbat events might be scrapped

1.23.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in January 24 spot – Tuesday
US-Israel ties souring as American youth consider Israel an illegitimate state

1.23.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in January 23 spot – Monday
US & Israel military drills surge large battle-ready forces into the Middle East

1.22.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Anti-government companies announcing strike on Tuesday several hours

1.22.23 – Su- - - News Placed in January 22 spot – Sunday
Deri dismissed from Cabinet following Court ruling; will remain an influence

1.22.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Knesset Lawyers refuse to overhaul Court appointments & ability to change laws

1.21.23 – Sa- - - News Placed in January 21 spot – Saturday
Lapid & Gantz stir rallies against reform to appoint judges & overriding Court

1.19.23 – Th- - - News Placed in January 19 spot – Thursday
620 lawyers issued a letter to Herzog to warn against judicial reforms

1.19.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
Israel and Palestinians clash at UN meeting as extremists fuel the fire