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Supreme Court will respond to judicial oversight by appeals next month

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IDF says no one has the right to refuse a call to service; we would not allow return

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29-week-long protest spreading into the reserve ranks over judicial oversight

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Protesters form human chain West Wall to Knesset ahead of a final judicial vote

7.28.23 – Fr  
Lt. Gen. Halevi is steadfast; readiness reports cause more panic than reflect reality

7.28.23 – Fr

Military intel dispatches reveal PM warned of immediate risk amid judicial reform chaos  
In recent months, Military Intelligence Directorate has sent four personal warning letters to PM regarding effects of reservist protest; While Iran and Hezbollah prefer to let Israel tear itself apart on the inside, the army is on the highest alert since the Second Lebanon War

Yossi Yehoshua|02:49

The IDF Intelligence Directorate has directly and personally warned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu multiple times about the severe security consequences of the turmoil surrounding judicial reform legislation.

Four urgent dispatches, the latest sent just last week, were sent to Netanyahu shortly before the Knesset vote. The letters emphasize that adversaries see a historic opportunity to alter the strategic situation in the region due to the unprecedented crisis in Israel.

Senior Intelligence Directorate officers cautioned that the impact is not only immediate but may also have long-term repercussions. According to the IDF's analysis, foes like Iran and Hezbollah are closely monitoring the crisis within Israel's reservist system and the vulnerability of critical military assets. The summer of 2023 in Israel, as perceived by adversaries in the Intelligence's assessment, is a historical weak point. While discussions have previously centered around "tactical" damage to deterrence, intelligence officials now worry about significant erosion of the fundamental deterrent capability in this phase. In addition to the dispatches sent to the prime minister, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi also met with him, providing hard-hitting information that backs the analysis. According to the Intelligence Directorate, Iran and Hezbollah would prefer to wait on the sidelines and allow Israel to tear itself on the inside. However, the Intelligence Directorate still maintains that the likelihood of escalation has increased and is now at its highest since the Second Lebanon War, which erupted exactly 17 years ago. Hassan Nasrallah will seek friction as he has done in recent months, even at the cost of several days of fighting against Israel. Nasrallah believes he can stretch the rope just enough to avoid escalating things into full-scale war, believing that Israel will refrain from entering such a significant conflict at this time. Despite failing to anticipate the Ehud Olmert government's moves in 2006, Nasrallah remains confident in his ability to influence decision-makers in Israel, especially compared to the leaders of terror organizations in Gaza.

The dispatches sent by the Intelligence Directorate, along with the close monitoring of the crisis's expansion within the reserves, which now goes beyond the Air Force and raises concerns about potential impacts on other regional commands, form an integral part of the chief of staff's commitment to transparency with the political leadership. In the face of the seismic upheaval that occurred even before the end of the half-year term, Lt. Gen. Halevi remains steadfast in providing an accurate assessment of the IDF's readiness and capabilities to the political authorities, without embellishing or downplaying the facts. He upholds this principled approach even in these challenging times and deserves commendation for it.

As part of the close monitoring of the army's readiness, there is currently no cause for concern: if a war were to break out tomorrow morning, the army is currently fully prepared. In contrast to such reports that cause more panic than reflect reality, wear and tear on the IDF's readiness is a gradual process that takes weeks, if not longer. The main challenge of addressing the crisis in the reserves is apparent in internal command deliberations. Over the past few weeks, the chief of staff has visited Air Force bases, the Intelligence Directorate, the Research Division and regular divisions to listen to frontline feedback and underscore the significance of military service, particularly during such times. Considering the prime minister's warnings and the outcomes so far, it is worth asking whether the chief of staff has not been left to confront this unprecedented crisis on his own.

7.27.23 – Th

Jordan, PA, Saudi Arabia, Egypt condemn Ben-Gvir Temple Mount morning visit

7.27.23 – Th

Israel's Arab neighbors condemn Ben-Gvir visit to Temple Mount

At least 16 arrested for alleged violation of regulations for Jews visiting site holy to Muslims amid tensions increased by Ben-Gvir visit; Jordan, PA, Saudi Arabia, Egypt condemn Israel calling minister's presence on Temple Mount a 'provocation'

Liran Tamari, Itamar Eichner|Updated:03:57

Condemnations came from Israel's Arab neighbors in the wake of National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's visit to the Temple Mount on Thursday in honor of Tisha B'Av. Meanwhile, Jerusalem police Thursday detained at least 16 Jewish visitors to Temple Mount for alleged violations of regulations under the existing status quo agreed to with the Muslim endowment. Nearly 2,000 Jewish visitors were allowed on the holy site as of early afternoon on Tisha B'Av, the Jewish commemoration of the destruction of the Holy Temple over 2,000 years ago. Two Palestinians were also detained.

Earlier in the morning, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir entered the compound revered by both Jews and Muslims. "This is the most important place for the people of Israel where we need to return to show our governance," he said

The visit which passed quietly and ended without riots, was condemned by the Palestinian Authority. "This assault as an official Israeli cover for the ongoing invasions and plans to Judaize the al-Aqsa Mosque, and to impose forced changes on its existing historical and legal reality, as an inseparable part of Jerusalem's Jewry," the PA said in a statement.

The Jordanian Foreign Ministry also issued a condemnation. "We warn against further one-sided Israeli action because it is dangerous to give extremists the ability to carry out provocations. Further actions of that kind, alongside continued violations of the status quo could cause an escalation of further violence," the Jordanian statement said.

Saudi Arabia said Ben-Gvir and "settlers broke into Al Aqsa Mosque area" in conduct that it said was a blatant violation of international norms and creates a provocation that hurts Muslims around the world. "The full responsibility lies with Israel," the Foreign Ministry in Riyadh said.

Egypt "condemns" the attack by Israeli government officials and hundreds of extremists on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and Israel's prevention of Muslim worshipers from exercising their right to come to the mosque and worship there. We call on the Israeli side to immediately stop these provocations and escalations that are causing an increase in existing tensions in the occupied territories," according to a statement from its Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Ben-Gvir informed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in advance of his intention to visit the site. "On this day, in this place, it is always important to remember - we are all brothers. Right, left, religious, secular," Ben-Gvir also said. "We are all the same people. And when a terrorist looks through the window, he does not differentiate between us and separate us. Unity is important, love of Israel is important."

In addition to Ben-Gvir, Minister of the Negev, Galilee and National Resilience Yitzhak Wasserlauf from Ben-Gvir's Otzma Yehudit party also visited the site. During Ben-Gvir's visit the police detained three Jewish visitors after they bowed down on the spot; Jewish prayer is forbidden at the site which is the holiest site in the world for Jews and the third holiest for Muslims behind Mecca and Medina.

In January after the establishment of the government and in May for Jerusalem Day, Ben-Gvir's visits to the Temple Mount provoked anger in the Arab world, and also condemnation from the United States.

In May, the State Department said that Ben-Gvir's ascent to the site was "an alarmingly provocative visit." The State Department's announcement states that "holy places should not be used for political purposes. The United States supports the status quo and calls on all parties to respect the sanctity of the place." About four months before, after Ben-Gvir visited the Temple Mount upon the formation of the government, the U.S. said that his visit was an "unacceptable action."

The Arab world also condemned Ben-Gvir's previous visits to the Temple Mount. In May, Saudi Arabia refrained from naming the minister, and a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Riyadh, said that "the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia strongly condemns the entry of a senior Israeli official into the al-Aqsa compound."

The Saudi statement on Thursday said that Ben-Gvir's conduct was "systematic," and was a blatant violation of all international conventions and agreements. According to the Saudi Foreign Ministry, the move by the National Security Minister was seen as "hurting Muslim feelings around the world." Riyadh sent a message to Israel stating that "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers the Israeli security forces to bear full responsibility for the consequences of the continuation of these violations."

Jordan reacted to Ben-Gvir's Thursday visit to the Temple Mount about an hour after it was reported in Israeli media. "The ascent of the Israeli Minister of National Security to the Temple Mount and the Al-Aqsa compound is a violation of the sanctity of the place,

it is a **provocative step** that must be condemned," Jordan said in a statement, adding that "this is a **dangerous escalation** that is a blatant violation of international law and the status quo in Jerusalem and the holy places."

Another country with which Israel has a peace agreement and condemned Ben-Gvir's step is **Egypt**, and the Foreign Ministry in Cairo stated that the Minister of National Security "was **accompanied by extremist groups**."

Egypt also stated that "these provocative actions are **contrary to the responsibility** and understanding expected of senior officials in the Israeli government. The successive attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque, aimed at formulating a policy of temporal and spatial division, will not change the existing legal and historical status quo according to which Al-Aqsa is an Islamic endowment."

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**7.26.23** – We

**IDF reserve officers to show summon before entering HQ when base has protesters**

**7.26.23** – We

**IDF demands reserve officers show summon before entering General HQ**

Reserve officers say the move by the base commander exhibits a **mistrust of long-serving senior members of the military**; initiative comes **after** volunteers in the **reserves** said they would **refuse to serve** what they consider to be a non-democratic regime

Yoav Zituni | 14:43

**Reserve officers** serving in the IDF's General **HQ in Tel Aviv** were **informed** they would now be **required to present a summon** for reserve **before** they would be **allowed to enter the base** when protests of the government's judicial legislation, **are underway outside**.

This **new procedure** was recently put **into effect by Col. Ohad Ezra**, head of the military's General Staff **headquarters in Tel Aviv**.

According to the **new order** that was delivered to them on **Wednesday**, **officers**, who have until now been **exempt from presenting such documentation at the entrance** to the military headquarters, **would not be allowed to enter** without presenting a summon to service to the security guards at the entrances.

The **military claims** the new order is aimed at improving **congestion at the entrance points** but many reserve officers who received the internal email detailing the procedure, claim it was put into effect **as a result of a lack of trust** in them.

"It's true that **many of the reserve officers** who said they would **refuse** to volunteer to serve the government that **was destroying Israel's democracy**, serve in the HQ in sensitive Air Force and Intelligence facilities but it is **going too far to suspect** that they may take **action inside the base** itself," one officers said.

The reservists who participate in the weekly and sometimes twice-weekly protests in Tel Aviv, do so out of uniform, often wearing t-shirts identifying them only as alumni of the military. After members of the coalition leveled condemnation and abuse at members of the volunteer reserve service, for their position, Air Force pilots currently serving in the IDF said they were being harassed by supporters of the government when they leave their bases wearing their uniforms.

Meanwhile, protest organizers said that a further 120 members of the reserves in the Air Force announced they were suspending their service late on Tuesday bringing the total number from the Air Force to 830, including over 260 pilots.

"The IDF recognizes and appreciates the significant contribution of reserve personnel to Israel's security," the military said in a statement. "The procedures to enter the base during routine days haven't changed, and the new orders are to be executed only while the area near the base is blocked by protesters."

7.26.23 – We

IDF believes additional incursion needed in Jenin to neutralize terrorist hotspot

7.26.23 – We

Back to Jenin? IDF believes additional incursion needed to neutralize terrorist hotspot  
IDF strikes delicate balance between hindering terrorists' reinforcement and supporting the Palestinian Authority's stability; Since the last operation, IDF has refrained from action, allowing the terrorists to regroup, rearm, and stockpile explosives

Elisha Ben-Kimon|02:24

Over 20 days have passed since the Israel Defense Forces' operation in the Jenin refugee camp, but it appears a return may be necessary. Sources in the security establishment reveal that Palestinian terrorists are attempting to rebuild from the ruins, focusing on infrastructure, producing potent charges, and collecting renewed munitions.

Shortly after the IDF bulldozers withdrew from the Jenin refugee camp, Palestinian Authority personnel promptly stepped in, seeking to establish governance. Interestingly, this aligned with the objectives of the recent IDF operation. Dozens of terrorist operatives were arrested, and a display of governance and enforcement of public order unfolded on the city's streets.

The latest visit from PA President Mahmoud Abbas was the climax that bolstered the Palestinian Authority's position in the refugee camp. However, the IDF remains cautious, aware that it can not rely solely on the Palestinians. While the Israel military has not operated in the camp since the operation, security officials clarify that they aim not to obstruct the PA's efforts to govern Jenin again – a critical Israeli security interest – despite the growing terrorist resurgence in the camp.

"Thwarting terrorism requires periodic operations in Jenin to prevent its resurgence in the refugee camp," according to a security official. "While not on the scale of the latest

operation, **targeted** short-term **two-hour operations**, like the recent one near Tulkarm, **are imminent**." The official said that **entering Jenin again is likely** in the near future. Special Operations Engineering Unit operating in Jenin

Not to be outdone, **tensions** in the Nablus sector are also **on the rise**. On **Monday**, **terrorists fired at** an Israeli **bus traveling through** Huwara, but miraculously despite being hit with eight bullets, no one was injured. Additionally, thanks to the **swift response** of combat engineering fighters, **a major attack was prevented**. These fighters, conducting proactive movements near the Samaritan community in the northern West Bank, identified a suspicious vehicle early Tuesday morning.

During a tense encounter, two armed terrorists emerged from a vehicle and opened fire on the forces. The soldiers swiftly responded, **returning fire and neutralizing all three terrorists**, **identified as Hamas operatives** by Palestinian media. A search of their vehicle **uncovered** additional **weapons, ammunition, and combat vests, indicating plans** for a **significant** shooting attack. Notably, **one of the slain terrorists** was revealed to be the **son of a senior Hamas official in Nablus**.

7.25.23 – Tu

**Supreme Court will respond to judicial oversight by appeals next month**

7.25.23 – Tu

**How will Supreme Court respond to government move to curb judicial oversight**  
**First judicial overhaul bill may end up at court's doorstep next month after several**  
**appeals have been filed against the legislation, creating a potential constitutional crisis;**  
**AG signals won't be able to defend bill**  
Tova Zimuky|| 17:05

The **Supreme Court may** soon be hearing one of the most explosive cases in Israel's history on the question of whether it has the authority to **strike down Knesset's attempt to restrict its power** through Basic Law.

A **bill** to curb the court's use of the reasonableness clause **to nullify** government **decisions** and appointments was **passed on Monday**. The case may end up at the Supreme Court's doorstep next month after several **appeals have been filed** against the legislation.

This case **involves** a myriad of complex **legal issues**, including the position of the **Knesset** as the **constitutive authority** that forms the basis of the constitution, the **Basic Laws**, the status of the government and the coalition, the power **dynamics between the Supreme Court and the Knesset**, and the trust of Israeli citizens from all ends of the political spectrum in the importance and **standing of the Supreme Court**.

All these factors have run into turbulence. The **government's wish to dismiss Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara for obstructing** its actions **and the refusal of Justice Minister**

Yariv Levin to convene the judge selection committee to replace Supreme Court President Esther Hayut and Justice Anat Baron, who are retiring in October. In this context, there is a question of whether, given her upcoming retirement, Baron will preside over the debate over the nullification of a Basic Law, an unprecedented move that requires the Supreme Court to marshal a full 11-justice panel. So far, the Supreme Court has struck down 22 so-called regular laws on the grounds they went against the Basic Laws, or failed to meet constitutional muster. This will be the first time the court will debate on whether to strike down a Basic Law and it may not take long until the second after the attorney general ruled against the so-called Incapacitation Law, according to which a serving prime minister can only be removed from power by a Knesset super majority. Expressions like "misuse of the Knesset's constitutive authority" and "the unconstitutional amendment to the constitution" will become the main arguments of these appeals.

Following Israel's establishment, its founders agreed that the Knesset would also act as a constitutional convention to forge the state's constitution. The different political tribes in early Israeli society couldn't reach an agreement on many issues, particularly concerning religion and state affairs and different perspectives on Israel's nature as a Jewish and democratic state. Instead, lawmakers enacted Basic Laws, which act as "placeholders" for a constitution and would make up the components of a future one.

These laws, along with Israel's Declaration of Independence, have since been considered the determining factors of the state's governing system and its organizational and administrative methods.

They also define the rights and obligations of Israeli citizens, shape the relationship between them and state authorities, and establish the norms and rules for enacting laws, adjudication and policy-making.

Over the past months, the attorney general and her deputy Gil Limon made it clear to the Knesset's Constitution, Law and Justice Committee that the Knesset can't undermine the foundations of Israel's democracy and the basic values on which the state was founded.

Baharav-Miara and Limon already indicated that they won't defend the appeals. The person who will defend the appeals before the Supreme Court is Knesset Attorney General Sagit Afek, but the court will also seek Baharav-Miara's opinion.

In his speech before the committee, Deputy Attorney General Limon emphasized that despite majority rule being one of the basic principles of democracy, there's another fundamental principle - the separation of powers, which aims to limit the power of each of the three branches of government to prevent them from infringing on the rights of private citizens and the public.

As part of this principle, none of the three branches of government has absolute power or the "final say" on any matter. Instead, there are checks and balances between them, with each subject to the oversight of the other branches through the various tools at their disposal.



As part of these checks and balances, the judiciary conducts a judicial review of the executive branch's actions, including decisions made by the government, the prime minister and his cabinet members.

The way the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee chose - a deliberate avoidance of judicial review based on the decision's reasonableness - breaks the accepted norms in a democracy as part of the checks and balances among the three branches. Limon further said that the purpose of the amendment is to remove restrictions from the executive branch.

"This proposal violates the fundamental principle of the separation of powers that creates checks and balances," Limon noted.

"The approach underlying the proposed law, which calls for the cancellation of the reasonableness standard solely because of the subjective elements that require the exercise of judicial discretion, may not stop at this standard alone but may extend to the proportionality clause or any other legal principle that political officials perceive as limiting their authority."

"The amendments made to the proposed law in recent days only reinforce this concern. Such an approach, in practice, undermines the power of the entire judiciary," he added. "The proposal's implication is, in fact, the grant of unchecked power in the hands of a select few public officials who inherently centralize significant political power and deep influence over the entire public. This creates a kind of judicial 'sanctuary,' enabling unreasonable decision."

7.25.23 – Tu

Haredi lawmakers table bill treating Torah study at par with military service

7.25.23 – Tu

Haredi lawmakers table bill treating Torah study at par with military service

United Torah Judaism legislators say Netanyahu committed to enshrining exemption of yeshiva students from IDF service into law as part of coalition agreement; Gallant asserts Torah not equal to serving in the defense of the country

Kobi Nachshoni, Moran Azulay || 06:30

The ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism Party on Tuesday proposed a bill that would treat Torah study the same as military service.

Authors of the law said it was in line with the coalition agreement struck with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party during negotiations on the establishment of the government.

The proposed legislation states that since the study of the Torah is of vital importance to the State of Israel, those who undertake it for an extensive period of time would be considered as having served the nation.

The ultra-Orthodox lawmakers said that they **intend** to bring the bill to a **vote after the summer recess** following the government's failure to enshrine into law the exemption of yeshiva students from military service. **Netanyahu** made a **commitment** to his ultra-Orthodox coalition **partners** that legislation would pass ahead of the Knesset vote on the national budget bill but **did not live up to his promise**.

A **previous draft bill** that **allowed yeshiva students to avoid military service** **expired** last **April** and was earlier **ruled unconstitutional** and discriminatory **by the Supreme Court** in a **2017** decision. The government then requested time to legislate a **new bill** but **failed** to do so amid recurring election cycles.

After the Likud Party rushed to issue a statement claiming such legislation would not be advanced, ultra-**Orthodox** lawmakers said they **expected Netanyahu to fulfill his commitments**. In a curt message to the prime minister, they said they would not support his plan to remove Supreme Court oversight on Knesset legislation – another component of **Netanyahu's push to restrict the power of the courts** - if their bill is not advanced.

**Opposition** leader Yair **Lapid** **condemned** the proposed **bill**. "One day after the coalition passed its law to limit the reasonability clause, Israel's most irresponsible government ever is beginning to celebrate at a cost to all of us," Lapid said. "This **government of destruction that accused volunteers** to service in the reserves **of desertion** of the military, **dares now to consider a bill** giving legal cover for draft dodgers."

Gadi **Eizenkot**, a former **IDF chief of staff** and a member of the National Unity Party, said the **proposed legislation would be a fatal blow to the IDF's role** as the people's army and **must be rejected**.

Defense Minister Yoav **Gallant** **stressed** the importance of military service to the country. "**Torah study is an important facet that preserves us as a people and I hold it in high regard**," Gallant said. "**It is important to remember- there is no place to equate military service with Torah study**," he said.

7.23.23 – Su

Passing reasonableness law on eve of Tisha B'Av is very bad timing

7.23.23 – Su

Passing reasonableness law on eve of Tisha B'Av is 'very bad timing', former US ambassador says

David **Friedman**, who served as Donald **Trump's ambassador** to Israel, **criticized** the **legislation** to repeal the reasonableness standard and its timing: 'Given the striking parallel between the current rift and **the internal battles that caused the destruction of the Second Temple** - why does the government continue?'

Itamar Eichner |14:18

David **Friedman**, the former US ambassador to Israel, **commented** on **Sunday** on the push to pass **legislation** to repeal the use of the reasonableness standard tweeting: "Given the striking parallels between Israel's current internal rift and the **infighting that caused the**

destruction of the Second Temple 2000 years ago, why would the Israeli government proceed with its Judicial Reform bill on the eve of Tisha B'Av? Very bad timing."

Friedman, who is Jewish, was appointed to serve as the UN ambassador to Israel by former US President Donald Trump - and served in the position between May 2017 and January 2021. He served as Trump's adviser in his 2016 US presidential election campaign and as his campaign manager in Israel. He previously worked as a lawyer at the Trump Organization.

Friedman, who is also considered close to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and popular among the Israeli right, was the first ambassador to move to the US consulate in Jerusalem. The move occurred due to Trump's historic speech at the White House, in which he announced that the US government recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital for the first time – and prepared to move the embassy there.

Voices are constantly being heard in the US to stop Israel's judicial overhaul. Last week, senior White House officials confirmed what was attributed to US President Joe Biden in an article by New York Times senior columnist Thomas Friedman, which said that the message that the US president conveyed to Netanyahu in a phone call last week was that the legislation should be stopped immediately - and not passed without broad agreement. Apart from those senior officials, the spokesman for the National Security Council at the White House confirmed that the statement given by Biden to the columnist is authentic.

Given the striking parallels between Israel's current internal rift and the infighting that caused the destruction of the Second Temple 2000 years ago, why would the Israeli Asked about the same article, White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre said: Thomas Friedman "quoted the president directly, and I will let his words stand for themselves. The president was clear in his meeting with President Herzog and in his phone conversation with Netanyahu – his relationship with Israel goes back years, it is strong and deep. We are committed to Israel's security. I will let his response in the article stand on its own."

In response to the question of whether he wants Netanyahu to stop the judicial overhaul, she said: "The president believes that the core of the US-Israel relationship is democratic values. Any change needs a broad consensus. The president was clear when it comes to judicial reform."

7.23.23 – Su

Over 100,000 in Tel Aviv to support judicial reform against Opposition Lapid & Gantz

7.23.23 – Su

Over 100,000 gather in Tel Aviv in support of judicial reform as protests against continue in front of Knesset

Tens of thousands are heading to Tel Aviv from throughout the country to support government lawmakers as they prepare to vote for legislation to cancel the courts' reasonableness test; Meanwhile, anti-judicial overhaul protesters crowd the streets of Jerusalem

Ynet|Updated:13:27

Over 100,000 thousand people have gathered on Kaplan Street in Tel Aviv armed with Israeli flags and signs in support of judicial reform. The demonstrators said by organizers to be among the tens of thousands making their way from all over the country are participating in a march to show their support for the government's efforts at judicial overhaul, at the site that has been the focus of the anti-reform protests for the last 29 weeks.

In addition, about 100 people marched through the streets of Tel Aviv to protest against reservists who have notified the Israel Defense Forces that they will not show up for their volunteer reserve duty, chanting slogans including "the people demand reserve service without conditions.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of protesters are making their way to Jerusalem, including from Tel Aviv, to protest against the judicial reform in front of the Knesset, where lawmakers are currently debating the final legislation against the use of the reasonableness standard. They are expected to vote in second and third reading on or around Monday.

The Knesset's summer session ends on July 31.

As the protests begin to pick up steam on Monday evening, President Isaac Herzog – just hours after landing in Israel from his successful visit to the United States – headed to Sheba-Tel Hashomer Medical Center to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, where he is hospitalized after having a pacemaker implanted, in an effort to try to broker a last-minute compromise on the reform legislation.

"All the time, and also during his visit to the US, the president and his team are working to explore all efforts for dialogue with the aim of reaching an agreement between the parties," the President's office said.

Following his meeting with Netanyahu, Herzog met with Opposition Leader Yair Lapid, and was scheduled to meet later in the evening with the head of the National Unity party, Benny Gantz.

Earlier on Sunday, the government rejected a compromise outline proposed by Histadrut labor union Chairman Arnon Bar-David to modify the test of reasonableness, calling it a "one-sided acceptance of the opposition's position as it was from the beginning." The Histadrut's proposal reportedly was exactly the same as the proposal of opposition leader Yair Lapid, and the Likud party said in a statement that it "completely sterilizes the amendment on the issue of reasonableness and requires an absolute veto on all other elements of the reform."

At the demonstration in Tel Aviv, Transportation Minister Miri Regev condemned reservists who have suspended their volunteer service over the legislation.

"I know this is the attempt of the elite to sabotage any attempt at reform and diversification," Regev said, adding: "Let's tell the truth, they are concerned with maintaining their centers of power, their elite, and we are concerned with creating diversity, representation and justice."

Regev said that she has a problem with refusals and bullying, and called for pilots to be arrested. "Whoever refuses an order – belongs in prison," she said.

The former president of the country, Reuven Rivlin, spoke at in Jerusalem, saying that he came to protest so that "we could be saved from a bad moment that is unprecedented in the history of the country."

Rivlin quoted from the Declaration of Independence, and concluded: "I ask you to join the request for forgiveness that I wish to express to our wonderful fighters and pilots – they did not deserve to hear what they heard." He said that "there is only one person who can prevent our dear country from disaster, and his name is Benjamin Netanyahu."

Rivlin addressed the prime minister directly: "Bibi, immediately stop the entire legislative process ... above all else stands our Jewish and democratic state."

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7.23.23 – Su

IDF says no one has the right to refuse a call to service; we would not allow return

7.23.23 – Su

Halevi says without unity in the ranks, Israel cannot survive

Chief of Staff publishes a letter to his troops amid the crisis posed by the refusal of at least 10,000 members of the IDF reserve units among them pilots in the Air Force, to volunteer for service of what they call a non-democratic regime

Yoav Zitun|06:25

Chief of Military Staff Herzi Halevi said on Sunday, that without unity in the ranks, Israel will not survive in the Middle East. Halevi addressed his troops in a letter warning of the repercussions to the IDF should volunteers in the reserves, act on their threats to no longer show up for service amid the government's push to change the balance of power between the courts and the executive and legislative branches.

"Military service in active service and in the reserves is a duty and a great privilege. If we are not a unified force if the best among us do not serve, we will not be able to survive as an independent country in the region," Halevi wrote. "It is not too late for repair and we must do repair. There is no other way other than with unity. It is our responsibility and mine as IDF chief first and foremost."

Halevi published the letter while over 1,000 members of the Air Force including pilots and navigators, said they would no longer volunteer to serve if the judicial legislation is passed and some 10,000 others from across the military, signed a declaration stating the same.

"The IDF's mission has not changed in Israel's 75 years and is to defend the country's existence. The military's might lies in the superiority of its human resource, its preparedness for war and its unity inside and outside the military," he said.

Halevi alluded to a clip posted on social media last week that depicted Air Force pilots deserting troops on the ground because they would not express opposition to the judicial overhaul. The clip was shared by National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and by Culture and Sports Minister Miki Zohar. Families of fallen IDF soldiers were outraged and said the clip was hurtful to them and an affront to the memory of their loved ones. "We have attempted to leave the IDF out of the public debate but were dragged into it," Halevi wrote, "When fractures appear in our ranks an infantry soldier may mistakenly believe he will not receive the support he needs from an Air Force pilot, because of a political dispute and a pilot would be wrong to think that we would allow him to return to duty if the need arises if he misses his necessary training routine."

The military chief went on to say that in the face of Israel's security challenges, no one has the right to refuse a call to service and asked the members of the volunteer reserves not to refuse to do so.

Halevi was scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to present him with the up-to-date evaluation of the military on its preparedness for war amid the announcement of reservists, but after Netanyahu was hospitalized, the meeting was postponed to an undetermined time.

7.23.23 – Su

29-week-long protest spreading into the reserve ranks over judicial oversight

7.23.23 – Su

Netanyahu Halevi meeting canceled as more volunteers refuse to serve

Air Force officials fear protest spreading into the ranks after volunteers refuse service, say repercussions to the force, Israel's most effective strategic arm, would be long-lasting  
Yossi Yehushua|00:32

A meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi that was scheduled for Sunday, was postponed after the prime minister was hospitalized late on Saturday and fitted with a pacemaker.

Halevi was supposed to brief Netanyahu on the readiness of the military, after the announcement of thousands of volunteers to the military reserves, said they would refuse

to serve if the coalition passes a bill that would curb judicial oversight over government decisions.

Halevi was expected to tell the prime minister that at the moment, the military's preparedness was not yet affected but the threat by the 10,000 reservists, among them over 1,000 Air Force pilots, navigators and operational commanders, was real and could expand further beyond the reserve forces.

There is no doubt among officials that the military will be harmed. The Air Force's capabilities rely heavily on the volunteer reservists, many of them have actively participated in the 29-week-long protests against the government's legislative push, but they may not be alone and active service personnel may also refuse to serve. The situation is out of control, some say.

"The Air Force is torn, in a way never before seen," a senior officer said. "The best among us are agonizing. The unity in our force now and in the future will be impacted and the real fear is over how those now in uniform will respond since our squadrons are made up of active service personnel and reservists," he said.

Air Force officials also said that the belief in the just purpose of the force which had prompted them to serve Israel's security over the years, was eroding. They said they believed that if there was an immediate threat to Israel's security, the volunteers would show up. But there was an increased crisis in confidence in the country's leadership and therefore in the justification for missions that they may be called upon to fulfill.

Only the prime minister can stop this from happening, the officials said although Defense Minister Yoav Gallant could also help. Gallant was not expected to weigh in publicly after he was dismissed by Netanyahu last March for speaking out against the legislation's repercussions.

The Air Force, the pride of Israel and its most effective strategic arm will likely not be the same after the bill is passed and the fallout will be felt for years to come.

7.22.23 – Sa

Protesters form human chain West Wall to Knesset ahead of a final judicial vote

7.22.23 – Sa

Protesters join prayer for unity, form human chain to Knesset

Calling on government to halt legislation to curb judiciary protesters say they are expressing the need to preserve both Israel's Jewish and democratic components

01:38

Protesters were among the thousands who gathered early on Sunday, at the Western Wall for a prayer for Israel's unity, days before Tisha B'Av when observant Jews lament the destruction of the Jewish Temple and the expulsion of Jews to a two thousand-years-long

exile. The protesters said they would be forming a human chain stretching from the site, to the Knesset where deliberations begin ahead of a final vote on a bill to curb judicial oversight of the government.

Organizers said that Israelis of all stripes, religious and secular, from the left and from the right, from the urban centers and the social and geographic periphery are set to participate in a call to the government, that broad agreement is needed on their legislation.

"This will symbolize the unbreakable bond between Israel's Jewish and democratic aspects and is a call to prevent the rift in the nation," the organizers said.

Tens of thousands of protesters joined the march to Jerusalem calling for the coalition's legislative push to be halted before the Knesset votes on the first bill in what they see as an assault on Israeli democracy. Deliberations are to begin on Sunday and conclude with a vote on Monday, which is expected to pass.

A meeting that was scheduled to take place between the Chief of Military Staff Herzl Halevi and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the military's readiness was postponed after Netanyahu was hospitalized and implanted with a pacemaker overnight.

Halevi was expected to provide the prime minister with an accurate evaluation of the military's ability to function after more than 1,000 pilots, navigators and other members of the Air Force as well as thousands from other critical units, said they would no longer volunteer for service if the bill is passed.

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Ynet-News, July 21, 2023 – Friday

7.21.23 – Fr- - - News   Placed in July 21 spot – Friday  
Netanyahu says efforts underway to reach judicial bill final vote Monday

7.20.23 – Th- - - News   – Thursday  
Ben-Gvir & Zohar staged video of troop support denied for supporting reform

7.20.23 – Th- - - News   Placed in July 20 spot – Thursday  
President Herzog enthalls US members of Congress in historic speech

7.19.23 – We- - - News   Placed in July 19 spot – Wednesday  
IAF commanders wobble as reserves refuse to serve, over judicial overhaul

7.18.23 – Tu- - - News   – Tuesday  
US Congress Declares 'Israel is not apartheid state'; vote 412-9

7.18.23 – Tu- - - News   Placed in July 18 spot – Tuesday



Letter signed by 161 Israeli Air Force (IAF) reservists, resign from service

7.18.23 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Final wording to compromise a final vote on Judicial oversight next Monday

7.18.23 – Tu- - - News Placed in July 17 spot – Wednesday

Despite Democrat Squad boycott; President Isaac Herzog will address Congress

7.16.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday

US Representatives dubbed “the Squad” promote anti-Semitism in Congress

7.16.23 – Su- - - News Placed in July 16 spot – Sunday

Saudi Arabia textbooks remove antisemitic content; Israel described as Zionist entity

7.15.23 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

Swedish activist backs off Bible burning in Stockholm

7.14.23 – Fr- - - News Placed in July 14 spot – Friday

Sweden approves activist Bible burning in front of embassy as freedom of expression