

Ynet-News Oct 2, 2019

10.02.19 - News Placed in Oct 3 spot – Thursday

Unity talks to begin with Netanyahu & Liberman

09.29.19- News Placed in Oct 2 spot – Wednesday

Four days of hearings in Netanyahu corruption cases to begin Today - Wednesday

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Four days of hearings in Netanyahu corruption cases, to begin Wednesday

AG approves four days of hearings in Netanyahu corruption cases, to begin Wednesday  
Avichai Mandelblit, who intends to indict the prime minister for bribery, fraud and breach of trust, approved the PM's request made to hold the hearings over four days to ensure his lawyers would have sufficient time to present full arguments.

i24news, Ynet|Published: 09.29.19 , 18:33

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will begin his pre-indictment hearings in three corruption cases this Wednesday, local media reported Sunday.

Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit approved the premier's request made last Thursday to hold them over the course of four days to ensure his lawyers would have sufficient time to present their full arguments.

The prime minister is being investigated in three separate cases: Case 1000 concerns illicit gifts Netanyahu allegedly received from business moguls Arnon Milchan and James Packer.

Case 2000 concerns alleged discussions Netanyahu and Yedioth Ahronoth publisher Arnon Mozes had over a quid pro quo of positive media for the prime minister in return for Netanyahu weakening Yedioth's main rival newspaper Israel Hayom.

Case 4000 involves an alleged plan to ease regulations for telecommunications mogul and Bezeq chief Shaul Elovitch in return for positive coverage on his Walla! news website, and is on the agenda for Wednesday and Thursday.

Arguments in Case 1000 and Case 2000 will be heard on Sunday and Monday next week, "a total of four consecutive hearing days which will end as stated until Yom Kippur," Mandelblit informed Netanyahu's attorneys Sunday morning, referring to the Jewish Day of **Atonement that begins at sunset on Tuesday, October 8.**

On Thursday, Mandelblit also rejected Netanyahu's request for his pre-indictment hearing to be broadcast live, in a ploy meant to validate his claims that he has "nothing to hide."

"It would have been better if instead of making such an idle request such as this in connection with the hearing -- which you well know would not be accepted -- you would have worked to comply with the mandatory guidelines under this procedure," Mandelblit stated, slamming Netanyahu's defense for submitting just a single page rather a comprehensive brief detailing its planned arguments.

The attorney general said he intends to charge the premier with bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

Yedioth Ahronoth owner Arnon Mozes is set to be charged with bribery following his pre-indictment hearing last month.

**10.02.19**

**Unity talks to begin with Netanyahu & Liberman**

**As unity talks stall, Netanyahu to meet with Liberman**

**We'll see if this is serious,** PM tells Yisrael Beytenu leader as Liberman says his party may present its own coalition plan after talks between Likud and Blue and White collapse again

Moran Azulay|Published: **10.02.19**, 19:48

Benjamin Netanyahu and Yisrael Beytenu leader Avigdor **Liberman will meet Thursday** morning in Jerusalem as part of the prime minister's efforts to form a coalition government.

"There's no point wasting the country's time," Netanyahu told Liberman in a conversation Wednesday. "We'll meet, see if this is serious or not and based on that make a decision."

The meeting was planned after Likud and Blue and White talks on a potential unity government ended without results.

Neither Netanyahu nor Blue and White leader Benny Gantz, who leads a bloc of center-left parties, have enough Knesset members in their respective blocs to form a majority coalition.

Gantz on Tuesday backed out of planned talks to form a national unity government, saying conditions were not ripe to hold effective negotiations.

Both President Reuven Rivlin and Liberman have been calling for a unity government between Likud and Blue and White and have expressed opposition to a third round of elections within a year.

Liberman said earlier Wednesday that if there is no progress on unity talks before Yom Kippur, his party would present Blue and White and Likud with its own proposal.

"Even if new elections are held, the political map will not change significantly, and therefore an informed solution must be reached, leaving all personal and ego considerations aside," he said.

Netanyahu, who was last week given 28 days by Rivlin to form a government, met Wednesday with the heads of the right-wing factions that form his political bloc in any coalition negotiations.

As the rightist bloc met, Netanyahu's Likud party repeated its previous claim that Gantz's political partner Yair Lapid was scuppering unity talks for his own purposes.

"The ministers had been made aware that the Blue and White negotiating team canceled the meeting because Lapid overpowered Gantz during the holiday, intending to drag the country into another election," said a Likud source.

"Lapid does not want a rotation (of prime ministers) between Netanyahu and Gantz, but only between Gantz and himself."

Yamina leader Ayelet Shaked said following the meeting that the right-wing bloc remains "hardy like concrete," while the head of the Jewish Home party, Education Minister Rafi Peretz, said the right is "marching together."

Blue and White, meanwhile placed the blame for the cancellation of the unity talks firmly on Likud.

"This is not a negotiation, it is a deaf discourse and there is no point in continuing as long as the conditions stay the same," the party said.

"Why should we help him take the hearing off the headlines?" said one Blue and White official, referring to Netanyahu's pre-indictment hearings which kicked-off on Wednesday morning - the time when the planned unity talks were supposed to take place.

09.27.19

## US at stalemate, refusing to end Iran sanctions in return for meeting

Rouhani: U.S. offered to end Iran sanctions in return for meeting

Iranian president says he rejected offer despite pressure from Germany, Britain and France, insisting on punitive measures be halted first; Trump claims it was Tehran that proposed meeting condition sanctions were lifted

Reuters|Published: 09.27.19, 21:13

GENEVA - The United States sent a message to European leaders that it was willing to lift all sanctions on Iran, according to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who said he had rejected talks with Washington while punitive U.S. sanctions remained in place.

Rouhani, speaking on his return from the United Nations General Assembly in New York said Germany, Britain and France had insisted on a joint meeting with U.S. officials.

"The German chancellor, the prime minister of Britain and the president of France were in New York and all insisted that this meeting take place and America says that it will lift the sanctions," Rouhani said, according to his official website.

"It was up for debate what sanctions will be lifted and they (the United States) had said clearly that we will lift all sanctions," his website quoted him as saying.

U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted on Friday that he had rejected Iran's request to lift sanctions.

"Iran wanted me to lift the sanctions imposed on them in order to meet. I said, of course, NO!" he wrote.

Iran wanted me to lift the sanctions imposed on them in order to meet. I said, of course, NO! — Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) September 27, 2019

According to Rouhani, France and Britain pressed him to meet Trump, with French President Emmanuel Macron warning him it would be a lost opportunity if he did not. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson suggested the Iranian leader should take the plunge.

Iran has ruled out bilateral talks with the United States unless it returns to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, abandoned by Trump last year, and eases the crippling economic sanctions that he has since imposed on the Islamic Republic.

Iran was ready for negotiations but not in an atmosphere of sanctions and pressure, Rouhani said.

Rouhani did not meet Trump in New York and European and Gulf officials expect Washington to keep tightening the vice on Iran's economy.

The United States and Iran are at odds over a host of issues, including the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, U.S. accusations - denied by Tehran - that

Iran attacked two Saudi oil facilities on Sept. 14, and Iran's detention of U.S. citizens on what the United States regards as spurious grounds.

09.27.19

British tanker & 16 man crew leave Iran after 10-week detention

British tanker leaves Iran after 10-week detention

Vessel, seized by Revolutionary Guard in Strait of Hormuz after U.K. detained Iranian ship, left Bandar Abbas bound for Dubai; families of crew informed, repatriation planned Reuters|Published: 09.27.19 , 15:27

DUBAI - The British-flagged Stena Impero tanker sailed out of Iranian waters on Friday, the owner said, after it was detained in July during a row with Britain that has stoked tensions in the Gulf.

The Stena Impero left Iran's Bandar Abbas port on Friday morning bound for Dubai, where the crew would be repatriated, Sweden's Stena Bulk said, after being detained for 10 weeks.

The ship was seized by Iran's Revolutionary Guard in the Strait of Hormuz, a major oil shipping route, for alleged marine violations two weeks after Britain detained an Iranian tanker off the territory of Gibraltar. The Iranian ship was released in August.

"It reached international waters," Stena Bulk CEO Erik Hanell told Reuters in a text message after the Stena Impero began sailing, adding that the ship's master "reported that all crew members are safe and in high spirits following release."

He said the crew would receive medical checks and be de-briefing in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, on the opposite side of the Gulf, before travelling home to their families. Seven of the 23 crew were freed earlier this month.

The seizure of the ship ratcheted up tension after attacks in May and June on other merchant vessels in Gulf waters, which the United States blamed on Iran, a charge Tehran denied.

The Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran in the country's southern Hormozgan Province said the ship started to move out from Bandar Abbas at 9 a.m. Iran time (0530 GMT).

But it said the judicial file on the vessel remained open and the process of looking into "violations" by the ship was ongoing.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that the detention order had been lifted but the investigation continued.

Stena Bulk said Wednesday it was not in negotiations with Iran and said it was not aware of any formal charges against the crew or the company.

Relations between the United States and Iran have become more strained since Washington withdrew last year from a global pact to rein in Tehran's nuclear program and imposed sanctions on the country aimed at shutting down Iranian oil exports.