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10.04.19 - - News Placed in Oct 4 spot – Friday

Palestinians drop Feb boycott & take \$430 million Israeli collected tax money on Sunday

10.03.19 - News Placed in Oct 3 spot – Thursday

Official 22<sup>nd</sup> Knesset plan drafts ultra-Orthodox & allows weekend public transport

10.04.19

Palestinians to resume taking Israeli collected tax money

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PA stopped taking money because of dispute with Israel over stipends paid to families of Palestinian terrorists, but souring financial situation and increasing instability force Ramallah to reconsider its policies

Reuters|Published: 10.04.19 , 19:31

The cash-strapped Palestinian Authority (PA) will once again accept tax revenues collected on its behalf by Israel, after rejecting the money for months, Israeli and Palestinian officials said on Friday.

The PA had stopped taking the money because of a dispute with Israel over stipends paid to the families of Palestinian terrorists killed or jailed by Israel.

The change of policy could help the PA relieve a deepening financial crisis.

A spokeswoman for the Israeli Finance Ministry said that 1.5 billion Shekels (about \$430 million) would be handed over to the PA on Sunday.

Hussein al-Sheikh, the PA minister of civil affairs, said that following understandings reached with Israeli Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon on Thursday, both sides would begin discussions on a range of financial issues next week.

"The agreement was also on transferring a payment from the PA's financial dues. The dispute remains over the salaries of the families of prisoners and martyrs. We are determined to pay their dues at all costs," al-Sheikh said on Twitter.

In February, Israel announced it would cut by 5 percent the approximately \$190 million in tax revenues it transfers to the Palestinian Authority each month from imports that reach the West Bank and Hamas-run Gaza Strip via Israeli ports.

The deducted sum represents the amount of money paid by the PA, which exercises limited self-rule in the West Bank, to families of Palestinians convicted and jailed by Israel for security offences, including deadly attacks on Israelis.

The **tax transfers** make up about **half of the PA's budget**, according to Palestinian Finance Ministry data. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has since February refused to accept the partial tax remittances from Israel, saying the PA is entitled to all the money under interim peace deals.

Israel calls the stipends a "pay for slay" policy and says it encourages violence. Palestinians hail their jailed brethren as heroes in a struggle for an independent state and their families as deserving of support.

The United States passed legislation last year to sharply reduce aid to the PA unless it stopped the pay-outs and the **Trump administration last year cut hundreds of millions** of dollars of aid.

Analysts have warned that financial instability raises the risk of violence erupting in the West Bank.

**10.03.19**

**No breakthrough on meeting to form a new coalition**

**Official 22<sup>nd</sup> Knesset plan drafts ultra-Orthodox & allows weekend public transport**

**'No breakthrough,' says Likud after Liberman meeting**

Netanyahu and Yisrael Beytenu leader meet for the first time since the September elections in an **attempt to form a new coalition**, but Liberman's party says unity government is the only way to go

Moran Azulay|Published: **10.03.19** , 12:02

The **meeting** between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Yisrael Beytenu Chairman Avigdor Liberman **appears to have been held in vain** as Likud officials say "no breakthrough" was reached during the meeting on the formation of a new coalition government.

Yisrael Beytenu party said that during Thursday's meeting it was made clear to the prime minister that in light of the security and economic challenges, a unity government is the preferred option. "The right path for forming a government is to jointly create fundamental principles between Yisrael Beytenu, Likud and Blue and White."

For a second day in a row **Netanyahu held coalition talks at the same time** his attorneys were **trying to convince the attorney general not to indict** the prime minister **on corruption** multiple cases, which could see him being charged with fraud, breach of trust and bribery charges.

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

In the meantime, Yisrael Beytenu on Thursday published its **official plan for the 22 Knesset**, set to be sworn in later in the day, which emphasizes the party's long standing agendas such as **drafting the ultra-Orthodox into the military**, making **core curriculum** an **obligatory condition for any educational institutions** and **allowing public transport on weekends**.

"A civil union that creates an equal rights opportunity will correct the injustice that at any given moment, there are more than 5000 soldiers who can potentially die for State of Israel but cannot join in marriage," said the party in a statement.

"Teaching core curriculum should be a condition for becoming a recipient of the schools budget."