

Ynet News November 5, 2019

11.05.19 - - News Placed in Nov 5 spot – Tuesday
Iran producing 4.5% enriched uranium, seeking 90% for weapons as US sanctions

11.05.19 - - News Placed in Nov 1 spot – Friday
Qatar struggles monthly 30 million fuel cost to the Gaza power plant

11.05.19 - - News Placed in Nov 2 spot – Saturday
PA raises age of marriage for both genders from 15 to 18 as announced on July 27.

11.04.19 - - News Placed in Nov 3 spot – Sunday
Government talks have stalled & Hamas cross-border rockets flare-up new threats

11.04.19 - - News Placed in Nov 4 spot – Monday
Likud pushes for West Bank annexation of Jordan Valley to full Israeli sovereignty

10.31.19 - - News Placed in Oct 31 spot – Thursday
Gantz in coalition bid, meets with Joint List Arab leaders; first time since 1999

10.29.19 - - News Placed in Oct 29 spot – Tuesday
Gantz vows to accept Reform and Reconstruction, with official Orthodox Judaism

11.05.19
Qatar struggles monthly 30 million fuel cost to the Gaza power plant

Hamas threatens cut in financial aid to Gaza will lead to escalation in violence
Qatari envoy to Gaza Strip informs enclave's leadership during last visit, that Qatar will struggle to continue transferring monthly \$ 30 million financial aid to Strip

Elior Levy|Published: 11.05.19 , 23:02

Hamas announced that a potential cut in monetary aid transferred to the Gaza Strip from Qatar may lead to an escalation in violence with Israel, that could even turn into a military confrontation, Lebanese newspaper Al Akhbar reported on Tuesday.

The newspaper, which is affiliated with the Gazan terror group, also reported that Qatari envoy to the Gaza Strip Mohammed Al-Emadi informed the enclave's leadership during his last visit, that Qatar will struggle to continue transferring the monthly \$ 30 million financial aid to the Strip.

Sources said the organization's leadership would approach the Emir of Qatar Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani with a request to carry on with the transfer of the funds.

Hamas sees only two options to avoid an escalation in case of a cut in funds – either Israel will transfer taxes collected from the private sector in Gaza to the local Treasury, or remove the blockade imposed on Gaza by Israel since 2007.

The Qatari aid to Hamas consists of money paid to Israel to transfer fuel to the Gaza power plant and to pay a monthly stipend to tens of thousands of Gazans.

11.05.19

PA raises age of marriage for both genders from 15 to 18 as announced on July 27.

Amid protests and pleas, PA outlaws child marriage

New legislation raises age of consent for marriage for both genders to 18, and while seen as a historic achievement for the Palestinian Authority, many women's rights activists do not believe it goes far enough

The Media Line |Published: 11.05.19, 20:09

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh's government has passed a law setting the minimum age for matrimony at 18 for both genders in an effort to reduce rates of early marriage.

"The new law is meant to protect Palestinian families and ensure the advancement of Palestinian women," the government stated when it announced the upcoming law on July 27.

Exceptional cases will be determined by the chief justice.

According to statistics published by the Women's Affairs Center in Gaza City, 37% of married Palestinian females wed when they are under the age of 18, including 5% who marry before the age of 15.

Sixty-three percent of young married women suffer violence at the hands of their husbands, and 95% would not recommend early marriage for their daughters.

Child marriage is thought to contribute to the high rate of divorce in the Palestinian territories.

"This law came to put an end to the phenomenon of early marriage in Palestinian society and give females a chance to exercise their right to education," says Palestinian Social Affairs Minister Ahmad Majdalani.

"It's an important law that will positively reflect on Palestinian society."

Majdalani stressed that females have the right to fully live their childhood and utilize their youth to mature physically and psychologically.

“Females are not ready or able to start a family when they themselves are very young,” he says, adding that both genders need space.

Until now, the minimum age for marriage in the West Bank has been 15 for females and 16 for males, while in the Gaza Strip it has been 17 for females and 18 for males.

Judges had the power to decide otherwise in certain cases, for example if the girl were seen as mature and her father approved.

Speaking to The Media Line, Palestinian women expressed joy at the new law, although some remained critical of certain aspects.

“At 18, girls are still very young to get married, in my opinion,” says 27-year-old Catherin, but adds that it is still an improvement over the previous minimum age.

“I think the age is fine as long as another clause is included stating that females must give full consent to the marriage,” she says.

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 67% of women who divorced in the Palestinian territories in 2018 were aged 18 to 29, versus 55% for men.

Dina Azouni, a young Palestinian activist, feels the new law is a great improvement although the focus should be on whether there is genuine consent by the female.

“The dangerous cases are when women are forced to get married because their family wants money,” Azouni says. “Setting the legal age at 18 is a step forward, but this doesn’t eliminate the problem of forced marriages in our country.”

Each week, thousands of Palestinian women and girls gather in the West Bank and elsewhere, demanding an end to physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence against women, and seeking a family protection law.

As a result of the demonstrations, the PA’s Women’s Affairs Ministry said the government would enact a family protection law by the end of this year.

As for the new law on the age of consent, some women believe it came 25 years too late.

“It should have been one of the first laws passed by the Palestinian Authority,” says Nahed Abu Tomeh, a West Bank activist.

“The Palestinian government (at the time) had no real political will to make the decision, as it wanted to avoid confrontations with those who were against the determination of an age for marriage,” she claimed.

Abu Tomeh added that the PA now had no choice in the matter, pointing out that it signed the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) Protocol in 2014.

11.04.19

Government talks have stalled & Hamas cross-border rockets flare-up new threats

Hamas warns it has enough rockets to target Tel Aviv for 'six months in a row'

Yahya Sinwar, the terror group's leader in Gaza, threatens to turn Israeli cities into 'ghost towns' and warns that 'thousands of traps' and 'thousands of kilometers' of attack tunnels are waiting for IDF soldiers in the coastal enclave

Elior Levy|Published: 11.04.19 , 19:49

Hamas's leader in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, on Monday threatened to turn Israeli cities into "ghost towns" and warned the terror group has enough firepower to launch rockets into Tel Aviv "for six months in a row."

The remarks come just days after the latest cross-border flare-up between Israel and Palestinian factions in the coastal enclave, which saw at least 10 rockets being fired at Israeli communities near the Gaza border. A home in the southern city of Sderot sustained a direct hit. In response, the military said, a series of Israeli strikes targeted sites belonging to Hamas.

Speaking at a rally in Gaza, Sinwar appeared to be unfazed by the threats made by Israeli officials following the rocket barrage on Friday evening. "We have heard the threats Israeli leaders made towards us, but we will still make them curse the day they were born."

"Various intelligence agencies are trying to undermine the stability in the Gaza Strip," Sinwar said, adding that Hamas has "many secret tools to counter the attempts made by Israeli intelligence to infiltrate Gaza."

The 57-year-old also warned Israel against launching a ground operation in Gaza, claiming there are "hundreds of thousands" of traps waiting for Israeli soldiers and "hundreds of kilometers" of attack tunnels hidden underground.

He added that Hamas militants are manufacturing anti-tank missiles themselves in order to counter Israeli armored forces in the area.

Earlier, Sinwar said negotiations regarding a possible long-term ceasefire arrangement, as well as prisoner exchange talks, have stalled since Israel doesn't have a government and is unable to make important decision.

11.04.19

Likud pushes for West Bank annexation of Jordan Valley to full Israeli sovereignty

Likud MK pushes PM on West Bank annexation

Sharren Haskel's bill, if implemented, would bring the Jordan Valley territory under full Israeli sovereignty, permit Palestinians living in area to apply for Israeli citizenship within decade, provided they meet certain criteria

Amihai Attali|Published: 11.04.19 , 12:09

A Likud MK is pushing legislation to hold Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to a campaign pledge to annex parts of the West Bank.

Sharren Haskel was to set propose a bill on Monday that would call for the eastern side of the Jordan Valley to be brought under full Israeli sovereignty.

Several days before the election campaigns officially kicked off, Netanyahu called a press conference at which he stated that when re-elected, he would work to implement full sovereignty over the Jordan Valley, citing security concerns.

Blue and White officials scoffed at the statement, saying: "The citizens of the Jordan Valley are not props for Netanyahu's propaganda."

The party added: "Blue and White already stated that the Jordan Valley is eternal part of Israel. Netanyahu was the person behind a plan to hand over the territory (to the Palestinians) back in 2014."

Haskel's bill proposal would permit Palestinian residents in the territory to apply for Israeli citizenship within ten years of its implementation, provided they were not charged in the past with any security offenses and have not publicly called for a boycott against Israel.

"It's time to make the residents of the Jordan Valley legal Israeli citizens, thus kick-starting the development and prosperity of the region," said Haskel on Sunday.

"The communities of the Jordan Valley and their residents are a strategic resource of the highest order for Israel," she said.

"There is a wide consensus today about the region, following the long-awaited U.S. president's recognition of the Golan Heights as under Israeli sovereignty. It is time to do the same with the Jordan Valley.

"After Blue and White leader Benny Gantz proposed to do the same, I call upon him and my fellow party members to support my proposal."

New Right MK Ayelet Shaked proposed a similar bill Sunday, regarding the Gush Etzion bloc of settlements and Ma'ale Adumim settlement in the West Bank.

"We have in our hands a diplomatic window of opportunity and the support of the U.S. for such an action, an opportunity that will not last for long. We must not hesitate or delay," said Shaked on Sunday.

10.31.19

Gantz in coalition bid, meets with Joint List Arab leaders; first time since 1999

Gantz meets with Joint List leaders in bid to form coalition

Blue and White say the meeting focused on issues 'important to Arab society,' while the leader of the Arab-dominated political alliance throws a dig at the ruling party, saying the Joint List 'welcomes Likud's hysteria'

Hassan Shaalan, Yuval Karni | Published: 10.31.19, 20:29

Blue and White leader Benny Gantz met with the leaders of the Arab-dominated Joint List on Thursday as part of his efforts to form a coalition government.

President Reuven Rivlin tasked Gantz with trying to form a coalition government last week, two days after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was unable to do so when his allotted 28 days came to an end.

"The meeting took place in a good atmosphere and various issues - which are important to Arab society - were discussed, with an emphasis on civil issues," said the Blue and White party in a statement. "Gantz emphasized the treatment of these issues is not conditioned on anything."

The Joint List leader MK Ayman Odeh at the end of the meeting said he expects further discussions to take place. "We promised our public to promote their values and will do everything possible to make them a reality."

Odeh later took to Twitter to add the issues discussed did not revolve solely around the Arab sector but took into consideration the interests of "all Israeli citizens."

"We remain true to the values of peace and equality and as always, welcome Likud's hysteria."

Joint List MK Ahmad Tibi also hailed the meeting, saying it's the first time a candidate for prime minister held talks with Arab parties since 1999, when Ehud Barak's Labor won the national vote.

"We held a discussion about both civil and political issues ... MK Odeh and I are pleased with the understandings reached on the civil matters," Tibi said.

"Certainly, there is a need for further talks to be conducted in a thorough manner, unlike meetings we've had with other leaders."

10.29.19

Gantz: vows to accept Reform and Reconstruction, with official Orthodox Judaism

Gantz: 'When I will be prime minister, I will embrace all streams of Judaism'
PM hopeful vows to accept all denominations of Judaism, as Israel does not officially recognize any other Jewish streams and their religious practices except Orthodox Judaism

Ynet|Published: 10.29.19 , 22:34

Blue and White leader MK Benny Gantz announced Tuesday that he will embrace all streams of Judaism if he were to become prime minister.

"When I will be the Prime Minister of Israel, I will embrace all streams of Judaism. We are part of an inspiringly colorful mosaic of cultures and traditions. I will nurture this pluralism," said Gantz as he addressed Jewish leaders from around the world attending The Jewish Agency for Israel Board of Governors in Jerusalem.

Gantz said he will also push for the implementation of the Western Wall agreement, a compromise reached between Orthodox and non-Orthodox

Jewish denominations, according to which the non-Orthodox "mixed" prayer area for men and women was supposed to be expanded in the southern part of the Western Wall.

"I will promote the implementation of the Western Wall agreement. Every time I go to the Western Wall, I look at the sea of stones — the different sizes and shapes — like the streams we have in Judaism. I'm telling you today, the Western Wall is long enough for all," said the former IDF chief.

Emphasizing the need for unity among the Jewish people during a time of increasing global anti-Semitism, Gantz also spoke on his mission to avoid a third election and form a unity government.

"Israel requires a stable, responsible, and pragmatic government. A broad liberal unity government, which I set out to establish from the moment I entered politics less than a year ago. This is the government the people chose and the one that they need".

“The divisive dialogue is tearing our strong nation apart. It may serve political purposes but is shredding the fabric that holds us

together. The rift between right and left, between secular and Orthodox, between the haves and the have-nots, between Jews and non-Jews, has grown wider and wider”.

As of today, the State of Israel does not officially recognize other denominations of Judaism except Orthodox Judaism - meaning that conversion to Judaism, marriage and other various religious practices through the different streams of Judaism, such as Reform and Reconstructionist Judaism, are also not recognized by the state.

11.05.19

Iran producing 4.5% enriched uranium, seeking 90% for weapons as US sanctions

In new break with nuclear deal, Iran revives uranium centrifuges

Rouhani stresses steps taken so far, including going beyond the deal's enrichment and stockpile limitations, could be reversed if Europe offers a way for it to avoid U.S. sanctions choking off its crude oil sales abroad

Associated Press|Published: 11.05.19, 11:11

Iran's president announced on Tuesday that Tehran will begin injecting uranium gas into 1,044 centrifuges, the latest step away from its nuclear deal with world powers since President Donald Trump withdrew from the accord over a year ago.

The development is significant as the centrifuges previously spun empty, without gas injection, under the landmark 2015 nuclear accord. It also increases pressure on European nations that remain in the accord, which at this point has all but collapsed.

In his announcement, President Hassan Rouhani did not say whether the centrifuges, which are at its nuclear facility in Fordo, would be used to produce enriched uranium. The centrifuges would be injected with the uranium gas as of Wednesday, Rouhani said.

His remarks, carried live on Iranian state television, came a day after Tehran's nuclear program chief said the country had doubled the number of advanced IR-6 centrifuges in operation.

There was no immediate reaction from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog now monitoring Iran's compliance with the deal. The European Union on Monday called on Iran to return to the deal, while the White House sanctioned members of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's inner circle as part of its maximalist campaign against Tehran.

Rouhani stressed the steps taken so far, including going beyond the deal's enrichment and stockpile limitations, could be reversed if Europe offers a way for it to avoid U.S. sanctions choking off its crude oil sales abroad.

"We should be able to sell our oil," Rouhani said. "We should be able to bring our money" into the country.

The centrifuges at Fordo are IR-1s, Iran's first-generation centrifuge. The nuclear deal allowed those at Fordo to spin without uranium gas, while allowing up to 5,060 at its Natanz facility to enrich uranium.

A centrifuge enriches uranium by rapidly spinning uranium hexafluoride gas. An IR-6 centrifuge can produce enriched uranium 10 times faster than an IR-1, Iranian officials say.

Iranian scientists also are working on a prototype called the IR-9, which works 50-times faster than the IR-1, Iran's nuclear chief Ali Akhbar Salehi said Monday.

As of now, Iran is enriching uranium up to 4.5%, in violation of the accord's limit of 3.67%. Enriched uranium at the 3.67% level is enough for peaceful pursuits but is far below weapons-grade levels of 90%. At the 4.5% level, it is enough to help power Iran's Bushehr reactor, the country's only nuclear power plant. Prior to the atomic deal, Iran only reached up to 20%.

Tehran has gone from producing some 450 grams (1 pound) of low-enriched uranium a day to 5 kilograms (11 pounds), Salehi said. Iran now holds over 500 kilograms (1,102 pounds) of low-enriched uranium, Salehi said. The deal had limited Iran to 300 kilograms (661 pounds).

The collapse of the nuclear deal coincided with a tense summer of mysterious attacks on oil tankers and Saudi oil facilities that the U.S. blamed on Iran. Tehran denied the allegation, though it did seize oil tankers and shoot down a U.S. military surveillance drone.