

Ynet-News December 18, 2019 – Monday -

TV-News- We -- - News Placed in Dec 18 spot – Wednesday

Democrats & Independents Impeached Trump on False Charges = Senate will repeal

12.18.19 – We –

Merkel defends Germany UN voting record & not recognizing Jerusalem as capital

12.18.19 – We -- - News Placed in Dec 15 spot – Sunday

Israeli Electric cuts power 3hrs each day to West Bank over Palestinian \$519m debt
Began Sunday 12.15.19

12.18.19 – We -- - News Placed in Dec 17 spot – Tuesday

Moscow airport impedes Israelis, to urge Israel not to extradite Russian hacker to US.
Wednesday

12.16.19 – Mo -- - News Placed in Dec 16 spot – Monday

Israel signs gas deal with Egypt, in most significant cooperation to Arabs since 1979
Signed on Monday

12.16.19 – Mo -

Israeli company will supply a NATO member with high-tech Weapon Stations (RCWS)

12.13.19 – Fr -

British PM Boris Johnson can deliver Brexit in weeks, but Scotland minister won't go

12.18.19

Merkel defends Germany UN voting record & not recognizing Jerusalem as capital

12.18.19

Merkel defends Germany's UN voting record on Israel

Chancellor goes out in defense after Jewish human rights organization criticizes country's
ambassador voting against Israel at UN

Associated Press| Updated: 12.18.19 , 21:17

Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday defended Germany's voting record on Israel at
the United Nations, arguing that supporting the country doesn't mean backing all of its
actions.

The Jerusalem Post reported last week that the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center criticized Germany's ambassador to the U.N., Christoph Heusgen, for casting "anti-Israel votes" among other things. The German government strongly backed Heusgen, who previously served for years as Merkel's foreign policy adviser.

"A commitment to the state of Israel ... does not mean 100% agreement with all of Israel's political actions," Merkel said during a regular question-and-answer session in the German parliament.

She noted that European Union countries consult on how to vote at the U.N., where Germany is currently serving a two-year stint on the Security Council.

Germany works to try to ensure that "all tendencies that we can influence that could embody an anti-Israel stance" are removed from resolutions, she added. "So I think we are doing good work."

Germany and other European countries haven't joined the U.S. in recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and continue to criticize Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank.

The European Court of Justice ruled in November that EU countries must identify products made in Israeli settlements in the West Bank on their labels.

12.18.19

Israeli Electric cuts power 3hrs-day to West Bank over Palestinian \$519m debt
Began Sunday 12.15.19

12.18.19

Israeli Electric Company cuts power to West Bank over Palestinian debt

Estimated 130,000 Palestinians in West Bank rely on Israel Electric Company to provide them with power to get through winter, now due to huge debt owed by Palestinian Electric company, they find themselves with no power

Reuters| Updated: 12.18.19 , 20:42

The state-owned Israel Electric Company said on Wednesday it was continuing power cuts to several cities in the West Bank to press for payment of what it said was \$519 million owed by a Palestinian electricity company.

Israel Electric Corp (IEC) began daily, three-hour power cuts on Sunday, a spokeswoman said, adding that the company is "determined to collect the debt but disconnects the power in a reasonable and proportionate way".

The cuts have led to afternoon power outages in the cities of Ramallah and Bethlehem, affecting an estimated 130,000 people, said Hisham Omari, who heads the Palestinians' main electric company in the West Bank.

“When you have no electricity, there is no life. You stop life, you stop work, you feel the winter cold, for three hours,” added Omari, chairman of the Jerusalem District Electricity Company (JDECO).

Palestinians in the West Bank are largely dependent on electricity supplied by Israel. JDECO buys electricity from IEC and then sells it to customers in the West Bank, where the Palestinian Authority has limited self-rule under interim peace deals with Israel. JDECO does not have its own power stations and **relies on Israel for 95 percent** of its energy supply. **It buys the remainder from neighboring Jordan.**

Omari said the company was “trying to take a 150 million shekels (\$43.25 million) loan from a Palestinian bank to help pay off the debt.”

He added that the PA is negotiating with Israel to reschedule JDECO’s debt payments and end the power cuts

12.18.19

Moscow airport impedes Israelis, to urge Israel not to extradite Russian hacker to US.

12.18.19

Dozens of Israelis detained at Moscow airport, passports confiscated

Passengers were taken aside to a pre-prepared area, with Russian security personnel performing **a slow questioning process**

Itamar Eichner| Updated: **12.18.19** , 16:14

More than 40 Israeli civilians who landed on an El Al flight at Moscow's Domodedovo Airport on **Wednesday** were detained and had their passports confiscated.

Most Israeli passengers on the flight, **including children**, were taken aside to a pre-prepared area, with Russian security personnel performing **a slow questioning process** for everyone.

All passengers were **released after two hours of questioning and fingerprinting.**

This incident **follows the arrest and imprisonment of 26-year-old Israeli Naama Issachar** by Russian authorities **for drug possession** during a contact flight from India to Israel **earlier this year.**

Issachar's family claim that her seven-year jail sentence for possessing a small amount of cannabis **was part of an effort by Moscow to press Israel into preventing the extradition a Russian hacker to the United States.**

12.16.19

Israel signs gas deal with Egypt, in most significant cooperation to Arabs since 1979
Signed on Monday

12.16.19

Israel signs gas deal with Egypt, becomes major energy exporter

With expected boon, Israel plans to wean itself off coal and potentially revolutionize its economy, potentially aided by EU as it aims to reduce dependence on Russian gas with new delivery routes, something that could also curtail Iranian ambitions to use Syria as gateway to Mediterranean

Associated Press | Updated: 12.16.19 , 21:08

Israel became a major energy exporter for the first time on Monday after signing a permit to export natural gas to Egypt.

The announcement comes just days before Israel's lucrative Leviathan gas field in the Mediterranean Sea is expected to go online.

Energy Minister Yuval Steinitz called the permit a "historic landmark" for Israel. He said it's the most significant economic cooperation project between the neighboring countries since they signed a peace deal in 1979.

With the expected gas boon, Israel plans to wean itself off coal and potentially revolutionize its economy.

The European Union, seeking to reduce its dependence on Russian gas, has encouraged the formation of new delivery routes, including through the eastern Mediterranean. These routes could also curtail Iranian ambitions to use Syria as a gateway to the Mediterranean.

"The natural gas revolution turns us into an energy power and affords us not just huge income for the country but also a dramatic decrease in air pollution," Steinitz said.

But Israel's focus on its newfound gas reserves over the past decade has faced stiff domestic criticism from environmental and social welfare activists.

They say the government has been too generous toward the gas tycoons behind the exploration, and that the massive investment has steered resources away from focusing on renewable energy sources.

More recently, local activists have been urging Israel's Delek Drilling and its U.S. partner, Noble Energy, to move a proposed shoreline treatment gas rig farther out to sea.

The activists fear what they call the catastrophic consequences of spreading toxic water and air pollution toward their homes.

Delek, Noble, and the government insist that the most stringent safety measures have been put in place, and accuse their critics of waging an irresponsible scare campaign.

Aside from the economic benefits, the promise of gas appears to have helped Israel grow closer to Arab governments and other Mediterranean countries.

Israel signed a \$15 billion deal last year to provide Egypt with 64 billion cubic meters of gas over a 10-year period that will help transform both into regional energy players.

In January, Egypt hosted its first-ever regional gas forum. Steinitz attended alongside several regional delegations, the first such visit by an Israeli cabinet member since Egypt's 2011 Arab Spring uprising.

12.16.19

Israeli company will supply a NATO member with high-tech Weapon Stations (RCWS)

12.16.19

In first, Israel and Montenegro ink multi-million defense deal

Elbit deal with Balkan state worth around \$35M, will supply country with high-precision, multi-purpose weapon system for small and mid-caliber weapons

i24NEWS, Ynet | Updated: 12.16.19, 12:59

For the first time in history, Israel and Montenegro signed a major, multi-million-dollar defense contract, the Ministry of Defense confirmed Monday.

The Government-to-Government contract with the Balkan state had been signed on Sunday and is reportedly worth some \$35 million.

The agreement was signed in Tel Aviv, with Montenegrin Defense Minister Pedrag Boscovic spearheading the country's delegation to Israel.

Israeli defense company Elbit Systems will supply the NATO member state with its high-tech Remote Control Weapon Stations (RCWS)

According to Elbit official website, RCWS is a third-generation, high-precision, multi-purpose weapon system for small and mid-caliber weapons.

The weapons are installed on combat vehicles to allow the gunner stay inside the armored hull while firing.

The RCWS purchased by Montenegro will be mounted on its new U.S.-made Joint Light Tactical Vehicles.

12.13.19

British PM Boris Johnson will deliver Brexit in weeks, but Scotland minister won't go

12.13.19

Winning big, Johnson on course to deliver swift Brexit

Exit polls suggest Johnson, Conservative Party achieve greatest victory in national vote since Thatcher, making Johnson able to deliver Brexit within weeks; Labour crash,

Corbyn steps down

Reuters| Updated: 12.13.19 , 09:58

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson won a resounding election victory on Friday that will allow him to take Britain out of the European Union in a matter of weeks.

For Johnson, whose 20-week tenure in power has been marked by chaotic scenes in parliament and stark division on the streets over Britain's tortuous departure from the European Union, victory in Thursday's contest was vindication.

Educated at the country's most elite school and recognizable by his bombastic style, the 55-year-old must not only deliver Brexit but also convince Britons that the contentious divorce, which would lead to lengthy trade talks, is worth it.

A landslide Conservative win marks the ultimate failure of opponents of Britain's departure from the European Union who plotted to thwart a 2016 referendum vote through legislative combat in parliament and prompted some of the biggest protests in recent British history.

Johnson won an outright majority in the 650-seat parliament after an exit poll showed the Conservatives on course to win a landslide 368 seats, the biggest Conservative national election win since Margaret Thatcher's 1987 triumph.

"I think this will turn out to be a historic election that gives us now, in this new government, the chance to respect the democratic will of the British people," Johnson said after winning his seat of Uxbridge.

He said the Conservatives appeared to have won "a powerful new mandate to get Brexit done".

U.S President Donald Trump said it was "looking like a big win for Boris".

Labour was forecast to win 203 seats, the worst result for the party since 1935, after offering voters a second referendum and the most radical socialist government in generations. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said he would step down.

With results from across Britain indicating the exit poll was accurate, Johnson's bet on a snap election has paid off, meaning he will swiftly ratify the Brexit deal he struck with the EU so that the United Kingdom can leave on Jan. 31 - 10 months later than initially planned.

But nearly half a century after joining what has become the world's largest trading bloc, Johnson faces the daunting challenge of striking new international trade deals, preserving London's position as a top global financial capital and keeping the United Kingdom together.

Sterling soared and was on course for one of its biggest one-day gains in the past two decades. The pound hit a 19-month high of \$1.3516 versus the dollar and its strongest levels against the euro since shortly after the 2016 Brexit referendum.

As of 7 am Israel time, Johnson's Conservatives had made a net gain of 41 seats.

BREXIT FAR FROM OVER

After nearly four years of Brexit debate that has riven the United Kingdom, deadlocked parliament and shocked allies, a majority will allow Johnson to lead the United Kingdom out of the club it first joined in 1973. But Brexit is far from over.

He faces the **daunting task of negotiating a trade agreement with the EU**, possibly in just 11 months, while also negotiating another trade deal with U.S. President Donald Trump. The outcome of the negotiations will shape the future of Britain's economy. After Jan. 31, Britain will enter a transition period during which it will negotiate a new relationship with the remaining 27 EU states.

This can run until the end of December 2022 under the current rules, but the Conservatives made an election promise not to extend the transition period beyond the end of 2020.

A big majority **may give him** the political security to **extend the trade talks beyond 2020** because he could overrule the Brexit hardliner European Research Group (ERG) faction in the party.

"The bigger the Tory majority, of course, the less influence over this the ERG and Eurosceptics will have," said Brexit party leader Nigel Farage. "It will be called Brexit, but it won't really be."

"GET BREXIT DONE"

Johnson called the first Christmas election since 1923 to break what he said was the paralysis of Britain's political system after more than three years of crisis over Brexit.

The face of the victorious "Leave" campaign in the 2016 referendum, Johnson fought the election under the slogan of "Get Brexit Done", promising to end the deadlock and spend more on health, education and the police.

He was helped early in the election by Farage's Brexit Party which stood down hundreds of candidates to prevent the pro-Brexit vote from being split. Early results showed the Brexit Party had poached a significant number of voters from Labour.

While Brexit framed the election, the slow-motion exit from the EU has variously fatigued, enthused and enraged voters while eroding loyalties to the two major parties. Results showed Johnson's strategy had successfully breached Labour's so-called "Red Wall" of seats across the Brexit-supporting areas of the Midlands and northern England where he cast his political foes as the out-of-touch enemies of Brexit.

The Conservatives took Sedgefield, once held by former Prime Minister Tony Blair, Labour's most successful leader.

LABOUR DEFEAT

A defeated Labour now faces a civil war between the socialists who control it and more moderate factions that will demand power.

"This is obviously a very disappointing night for the Labour Party with the result that we've got," Corbyn said after being re-elected in his own north London electoral seat. He said he would not lead the party in any future elections.

Wearied Labour candidates said his leadership had played a major role in the defeat. Ruth Smeeth, who said she also expected to lose her seat in Stoke-on-Trent, laid the blame firmly at Corbyn's door.

"He should have gone many, many, many months ago," she said.

The Liberal Democrats were forecast to win 13 seats, the exit poll said. Jo Swinson, Liberal Democrat party leader, lost her seat to the Scottish National Party.

The Brexit Party were not predicted to win any.

The Scottish National Party, which strongly opposes Brexit, would win 55 of the 59 seats in Scotland, the poll said, setting the scene for it to demand a second independence vote after secession was rejected by 55% to 45% in 2014.

Scotland's first minister, Nicola Sturgeon, said Johnson did not have the mandate to take Scotland out of the EU.