

# 02102026 NEWS SPECIAL Don't miss Lev U'Neshama NOTE at end!

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**Iran steps up arrests, floats 'diluting' its enriched uranium as Netanyahu heads to US PM set to give Trump latest intel; Tehran's atomic chief floats downblending near-weapons-grade nuclear material in exchange for sanctions relief; Khamenei calls for national 'resolve'**

By Agencies and Tol Staff Today, 11:54 pm



*A man cycles past a mural and a giant billboard displaying a map of potential targets in the Tel Aviv area along with a warning message reading, 'You start, we finish!' in Palestine Square, in Tehran, Iran, on February 9, 2026. (ATTA KENARE / AFP)*

**Iran stepped up its continuing crackdown on dissent on Monday, arresting more people while holding the door open to Washington for further nuclear negotiations. The arrests — including that of Javad Emam, the spokesperson for the country's main reformist coalition — came after Iranian and US officials held talks in Oman that both sides painted as positive. And they came on the eve of a visit to Washington by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, where he will reportedly brief US President Donald Trump about Israeli intelligence on Iran.**

Weeks after repressing a wave of protests with a deadly crackdown in which many thousands were reported killed, following one of the greatest challenges to the regime's authority since it came to power in the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Tehran has taken a two-track approach.

It is rounding up and jailing perceived critics, while at the same time pursuing a potential diplomatic opening with the Trump administration. On Monday, it floated possible concessions on its stockpile of enriched uranium.

After heaping more jail time on Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi, Iran on Monday arrested Hossein Karoubi, the son of prominent dissident Mehdi Karoubi. A spokesperson for the Reformist Front coalition told local media on Monday that Iran's Revolutionary Guards had arrested the group's spokesman Emam.

Emam was one of at least five Reformist Front figures to be detained, alongside several activists and filmmakers for co-signing a protest statement.

Iran's government has claimed that the protests were "riots" fueled by its chief adversaries, Israel and the United States. It has threatened to attack Israel and US targets if Trump follows through on his threats to attack Iran over the crackdown and over its nuclear program.



*The Iranian supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, addresses the nation in a televised speech on February 9, 2026. (Official website of the Office of the Iranian Supreme Leader via AP)*

On Monday, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called for "resolve" ahead of the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution this week.

Since the revolution, "foreign powers have always sought to restore the previous situation," Khamenei said in a televised address, referring to the period when Iran was under the rule of Shah Reza Pahlavi and dependent on the United States.

"National power is less about missiles and aircraft and more about the will and steadfastness of the people," he said, adding: "Show it again and frustrate the enemy."

Alongside this defiance, Iran has signaled it could come to some kind of deal to dial back its nuclear program to avoid further conflict with Washington.

The official IRNA news agency reported that Iranian atomic agency chief Mohammad Eslami had said that

Tehran could dilute its highly enriched uranium in return for sanctions relief.

“In response to a question about the possibility of diluting 60 percent enriched uranium,” IRNA reported, Eslami “said this depends on whether all sanctions would be lifted in return.”



*Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, center, heads to the venue for talks between Iran and the US, in Muscat, Oman, February 6, 2026. (Iranian Foreign Ministry via AP)*

Washington has demanded Iran relinquish its stockpile — estimated last year by the UN nuclear agency at more than 440 kilograms (970 pounds) — of uranium enriched to up to 60% fissile purity, a small step away from the 90% that is considered weapons grade.

Diluting or “downblending” uranium means mixing it with other substances to reduce the enrichment level, so the final product does not exceed a given enrichment threshold — and thus extending the amount of time it would take Iran

to create sufficient nuclear material for a bomb.

Iran has consistently denied seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. However, it enriched uranium to levels that have no peaceful application, obstructed international inspectors from checking its nuclear facilities, and expanded its ballistic missile capabilities. Before the 12-day war between the countries last June, Israel said Iran had recently taken steps toward weaponization.

At the talks in Oman last week, the US and Iran agreed to discuss Tehran’s nuclear program, though Washington and Israel also want to put Iran’s ballistic missiles and its support for proxy terror groups in the region on the agenda. Iran has rejected this.



*Centrifuges line a hall at the Uranium Enrichment Facility in Natanz, Iran, in a still image from a video aired by the Islamic Republic Iran Broadcasting company on April 17, 2021, six days after the hall had been damaged in a mysterious attack. (IRIB via AP)*

On Monday, Channel 12 reported that Netanyahu decided to move his meeting with US President Donald Trump to this week in order to deliver an in-person briefing on Israel’s latest intelligence regarding Iran.

According to the news outlet, which cited a source close to the premier, Netanyahu will deliver the same briefing to Trump that he gave US special envoy Steve Witkoff when he visited Israel last week.

He is choosing to deliver it himself to ensure Trump receives all the information accurately, the report says. The briefing will cover the Islamic Republic’s nuclear and missile programs, as well as its support for proxies, and the suppression of protesters during the recent demonstrations.

Ali Larijani, a close adviser to Khamenei and secretary of Iran’s national security council, will visit Oman on Tuesday following the US-Iranian talks there, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported.

“During this trip, [Larijani] will meet with high-ranking officials of the Sultanate of Oman and discuss the latest regional and international developments and bilateral cooperation at various levels,” Tasnim said.

The date and venue of the next round of talks have yet to be announced. Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday that a new round of talks would be “an appropriate opportunity for a fair and balanced resolution of this case,” and that a desired outcome could be reached if the US avoids maximalist positions and respects its commitments.

Iran would continue to demand the lifting of sanctions and insist on its nuclear rights, including enrichment, he said.

*A man walks past a mural depicting the US Statue of Liberty with the torch-bearing arm broken, painted on the outer walls of the former US embassy, in Tehran, Iran, on February 6, 2026. (AFP)*



Iran and the US held five rounds of talks last year on curbing Tehran’s nuclear program, with the process breaking down mainly due to disputes over uranium enrichment inside Iran. The US then struck Iranian nuclear facilities at the end of the Israel-Iran war.

Since Trump struck Iran's facilities, Tehran has said it has halted enrichment activity.

Iran still holds "deep distrust" for the United States despite agreeing to return to the talks, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned on Monday.

"We are looking for serious negotiations to achieve a result, provided the other side shows the same seriousness and is also ready for constructive negotiations," the minister said.

"Unfortunately, a deep mistrust persists due to the behavior of the United States in recent years," he said, addressing ambassadors at a diplomatic gathering in Tehran.

*Protesters participate in a demonstration in support of the nationwide protests in Iran against the government, in Berlin, Germany, February 7, 2026. (AP/Ebrahim Noroozi)*

Trump previously warned Iran not to kill protesters. But more recently, the United States has not given any sign that the continuing crackdown on Iran's domestic critics is of significant concern to it in the talks.

The arrest of Reformist Front spokesman Emam followed those on Sunday of three other figures, including Azar Mansouri, who has led the coalition since 2023. Another reformist lawmaker was arrested on Monday.

The reformist camp largely backed Pezeshkian in the 2024 presidential election.

Separately, Hussein Karoubi was also picked up. Karoubi's father, Mehdi Karoubi, was a figure in the 2009 Green movement protests and has largely been under house arrest ever since.

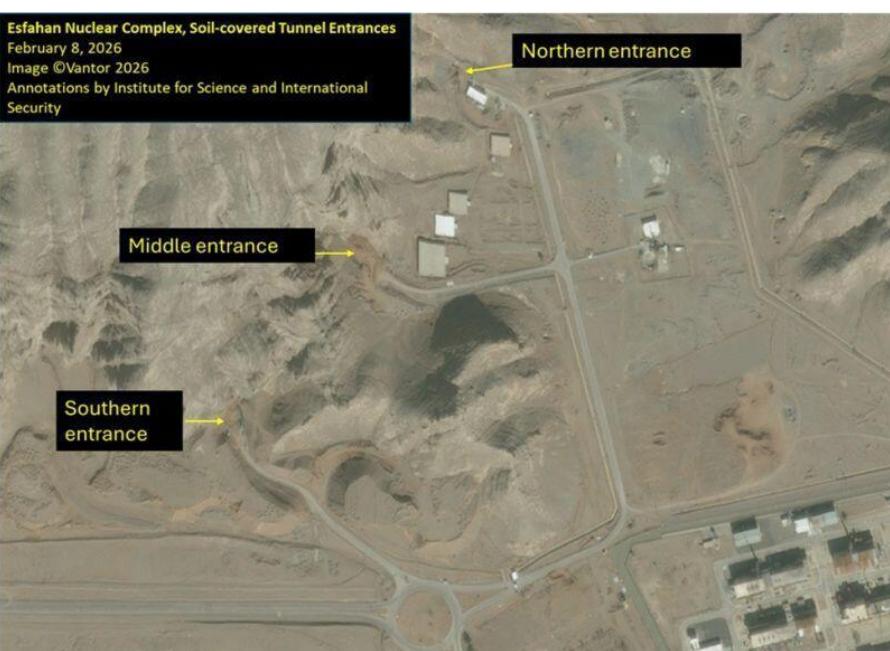
The authorities in Iran have acknowledged that 3,117 people were killed in the protests, and published a list of 2,986 names, most of whom they say were members of the security forces and innocent bystanders.

International organizations have put the toll far higher. The US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) says it has verified 6,961 deaths, mostly protesters, and has another 11,630 cases under investigation. It has also counted more than 51,000 arrests. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-steps-up-arrests-floats-shrinking-nuclear-program-as-netanyahu-heads-to-us/>

## Iran fortifies Isfahan nuclear site, sealing tunnels against possible attack

*Satellite images show soil poured over tunnel entrances at Iran's sensitive Isfahan nuclear facility, a move analysts say is meant to blunt a possible US or Israeli air attack or a ground raid as war fears resurface*

18:40



**High-resolution satellite images taken Monday over Iran point to unusual fortification steps at the Isfahan nuclear site, one of the country's most sensitive and heavily fortified facilities, which was struck several times during the 12-day war.**

**The images show that the three main tunnel entrances at the site were covered with soil, making them difficult to identify and almost completely blocking access** In the first image, the three tunnel openings leading to the underground complex at Isfahan can be seen filled with earth:

*Satellite images from the Isfahan nuclear facility (Photo: Institute for Science and International Security)*

According to images published on the website of the Institute for Science and International Security, the southern entrances and those in the center of

the site were covered and are no longer distinguishable. The northern tunnel entrance, where additional preparatory measures had been observed, was also filled with soil. The institute noted that no vehicle activity was visible in the area of the entrances.

**Researchers said the measures suggest Iran is concerned about a possible American or Israeli airstrike, as well as a potential raid on the nuclear facility.** Filling the tunnel entrances would reduce the damage from an aerial attack and complicate ground access in the event of a special forces operation aimed at seizing or destroying enriched uranium that may be stored at the site.



*The central tunnel entrance (Photo: Institute for Science and International Security)*



*The southern tunnel entrance (Photo: Institute for Science and International Security)*



*The northern tunnel entrance (Photo: Institute for Science and International Security)*

**It is also possible that Iran transferred equipment or certain materials into the tunnels to protect them. Similar preparations were documented in the days before the United States joined the 12-day war in Operation 'Midnight Hammer,' when the facilities at Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan were attacked.**

Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu departed on Monday for Washington](#) ahead of his meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday morning, U.S. time, at the White House and is planned as a closed working session without media presence.

Israel fears Trump could reach what officials describe as a 'thin' agreement with Iran, one that addresses only the nuclear issue and lacks meaningful oversight by the International Atomic Energy Agency. In Jerusalem, there is concern such an agreement would effectively tie Israel's hands, making it extremely difficult to act inside the Islamic Republic while a deal is in place between Washington and Tehran.

In such a scenario, Netanyahu would also be unable to publicly criticize Trump, given the high regard in Israel for him as what many consider the most pro-Israel president ever to serve in the White House. During Trump's previous term, Israel did not act militarily against Iran despite threats and repeated statements that it was not bound by the nuclear agreement.

A senior Israeli official said, "There is concern this is heading toward an agreement that is not good for us. This is not just negotiations between Witkoff and Kushner and the Iranians. Turkey is involved, as well as Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. There are many players influencing Trump. We are worried this is moving toward an agreement that will not be good for Israel, and that is troubling." <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/sjetdx00vbx>

## **Netanyahu heads to Washington for closed-door meeting with Trump: what's he worried about?**

**PM seeks to press Trump on strict red lines over Iran's nuclear program and ballistic missiles, even as US allies in the region push for a lighter deal**

*Itamar Eichner | 14:03*

**Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will depart Tuesday for Washington ahead of a closed-door meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump, as Israeli officials express growing concern over a potential U.S.-Iran deal they fear could sideline Israel's strategic interests.**

**Netanyahu is scheduled to take off from Tel Aviv at noon and land in Washington around 1 a.m. Wednesday, Israel time. The meeting with Trump is set for Wednesday morning at the White House**

and will be held without media presence, a departure from the leaders' past encounters, which typically included joint press events and photo ops.



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Donald Trump (Photo: AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

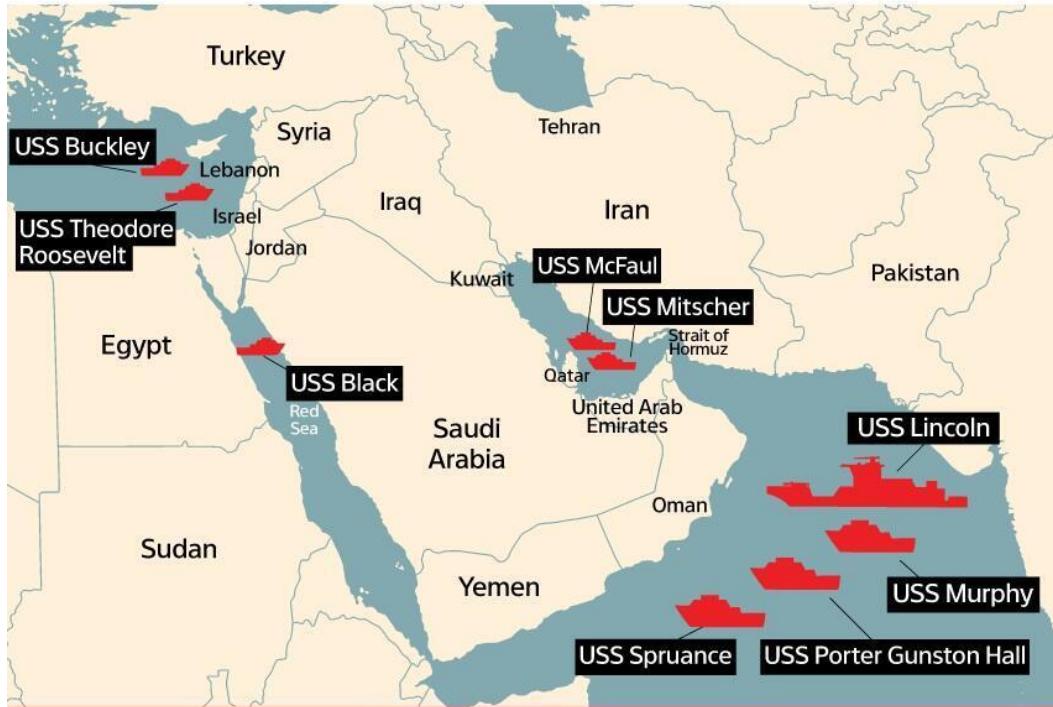
The decision for a private working meeting reportedly came from the White House, contrasting with previous summits, such as their previous meeting at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. That visit featured public remarks and a joint press conference. This time, Netanyahu will be accompanied by a small delegation, including his military secretary Maj. Gen. Roman Gofman and acting National Security Adviser Gil Reich.

The absence of media has sparked speculation in Jerusalem that Trump may have agreed to meet Netanyahu out of diplomatic courtesy but wished to avoid the public fanfare of past meetings. One possible reason, Israeli officials say, is to conceal divisions between the two over the shape of a potential agreement with Iran.

Senior Israeli officials have voiced concerns that Trump, under pressure from regional actors including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Turkey and his envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, may pursue what they call a "lightweight" nuclear deal—one focused solely on uranium enrichment, without meaningful oversight by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Such a deal, they warn, could "lock in" Israel's options and make it harder to take independent action against Iran.

"There's a real concern this is heading toward a deal that's bad for us," said one senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It's not just Kushner and Witkoff—there are many players influencing Trump, and the direction is worrying."

## Trump's armada



\* The exact locations of the vessels are not known

### Trump's armada

During the private meeting, Netanyahu is expected to outline Israel's red lines: zero enrichment on Iranian soil, removal of enriched uranium stockpiles, reinstatement of robust international inspections and strong enforcement mechanisms. He will also press Trump to include restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile program—an

issue Israeli officials say has not received sufficient attention from the U.S., despite posing a growing threat to both Israel and Europe.

In the background, the U.S. continues to build up military assets in the region, should Trump decide to consider a military option against Iran. However, Netanyahu's delegation does not include senior defense officials. Initial discussions included the possibility of bringing Brig. Gen. Omer Tishler, the incoming Air Force chief and the main liaison with the U.S. military, but that idea was shelved over fears it could be seen as an effort to provoke or prepare for war.

#### **Vance: 'Trump will set the red line in Iran talks'**

U.S. Vice President JD Vance said during a visit to Armenia that President Trump would ultimately determine the red lines in the ongoing negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

Asked whether the United States would accept limited uranium enrichment by Iran or insist on zero enrichment as a non-negotiable condition, Vance responded: "I think the president is going to make the ultimate determination about where we draw the red lines in the negotiations.

Vance: 'The president is going to preserve decisional space for himself'

Reflecting on earlier negotiations, he added: "If you go back to the original negotiations that happened between us and the Iranians, the president was trying very, very hard to actually strike a constructive deal that would have been good for the United States. And frankly, the entire administration agreed if the Iranians were smart enough to have made that agreement, then it would've been good for them too."

Pressed for specifics on the current U.S. position, Vance declined to outline policy publicly. "I'll let the president speak to exactly where he wants to set the lines of negotiation," he said. "As you guys know, he typically does that privately. He doesn't announce what he is going to do in a negotiation because he thinks that it constrains him. In private, I think he'll have a lot of good conversations with his team and with others in the days and weeks to come."

"With all due respect to our friends in the media," he added, "the president is going to preserve decisional space for himself, and that means not revealing too many of his cards publicly."

Iranian protesters in the streets of Tehran, January 9

(*Video: Reuters*)

Vance was also asked whether the negotiations include discussion of Iran's violent crackdown on protesters who demonstrated over the country's cost-of-living crisis—an issue that had previously drawn public condemnation from Trump and a [pledge of support for Iranian citizens](#).

"The president said this publicly. It's already very much been part of the negotiations that we've had," Vance confirmed. "It's one of the things that the president made a very strong demand. There were prisoners who were going to be executed, the crackdown, of course, was very brutal and violent and as the president and the entire administration have said, we stand with the Iranian people."

"We stand with the right of peaceful protest around the world, and certainly, people who want to exercise that right in Iran. The president has made that part of the conversation that he's had—not just with the Iranians, but with people all across the region. I'm sure that will continue."

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hk7jehwwzl#autoplay>

## **IDF says it killed four Hamas gunmen who emerged from Rafah tunnel, fired on troops**



*Military also says it killed Palestinian who crossed Yellow Line; Palestinians: 2 killed in Gaza City strike; report says Indonesia to send thousands of troops to join Gaza ISF*

*By [Emanuel Fabian](#), [Lazar Berman](#), [Tol Staff](#) and [AFP](#) 10 February 2026, 12:03 am*

*Destroyed buildings are pictured in the Jabalia camp for Palestinian refugees in the northern Gaza Strip on February 8, 2026 (Omar AL-QATTA / AFP)*

**IDF troops on Monday killed four Palestinian gunmen who emerged from a tunnel and attacked soldiers in southern Gaza's Rafah, the military said, with several other Palestinians reportedly killed in IDF strikes in the Strip later in the day.**

**According to the IDF, during mop-up operations in eastern Rafah early in the morning, four terror operatives were identified emerging from a tunnel and opening fire on troops of the 7th Armored Brigade.**

**The soldiers returned fire, the IDF said, "and eliminated the four terrorists." There were no reports of Israeli casualties in the incident.**



The IDF said the attack was a "blatant violation of the ceasefire" between Israel and Hamas, and it viewed the incident "gravely."

Dozens of Hamas operatives were believed to be [trapped](#) underground in the eastern Rafah area, on the Israeli side of the ceasefire line. The IDF has reported killing or capturing some 40 of them in recent months.

The IDF said it was continuing to operate in the area "to locate and eliminate all remaining terrorists in the tunnel."

*The Israeli army deployed near the border fence with Gaza, southern Israel. February 9, 2026. (Tsafir Abayov/FLASH90)*

Commenting on the incident, Hamas's

military wing described it as "heroic resistance, saying that its fighters "refused humiliation or submission in the besieged Rafah valley and chose martyrdom over surrender."

Later on Monday, Palestinian media reported two dead and several wounded in an Israeli airstrike in Gaza City, on the Hamas-controlled side of the ceasefire line.



The IDF did not immediately comment on the reported strike.

*Gaza's civil defense teams work to recover remains of people trapped beneath the rubble of a house after it was previously destroyed by an Israeli airstrike in Gaza City, February 9, 2026. (AP Photo/Jehad Alshrafi)*

Separately, the military on Monday said that troops in northern Gaza shot and killed a Palestinian who crossed the [Yellow Line](#) and approached soldiers of the Gaza Division's Northern Brigade "in a manner that posed an immediate threat."

"Immediately after identification, the forces eliminated the terrorist in order to remove the threat," the army said.

Since the start of the ceasefire in October 2025, the IDF has said it has killed dozens of terror operatives and other "suspects" who have crossed the Yellow Line — demarcating the military's withdrawal in the Strip — and approached troops. Such incidents have taken place on a near-daily basis.

#### **Indonesia said set to deploy thousands of troops**

Meanwhile, the Kan public broadcaster reported Monday that several thousand Indonesian troops are expected to deploy in Gaza in the coming weeks, which would mark the first deployment of the [International Stabilization Force](#).

The Prime Minister's Office did not respond to requests for comment.



*Illustrative: Indonesian soldiers are deployed following days of violent protests against lawmakers' perks and privileges, in Jakarta, Indonesia, September 1, 2025. (AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana)*

The forces will be based in the southeast of Rafah, according to the report, which specified that offices and living quarters will be built for them in the coming weeks. There was no set date reported for their arrival.

In November, Indonesia's defense minister said the country had trained up to 20,000 troops to take on health and construction-related tasks.

An Indonesian official told reporters that President Prabowo Subianto was invited to attend the February 19 Board of Peace meeting alongside

US President Donald Trump in Washington, but had not decided whether he would make the trip.



Under Trump's Gaza peace plan, the first phase of which was signed into force in October, the ISF is tasked with providing security in the Strip, while gradually phasing out the IDF, which currently remains in control of 53% of the enclave. The force will be headed by US Central Command Special Operations Commander Maj. Gen. Jasper Jeffers.

*US President Donald Trump greets Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto pose during a summit in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh on October 13, 2025. (Evan Vucci / POOL / AFP)*

Only a few countries have since voiced public interest in joining the ISF. Azerbaijan, which Washington had publicly touted

as a member of the force, announced last month that it would not be participating.

While the US has had trouble getting countries to commit their forces to join the ISF, a US official speaking to The Times of Israel last month [downplayed](#) the apparent recruitment woes, insisting that countries would agree to contribute troops once they realize that they will not be expected to send their soldiers into battle against Hamas, as the mandate will be more modest than Washington and Jerusalem initially envisioned.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-says-it-killed-four-hamas-gunned-who-emerged-from-rafah-tunnel-fired-on-troops/>

## IDF nabs top terror group figure from Lebanon, kills 2 Hezbollah operatives

**Military says senior member of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya captured in raid; group identifies him as Atwi Atwi; airstrike said to kill 3, including child**

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

9 February 2026, 12:13 pm Updated at 4:39 pm



*Screen capture from video of Lebanese security forces at the scene from where Israel captured Atwi Atwi, a senior member of the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya terror group, February 8, 2026. (X, used in accordance with Clause 27a of the Copyright Law)*

**The Israel Defense Forces captured a "senior" member of the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya terror organization during an overnight raid in southern Lebanon, and separately killed two Hezbollah operatives, the military said Monday.**

According to the IDF, the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya operative was nabbed late Sunday from a building in the Mount Dov area near the border by a

**special forces unit operating under the 210th "Bashan" Regional Division. The raid was wrapped up early Monday morning, and there were no reports of clashes during the operation.**

Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya identified the official as Atwi Atwi, saying he was captured in the town of Habbariyeh, located some five kilometers north of the border.

The IDF said it had collected intelligence on the operative in recent weeks, which led it to launch the raid.

"The terrorist was detained and transferred for further interrogation within Israeli territory. In addition, weapons were located in the building where the terrorist was arrested," the army said.

The IDF did not provide further details on the operative, other than describing him as a "senior" member of the terror group. According to a military source, the IDF decided to capture the operative instead of targeting him in a strike in an attempt to obtain intelligence on the group's activities in Lebanon and Syria.

Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya is a Sunni faction that forms part of the broader Muslim Brotherhood political network. The armed wing of the group, the al-Fajr Forces, established in the 1980s, repeatedly targeted Israel from Lebanon during the 2023-2024 war with Hezbollah, often working in conjunction with the Iran-backed Shiite Lebanese terror group.

The group said in a statement that it holds Israel "responsible for any harm that may befall him." It called on the Lebanese government to put pressure on the sponsors of a ceasefire between the two countries, to end Israeli raids into Lebanon, and secure the release of those it has captured.

It also linked the raid to a [visit to the same area](#) the day before by Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, during which he emphasized that his visit was meant to underscore the presence of the Lebanese state in the south of the country, which was a stronghold of Hezbollah for decades.

In its statement, Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya questioned if the Israeli "piracy" was a response to "the affirmation of the people of the region of their adherence to the state."

The IDF said that al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya "advanced throughout the war and continues to attempt to advance terror activities against the State of Israel and its citizens in the northern sector."

The military has also previously accused the group of closely cooperating with the Hezbollah and Hamas terror groups in both Lebanon and Syria, and maintaining military sites in southern Lebanon and infrastructure along the Syria-Lebanon border and in [southern Syria](#).

Shortly after announcing the capture, the IDF also said it carried out an airstrike against a Hezbollah operative in the southern Lebanon town of Yanouh.

According to the military, the strike killed Ahmad Ali Salami, who served as an artillery commander in Hezbollah.

The military said Salami advanced numerous rocket attacks on Israel during the 2023-2024 war with Hezbollah, and recently was working to restore the terror group's artillery infrastructure "from within the civilian population in Lebanon." His actions were a violation of the ceasefire.

"The IDF is aware of the claim that uninvolved civilians were killed," the military said, after Lebanon's health ministry reported three dead in the strike, including a three-year-old.

The IDF said it took steps to mitigate civilian harm, and that it "regrets any harm to uninvolved civilians and operates to minimize harm as much as possible."

"The incident is under review," the military added.

In a separate incident on Monday, the IDF said a Hezbollah operative was killed by Israeli troops in southern Lebanon's Ayta ash-Shab.

The IDF said it collected intelligence on the operative in recent months, and recently he had worked to collect intel on Israeli forces and rebuild Hezbollah's infrastructure in southern Lebanon.

"The terrorist's activities constituted a violation of the understandings between Israel and Lebanon and posed a threat to IDF troops operating in the area," the army said. Following the intelligence-gathering operations, troops of the 300th "Baram" Regional Brigade killed the operative, the military added.

Under the November 2024 ceasefire agreement, Hezbollah was required to withdraw and disarm south of the Litani River, but Israel alleges that the terror group remains entrenched in the area, leading to IDF to conduct near-daily strikes.

Lebanon's government has committed to disarming Hezbollah, and the army last month said it had completed the first phase of its plan to do so, covering the area between the Litani River and the Israeli border about 30 kilometers (20 miles) further south.

The Israel-Hezbollah war started when the terror group began firing missiles across the border on October 8, 2023 — a day after the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel.

The November 2024 ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel followed an Israeli ground invasion and

concurrent air assault that severely degraded the group and killed much of its leadership.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-nabs-top-terror-group-figure-from-lebanon-targets-hezbollah-operative/>

## Muslim countries, EU join condemnations of Israeli moves deepening West Bank control

***Muslim states, including allies and adversaries, call security cabinet decision illegal and a ‘dangerous escalation’; EU: It’s a ‘step in the wrong direction’***

By [Nava Freiberg](#),

[Leon Kraiem](#), [Noam Lehmann](#), [Tol Staff](#) and [AFP](#) 9 February 2026, 6:32 pm



*This handout picture released by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) shows, (L-R) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassim al-Budaiwi, Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled al-Hamad al-Sabah, Qatar's Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Oman's Deputy Prime Minister for Defense Affairs Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Bahrain's King's Personal Representative Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the UAE's Vice President and Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed al-Nahyan, posing for a group picture during the 2025 Arab-Islamic emergency summit in Doha on September 15, 2025. (Saudi Press Agency / AFP)*

**International condemnation mounted Monday in response to Israel’s moves to tighten its control of the West Bank, as both the European Union and a group of Muslim**

**countries slammed the decision.**

The statements followed those denouncing the move Sunday from the Palestinian Authority and Hamas.

**Muslim countries called the decision illegal and a “dangerous escalation.” The EU called it a “step in the wrong direction.”**

**The security cabinet decision, announced on Sunday by Defense Minister Israel Katz and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, “dramatically” changes land registration and property acquisition procedures in the West Bank, easing Jewish settlement in the territory. It aims to deepen Israeli control over the territory, including at sensitive sites such as Hebron’s Cave of the Patriarchs. Smotrich said the goal of the new measures was, in part, to “kill the idea of a Palestinian state.”**

Israel’s neighbors, as well as the EU, oppose Israeli control of the West Bank and have long called for the establishment of a Palestinian state, a prospect Israel’s government rejects.

“The European Union condemns recent decisions by Israel’s security cabinet to expand Israeli control in the West Bank. This move is another step in the wrong direction,” EU spokesman Anouar El Anouni told journalists.

The EU has [weighed suspending Israel’s inclusion](#) in agreements with the bloc covering research and free trade in response to Jerusalem’s treatment of the Palestinians, though it has not done so yet. The bloc includes allies of Israel like Germany and Hungary, as well as a number of outspoken critics such as Ireland and Spain. Despite Israeli objections, several EU countries [recognized a Palestinian state](#) during the Gaza war sparked by the

Hamas-led October 7, 2023, attack.

*An Israeli soldier stands guard during the inauguration ceremony for the newly legalized Jewish settlement of Yatziv, near the Palestinian town of Beit Sahour, in the West Bank, January 19, 2026. (Ohad Zwigenberg/AP)*

The UK joined the chorus of condemnations, with a government statement asserting that “any unilateral attempt to alter the geographic or demographic make-up of Palestine is wholly unacceptable and would be inconsistent with international law. We call on Israel to reverse these decisions immediately.”

Middle Eastern countries, meanwhile, have said



moves to annex the West Bank would [mark an end](#) to Israel's normalization in the region. The statement was signed by countries with which Israel has relations, such as Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, as well as adversaries including Turkey and Qatar. Other signatories included Pakistan, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

The measures are "aimed at imposing unlawful Israeli sovereignty, entrenching settlement activity, and enforcing a new legal and administrative reality in the occupied West Bank, thereby accelerating attempts at its illegal annexation and the displacement of the Palestinian people," the signatories said in a joint statement. They called on the international community "to compel Israel to halt its dangerous escalation in the occupied West Bank and the inciting statements of its officials."

Israel has pushed for years for a normalization deal with Riyadh, which has [called for](#) a Palestinian state in return. Recently, however, Saudi Arabia has signaled a move away from normalization.



*European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen looks on as she arrives to attend the European Council meeting in Brussels on December 18, 2025. (NICOLAS TUCAT / AFP)*

The Muslim countries' statement followed a call from Hamas, which is based in Gaza, for "a unified Arab and Islamic position" against the Israeli decision.

The terror group called on countries to "take practical and serious steps, foremost among them cutting off relations with the Zionist entity and expelling its ambassadors from capitals that have established relations with it."

"We demand the Arab and Islamic states... bear their historical responsibility in confronting the occupation [Israel] and its plans aimed at imposing the annexation of the West Bank as a fait accompli," Hamas said.

It also called for "Palestinians and their rebellious youth throughout the West Bank and Jerusalem to intensify the confrontation with the occupation and its settlers by all available means, to thwart the projects of annexation, Judaization and forced displacement."

On Sunday, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's office called the decision dangerous, saying it considers the moves part of a war by the Israeli government against Palestinians, in a report published by the PA's WAFA news outlet.

The report said Abbas considered the decisions "null and void, granting no legitimacy and [carrying] no legal consequences."

The PA also called on the US as well as the international community to intervene and stop the actions.

"These unilateral measures aim to undermine any political horizon, dismantle the two-state solution, and drag the region into further tension and instability," PA Vice President Hussein al-Sheikh [posted on X](#). "We call on the US administration and the international community to intervene immediately to halt this occupation-driven aggression."



*The Tomb of the Patriarchs is seen in Hebron, in the West Bank, on September 30, 2025. (Wisam Hashlamoun/Flash90)*

The plan adopted on Sunday tightened Israeli control throughout the territory and eased future settlement expansion. It transferred authority over building permits for the Jewish settlement in the largely Palestinian city of Hebron from the Palestinian Authority's Hebron municipality to Israel.

The changes also affect the Tomb of the Patriarchs, a site holy to Judaism and Islam that has been a flashpoint of conflict. The decision also affected the site of Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem by establishing "a dedicated municipal authority" responsible for cleaning and routine maintenance of the holy site.

The plan also ordered the publication of land registries in the West Bank, meaning that potential buyers will be able to identify landowners and approach them for purchasing. And it repealed a legal provision that prevented non-Muslims from buying real estate in the area, easing property purchases in the West Bank.

In addition, it expanded Israeli oversight and enforcement activities into Areas A and B, which are both meant to be under Palestinian Authority civil control under the 1990s-era Oslo Accords, with regard to water violations, damage to archaeological sites and environmental hazards that pollute the territory, Smotrich and Katz's statement said.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/muslim-countries-eu-join-condemnations-of-israeli-moves-deepening-west-bank-control/>

## Anti-Israel protests erupt in Australia as President Herzog visits Sydney in aftermath of Bondi

Herzog is visiting Australia this week following an invitation from Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in the aftermath of the December 14 shooting at a Hanukkah event at Bondi Beach.

By REUTERS FEBRUARY 9, 2026 12:58 Updated: FEBRUARY 9, 2026 14:05



*Police officers remove demonstrators gathered at Town Hall Square to protest against President Isaac Herzog's state visit to Australia, in Sydney, Australia, February 9, 2026 (photo credit: REUTERS/Jeremy Piper)*

**Thousands gathered across Australia on Monday to protest over the arrival of President Isaac Herzog, who is on a multi-city trip aimed at expressing solidarity with Australia's Jewish community.**

**Herzog is visiting Australia this week following an invitation from Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in the aftermath of the December 14 mass shooting at a Hanukkah event at Sydney's Bondi Beach that killed 15.**

**The visit has attracted the ire of some people in Australia, who accuse Herzog of being complicit in civilian deaths in Gaza. Pro-Palestine groups have organized protests in cities and towns across the country on Monday evening.**

In Sydney, thousands gathered in a square in the city's central business district, listening to speeches and shouting pro-Palestine slogans.

"The Bondi massacre was terrible but from our Australian leadership there's been no acknowledgment of the Palestinian people and the Gazans," said Jackson Elliott, a 30-year-old protestor from Sydney.

*Protestors march through Canberra city centre during a protest against the visit of Israel's President Isaac Herzog on February 09, 2026 in Canberra, Australia. (credit: Hilary Wardhaugh/Getty Images)*

"Herzog has dodged all the questions about the occupation and says this visit is about Australia and Israeli relations but he is complicit."

There was a heavy police presence with a helicopter circling overhead and officers patrolling on horseback.

Police used pepper spray and tear gas to push back groups of people who were trying to breach the line and march ahead. Several protesters were arrested as they clashed with police.

Authorities in Sydney declared Herzog's visit a major event and were authorized to use rarely invoked powers

during the visit, including the ability to separate and move crowds, restrict their entry to certain areas, direct people to leave and search vehicles.

On Monday in a Sydney court, the Palestine Action Group - which organized the protest - failed to legally challenge the restrictions on the demonstration.





President Isaac Herzog speaks at Bondi Beach during a state visit to Australia, in Sydney, February 9, 2026 (credit: MA'AYAN TOAF/GPO)

President commemorates lives lost

**Meanwhile, thousands of Jewish community members, government officials and opposition party politicians welcomed Herzog at an event, more than a kilometer away from the protests, honoring the victims of the Bondi attack.**

"We all remember the boycotts, the threats, the colleagues who turned their backs on their Jewish friends ... that was the prelude to Bondi," he told a large crowd at Sydney's International Convention Centre, according to an ABC News report.

Herzog began his visit earlier on Monday at Bondi Beach, where he laid a wreath at a memorial for the victims of the attack. He also met survivors and the families of 15 people killed in the shooting.

"This was also an attack on all Australians. They attacked the values that our democracies treasure, the sanctity of human life, the freedom of religion, tolerance, dignity, and respect," Herzog said in remarks at the site.

In a statement, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry Co-Chief Executive Alex Ryvchin said Herzog's visit "will lift the spirits of a pained community."

The Jewish Council of Australia, a vocal critic of the Israeli government, released an open letter on Monday signed by over 1,000 Jewish Australian academics and community leaders, urging Albanese to rescind Herzog's invitation. <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-886076>

## Press TV journalist who praised Oct. 7 arrested en route to anti-Zionist gathering

**West Midlands Police confirmed that they arrested two people in Birmingham, including a 35-year-old woman, on suspicion of inciting racial hatred.**

By [MATHILDA HELLER, DANIELLE GREYMAN-KENNARD](#) FEBRUARY 9, 2026 12:48 Updated: FEBRUARY 9, 2026

17:42



**Press TV journalist Latifa Abouchakra was reportedly arrested by West Midlands Police on Sunday by West Midlands Police on her way to address the launch meeting of the Anti-Zionist Movement.(photo credit: SCREENSHOT/X/VIA SECTION 27A OF THE COPYRIGHT ACT)**

**Two people were arrested at the Birmingham launch of a movement calling itself the Anti-Zionist Movement on Sunday, according to West Midlands Police (WMP). One of those arrested was a journalist for Iran's Press TV who praised the October 7 attacks.**

**AZM describes itself as a Palestinian-led grassroots movement that is "unapologetically anti-Zionist, pro-armed resistance, and upholds the Thawabet and campaigns against Jewish Supremacy."**

**Its social media bio reads: "liberation via zio eradication." The Thawabet is a term coined by the Palestinian National Council which lays out the Palestinian right to resistance, self-determination (statehood), and return, asserting that Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine.**

Though AZM was launched formally in Bristol 11 weeks ago, the recent Birmingham launch has garnered significantly more media attention, at least in part due to its controversial hosts: Rahmeh Aladwan, Latifa Abouchakra, Sami Alsoos, David Miller, and Maher Falastini.

Aladwan is currently on a 15-month suspension from her position as a National Health Service (NHS) doctor due to her online activity, including praise for Hamas.

In a video promoting the launch of AZM and arguing why Palestinians should be anti-Zionist, Aladwan said "Jewish settlers need to be repatriated back to where they came from," and "every inch of the land is Palestine."

She added that she believes 95% of Jews are Zionists and therefore does not distinguish between Jews and Zionism.

According to WMP, one of those arrested was a 35-year-old woman wanted by the Metropolitan Police on suspicion of a Public Order Act offence, as part of an investigation by the London force into speeches and social

media posts made between May and October 2025 in London and Birmingham. Officers stopped the car she was traveling in and detained her on suspicion of inciting racial hatred.

Aladwan subsequently revealed that the woman was Abouchakra, blaming her arrest on the “[Zionist lobby](#).” Abouchakra, 35, has been a prominent figure on Press TV’s “Palestine Declassified” program, where she has criticized Israeli policies and Zionist influence on Western institutions.

Press TV is the Islamic Republic of Iran’s first international news network. The channel said its presenter’s arrest marks a “continuation of the politically motivated crackdown on pro-Palestinian voices.”

David Miller, a former University of Bristol professor dismissed in 2021 over antisemitism allegations, said Abouchakra’s arrest was “more evidence of the police working directly for the Zionist regime.”

He noted that the arrest has not stopped the event’s hosts from “explaining that the Palestinian people have the right to resist occupation and colonialism by ‘all available means, including armed struggle.’”

The other person arrested was a 42-year-old man suspected of a public order offence after a member of the public who had come to observe the event told WMP he had been threatened. The man has not been named.

WMP announced the launch of a criminal investigation into the social media post used to advertise the event.

Sunday’s event was supposed to be held at The Old Print Works venue in Birmingham; however, after significant numbers of complaints, the venue cancelled the booking.

The UK’s Charity Commission then confirmed to Jewish News that it had opened an inquiry into Make It Sustainable Ltd., the charity that owns the venue, “in line with [the commission’s] policy on evidence of potential criminal activity.”

Further evidence indicates that the same venue hosted an event last month featuring a hate preacher named Asrar Rashid, who lauded Hamas’s October 7 massacre in southern Israel.

Experts have long warned about the risks posed by Iranian state media in the United Kingdom, noting the radicalizing impact it can have and how it can provide [journalistic coverage](#) for persons or funds to enter and exit the country.

Dr. Lynette Nusbacher, a former British Army intelligence officer and one of the architects behind two of the UK’s National Security Strategies as part of Britain’s National Security Secretariat, told The Jerusalem Post that the UK was likely finally taking action against Tehran’s “agents,” as it has become increasingly impossible to ignore the human rights violations committed by the Islamic regime.

Nusbacher, who had earlier warned the Post about Houthi and Iranian media shell companies, said, “It used to be a struggle for experts and advocates to get the UK government to recognize the extent to which Iran used the UK as a base for their influence operations.

“I’d like to think that hard work by academics and investigators is finally paying off [but] I don’t think that’s it... I think that the obscenity of Iranian government action against their own people means that it’s no longer possible to ignore the dogged open-source investigators.”

She concluded, “For the last year, we’ve seen increasing evidence that Iranian government media are operating in Britain as agents of influence, and this is the response,” she concluded.

### **Post Maccabi Tel Aviv policing inquiry**

Interestingly, at the end of its statement about Sunday’s arrests, WMP said, “Before and during today’s operation, we listened to and updated key stakeholders, including members of the local Jewish community.”

This appeared to be a clear reference to last year’s Maccabi TLV scandal, specifically the Police’s failure to adequately consult with the local community before approving a ban on Israeli away fans from attending an Aston Villa game.

During a Home Affairs Select Committee in December, Assistant Chief Constable Mike O’Hara responded “yes” when asked if there were Jewish community representatives who said they did not want Maccabi Tel Aviv fans to attend the fixture.

However, this was not the case, and Ruth Jacobs, chair of the Birmingham and West Midlands Jewish Community, said she had been “horrified” at the claim.

In a letter to Dame Karen Bradley, chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, Chief Constable Craig Guildford confirmed there was “no documented feedback from Jewish representatives prior to the decision being communicated, which expressed support for the ban on Maccabi Tel Aviv fans.”

Guildford apologized to the committee on behalf of himself and O’Hara and said there was never any

intention to mislead. He also relayed that O'Hara had formally apologized to Jacobs and that the apology had been accepted.

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-886084>

## China calls on banks to limit exposure to US debt – Bloomberg

*Geopolitical tensions and volatility in American bond markets have reportedly been raising risk concerns*

9 Feb, 2026 16:38



© Getty Images / imagedepotpro

China has urged its banks to curb their exposure to US government debt, citing market volatility and growing financial and geopolitical risks, Bloomberg has reported citing people familiar with the matter.

**Over the past decade, China has steadily trimmed its US Treasury holdings, a shift that has seen it overtaken by Japan and the UK as the largest foreign holders of American debt. Since peaking at around \$1.3 trillion in 2013, its holdings have fallen roughly by half to about \$650–700 billion, reaching levels not seen since 2008.**

Beijing has advised China's major financial institutions to limit new purchases of US government bonds and reduce positions where exposure is high, according to sources who spoke to the outlet on Monday. The guidance reportedly does not apply to Beijing's official state holdings.

According to the report, which cited China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange, Chinese banks held about \$298 billion in dollar-denominated bonds as of September. It is unclear how much of that total consisted of US Treasuries.

The guidance, reportedly intended to diversify market risk, came ahead of last week's phone call between Chinese President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart, Donald Trump. In October, the two leaders agreed to a one-year trade truce, under which tariffs and export controls on each other's goods would be lowered.

Beijing's latest move comes amid broader concerns about swings in US bond yields and heavy reliance on dollar-denominated assets. Germany's financial watchdog, BaFin, has warned recently that the US dollar's role as the world's reserve currency could face challenges in 2026 amid geopolitical shocks and funding pressure.

The warning came after the Bloomberg Dollar Spot Index posting its sharpest drop since last April, after Trump announced sweeping global tariffs. Last month, Trump dismissed concerns over the currency's weakness, saying it is "doing great" and should be allowed to "seek its own level."

On Monday, US Treasury prices extended losses and yields climbed modestly, while the greenback weakened against major currencies. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said last week that the Treasuries market had delivered its best performance since 2020 and saw record foreign demand at auctions.

<https://www.rt.com/news/632208-china-us-treasury-holdings/>

## WATCH: Margaret Brennan of CBS appears shocked Republican congressman wants to enforce the law, questions his compassion

By [Hailey Gomez, Daily Caller News Foundation](#)

February 9, 2026



*Margaret Brennan of CBS News*

**CBS host Margaret Brennan exhibited shock during Sunday's "Face the Nation" after Republican Texas Rep. Tony Gonzales said the U.S. should enforce its laws, before questioning the lawmaker how he could support the deportation of a family.**

**A photo of five-year-old Liam Conejo Ramos being detained by federal law enforcement agents widely circulated in January 2026 and prompted discussions online and in the**

media. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) subsequently released a statement noting the boy's father, Adrian Conejo Arias, was the target of an illegal immigrant arrest operation. Ramos, according to the agency, had been caught up in his father's arrest after his mother declined to take him, leading to the father requesting the child stay with him while in detention.

"So, Trump was not the first president of the United States to detain children. You have this facility, though, in your district, Dilley, and that is for family detentions. That's where little five-year-old Liam Ramos from Minnesota was held before a judge — that's the picture of him there — ordered him released," Brennan said showing multiple pictures. "He was ordered released because his family has a pending asylum claim. A legal process. He had entered with U.S. government permission through a process that the Biden administration had deemed legal, the current administration does not, the CBP One app."

Brennan went on to state Arias gave an interview to Telemundo in which he argued how his son is "not OK" as he wakes up crying at night and is allegedly "worried he's going to be taken again."

"It's psychological trauma according to the father. And the administration's still trying to deport him. Do you understand why they are so focused on this five-year-old and his dad if they did come in through the front door with U.S. government permission?" Brennan asked.

"Well, the front door was via an app that Biden knew exactly what he was doing, and he created this huge mess and now President Trump is there to clean up. And immigration—" Gonzales responded before Brennan jumped in.

Cutting off the Republican lawmaker, Brennan argued Arias and Ramos had [come into](#) the United States through the "front door."

"Through an app that wasn't vetted. And the bottom line is that he's likely—they're not going to qualify for asylum. So, what do you do with all the people that go through the process and do not qualify for asylum? You deport them. I understand the five year old. And it, you know, it breaks my heart. I have a five-year-old at home. I also think, 'What about that five-year-old U.S. citizen? What about our—'" Gonzales said before Brennan cut him off.

"You feel comfortable defending that?" Brennan pushed back.

**WATCH:**

Gonzales began to lay out his argument, stating the United States has to have a "nation of laws," but the CBS host then cut him off for the third time.

"They were following the law," Brennan said. "That's the rub is that a new administration deemed the last administration's regulation not to be legal."

"We can be compassionate and we can also enforce our laws. And I think that's the secret sauce that the administration and Congress must do. Let's enforce our laws, but let's do it in a humane way. The facility in Dilley, I've visited there many times. I've visited dozens of different facilities. It is a nice facility. It's a detention facility for people that are in the country illegally that are about to be deported, but it is a nice facility. Nicer than some elementary schools here in San Antonio."

Since the arrest of Arias in Minneapolis, he and his five-year-old son were sent to a detention facility in Texas, but were [released](#) Jan. 31 by a federal judge's ruling. The two were then returned to Minnesota on Feb. 1, with the family being granted a continuance after DHS filed a motion to expedite deportation proceedings.

Following the father and son's release, DHS Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin [released](#) a statement noting the facts of the case remain the same as the father had fled agents on foot, abandoning his child.

"For the child's safety, one of our ICE officers remained with the child while the other officers apprehended Conejo Arias. Our officers made multiple attempts to get the alleged mother who was inside the house to take custody of her child. Officers even assured her she would NOT be taken her into custody. The alleged mother refused to accept custody of the child," McLaughlin wrote. "The father told officers he wanted the child to remain with him."

The modern system of family detentions was [used](#) under both former presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Obama notably deported the most illegal immigrants during his two terms in office.

<https://www wnd com/2026/02/watch-margaret-brennan-cbs-appears-shocked-republican-congressman/>

**OP ED**

## Mamdani Turns NYC into Wasteland of Corpses and Trash



New York City would smell worse than it does if it weren't so cold. And if it weren't so cold.

After urging New Yorkers to abandon their individualism for his "warmth of collectivism", 16 homeless people are dead because of Mamdani's progressive policy of letting them stay out in the cold, instead of escorting them to homeless shelters, but the survivors of his Gulag Games

did get a consolation prize in the form of red capes with 'Mayor Mamdani' emblazoned on them that are thinner than his resume. But the same cold killing the homeless is also keeping the trash that has been piling up since Jan 24 from rotting so it doesn't smell as bad as his policies.

The city hasn't had trash pickup for a third of Mamdani's term. It's also had a homeless death against every other day he's been in office. Zohran Mamdani did promise to transform New York City, but few expected him to make it a frozen wasteland full of corpses and trash in one month.

Even by Communist standards, this is fast work: somewhere Mao is kvelling and shouting up, "Zohran, quick start killing sparrows" and Pol Pot is urging him to go after anyone in glasses.

But really how did the Zombie Democrats of Manhattan think that 'Take Your Muslim Marxist Nephew Baby to Work Day' was gonna end? Mamdani has less executive experience than one of those Mexican small town dog mayors. After a career of trying to make rap videos for social media, he spent 5 years in the State Assembly where he made more videos for social media.

Hailed as historic for being the first member of the religion that flew planes into the World Trade Center to run the city after winning an election against a disgraced politician who killed off most of his own voting base, no one in the media or the party asked if Mamdani could do the job.

Or, considering his poor employment record which would disqualify him from most careers, any job. Any job with more responsibility than talking about Marxism on social media podcasts.

Now he's up against actual problems, a snowstorm, a cold spell and resource allocation and his 5 years in the State Assembly sitting on various useless committees with no responsibility, no power and no actual say in anything poorly prepared this precious baby mayor for the real world challenge of running one of the largest cities in the world where problems have to be solved.

Mamdani ran for office promising to make the buses free, but he can't even pick up the trash.

Even before this Mamdani was foundering, pretending he didn't know the city's budget had a \$12 billion hole because of the migrant invasion and then prepping a march to Albany to demand a wealth tax. The march is currently off because the streets are full of trash. If Manhattan Marxists march to Albany in this weather (expected lows of -6 by the end of the week), they will find that the warmth of collectivism is no match for upstate temperatures.

And besides, no amount of protests will take those huge black trash bags off the sidewalk and into whatever magical green fairyland that trust fund babies imagine 'recycling' goes to. Protests don't solve problems. They're what rich kids from the Mamdani class do with their spare time.

What do you do when you can't blame capitalism, Israel or Trump for your problems?

Don't ask Mamdani who has yet to figure it out.

Zohran Mamdani didn't run for mayor to keep the streets clean or to keep homeless vagrants from dying by the sides of buildings. 'Mayoring' to him meant social transformation: not the grim and dirty business that it takes to keep a city of 8.5 million from turning into a necropolis. In the real world, social experiments don't keep the lights on, the streets clear or daily life moving.

The Marxist brats and crones who have taken over what used to be the party of Jefferson and Jackson think that the solution to most problems is more 'equity' by which they mean the redistribution of resources. But what if the real shortage isn't resources, but competence?

Equity is a convenient Marxist answer for everything because it assumes that the problem is that the wrong people have too much and the right people have too little, so they select a designated rich minority person, like Mamdani, Obama or Elizabeth Warren, to continue the redistribution process so that we end up with a new balanced system of economic misery.

They usually get the misery right but nothing else.

But forget economic theories about Communism and Capitalism for a moment. One of the reasons that the Soviet Union lost the Cold War was that its leaders were dumb and incompetent. One of the reasons Communist China is beating our pants off is because it's not.

The USSR's great idea was copying American mass construction to manufacture the ramshackle 'Khrushchevkas' that still dot the Russian rust belts. China's great idea was selling our entire economy back to us. China is competent while Vladimir Ilych Mamdani isn't.

Killing people or letting them die in the name of an ideological vision only gets you so far whether it's in Moscow, Beijing, Islamabad or New York City. Competency is one of those things you can't redistribute and the people most likely to want to aren't competent anyway.

When faced with an actual problem, ideology looks for someone else to blame, while competence powers through. Mamdani was faced with actual problems right out of the gate and once he ran out of other people's money and other people to blame, he had nothing.

And no matter how much you redistribute to nothing, it still stays nothing.

*Daniel Greenfield is a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center. This article previously appeared at the Center's [Front Page Magazine](#).*

<https://bkdvk-zgpvh.campaign-view.com/ua/viewinbrowser>



#### STEP BY STEP

STEP BY STEP: Good news is that many friends and supporters of Lev U'Neshama (Heart and Soul) donated towards the Education Fund project to provide basic school supplies for actually 350 children within our Lev U'Neshama families.

We are grateful that the school supply part of our effort has been successful.

According to the Israel Population and Statistics office, Tzfat's population is about 40,000, and one third live at the poverty level. We do what we can so at least the children within our struggling LUN families can get the things they need.

Every week we are providing new sport shoes and eye exams/eyeglasses to the children on our request list. However, previous donations are rapidly dwindling. I am reaching out now before the fund has been emptied and we will have to say "no" to additional requests.

We work with two local shoe merchants who give Lev U'Neshama a discount but they advised us the cost of the shoes has increased. Also, we work with an accredited optician in town who also gives us a discount but his cost is stable.

Lev U'Neshama is an Israeli registered non-profit charity organization, volunteer run, no business expenses whatsoever and every \$ goes into our programs.

Shoes: \$45 per pair regular and \$60 for First Steps, baby shoes.

Eye Exam/Eyeglasses: \$60 per child.

Your support is urgently requested.

Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at [mortsmo@aol.com](mailto:mortsmo@aol.com) for bank information.

US Donors may also send checks made payable to

Simcha Smolensky, my son, who is also a volunteer. Send to:

Rabbi Simcha Smolensky, 6739 N Mozart St Chicago IL 60645

**Your support will be appreciated.**

Yaffa Smolensky