

Reservist Michael Nachmani, 26, killed in northern Gaza

Nachmani was killed by Hamas sniper fire on the outskirts of Gaza City's Shati neighborhood, coinciding with the beginning of the IDF's withdrawal from the area on Thursday

Yoav Zitun|22:07

The IDF cleared for publication Friday morning that Sgt. First Class (Res.) Michael Mordechai Nachmani, 26, from Dimona, a technology and maintenance combat soldier in the IDF's 614th Combat Engineering Battalion, was killed in action in the northern Gaza Strip.

Nachmani was killed by Hamas sniper fire on the outskirts of Gaza City's Shati neighborhood, coinciding with the beginning of the IDF's withdrawal from the area on Thursday.



Michael Mordechai Nachmani

Marking two years since the October 7 massacre the war that followed, the Defense Ministry this week published updated data on the fallen and the families newly bereaved as of October 7, 2025.

According to the figures, 1,152 members of Israel's security forces have fallen since October 7, 2023. Of them, about 42% (487) were under the age of 21, while 141 were over the age of 40. More than 6,500 relatives have joined Israel's bereaved community, including some 1,973

bereaved parents, 351 widows, 885 orphans, and 3,481 bereaved siblings.

The data was released by the Defense Ministry's Department for Bereaved Families, Commemoration and Heritage, and includes fallen soldiers from the IDF, Israel Police, Shin Bet, local emergency response squads (Ravshatzim), and civilian security teams who fought in Gaza, southern and northern Israel, Lebanon, and the West Bank. <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/h1u0velale>

Gaza ceasefire takes effect as government approves deal to free the hostages

Most far-right ministers vote against agreement to halt fighting with Hamas; Kushner and Witkoff tell cabinet that IDF's 'bravery' and Netanyahu's 'difficult decisions' enabled agreement

By [Ariela Karmel](#), [Sam Sokol](#) and [Lazar Berman](#)

Today, 3:32 am



US envoy Steve Witkoff and US President Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner flank Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at a cabinet meeting on October 9, 2025. (Maayan Toaf / GPO)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet voted early Friday morning in favor of a Gaza ceasefire deal that will see hostages freed in exchange for Palestinian security prisoners and a halt to the fighting, despite vocal objections from the premier's far-right coalition partners.

The Israel Defense Forces now will withdraw to new lines inside of the Gaza Strip, 72 hours after which Hamas will release all the hostages.

Netanyahu's office announced the approval of the deal, but did not immediately provide a vote tally, though the agreement was opposed by National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, Negev, Galilee and National Resilience Minister Yitzhak Wasserlauf and Heritage Minister Amichay Eliyahu of the far-right Otzma Yehudit party.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Settlements and National Projects Minister Orit Strock of the Religious Zionism party also voted against the deal, though Immigration Minister Ofir Sofer, also a member of the party, voted in favor.

Addressing the cabinet, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel was "about to achieve" the return of its hostages.

"We've fought during these two years to achieve our war aims," said Netanyahu in English, alongside top

White House aides Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. “A central one of these war aims is to return the hostages, all of the hostages, the living and the dead. And we are about to achieve that goal.”

Netanyahu said Israel “couldn’t have achieved it without the extraordinary help of President Trump and his team, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. They worked tirelessly with Ron [Dermer] and his team, our team. And that, and the courage of our soldiers, to enter Gaza, and combine military and diplomatic pressure that isolated Hamas, I think has brought us to this point.”

Witkoff and Kushner helped broker the negotiations over the deal and both attended the cabinet meeting approving it.

Kushner, US President Donald Trump’s son-in-law, praised Israel’s military performance over the last two years and said that “bringing the hostages home has been a priority for President Trump for a very, very long time, and we’ve all worked very tirelessly to do that.”

“This **all would not have been possible without the bravery of the IDF and its soldiers**, what they’ve accomplished not just in Gaza, but also what they’ve done in the theater over the last couple of years to eliminate Hezbollah in the north and really degrade them,” he said.

Kushner said that Netanyahu, “really did an incredible job with this, and did a great job with the negotiations.”

“You held your lines firm and I think that between you and President Trump, you had a lot of alignment on what the end state should be,” he concludes.

White House special envoy Witkoff, in turn, praised Netanyahu for making “very difficult decisions,” stating that while there were times at which he wished the premier had been “more flexible,” “the truth is that now, looking back, I think we wouldn’t have reached this point if Prime Minister Netanyahu hadn’t acted the way he did.”

‘You can’t make peace with Hamas’

Far-right leaders have been critical of the deal, with Smotrich announcing on Thursday that Religious Zionism would not vote in favor. Speaking with The Times of Israel, a party source said that it remained up in the air whether or not the far-right faction would bolt the government.

Ben Gvir had also announced ahead of the cabinet meeting that Otzma Yehudit would vote against the first phase of the deal, in which Palestinian prisoners will be released in exchange for all 48 Israeli hostages held in Gaza.

Israel is due to release 250 Palestinian security prisoners serving life sentences, plus another 1,700 Gazans imprisoned since the October 7, 2023, Hamas-led attack that launched the war.



Palestinian prisoners, released by Israel, gesture as they arrive on a bus at the European Hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, early on February 27, 2025. (AFP)

Ben Gvir’s party said it would remain in Netanyahu’s coalition for now, but warned that if Hamas is not dismantled, Otzma Yehudit will “bring down the government,” an echo of an [earlier threat to bolt](#) if the terror group “continues to exist” after the hostages are freed.

Earlier this year, Ben Gvir’s party [quit the coalition for several months](#) to protest the acceptance of a previous hostage release and ceasefire deal.

Ben Gvir’s demand to veto the release of specific Palestinian security prisoners, including convicted terrorists, delayed the security cabinet meeting on the ceasefire deal as well as the subsequent vote of the entire government to ratify the agreement, according to Kan.

The **ultranationalist minister sparred with both Kushner and Witkoff, asserting that they would not release terrorists like those being freed under the deal** in the United States, the broadcaster reported.

“You can’t make peace with Hamas! They want to murder us,” he said. **Probably the most truthful statement in the article. rdb**

In response, Kushner argued that **“Hamas is isolated and deterred all over the world,”** to which **Ben Gvir shot back: “Would you make peace with Hitler? Hamas is Hitler.” Kushner is not correct. Hamas**

is in the UK, France, Germany, Belgium etc. How do you consider that isolated and deterred. They are disrupting all of the nation's governments and society. His view is with blinders on. rdb

According to Channel 13 news, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir told the cabinet, "we're world champions in being bitter" but "this is a great agreement."



Left: National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, January 16, 2025; Right: Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich, January 13, 2025. (Both photos by Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

Otzma Yehudit and Religious Zionism's departure from the coalition would not automatically bring down Netanyahu's minority government, which currently holds 60 out of 120 seats in the Knesset.

They could join the opposition in holding a full constructive vote of no confidence, but that would require 61 Knesset members to agree on backing an alternative government to replace the

current one, which appears unlikely.

They could, however, join with the opposition in collecting 61 signatures to submit a "change of circumstances" letter to Knesset Speaker Amir Ohana requesting permission to hold a vote on dissolving the Knesset.

An opposition-backed bill to disperse the Knesset and call early elections failed in June. Under parliamentary rules, because the legislation was defeated, lawmakers have to wait six months to bring another Knesset dissolution bill to a vote.

'The war will immediately end'

Ahead of the vote, Kan published a copy of the agreement signed by Israel, Hamas and mediators on Thursday, but it was not clear if the cabinet voted on it. **The signed deal is entitled "Implementation Steps for President's Trump for a 'Comprehensive End of Gaza War" and details the stages of the agreement, beginning with the American leader's announcement of "the end to the war in the Gaza Strip, and that the parties have agreed to implement the necessary steps to that end."**

The **second step states that "the war will immediately end upon the approval of the Israeli government," with all military operations coming to a halt.**

The **third step calls for the "immediate commencement of full entry of humanitarian aid and relief" into the Gaza Strip, while the fourth says that the "IDF will withdraw to lines agreed upon as per map X attached herewith, and this will be completed after President Trump's announcement and within 24 hours of Israeli government approval."**

In the **fifth step, which will take place "within 72 hours of the withdrawal of Israeli forces, all Israeli hostages, living and deceased, held in Gaza will be released."**

The **next subclause states that "as Hamas releases all the hostages, Israel will release in**

parallel the corresponding number of Palestinian prisoners as per the attaches lists," followed by another subclause declaring "the exchange of hostages and prisoners will be done according to the mechanism agreed upon through the mediators and through the ICRC without any public ceremonies or media coverage."

Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Strategic Affairs Minister Robn Dermer in Jerusalem on October 9, 2025. (Maayan Toaf/GPO)

The final step listed says "a task force will be formed of representatives from the United States, Qatar, Egypt, Turkey and other countries to be agreed upon by the parties, to follow up on the implementation with the two sides and coordinate with them."

Ahead of the agreement, the Knesset was lit up in red, white and blue in honor of the expected visit of US President Donald Trump and Knesset Speaker Amir Ohana officially invited Trump to **speak** at the legislative body, following informal offers for the American leader to address Israeli lawmakers during



a slated trip to Israel next week. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/gaza-ceasefire-takes-effect-as-government-approves-deal-to-free-the-hostages/>

West Bank settlement Kohav HaShahar in lockdown over suspected terrorist infiltration

The suspected incident is under investigation.

By **JERUSALEM POST STAFF** OCTOBER 10, 2025 06:00 Updated: OCTOBER 10, 2025 06:42



A drone view of Al-Aroub refugee camp alongside a new road, part of the expansion of Israeli bypass roads connecting Israeli settlers in the West Bank with Jerusalem, in the West Bank, September 29, 2025. (photo credit: REUTERS/AMMAR AWAD)

Authorities warned of a possible terrorist infiltration in the West Bank settlement Kohav HaShahar on Friday morning.

The IDF confirmed the military received a report that a suspect attempted to break into a house in Kohav HaShahar.

IDF soldiers and additional forces were dispatched to the scene and are currently

conducting searches in the area.

The IDF Home Front Command instructs residents to remain locked in their homes until further notice as the military investigates. **?Peace partners? rdb**

This is a developing story. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-870007>

Israel set to release terrorist behind Ramallah lynching of two reservists, murder of teen - report

Jihad A-Karim Azziz Rom was sentenced to life for Yuri Gushchin murder plus an additional 20 years for his role in the killing of the two reservists.

By **MAARIV ONLINE, DANIELLE GREYMAN-KENNARD** OCTOBER 10, 2025 03:26 Updated: OCTOBER 10, 2025 04:13



A FREED Palestinian prisoner holds a weapon as he is carried after his release by Israel as part of the hostage deal, in Khan Yunis, last Saturday. We face vile murderers who scorn human life, individuals who planned attacks and killed dozens, including infants, families, young men, and women, the (photo credit: MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS)

Jihad A-Karim Azziz Rom, a terrorist who participated in the lynching of IDF reservists Vadim Norzitch and Yosef Avrahami in 2000 and the abduction and murder of Yuri Gushchin in 2001, is set to be released as part of the Gaza peace deal, Maariv reported early on Friday morning after the Israeli government approved the deal.

Rom, who was 26 at the time of the lynching, was sentenced to life for Gushchin's murder plus an additional 20 years for his role in the killing of the two reservists.

The **Ramallah lynching became a key moment in Palestinian terrorism, after Italian film crews recorded Arab terrorists lifting their blood-soaked hands in celebration** of the attack at Ramallah police station. The **two reservists had mistakenly drove into Ramallah where they were detained by Palestinian Authority police officers, and taken to the local police station in Ramallah's twin city el-Bireh where a thousand Palestinian rallied for their deaths.** The crowd eventually overwhelmed the officers, took over the station and beat and stabbed Norzitch and Avrahami to death.



Gushchin, who immigrated to Israel from Russia in 1990, was visiting Ramallah with a Palestinian acquaintance after falsely being promised work. He was murdered at aged 18 and his body was discovered between the slaughterhouse between El Bireh and Beit El with multiple stab and gunshot wounds.

Aziz Salha with bloody hands during lynching in Ramallah in 2000. (credit: Wikimedia Commons)

Suicide bomber to be released

Baher Bader, one of the terrorists responsible for a suicide bombing in Tzrifin in 2004, is also reportedly set to be released. Bader was sentenced to 11 life sentences.

Israel has reportedly refused to release any

child murderers, life prisoners who have served less than a decade in prison, and those defined as 'terror symbols' will not be released.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-870000> **This is reprehensible These people should have been put to death long ago and not be bargaining chips. Thou shalt not MURDER and that is what they did. rdb**

Gaza ceasefire starts as IDF completes partial withdrawal; Hamas has 72 hours to return hostages

Solider killed by Hamas sniper hours before deal goes into effect; IDF, Hamas warn Gazans not to approach troops in new positions; coastal road opens for Palestinians to return to Gaza City

By [Emanuel Fabian](#), [Nurit Yohanan](#) and [Agencies](#) Today, 1:14 pm



Tanks and armored vehicles of the 188th Armored Brigade roll out of the Gaza Strip, early October 10, 2025. (Amutat Barak 188)

The Israel Defense Forces completed a withdrawal to agreed-upon deployment lines in the Gaza Strip on Friday at noon, officially beginning a ceasefire and a 72-hour countdown during which Hamas is to release the hostages it is holding under the first phase of the US-brokered deal.

The withdrawal was conducted under the cover of artillery shelling and airstrikes in some areas and an IDF reservist was killed by a Hamas sniper hours before the agreement went into place.

The completion of the withdrawal started a 72-hour countdown, during which Hamas is obligated to release all the living hostages and as many of the dead hostages that it can secure, according to the terms of the deal. That puts the deadline at noon on Monday.

The IDF published footage of the pullback.

US Envoy Steve Witkoff later said that the US military had confirmed that the IDF had completed its obligations.

“CENTCOM has confirmed that the Israeli Defense Forces completed the first phase withdrawal to the yellow line at 12PM local time. The 72 hour period to release the hostages has begun,” Witkoff posted on X.

Israeli troops withdraw to new deployment lines in the Gaza Strip as part of a hostage deal, October 10, 2025. (Israel Defense Forces)

Media outlets in Gaza reported Friday that five people were seriously injured in an IDF strike on a school that had been serving as a shelter for displaced people in Jabalia, in northern Gaza City.

There was no immediate comment from the IDF.

Ahead of the deal taking effect, an IDF reservist soldier was killed in a Hamas sniper attack in Gaza City on

Thursday afternoon.

The **slain soldier was named Friday morning as Sgt. First Class (res.) Michael Mordechai Nachmani**, 26, a Technology and Maintenance Corps soldier in the 614th Combat Engineering Battalion, from Dimona.

Israel's toll in the ground offensive against Hamas in Gaza and in military operations along the border with the Strip stands at 472. The toll includes two police officers and three Defense Ministry civilian contractors.



Sgt. First Class (res.) Michael Mordechai Nachmani (Israel Defense Forces)

Following the withdrawal, the IDF remains in control of just over half of the Strip's territory, or 53 percent — most of which is outside of urban areas.

This includes a buffer zone along the entire Gaza border, including the Philadelphi Corridor — the Egypt-Gaza border area — along with Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya in the Strip's far north, a ridge on the eastern outskirts of Gaza City, and large portions of Rafah and Khan Younis in southern Gaza.

In a tearful statement at a press conference, IDF Spokesman Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin said the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip was “an emotional moment for the people of Israel and for the IDF troops and soldiers who have fought and acted over the past two years with courage, bravery, and out of a sense of mission and dedication.”

Defrin showed the IDF's current deployment in the Gaza Strip as part of the deal, and said that troops “will act to eliminate any threat to their security, no risks will be taken.



This map published by the IDF on October 10, 2025, shows the IDF's deployment in Gaza following a ceasefire. (Israel Defense Forces)

“We will do everything possible to protect the security of the residents of the western Negev, the south and the entire country,” he said.

Asked whether Hamas still poses a threat to Israel, Defrin said: “Hamas today is not the Hamas of two years ago; Hamas has been defeated everywhere we fought it.”

Both the IDF and Hamas's Civil Defense agency earlier issued calls urging residents not to go near areas where Israeli forces

were stationed in the Strip.

“According to the agreement, IDF troops will remain deployed in specific areas of the Gaza Strip. Do not approach IDF troops in the area until further notice. Approaching the forces exposes you to danger,” warned the IDF's Arabic-language spokesperson Col. Avichay Adraee.



A smoke plume billows following Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip as pictured from across the border in southern Israel on October 10, 2025. (Jack GUEZ/AFP)

Adraee said moving from southern Gaza to the Strip's north, and vice versa, was permitted via the Rashid coastal road and the Salah a-Din highway.

“We warn you that in the northern Gaza Strip area, approaching the areas of Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahia, Shejayia and the areas where forces are stationed is extremely dangerous,” he said. “In the southern part of the Strip, it is very dangerous to approach the Rafah

crossing area, the Philadelphi Corridor and all areas where forces are stationed in Khan Yunis.”

He also warned that along Gaza’s coast “there is great danger in fishing, swimming and diving. We warn against entering the sea in the coming days.”



An Israeli navy ship patrols the waters, as seen from Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip on October 10, 2025. (Photo by Eyad BABA / AFP)

Hamas’s Civil Defense agency also told Gazans not to **approach the borders of the enclave until an official announcement is made about an IDF withdrawal.** “Violating this warning puts your lives at risk,” the statement said.

Following the announcements, footage from Gaza showed hundreds of people beginning to move along the coastal al-Rashid Road moving back north toward Gaza City, the enclave’s main urban center which has been under Israeli assault for the past month.

The ceasefire between Israel and Hamas was announced in the early hours of the morning on Thursday and was ratified by the government later that evening. The hostages — some 20 living, at least 26 thought to be dead — are meant to come home within 72 hours of the completion of an agreed-upon withdrawal of the IDF.

The terror group has, in the past, told mediators it does not know where some of the bodies of slain hostages are located, which may delay the release of the bodies.



Palestinians look toward Gaza City from a hilltop in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip on October 10, 2025. (Photo by Eyad BABA / AFP)

Israel is due to release 250 Palestinian security prisoners serving life sentences, plus another 1,700 Gazans imprisoned since the October 7, 2023, Hamas-led attack that launched the war.

Meanwhile, the announcement of a ceasefire mixed emotions in Gaza, much of which has been flattened by Israel’s offensive and has seen much of the population displaced.

“Honestly, when I heard the news, I couldn’t hold back. Tears of joy flowed. Two years of bombing, terror, destruction, loss, humiliation, and the constant feeling that we could die at any moment,” displaced Palestinian Samer Joudeh told AFP.

Nevin Qudeeh said she felt the greatest sense of relief since the war erupted two years ago. She’ll be even happier, she added, when she can return home.

“We’re staying on the streets.”



Palestinians celebrate following the announcement that Israel and Hamas have agreed to the first phase of a peace plan to end the war, outside Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, October 9, 2025. (AP Photo/Abdel Kareem Hana)

“I am happy and unhappy,” said Mohammad Al-Farra. “We have lost a lot of people and lost loved ones, friends,” relatives, and homes that are about a lot more than stones and physical buildings, he said.

One cannot help but wonder what the day after would look like, he said — or where to even begin picking up the pieces. “The situation is very difficult.”

But he said they would overcome future hardships

just like they’ve been doing.

Taghreed al-Jabali, displaced from Khan Yunis, also shared the mixed feelings.

“We don’t know whether to feel happy or sad,” she said, lamenting the killings and losses of the last two years, including children missing two full years of school.

“Our sons and daughters didn’t receive an education. A whole generation was lost. Two generations were lost, not just one. May God make it up for us,” she said. **You might want to think about that the next time you vote for a terrorist organization for your leaders and decide to dance in the streets and give out celebratory candy when those critters slaughter Israelis** **rd**



Displaced Palestinians walk along the coastal road near Wadi Gaza in the central Gaza Strip, October 10, 2025. (AP Photo/Abdel Kareem Hana)

The war erupted when Hamas-led terrorists rampaged through southern communities on October 7, 2023, murdering some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking 251 hostages.

The Hamas-run Gaza health ministry says more than 67,000 people in the Strip have been killed or are presumed dead in the fighting so far, though the toll cannot be verified and does not differentiate between civilians and fighters. Israel says it has killed over 22,000 combatants in

battle as of August and another 1,600 terrorists inside Israel during the October 7 onslaught.

Israel has said it seeks to minimize civilian fatalities and stresses that Hamas uses Gaza’s civilians as human shields, fighting from civilian areas including homes, hospitals, schools and mosques.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/gaza-ceasefire-starts-as-idf-completes-partial-withdrawal-hamas-has-72-hours-to-return-hostages/>

Netanyahu’s Likud enjoys slight bump in support on heels of Gaza deal, poll shows

Ex-PM Bennett, who has been largely silent on the truce-hostage agreement, sinks to lowest number of Knesset seats in potential election since first being included in Maariv survey

By [Tol Staff](#) Today, 11:16 am



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attends the opening ceremony of the new Knesset museum, in Jerusalem on August 11, 2025. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

After the Gaza truce-hostage deal, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu enjoys a slight bump in public support while his closest rival, former premier Naftali Bennett, sinks to his lowest level yet, according to a poll published Friday.

Asked whether elections should be held “upon completion of the deal and the return of the hostages,” 48 percent of respondents to the Maariv poll said yes, 39% said no,

and 13% said they don’t know.

The initial phase of the Gaza ceasefire deal, which Israel and Hamas agreed to on Thursday, requires Hamas to return the 48 remaining hostages within 72 hours, and Israel to stage a partial withdrawal from the Strip. Israel will also release close to 2,000 Palestinian prisoners.

Other components of the Trump deal, including a full withdrawal by Israel, disarmament of Hamas, and the formation of an international transitional administration for Gaza, are still being negotiated.

Asked whom they would vote for in the next election, respondents to the Maariv poll (Hebrew) awarded Netanyahu’s Likud party 27 of the Knesset’s 120 seats — up from the 25 seats that Likud received in last week’s Maariv poll.

Bennett, who has registered a party tentatively called “Bennett 2026,” would win 19 seats, down from 22 last week, and his lowest result since first being included in the poll in August 2024, Maariv said. A one-time Netanyahu aide who used to run to the premier’s right, Bennett has said little about the Gaza deal. Maariv surmised his silence hurt his standing in the survey.



Former prime minister Naftali Bennett speaks during the Israel Information Technology Conference in Ness Ziona, May 5, 2025. (Avshalom Sassoni/Flash90)

National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir's Otzma Yehudit party, which opposes the truce-hostage deal, garnered six seats, down from nine last week. Fellow far-right party Religious Zionism, led by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, did not win enough support to gain any seats in the Knesset, with just 2.3% of respondents — the same number as last week — saying they would vote

for him.

Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox allies — the Sephardic party Shas and its Ashkenazi counterpart United Torah Judaism — held their ground at eight and seven Knesset seats, respectively. Both quit the government this year over its failure to codify Haredi yeshiva students' exemption from military service.

In total, the pro-Netanyahu bloc consisting of Likud, Otzma Yehudit, Religious Zionism and the ultra-Orthodox parties would win 48 seats.



Left: National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, January 16, 2025; Right: Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, January 13, 2025. (Photos by Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

Meanwhile, respondents awarded Opposition Leader Yair Lapid ten seats — up from seven in last week's poll. Maariv attributed the spike in support to Lapid's staunch support for a hostage deal.

Yesh Atid's fellow Zionist opposition parties — The Democrats, led by dovish former deputy IDF chief Yair Golan and Yisrael Beytenu, led by hawkish veteran lawmaker Avigdor Liberman both polled at 10, the same

number they received in last week's poll.

Blue and White, led by centrist former IDF chief Benny Gantz again failed to cross the election threshold, with Gantz's support dropping from 3% to 2.3% of respondents.

Former IDF chief Gadi Eisenkot, who broke off from Gantz's party and quit the Knesset, would win eight seats with his new "Yashar!" party — up from seven seats last week.

In total, **the Zionist anti-Netanyahu bloc led by Bennett, Lapid, Golan, Liberman, Gantz and Eisenkot would win 57 seats — four seats short of being able to form a government on their own.**

Also **receiving five seats was HaMiluimnikim ("The Reservists"), a party advocating for reservists' rights and ultra-Orthodox military service**, led by Communications Minister Yoaz Hendel, who has declined to say whether he would join a Netanyahu government.



(Clockwise from top left): The Democrats chief Yair Golan, Yesh Atid chief and Opposition Leader Yair Lapid, Blue and White chief Benny Gantz and Yisrael Beytenu chief Avigdor Liberman hold a joint press conference at the Knesset in Jerusalem, November 6, 2024. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

Five seats each, like last week, would also go to Ra'am, an Islamist Arab party that joined the short-lived "change government" led by Bennett and Lapid in 2021-2022; Hadash-Ta'al, an alliance of the binational communist party Hadash and secularist Arab party Ta'al.

Israel's next parliamentary election is set to be held in October 2026, but could take place before then if the

current government falls. Both Smotrich and Ben Gvir have threatened to topple the government in case of a permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

The war in Gaza erupted after the October 7, 2023, Hamas massacre in southern Israel that killed some 1,200 people and saw another 251 taken hostage.

The survey was conducted by the Lazar Research Institute, led by Menachem Lazar, in cooperation with the Panel4All polling platform. The sample size was 500 and the margin of error was +/- 4.4%, according to Maariv.

Netanyahu may hold early elections, 'use Gaza deal to gain support,' Likud official says

If carried out, the move could provide Netanyahu with a renewed leadership mandate, project unity within the party, and preempt potential internal challenges to his authority.

By [ANNA BARSKY](#) OCTOBER 10, 2025 09:05



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seen at the Knesset before a vote on the Gaza deal, October 9, 2025(photo credit: MAAYAN TOAF/GPO)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is reportedly laying the groundwork for early elections, with a senior Likud source confirming that internal preparations are already underway quietly and discreetly, Maariv reported on Friday.

Senior Likud officials told Maariv that the initiative represents “preparation for advancing national elections,” adding that Netanyahu seeks to capitalize on “the public momentum surrounding the hostage deal”

and the broader peace initiative presented by US President Donald Trump as “a first step toward comprehensive peace in the Middle East.”



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrives to his Likud party faction meeting at the Knesset, Israel's parliament, in Jerusalem May 20, 2024 (credit: RONEN ZVULUN)
Holding Likud primaries

According to a Maariv report published Friday morning, Netanyahu recently contacted Likud Central Committee Chairman and Welfare Minister Haim Katz, asking him to convene the party's central body to approve holding snap leadership primaries within the coming weeks.

Sources told *Maariv* that [Netanyahu](#) instructed Katz to examine the organizational and legal aspects required to initiate a fast-track leadership vote and to determine how the party's central committee and internal election bodies could be activated within a very short timeframe.

Among the options being considered is holding the Likud leadership primaries at the same time as the elections for the party's conference, which are scheduled for November 24. If carried out, the move could provide Netanyahu with a renewed leadership mandate, project unity within the party, and preempt potential internal challenges to his authority. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/politics-and-diplomacy/article-870012>

Spanish Gaza flotilla activist convicted of assaulting prison guard, to be deported from Israel
Reyes Rigo Servia of Spain admitted to biting a prison guard under a plea deal; She was sentenced to 10 days in jail, fined \$2,600, and will be deported Saturday. She claimed she was beaten and mistreated in custody
[Ilana Curie](#)|08:19

The Be'er Sheva Magistrate's Court on Friday approved a plea deal for Reyes Rigo Servia, a 56-year-old Spanish national who participated in a Gaza flotilla, after she pleaded guilty to assault causing bodily harm and aggravated assault of a prison guard.

Under the plea agreement, Servia was convicted on a revised indictment and sentenced to 10 days in prison—already served since her arrest—along with a NIS 10,000 fine. The court also ordered her deportation from Israel, scheduled for Saturday.



Reyes Rigo Servia and the Israeli prison guard that was bitten

Servia's attorney, Hail Abu Garara, said his client had agreed to deportation from the moment she arrived in Israel, contrary to police claims.

During her court appearance, Servia told the judge she had been mistreated in custody. "They put me in a prison worse than what animals get," she said. "They hit us, pushed us a lot. On the fifth day they attacked my friend, and I tried to protect her. They grabbed me by the head, and my glasses fell off."

She added that the women were held in harsh conditions: "There were 14 of us in a cell meant for five. We weren't given water, the food was rotten. They pushed us and hit us. I didn't get everything I needed." **You should have received a belt across your backside because you are obviously a nasty self centered biddy. What right do you have to invade a sovereign country and support a terrorist group? rdb**



Servia was originally accused of biting a female guard at Ketziot Prison on October 6, four days after the navy intercepted four vessels from the "Sumud" flotilla bound for Gaza. **The initial indictment alleged that when ordered to enter her cell, she refused, lay down on the floor with another detainee, and resisted attempts by guards to move her. According to prosecutors, she bit a guard's left hand, causing a visible bite mark and redness that required medical attention.**

In the amended indictment, the biting allegation was replaced with the claim that she dug her nails into the guard's flesh while resisting.

Prosecutors argued that Servia's participation in the flotilla was illegal and deliberate, intended to breach Israel's maritime borders. They said her behavior in custody demonstrated that she posed a high risk and showed no respect for the law.

"By her physical resistance and assault on the guard," the indictment stated, "the defendant showed that the rule of law does not deter her and that she would not hesitate to defy court or enforcement authority orders."

Earlier this week, the court had extended Servia's detention, but the judge noted there was "significant merit" in her attorney's claim that deportation was preferable. "However," he said, "this consideration belongs to the prosecution and is not within the court's discretion." <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/bknmitl6eg>

Indonesia to block Israeli team from gymnastics world championships

Amid pressure from politicians and Muslim groups, Jakarta says Israeli team denied visas, claim international gymnastics governing body supports the decision

By [Agencies](#) Today, 10:10 am



Israel's Artem Dolgopyat reacts after competing in the artistic gymnastics men's floor exercise final during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Bercy Arena in Paris, on August 3, 2024. (Paul Ellis / AFP)

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Indonesia will block Israeli athletes from competing at the upcoming gymnastics world championships in Jakarta, officials said Friday, claiming that the sport's international governing body supports the decision.

The decision to deny visas to the Israeli athletes comes after their planned participation had sparked intense opposition in the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, which has long been a staunch supporter of Palestinians.

Israel is among 86 countries registered to compete in the competition that begins in Jakarta on October 19, with a team highlighted by 2020 Olympic gold medalist and defending world champion Artem Dolgopyat in the men's floor exercise.

Now its participation is in doubt, even though the Israeli Gymnastics Federation said in July that it had been assured by Indonesian officials that it would be welcome at the worlds. That would have gone against Indonesia's long-standing policy of refusing to host Israeli sports delegations for major events.

On Thursday, Indonesia's senior minister of law, Yusril Ihza Mahendra, made it clear the Israeli team will not be allowed into the country, despite Israel and Hamas having agreed to a ceasefire-hostage release deal.

"The government will not grant visas to Israeli gymnasts who intend to attend the World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Jakarta," Mahendra said.



Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto addresses the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025. (AP/Yuki Iwamura)

He added in a video statement that the decision was in line with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto's previous directives on various occasions, and most recently in his speech at the UN General Assembly, which strongly condemned Israel for its continued attacks on the Gaza Strip.

Subianto also said the world must respect Israel's right to live in security, and ended his speech by saying, "Shalom." **[I thought this turkey was all supportive of**

the Trump plan and willing to help with the post war operations. Obviously his hatred of Jews outweighs most of his thinking and plans. He would not be a good help in dealing with Gaza. rdb

Mahendra acknowledged that the Indonesian Gymnastics Federation had previously submitted a sponsorship letter for six Israeli athletes to obtain visas, but that "the federation has withdrawn the sponsorship letter."

Indonesia's federation said Friday it had informed the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) of its position.

"The FIG today has officially stated through a phone call to me that they supported the Indonesian government's decision," Indonesian gymnastics federation chairwoman Ita Yuliati told a press conference.

"Their (the Israeli athletes') visas have been rejected by the immigration," she said.

FIG did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment.

Raja Sapta Oktahari, head of the national Olympic committee, said Indonesia was ready to accept any consequences for blocking the Israeli athletes from competing.



Indonesian Gymnastics Federation president Ita Yuliati (R) and Indonesian Olympic Committee president Raja Sapta Oktahari attend a press conference ahead of the 53rd Artistic Gymnastics World Championships at Indonesia Arena in Jakarta on October 10, 2025. (Photo by Yasuyoshi CHIBA / AFP)

"We will review the consequences after the event," he said.

Indonesia has expressed interest in hosting the 2036 Olympics. **There should be a resounding NO WAY to that request if that is what they are doing. - rdb**

In recent days, **Indonesian politicians and moderate Muslim groups have made increased calls for the Israeli team to be barred from the competition.** They have been joined by a flood of outraged comments on social media by users objecting to the arrival of athletes from a country they say is committing genocide. **Just one more reminder that this is truly a religious war and there will never be any peace with islam who is bent on world domination and subjugation of any none Islamic group rdb**

Israel has fiercely denied such accusations, saying it seeks to minimize civilian fatalities in its operations to dismantle Hamas and stresses that the terror group uses Gaza's civilians as human shields, fighting from civilian areas including homes, hospitals, schools, and mosques.

Jakarta Gov. Pramono Anung said the humanitarian catastrophe resulting from the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza is unbearable and that the Israeli athletes' arrival would cause deep emotional distress to the majority of Indonesians.

"Their presence would obviously spark public outrage in such a situation," Anung told reporters on Wednesday.

The MUI, Indonesia's highest Islamic body, had urged all communities that support Palestinian independence to call for the Israeli team to be excluded.



Protesters wave Palestinian flags as they shout slogans during an anti-Israel rally on the anniversary of Hamas's October 7 massacre, outside the US Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, October 7, 2025. (AP/Achmad Ibrahim)

"By refusing to allow Israeli athletes to compete in the sporting arena, we want to state that all forms of colonialism must be abolished because they are contrary to humanity and justice," said Amirsyah Tambunan, the MUI Secretary General.

The Israeli Gymnastic Federation did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The gymnastics spat is the latest example of how the global backlash against Israel over the humanitarian toll of the war in Gaza has spread into the arenas of sports and culture. Israel's critics say it should be sidelined from international events just like Russia has been since its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The cycling team, Israel Premier Tech, announced Monday it was changing its name and moving away from its national identity after being excluded from a race in Italy over concerns about pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel protests, and less than a month after the Spanish Vuelta was repeatedly disrupted by protests against the team.

In soccer, Israel's World Cup qualifying match against Italy next week is expected to attract more pro-Palestinian protesters outside the stadium in Udine than ticket-holding spectators inside the arena.

Indonesia was stripped of hosting rights for soccer's Under-20 World Cup in 2023, only two months before the start of the tournament, amid political turmoil regarding Israel's participation.

Indonesia has drawn a clear line for decades. Since the 1962 Asian Games when Israel and Taiwan were excluded from Jakarta, the country has maintained a consistent refusal to host Israeli delegations.

"That stance was never about pettiness or isolationism; it was a reflection of Indonesia's conviction that no sporting event should legitimize an apartheid state," said Muhammad Zulfikar Rakhmat, a researcher at the Center of Economic and Law Studies or CELIOS. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/indonesia-to-block-israeli-team-from-gymnastics-world-championships-in-jakarta/>

Jews suffer highest rate of religious hate crime in England and Wales, figures show 2,873 antisemitic incidents recorded in year ending March 2025, according to figures published in wake of deadly Yom Kippur synagogue attack

By [Reuters](#) and [Tol Staff](#) 9 October 2025, 9:23 pm

Jews suffered the highest rate of religious hate crimes in England and Wales in the year ending March 2025, UK interior ministry data showed on Thursday.

Muslims experienced the highest absolute number of such crimes, but they make up a larger proportion of the population, so the per capita rate is lower.

A total of 2,873 religious hate crimes were recorded against victims perceived to be Jewish, equivalent to 106 crimes per 10,000 Jews. For people perceived to be Muslim, the total was 4,478, or 12 per 10,000 Muslims.

A terrorist attack at a synagogue in Manchester on Yom Kippur last week caused the deaths of two Jewish men. Separately, a fire at a mosque was being treated as a possible arson attack.

The data showed a spike in offenses against Muslims after the murder of three young girls at a dance event in Southport in July 2024 that sparked mass anti-Islam and anti-immigration protests.

"Today's hate crime statistics show that too many people are living in fear because of who they are, what they believe, or where they come from," said Britain's interior minister Shabana Mahmood.

“I will not tolerate British people being targeted simply because of their religion, race, or identity,” she said, noting police patrols have been stepped up at synagogues and mosques since last week.



Britain's Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood (C) and Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham (2L) arrive to address members of the media, near to Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation synagogue in Crumpsall, north Manchester, on October 2, 2025, following an attack at the synagogue. (Oli SCARFF / AFP)

Thursday’s data was skewed by the exclusion of crimes recorded by police in London due to a change in its methodology designed to prevent overcounting.

As a result, Thursday’s figures were not directly comparable to previous years, but were broadly consistent with a pattern of increased religious hate crimes in Britain.

Antisemitism has spiked worldwide in the two years since the Hamas terror group’s October 7, 2023, attack on Israel set off the war in Gaza. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/jews-suffer-highest-rate-of-religious-hate-crime-in-england-and-wales-figures-show/>

Sukkot is a 7 day holiday and is still in progress. Some insights from Jerusalem rdb
To sit in the sukkah comfortably, some Jerusalemites are living on the edge
A balcony with a festive temporary hut commands a premium even in luxury apartments, but many eschew safety concerns to jerry-rig their own platforms without city approval

By [Zev Stub](#)
Today, 8:01 am



A sukkah built on a temporary balcony around the Meah Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)



Sukkahs around the Meah Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)



Sukkahs around the Meah Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)



Sukkahs around the Meah Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)



Sukkahs near the Meah Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)

For residents of Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox Meah Shearim neighborhood, the holiday of Sukkot is a highlight of the entire year. Referred to by the rabbis as "the time of our joy," music pours through the storied commercial streets as families walk out in their finest clothing — men in black coats, women in long dresses, and children in matching outfits. Many clutch the four species, including tall palm branches and bright yellow citrons, used in the holiday prayers.

And of **course, sukkot, the festive booths for which the holiday is named, are hanging off balconies everywhere.**

With **a biblical commandment to eat and sleep in these outdoor huts for seven days, and with space at a premium in crowded urban areas like this, having a sukkah on your balcony is the ultimate luxury for the holiday.** The stipulation that the roof of the sukkah must look directly up to the sky, with no other balconies or other interferences between it and the heavens, adds a level of complexity to the holiday and a fascinating engineering challenge.

"Every **building has its own footprint, and when you are designing a building for construction, any balcony reduces the amount of space that is available inside apartments,**" explained Josh Skarf, a Jerusalem-based architect and author of a [book](#) investigating biblical concepts through the lens of architecture. "If you are concerned about leaving balconies open to the sky above, then every space that you're using for a balcony eliminates not only that space but also the space above it. You end up building in tiers, getting narrower toward the top like a wedding cake, and that reduces the number of apartments that you can sell."

But not everyone lives in an apartment optimized for Sukkot dwellings. Around Israel, and particularly in dense Haredi communities like those around Meah Shearim, sukkot built on unauthorized jerry-rigged temporary balconies are everywhere, often constructed with crude techniques that fall far short of best building practices. Those standing on pillars are generally safer than those built on a cantilever, Skarf noted.

Some look like disasters waiting to happen, with their fearless occupants living on a prayer.

"After the Jewish people's sins have been forgiven on the holiday of Yom Kippur, sitting in the sukkah is a sign that we trust the Holy One will protect us from calamity," commented a bystander looking at a sukkah hanging over the street from a balcony extended by steel scaffolding. "There is no need to be afraid."



A sukkah built on a temporary balcony around the Meah Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)

Not everyone relies only on heavenly favor. The Jerusalem municipality says that while it doesn't issue approvals for these temporary platforms, it does monitor them for safety, with a team of police dedicated to checking the integrity of these crude balconies. This arrangement has been in place for many years, with good results, a city spokesperson said.

"We are not aware of any sukkah existing in Jerusalem that endangers human life," the municipality

told The Times of Israel in a statement. "Should such a sukkah be erected, the municipality would take immediate action to enforce its removal in accordance with the law."

An emergency responder for the volunteer Tzevet Hatzalah organization operating in the neighborhood offered additional assurances that there was no need to worry. Everyone who builds such platforms hires the services of a qualified engineer, and until now, no tragedies involving collapsed sukkahs have taken place, he said. One can only hope he is right.

Several blocks from the crowded, disheveled old streets of Meah Shearim's commercial center, new luxury buildings glisten in the sun, highlighting sharp economic divides within the Haredi community.



A sukkah balcony with empty spaces above, allowing the sukkah to be directly under the sky, at the Cardo shopping promenade at the Jerusalem Estates, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)

At the Jerusalem Estates, large gardens with well-kept playgrounds lie between buildings designed for ultra-Orthodox residents. Spacious, privately built sukkot stand in front of buildings in the public space, while others sit on balconies strategically designed to maximize space, as Skarf described.

At the Cardo shopping promenade across the street, apartments several flights below the penthouse have balconies with empty spaces above them, creating unique corridors that enable the construction of a kosher sukkah at the expense of multiple balconies above.

For the wealthy ultra-Orthodox buyer, a sukkah balcony is a non-negotiable resource, sometimes increasing a home's value by as much as 5%. Even in less exclusive developments, it can add upwards of NIS 100,000 (\$30,000) to the value of an apartment, according to Nachi Paris, owner of Nachi Realty in Jerusalem.

"Everyone should strive to have a beautiful sukkah, in accordance with the size of their families and what they can afford," said Isser Oppenheim,

a Beit Shemesh resident who was visiting friends at the Jerusalem Estates. "It's a beautiful mitzvah whose joy brings increased holiness."



Isser Oppenheim at the Jerusalem Estates, October 8, 2025 (Zev Stub/Times of Israel)

Sukkah balconies started to come into style in Israel in the 1990s, and are now in high demand in many cities around the country, not just ultra-Orthodox ones. In Herzliya and Tel Aviv, some buildings as tall as 15 stories have been designed with Sukkah balconies in mind, and in Or Yehuda, a city of 40,000 in the center of the country, the local building and planning committee recently [ruled](#) that up to 30% of the balconies in new urban renewal projects should be sukkah balconies.

However, the innovation is neither new nor distinctly Israeli. In Brooklyn, New York, hassidim in the neighborhood of Williamsburg have been [living](#) for decades in brownstone buildings with staggered balconies designed for the Sukkot holiday.



Sukkah balconies also existed in pre-war Krakow and some other European towns with large Jewish communities, according to Haredi historian and podcaster Yehuda Geberer.

The main sukkah at The Inbal hotel in Jerusalem, Sukkot 2025 (The Inbal/Oz Ohayon)

Today, many of Jerusalem's luxury hotels offer private Sukkah balconies for their most exclusive suites, at prices even higher than regular rooms during the holiday. Guests can use these for private gatherings, separate from the communal hotel sukkot, which are often exquisitely decorated themselves.

“There are a lot of economic considerations to these sukkot, so people have given them a lot of thought,” Skarf said. “It’s interesting to see some of the rich and novel solutions people have come up with to enjoy the holiday.” <https://www.timesofisrael.com/to-sit-in-the-sukkah-comfortably-some-jerusalemmites-are-living-on-the-edge/>

What is happening with Big Pharm – a long but most interesting read. Criminal X-Public “servants” rdb

Behind the White Coats: Six Surgeons General's \$Millions in Pharma Conflicts Exposed

When “America’s Doctors” Become Big Pharma’s Spokespersons

[Sayer Ji](#)

Oct 09, 2025



Help Share this Campaign on X: <https://x.com/sayerjigmi/status/1976333236226994196>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Six former U.S. Surgeons General recently condemned HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in [an WSJ op-ed](#), but investigation reveals each has significant financial ties to pharmaceutical companies, healthcare corporations, or controversial ethical lapses that compromise their credibility as impartial voices.
- Current Surgeon General Vivek Murthy earned \$2.6 million in corporate consulting fees during the pandemic while advising the Biden campaign, and is now [named in federal lawsuits](#) for allegedly pressuring social media platforms to censor truthful vaccine side-effect information.
- A [leaked April 2025 memo](#) from the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) reveals a coordinated \$2 million campaign to remove Kennedy from office, deploying “strategic voices and allies” in what appears to be an orchestrated pharmaceutical industry counter-offensive.
- The revolving door between public health leadership and private industry has created a systemic crisis of credibility, with former officials monetizing their government experience through lucrative board positions and consulting arrangements with the very entities they once regulated.

Read the full story: <https://sayerji.substack.com/p/behind-the-white-coats-six-surgeons>

OP ED

Towards a Left-Wing Reich in Germany?

by [Drieu Godefridi](#)

October 10, 2025 at 5:00 am



Germany today offers the world a disturbing spectacle: a state in its death throes which, under the guise of democratic virtue, is sinking into authoritarianism. In today's Germany, the leading opposition party is not treated as a legitimate actor in the democratic process, but, without any due process, as an enemy within.

Pictured: Alice Weidel, co-leader of the political party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), is seen on a monitor as she speaks at the party's convention on January 11, 2025 in Riesa, Germany. (Photo by Sean Gallup/Getty Images)

Germany today offers the world a disturbing spectacle: a state in its death throes which, under the guise of democratic virtue, is sinking into authoritarianism. The erosion of civil liberties is not occurring through a coup d'état, but by the slow accumulation of administrative, legal and police measures that shape the contours of a dictatorship as implacable as it is convinced of its own virtue.

1. The Classification of the AfD by an Administrative Agency

In the spring of 2025, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution ([BfV](#), Germany's domestic intelligence service) [classified](#) the political party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) as a "right-wing extremist" organization. This classification [granted](#) the authorities the power to place its members and supporters under police surveillance without prior judicial authorization, including measures such as intercepting private communications or the BfV recruiting informants within the party.

This "judgment" was not delivered by an independent court. It was created by an administrative agency directly under the authority of the Interior Minister. The BfV is not even an administrative court; it is a bureaucratic body, issuing reports and recruiting informants without allowing the parties concerned to present their case. When an individual or party is labeled "fascist" and consequently excluded from Germany, is it not desirable that they at least be granted the right to defend themselves? Well, according to German law in 2025, the answer is *nein*.

Worse still, the file justifying this classification has [never](#) been released. There is therefore a complete absence of adversarial proceedings. The AfD was never consulted, and even after the fact, it has no right to know why, on what grounds, on the basis of what evidence and documents, it was excommunicated from the German "democratic" sphere.

The AfD is therefore reduced to [appealing](#) to the courts to challenge this label. How can the AfD effectively contest a classification when the documents remain secret so that it cannot even know what it is contesting? How can it challenge the term "far right" when it is not defined anywhere? Since the early Middle Ages, the tradition of the state based on rule of law — *Rechtsstaat* in German — has required that convictions be based on precise and strictly defined charges. *Nullum crimen, nulla poena sine lege*. No crime, no punishment without prior definition. Is the fact that the AfD defends positions more "right-wing" than other parties sufficient to justify a label? Given that the AfD's program is, on several points such as the right to bear arms, more "left-wing" than the U.S. Republican Party, should one conclude that the current U.S. administration is "super-Nazi"?

This is arbitrariness pure and simple. The issue has never been law, but power: the determination of the ruling caste to cling to authority at any cost, even if it means criminalizing a quarter of the German population. Let us not forget: the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany) also claimed to be "democratic."

Since May 2025, tens of thousands of activists, local elected officials and ordinary supporters of the AfD, the leading opposition party, have been subjected to police surveillance without a court order.

In today's Germany, the leading opposition party is not treated as a legitimate actor in the democratic process, but, without any due process, as an enemy within.

2. Repression of Free Speech: The Criminalization of Dissent

This repression not only affects AfD leaders, members and activists. It extends to ordinary citizens. Pensioners, shopkeepers and students are now being [prosecuted](#) for criticizing government policy on immigration, climate or healthcare. They are treated as criminals, even as terrorists or arsonists, on charges of "inciting hatred."

In April 2025, for instance, a Bavarian court [sentenced](#) David Bendels, editor-in-chief of *Deutschland-Kurier*, to seven months' suspended imprisonment. His "crime"? Publishing a satirical image showing Interior Minister Nancy Faeser holding a placard reading "I hate freedom of opinion." The court convicted him of "abuse, defamation or slander against persons in political life."

In 2024, a 20-year-old woman appeared before a court for insulting a convicted rapist in a private WhatsApp exchange. She [received](#) a harsher sentence than the rapist, who was handed only a suspended sentence.

These repressive measures do not target extremists, but ordinary citizens who dare to contest the ideology favored by the party in power. The Network Enforcement Act ([NetzDG](#)) reinforces this censorship by forcing internet platforms to delete content under penalty of fines, thereby further eroding the freedom of expression "guaranteed" by Article 5 of the German Constitution.

This climate of fear — the dread of a police raid at dawn over a comment on Facebook, a "like," a retweet — is ruthless in its cruelty and devastating in its effects on public opinion. It is turning Germany into a Potemkin

democracy, where only the official monologue is tolerated.

3. The Quarantined Area: Institutionalized Directed Democracy

Since 2015, an unwritten but inflexible rule has governed the federal parliament (Bundestag and Bundesrat) and regional parliaments: no coalition may be formed with the AfD, and no AfD vote will ever be recognized as legitimate. This [Brandmauer](#) (firewall) to relegate the AfD into a quarantine, has the direct effect of suspending political competition by freezing the political landscape. Henceforth, Germany lives under the illusion of alternation between Social Democrats (SPD) and Greens on one side and the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) on the other, all united in their refusal to open up the democratic game to its actual winner. With 20% of the vote in the last federal election — soon to be 26%, [according](#) to polls, and approaching 50% in former East Germany — the AfD is forcing other parties into unnatural coalitions. Merkel's doctrine reigns supreme: better for the "right" to govern with the far left than with the AfD.

Even as the German establishment insists this situation is "normal," even noble, international observers are mercifully beginning to express concern. U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance recently [declared](#):

"Europe's renunciation of its fundamental values, which are also those of the United States, is worrying. In a democracy, it is the voice of the people that matters, and there is no place for cordons sanitaires."

The quarantining of the AfD ensures that the left will remain in power indefinitely, regardless of election outcomes. This amounts to rule by a single "party" and a single ideology — that of the ruling caste. Democratic change through the ballot box in Germany is no longer possible.

4. Towards an Outright Ban on the Opposition

As if this were not enough, government circles are now openly considering banning the AfD altogether, under the fake pretext of "protecting the constitution." Annalena Baerbock, former foreign minister from the far-left Greens party, [declared](#) in early 2024: "We must not rule out banning the AfD if evidence of extremism continues to mount."

Saskia Esken, co-chair of the SPD, [added](#): "The AfD is no longer a democratic party. It is the duty of our constitutional state to prevent it from acting."

Even the once-conservative CDU has joined the chorus, with Chancellor Friedrich Merz [affirming](#) that "all constitutional instruments must be considered" against the AfD."

Criminalizing 25% of the electorate is like placing dynamite beneath a shared house. To condemn a quarter of the German population to democratic death — denying them any access to power while repressing even the polite expression of their opinions on social media — is to invite desperate and violent reactions. These reactions will inevitably be seized upon by the ruling caste to justify an even tighter grip on power.

The Shadow of the Reichstag Fire

One cannot but recall Germany's [Reichstag fire](#) on February 27, 1933, set by a Dutch communist, which the Nazi Party instantly used as a pretext to suspend civil liberties and consolidate its domination of the German state. The very next day, President Paul von Hindenburg, responding to Hitler's urgent request, [signed](#) the "Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and the State," invoking Article 48 of the Weimar Republic's constitution. The decree suspended fundamental civil liberties — freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and association, privacy of correspondence and communications, protection against arbitrary searches and arrests. On this basis, mass arrests of political opponents were immediately launched. The decree marked a decisive step in the Nazi Party's seizure of totalitarian power, paving the way for the elimination of opposition and the establishment of a dictatorship.

Germany today faces a fatal spiral. Either it accepts true pluralism and freedom of expression — without which democracy cannot exist — or it succumbs to the temptation of eliminating dissent by judicial and police means, silencing the only genuine opposition. If that happens, it will not be the AfD that is destroyed, but German democracy itself.

Any democracy that outlaws its opposition to the ruling party ceases to exist.

A new "Decree for the Protection of the People and the State" — banning the AfD — would signal nothing less than the death of German democracy.

Drieu Godefridi is a jurist (University Saint-Louis, University of Louvain), philosopher (University Saint-Louis, University of Louvain) and PhD in legal theory (Paris IV-Sorbonne). He is an entrepreneur, CEO of a European private education group and director of PAN Medias Group. He is the author of [The Green Reich](#) (2020).

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/21967/germany-left-wing-reich>



BS"D

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.

You can send donations to:

East Texas Biblical Prophecy Forum which is a 501-3C ministry and receive a tax credit statement

Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at 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, Volunteer Program Manager