



Netanyahu to meet with Trump in Mar-a-Lago to discuss Gaza and Iran

Jonathan Lis

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is to meet U.S. president Donald Trump Monday at Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida to discuss Gaza and Iran, amid Israeli concerns about Trump's attitude towards Netanyahu.

The U.S. president confirmed earlier this month that Netanyahu had initiated the meeting, their sixth since Trump returned to office in January. An Israeli source said the chances are growing that the two leaders will hold another meeting while the prime minister is in Miami. He said that that

will be decided after the first meeting in Mar-a-Lago.

Sources familiar with the details of the visit said they are struggling to assess whether Trump will take a friendly or hostile approach toward Netanyahu. "With Trump, you never know, but ostensibly there is no reason the conversation shouldn't be good," one source said.

Netanyahu had considered offering to reopen the Rafah border crossing in both directions as a gesture to Trump in their meeting, but he walked back that idea

after encountering intense opposition from National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, according to a source familiar with the details. Israel had announced in early December that the crossing would reopen for Gazans to leave Gaza, but it didn't happen because of opposition from Cairo. The crossing was supposed to open as part of the ceasefire agreement reached in October, but Netanyahu blocked the move

because many hostages hadn't yet been returned.

Monday's meeting is expected to focus primarily on U.S. efforts to advance to the second phase of the Trump Gaza plan, rising tensions involving Lebanon and Syria, and Israeli concerns over Iran's attempts to rebuild its missile capabilities. Israeli officials expect significant tension between Trump and Netanyahu over the issue of Turkish involvement in the international stabilization force in Gaza and the transition to the second phase of the Trump plan to end the war in Gaza, due to difficulties in recruiting countries for the mission.

Trump said several weeks ago that the transition to the next phase would take place "very soon." Israeli political leaders are concerned that the administration may push ahead with Gaza's reconstruction in parallel with efforts to demilitarize the territory, and are seeking to ensure that Hamas is disarmed before reconstruction advances.

Netanyahu is also expected to urge Trump to hold off on moving to the second phase before Ran Gvili's remains are found – otherwise that would effectively eliminate the possibility of locating and returning his body. Gvili's parents have joined Netanyahu on his Wing of Zion aircraft.

The second phase of Trump's plan, which has been delayed, is an ambitious, internationally led initiative intended to establish a new governing structure in Gaza and advance the territory's reconstruction. Alongside demands for Hamas to be disarmed, re-

maining tunnels destroyed, and Gaza fully demilitarized, Trump is expected to present the planned composition of Gaza's future governing bodies: a Board of Peace, an international administrative body that would operate under U.S. oversight, and a technocratic government tasked with managing daily life in the territory, whose members would not be affiliated with Hamas.

In recent days, Israeli officials have been publicly discussing Netanyahu's intention to bring to Trump's

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Iranian hackers leak alleged info from phone of PM's aide

Omer Benjakob

An Iranian hacker group leaked videos and texts after allegedly breaking into the phone of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's chief of staff, Tzachi Braverman, on Sunday.

In a post on X, the hacker group known as "Handala" posted videos allegedly showing Braverman holding "lavish" Shabbat dinners, which, according to the group, "were stages for secret deals, political networking, and power plays, all under the guise of tradition."

Earlier Sunday, the group said it had obtained sensitive information about Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from the phone and will publish it soon.

According to the hackers, the material to be released is linked to the alleged ties between Netanyahu's aides and Qatar, as recent revelations in the affair dubbed "Qatargate" have rocked the political system.

In a post on their X account, the hackers said they had broken into Braverman's iPhone and now possess "encrypted chats, hidden deals, shameful moral and financial indulgences, abuse of power, blackmail, payoffs." The hackers said they had dubbed the breach "The Gatekeeper's Fall."

Earlier this month, "Handala" claimed they had hacked Bennett's phone and circulated contacts and correspondence said to belong to him. Bennett initially denied the claims, but several hours later said that "it appears access was gained to the Telegram account through various means." He added that "the phone contact list, as well as many photos and chats – some real and some fabricated – were distributed."

The hacker group known as "Handala," apparently named after a cartoon Palestinian child who became a national symbol, specializes

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High Court rejects petitions against appointment of Zini

Chen Maanit

The High Court on Sunday rejected the petitions against the appointment of David Zini as Shin Bet chief, with a majority opinion by Justices Noam Solberg and David Mintz against the dissenting opinion of High Court President Isaac Amit.

Police set to indict ex-MAG

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Amit's dissent stated that the discussion of Zini's appointment should be returned to the Senior Appointments Committee, an independent advisory committee chaired by former Supreme Court President Asher Grunis, since it did not examine Prime Minister Netanyahu's integrity at the time of his appointment of Zini amid testimonies of political intervention in the work of the Shin Bet and a conflict of interests.

The High Court President

also mentioned the ongoing criminal proceedings against Netanyahu, who "sought to influence them through the head of the Shin Bet Security service."

He cited statements from former Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar, who was fired in March, that "the Prime Minister pressured me, in an unusual and repeated manner, to give instructions [...] in a manner that in practice does not allow the proper proceeding of the trial [...] In the meantime, an attempt was made to force upon me the wording of a professional opinion that was formulated by the Prime Minister or someone on his behalf, and was passed to me while I was required to present it as a position paper on behalf of the head of the Shin Bet."

Justice Amit also wrote that the Grunis Committee should have clarified why there was no defect in the aspect of moral integrity with respect to Netanyahu, given similar allegations raised by previous Shin Bet chiefs, and considering that

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'WE WIL DIE BEFORE WE ENLIST': Ultra-Orthodox Jewish men blocking traffic on Route 4 while demonstrating against the military draft of Haredim, on Sunday. (See story, Page 2.)

Moti Milrod

Police no longer tie suspect to Haymanot Kasau disappearance

Josh Breiner

The police are not attributing to the suspect in the assault on the girl in Beer Sheva to the disappearance of Haymanot Kasau, but they say that the findings strengthen suspicion against him in the Beer Sheva case, and on Sunday requested to extend his detention by three more days.

The Rishon LeZion Magistrate's Court on Tuesday extended the suspect's detention until Sunday. The man, a Beer Sheva resident, 63, is suspected of assault and committing an indecent act against the girl three weeks ago. At last week's hearing, Judge Menahem Mizrahi



An image of Haymanot Kasau in Tel Aviv, August.

Itai Ron

said that the police had an indication that the suspect was in Safed on the day Kasau disappeared and

they requested to extend his detention by ten days. The judge concluded in his decision that suspicion was not ruled out in the Kasau abduction, but no corroborating evidence was presented. In contrast, in the Beer Sheva case, suspicion was based on "real evidence."

The suspect's public defender, said he couldn't comment because of a gag order on the investigation. "I will remark that we are talking about a regular guy with no criminal background," he said. "It seems the matter here was blown out of all proportions, and that in this case the police are mistaking the mountains' shadow for the mountains."

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No human ever lived in it

Biggest stalactite cave in Israel or West Bank discovered near Ofra

Ruth Schuster

A large cave featuring spectacular speleothem "rock growths" that formed over thousands and possibly millions of years has been discovered by the settlement of Ofra about 30 meters below the surface. This subterranean cavern features the full gamut of hanging stalactites, stalagmites piling up, encrusted pools of minerals, "elephant ear" layered formations and much more, when artificially lit. Otherwise it is pitch black.

It's a pity that nobody other than the intrepid cavers of the Hebrew University's Cave Research Center and caving club who discovered it can visit. This cave is extremely hard to reach. It is not accessible to the general public or even to most experts, affirms Omri Salner of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

No human ever lived in it, neither our predecessors nor even animals, adds geologist Prof. Amos Frumkin, head of the Hebrew University Cave Research Center. The cave was discovered with efforts by Vladimir Boslov, Raz Ben-Yair, Reuven Zakai, Yuri Lisovetz and Yoav Negev.

The team exploring the cave did find the skeleton



The Jubilee Cave

Boaz Langford/The Israel Cave Research Center at Hebrew University

of a snake. It had probably fallen in, not lived permanently in this pitch-black space, Frumkin says by telephone.

Dubbed "Jubilee Cave" to mark Ofra's 50th birthday, the newly revealed subterranean wonder-world is about 88 meters in length, 75 meters wide and 40 meters in height – the highest underground chamber ever found in Israel, Frumkin says. The cave does not stand alone; it is part of a broader karst system around Ofra.

What is karst? That is the name for the pitted landscape that forms when rain over eons dissolves soluble bedrock, such as dolomite or limestone. The results are characteristic features from vast caves to sinkholes to underground rivers and streams.

Ofra sits in a karst system with at least 80 caves counted so far, descending through limestone or harder dolomite bedrock. Most are natural vertical shafts that channel rain-

water from the surface to the underground aquifers, Frumkin says. The Jubilee Cave is one of few in the area with a broad chamber.

To be clear, there is a crack in the earth near Ofra that goes down like a shaft and suddenly widens into the richly decorated chamber, and that is the Jubilee Cave. It also explains why you can't go there. It is difficult and dangerous.

But there is a problem.

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High Court stays Army Radio closure, accepting AG's motion

Chen Maanit and Jasmin Gueta

The High Court of Justice issued a temporary injunction Sunday halting the closure of Army Radio. Attorney General Gali Barav-Miara requested that the closure approved by the cabinet not be carried out until the court rules on challenges to the move.

Supreme Court President Isaac Amit said he issued the injunction in part because

the government did not explicitly promise to refrain from irreversible actions until the legal proceedings are concluded.

In her legal opinion Barav-Miara wrote that the proposal to close the station is highly flawed and the hearing on the matter will be held soon. "The damage that would be caused by taking actions to close the station are significant and irreversible," she wrote.

Earlier Sunday, Defense

Minister Israel Katz filed a joint response with the government against an urgent motion for a temporary injunction filed by Army Radio employees. They asked to stay the actions to close the station that the minister is advancing. In response, Katz attacked the union, claiming it had filed false affidavits in an attempt to mislead the court.

At a public conference

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