



Attorney-General Will Decide On Netanyahu's Indictment Before Israel's Elections

Attorney-General Avichai Mandelblit formally announced on Friday that he will decide Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's legal fate before the upcoming April 9 election.

Though there have been leaks to this effect, this was the first time that Mandelblit himself confirmed it, rejecting a request by Netanyahu's lawyers to delay the decision. Some polls have suggested that the announcement could have a decisive electoral impact on Netanyahu and the Likud, while others have suggested the impact will be minimal.

Mandelblit also explained for the first time why it was legal for him to make the decision pre-election despite the general rule that major legal decisions should not be made leading up to election.

While the basis for the general rule is to avoid any appearance of bias toward any political party, Mandelblit explained that in this case, delaying the decision would have shown bias in favor of Netanyahu.



Accordingly, he said it would be inappropriate to appear to delay the decision about the prime minister's public corruption cases under pressure from Netanyahu. Netanyahu's spokesman has continually blasted the idea that Mandelblit would determine the prime minister's public corruption probes fate pre-election.

Gantz on par with Netanyahu in latest leadership polls

Former IDF chief and political newcomer Benny Gantz got a boost in the polls two days after giving his first speech (scan QR barcode for the speech) and joining forces with another former IDF commander, Moshe Ya'alon. Gantz is now on par with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has so far been poised to win the premiership in the April 9 vote.



When asked who is the most suitable PM candidate, a poll by Reshet Channel 13 News puts Gantz and Netanyahu at 42 percent each. A poll conducted by Keshet Channel 12 News puts Netanyahu slightly ahead, with 36% compared to Gantz's 35%, while a poll done by the Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation (IPBC) shows a bigger gap, with the prime minister getting 47% compared to Gantz's 41%.

Gantz's Israel Resilience Party went up in the polls as well, and it is now trailing Netanyahu's Likud Party by a single-digit number of seats, with one poll predicting a six-seat difference and two others putting the two parties eight or nine seats apart.



Ethiopians shut down Tel Aviv with protest against police brutality

Ayalon Highway was blocked to traffic and many Tel Aviv streets were at a standstill as the Ethiopian community protests police overreaction following killing of Yehuda Biadga, 24, in Bat Yam two weeks ago. He was killed by police in Bat Yam two weeks ago as he was waving a knife. Witnesses say the youth posed no direct danger to the lives of the officers.

The incident is still being investigated

It began at Azrieli Junction, continued onto the Ayalon Highway and ended at Rabin Square where thousands of Ethiopians gathered to protest against police brutality in Tel Aviv Wednesday afternoon and evening. After blocking the Azrieli Junction, protesters proceeded to descend to the Ayalon Highway bringing traffic on Tel Aviv's main artery to a standstill. Many other Tel Aviv streets were blocked as well, causing huge backups and delays all over the city and the wider Gush Dan area.



IDF soldiers charged with severely beating detained Palestinians

The incident took place earlier this month during a manhunt for As'am Barghouti, who shot dead two soldiers from the Netzah Yehuda Battalion at the Giv'at Asaf outpost in the West Bank in December. The two Palestinians were arrested on suspicion they helped Barghouti and his brother—who were also involved in a terror attack near Ofra Junction that left seven people wounded—evade capture.



Arrested Netzah Yehuda soldier

The two detainees suffered severe rib and nose fractures and needed urgent medical care after five soldiers from the IDF's Netzah Yehuda battalion violently abused them; Palestinian suspects were arrested on suspicion of aiding attacker who killed the soldiers' comrades. A platoon commander and four combat soldiers from the IDF's religious battalion Netzah Yehuda were indicted Thursday for severely beating two Palestinian detainees, leaving them seriously hurt with fractures in their ribs and noses.



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