



## Two Centrist Israeli Parties Merge, Posing Threat To Netanyahu's Re-election

After talks that lasted through the night, Yair Lapid and Benny Gantz agreed that their two parties — Yesh Atid and Israel Resilience, respectively — would merge for the upcoming election. The deal stipulated that, if elected, Gantz would be Prime Minister first, for two-and-a-half years, and then Lapid would take over.



The latest polling average compiled by the Israel Policy Forum predicted that Israel Resilience and Yesh Atid - now called Kachol Lavan, literally meaning Blue-White, would get a combined 30 seats out of the 120 total, the same amount as Netanyahu's Likud. This merger between two top-polling centrist parties is posing a major challenge to Netanyahu's ten-year hold on the office, the Times of Israel reported.

## Netanyahu Orchestrates Merger To Bring Extremists Into Knesset

The Israeli right-wing party Jewish Home merged on Wednesday with a small extremist party led by followers of the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, all but guaranteeing Knesset seats for the extremists.



Kahane's party was banned from running in Israeli elections in 1988 for racism, and then banned entirely in 1994 under anti-terrorism laws. Two Kahanist groups, Kahane Chai and Kach, are currently designated as foreign terrorist organizations by the U.S. Department of State.

According to Haaretz, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised top positions in the next government to Jewish Home leaders if they merged with the small extremist party Otzma Yehudit, or "Jewish Power," which is led by three prominent Kahanists.

Parties must get at least 3.25% of all votes to gain entry into the Knesset. Had the two parties run separately, they likely would have split votes and risked falling under the electoral threshold and not making it into parliament at all, weakening options for Netanyahu to forge a coalition on the right.

The prime minister cancelled a meeting with Russian president Vladimir Putin in order to usher through the deal, according to the Times of Israel.



## Yum! Bamba to hit US supermarkets!

The world-famous and beloved Israeli peanut snack Bamba is set to hit the shelves of US retail giant Walmart this month, Osem CEO Avi Ben-Assayag announced Tuesday as he opened the company's enormous new factory in Kiryat Gat. Bamba will also be available in additional retail chains and pharmacies in the coming months.



Bamba was this Shaliach's first word. Even as a toddler, I had my priorities set!

## MERETZ LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN PROTESTING B'NEI BERAK BILLBOARD BAMBOOZLE

Last week, a billboard with a photo of Meretz leader Tamar Zandberg was not installed near the border of B'nei Berak and Ramat Gan. This week, Meretz announced that it plans to sue the B'nei Berak Municipality if it does not allow women's faces to appear on billboards in the Haredi city.

Meretz launched a campaign titled #YouWillNotEraseMe on Tuesday following the demand of B'nei Berak advertising companies not to display pictures of women on billboards. Her team released a video in which billboards featuring prominent women were erased. The famous figures on the billboards included Eurovision song contest winner Netta Barzilai, Nobel Prize Winner Ada Yonath, Supreme Court President Esther Hayut and Olympic medal-winning judoka Yael Arad.



*Edited by Idan Sharon, Adat Shalom's Shaliach. [Idan.Sharon@adatshalom.net](mailto:Idan.Sharon@adatshalom.net)  
The Congregational Shlichim Program is a partnership between  
the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and local synagogues.*