

# Israel troops kill Palestinian teenager in West Bank

Author:

Sat, 2021-11-06 01:57

JERUSALEM: A 13-year-old Palestinian was shot and fatally wounded on Friday by Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

It said Mohammed Daadas died in hospital after being shot in the stomach during clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli forces in Deir Al-Hatab village, east of Nablus.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment on the report.

Two other Palestinians were injured Friday in clashes in Beita, another West Bank village where locals have struggled for months to dislodge Israeli settlers and the military from a hilltop.

The clashes come days after Israel announced it would advance plans for 3,000 more homes for Jewish settlers in the West Bank, despite international criticism.

Israel has also advanced plans to build about 1,300 homes for Palestinians in the West Bank, but critics see the move as an attempt to parry global condemnation of settlement construction.

Palestinians eye the West Bank as part of a future state, while hard-line Israelis including Prime Minister Naftali Bennett say it is a heartland of Jewish history.

Israel seized the West Bank and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis have since moved into settlements that most of the international community regard as illegal.

Bennett has ruled out formal peace talks with the Palestinian Authority, saying he prefers to focus on economic improvements.

Bennett, a hard-line former settler, presides over a motley alliance of fellow nationalists, centrists, liberals and the first Arab party to ever sit in an Israeli government.

Israeli MPs approved the government's two-year budget on Friday, bringing stability to a shaky coalition of ideological opposites that would otherwise have collapsed, returning Israel to years of political turmoil.

"The budget we passed last night is excellent! I am mostly proud that it brings us a true and timely response to the needs of Israel 2022," Bennett tweeted after the package was approved.

The coalition needed to pass a budget by Nov. 14 to avoid a fifth election in three years.

None of the 61 members of the coalition defected through nearly 36 straight hours of voting.

Roughly 600 separate votes on individual spending measures were required to pass the budget that sets expenditure for this year at 609 billion shekels (\$194 billion) and for next year at 573 billion shekels.

Speaking on Thursday after the approval of the 2021 measures, Bennett boasted: "After years of chaos, we have formed a government, we have conquered delta (variant of the coronavirus) and now, praise God, we have

passed a budget for Israel.”

The country’s largest-selling newspaper, Yediot Aharonot, said Bennett’s government had finally attained “stability and a horizon,” and would no longer “topple in the slightest wind.”

Mansour Abbas, whose Raam party forms part of Bennett’s governing coalition, said it was the first time an Arab party had played a key role in the adoption of a budget.

“This is an important step in the political integration process” of Israel’s Arab minority, he said.

Approval of the two-year budget gives the coalition stability until 2023, when Bennett is due to turn the premiership over to centrist Foreign Minister Yair Lapid.

Suggestions that the government might fall before Lapid gets to take over could have unsettled the coalition’s left wing, analysts said.

“Coalition of change,” Lapid tweeted after the budget vote.

Israeli media reported attempts by the opposition, led by former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s right-wing Likud party, to peel away coalition lawmakers to vote against the budget.

Instead, the approved a budget that will increase military spending and aim to narrow gaps between the Jewish majority and Arab minority, among other priorities.



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Israeli bookstores pull Irish author’s work for refusing offer of Hebrew translation  
Benjamin Netanyahu’s hopes for a comeback dim as Israel passes

## Lebanese PM hopeful after crisis-busting move as calls grow for Kordahi's resignation

Sat, 2021-11-06 00:39

BEIRUT: Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati was on Friday awaiting the results of behind-the-scenes consultations aimed at bridging the gap within his government and mending ties with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries, after they severed diplomatic and economic ties with Beirut in protest over statements made by Information Minister George Kordahi.

MP Ali Darwish, a member of Mikati's parliamentary bloc, told Arab News: "Through the roadmap that Mikati announced on Thursday, he put forward an initiative to defuse the crisis."

Darwish stressed that Mikati "is a moderate man by nature over whom there is consensus, which is essential in a country like Lebanon, so it is crucial for him to carefully and wisely handle issues."

Mikati had once again called on Kordahi to "follow his conscience and prioritize national interest."

Kordahi, however, is refusing to resign from the government.

Speaking about the possibility of Mikati's government falling if Kordahi and his political team stand firm, Darwish said: "Mikati understands the Lebanese situation and believes that as long as he is prime minister, he can help Lebanon maintain good relations with the Arab countries."

Darwish added: "If Mikati were to resign, Lebanon could face unimaginable consequences."

The MP also said the current government "is based on a formula that brings together all the Lebanese, and if we were to lose the executive authority, we would be stripping Lebanon of the decision-making authority."

Speaking on behalf of the anti-Hezbollah Sovereign Front, former Interior Minister Maj. Gen. Ashraf Rifi said: "Hezbollah formed governments based on its interests, controlled the state and took it hostage for Iran's sake."

He called on Mikati to resign, saying: "You are the prime minister of a dysfunctional government, and the country does not need more Hezbollah governments."

Rifi noted: "This entire regime needs to leave, starting with the president from Hell, Michel Aoun. We need to steer away from the axis of evil, and justice must be applied."

International support for the Mikati government grew on Friday when the French Foreign Ministry announced that it is in "close contact with all parties concerned with the new conflict between Arab countries and Lebanon."

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian called on "all parties, as well as Lebanese officials, to promote calm and dialogue for the sake of the Lebanese people and the stability of Lebanon," stressing that this is "critical for the region."

Le Drian said: "Separating Lebanon from regional crises is of fundamental importance. Lebanon must be able to count on all its regional partners to support it in implementing reforms."

After she met with Mikati on Friday, the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Joanna Wronecka expressed "full support for the work of the Mikati government," encouraging it to proceed with the required reforms.

On Thursday evening, US State Department spokesman Ned Price stressed that Lebanon must work with its partners for the sake of the Lebanese people, and leave diplomatic channels open with the Gulf countries.

Price added: "We look for ways to alleviate the suffering of the people of Lebanon."

MP Nicolas Nahas, a member of Mikati's parliamentary bloc, described the current political complications as "major," noting that efforts are ongoing to curb the escalation with the Gulf states.

He added: "The issue requires a clear and integrated roadmap to rebuild confidence, and the first step begins with Kordahi following his conscience.

"If he does not resign, the president, the prime minister and the parliament speaker would need to decide what measures to take."

Nahas stressed: "Serious work is required, and it is not permissible in any way for the people to pay the price for political disputes."

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova also commented on the crisis.

Zakharova said: "Russia is looking forward to resolving the diplomatic conflict between Lebanon and the Arab Gulf states as soon as possible."

Zakharova pointed out that Kordahi's statements "were made at a time when he was not yet a minister representing the Lebanese state and its government."





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Lebanese prime minister urges information minister to resign

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## [From traditional to abstract, Arab pavilions at Expo 2020 Dubai seize the imagination](#)

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Fri, 2021-11-05 22:43

DUBAI: World Expos have a long and illustrious past, not least for their lasting contributions to urban skylines and architectural world-firsts. The Eiffel Tower and Chicago's Ferris Wheel are two of the most recognizable

examples.

Despite such permanent contributions, expos have mostly been temporary events, with elaborate pavilions representing countries from every corner of the world for a limited time, only to be unceremoniously removed at the end of the duration.

Chicago built an entire temporary city in grand neo-classical style for its expo in 1893. The famous White City ultimately provided planners with a blueprint for future growth – however, the buildings themselves were not retained.



This has been a common narrative of World Expos, with pavilion structures either unused or destroyed afterward.

Not so in Dubai. The Expo 2020 organizing committee has designed the site to include a dedicated pavilion for each nation, in addition to other participating organizations, which are intended to remain long after the event draws to a close.

Its novel concept has resulted in more than 200 pavilions across a site twice the size of Monaco, the sovereign city state on the French Riviera.

The site is divided into three “thematic districts” that mirror the sub-themes of the event: Sustainability, mobility and opportunity.





Algeria

Some of the pavilions have been designed and built by participating countries, showcasing their own national architecture and designs, while others occupy standardized buildings assembled by the host.

Many Arab countries have built their own pavilions and put substantial resources and effort into their development (with assistance from the UAE, in certain cases).

All Gulf Cooperation Council member countries – as well as Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt, among others – have self-built pavilions.

Many of these are in the Opportunity District, with prime locations close to the UAE and Saudi pavilions.

Since this is the first expo to be hosted by a Middle Eastern country, Arab states have pulled out all the stops to make their mark on the event.

Architecture across the site incorporates many elements of traditional Arabic design, but the overall impression is perhaps not as visually cohesive as Chicago's White City would have been.



Oman

Each country participating in Expo 2020 Dubai has been given the freedom to bring in its own unique design, with regional touches such as latticework, courtyards and shade structures applied throughout.

The result is a selection of powerfully individual pavilions designed to capture visitors' interest.

Arab pavilion designs and their associated architecture can be broadly defined as falling into two camps: Traditional yet innovative, with an emphasis on history and culture; and the expressive and inventive, with an emphasis on the abstract and experimental.

Falling into the former category is Algeria's pavilion, modelled on the Casbah (citadel) of its capital Algiers.

In a nod to the host city, the iconic blue and white palette of Algiers has been traded for desert shades.

The design of the pavilion references traditional Algerian style, with an interior courtyard and design elements to maximize air flow.

While the pavilion's interior courtyard provides a quiet protected space, the facade is dramatically stylized with designs resembling traditional Berber tattoos.





Bahrain

Also occupying the traditional-yet-innovative camp is Kuwait's pavilion, an eye-catching gold structure in the Sustainability District, constituting the Gulf kingdom's most ambitious expo contribution to date.

The design evokes the ecology of the desert, with video of camels and rolling sand dunes displayed on large external screens.

Textured gold exterior panels form a modern take on its desert terrain. In the center of the pavilion is a reproduction of a local water tower, used for the conservation of natural resources.

Another of the traditionalists is Morocco, which drew inspiration for its pavilion from its scenic earthen villages.

At 34 meters in height, spread across seven floors, it is among the tallest buildings at the expo.

The facade was built using rammed-earth construction methods, common to Morocco and inherently sustainable as the thick earthen walls keep the air inside cool.



UAE

The rooms are arranged around a central courtyard, complete with hanging gardens and other tributes to Moroccan regions and ecosystems.

Oman, too, pays homage to its traditional roots with a focus on the ancient frankincense tree, native to Dhofar governorate.

The exterior resembles the tree, with rich curved frankincense beams that required two to three years to create especially for the expo.

Oman also has among the most creative visitor experiences, with frankincense-scented sanitizing mist at the entrance and a photo area where floor panels emit sudden jets of faintly scented mist, so that the surprise of visitors is captured on camera.

Bahrain's pavilion is among the most striking and experimental of the expo. Designed by Christian Kerez Zurich AG, the pavilion appears from the outside to be a windowless metal box bristled with long metal rods, with no discernible entry or exit.

Instead, visitors are directed down a long ramp that takes them deeper and deeper underground, where the air becomes cooler and the sounds of the surface world recede.





## Morocco

The descent is described by the architect as “a transition between the outer and inner worlds of the pavilion.”

When visitors enter the pavilion proper, they are greeted by a cavernous ceiling and bright light.

The metal rods visible on the outside are revealed to be part of a forest of floor-to-ceiling columns.

The pavilion design is intended to explore the concept of density – both in reference to the world’s growing urban density, and as a nod to the densely woven fabrics of Bahraini craftspeople.

Another nation whose pavilion design has pushed the boundaries is Saudi Arabia – the expo’s second largest after the UAE’s and an obvious crowd favorite.

The structure is a ramp angled up toward the sky, implying the ambition of the Kingdom but also doubling as a kind of window.

The underside of the ramp, which faces visitors as they enter the pavilion, features the world’s largest LED display, depicting Saudi Arabia’s spectacular natural scenery, offering visitors a glimpse into parts of the Kingdom most have never seen before.

The pavilion has earned a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design platinum certificate in recognition of Saudi Arabia’s commitment to using sustainable construction materials and recycling waste during the construction process.

In a marked departure from past expos, country pavilions will remain a



permanent feature of the Dubai landscape.

Some pavilions will be repurposed to house an Expo 2020 Dubai museum, while others will remain tied to their country of origin as venues for cultural exchange.



Kuwait

In 2010, the UAE became the first country ever to relocate its pavilion to home soil after the Shanghai Expo (in the form of 24,000 individual steel pieces). In 2015, the UAE also repatriated its pavilion from Milan.

Now the country is continuing this tradition of sustainable reuse on a far grander scale. In the legacy period after the event, the site will evolve into a residential and commercial community named District 2020, retaining around 80 percent of its existing buildings.

In the meantime, millions of Expo 2020 Dubai visitors are getting an exposure to a global environment awash with new ideas, cultural experiences and entertainment. The wide variety of architecture is a source of awe and inspiration.

And thanks to the foresight of its planners, the expo will not disappear once its six-month run expires, but will live on as a sustainable community for decades to come.



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## [Netanyahu's hopes for a comeback dim as Israel passes budget](#)

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1636060692880131200

Fri, 2021-11-05 00:17

TEL AVIV: Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu watched from the sidelines Thursday as the government that toppled him after 12 years in power passed a national budget, dealing a major blow to his hopes of a swift return to the country's top office.

The man whose shadow loomed so large for so long over Israel, whose rule

sparked both mass protests and cult-like devotion, has been relegated to the backbenches as opposition leader, far from the levers of power and exposed to serious corruption charges.

The first budget to be passed in three years, during which a prolonged period of political gridlock brought four divisive elections, was a stress test for Israel's fractious coalition government.

"It changes the timeframe for him," said Anshel Pfeffer, a columnist at the left-leaning Haaretz daily and Netanyahu biographer. "It doesn't mean he's going to give up. He's not going to give up. He's incapable of giving up." Failure to pass the budget before Nov. 14 would have resulted in the dissolution of the government and snap elections – giving Netanyahu, who is rising in the polls, a chance at redemption. Now that it has passed, the government – established with the goal of ousting Netanyahu – appears to have bought itself some time. Coalition parties are struggling in the polls and none is likely to want to topple the government and trigger new elections, for now.

Netanyahu's best hope is that the coalition, made up of eight ideologically diverse parties, implodes over its own contradictions. Otherwise, his next chance will come when the government rotates its leadership in 2023, bringing the centrist Yair Lapid to power and perhaps giving his nationalist coalition partners a reason to bolt.

Aviv Bushinsky, a former Netanyahu aide, said Netanyahu is better off biding his time as opposition leader, a public platform from which he can contest the legal charges and ratchet up support from constituents.

"Right now he's in no hurry. He has nothing to lose," he said.

Addressing parliament on Wednesday, ahead of the budget vote, Netanyahu vowed to carry on.

"We will continue to fight this awful government. We will leave no stone unturned, we will look for any way to topple it, to return Israel to the right track," he said.

Netanyahu, a major figure in Israeli politics for the last quarter century, suffered a dramatic downfall earlier this year.

He began a 12-year run as prime minister in 2009, after an earlier stint in the 1990s, becoming Israel's longest serving leader and helping to shape the country.

He was ubiquitous on the world stage, preaching against Iran's nuclear program and the accord with world powers meant to rein it in.

He ramped up settlement building in the occupied West Bank, avoided peace talks with the Palestinians and presided over three wars against the Hamas militant group ruling Gaza.

He worked hard to convince Israelis that he was a world-class statesman, the only one who could safely guide Israel through its myriad challenges.

But under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, who has traveled to the global climate summit, steered Israel through a fourth COVID-19 wave and passed a budget, that argument has eroded.

"Suddenly you don't need to be Benjamin Netanyahu to be the prime minister of Israel. And that in itself has sort of been a revelation," Pfeffer said.

Netanyahu also used his office to divide Israelis, whipping up nationalists against dovish leftists, Jewish Israelis against Palestinian citizens of Israel and railing against the country's institutions, especially after he was indicted in three corruption cases.



Netanyahu is on trial for fraud, breach of trust and bribery, charges he denies but which clouded his last years in office. Under Israeli law, Netanyahu did not have to step down after being indicted, leaving him a bully pulpit from which he could fight the charges, push to legislate immunity and air his grievances against the media and the judicial system.



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[Benjamin Netanyahu](#)

Outgoing Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu gets his first smartphone  
Benjamin Netanyahu to leave prime minister's residence by July 10

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## [Vietnam seeks information from Iran about seized oil tanker](#)

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Fri, 2021-11-05 00:05

HANOI: Vietnam was seeking more information on Thursday about a Vietnamese oil tanker that was seized at gunpoint last month by Iranian soldiers in the Gulf of Oman, while vowing to ensure the safety and humane treatment of the ship's crew members.

Iran's powerful paramilitary Revolutionary Guard troops on Oct. 24 took control of the MV Southys, a vessel that analysts suspect of trying to transfer sanctioned Iranian crude oil to Asia. US forces had monitored the seizure but ultimately did not take action as the vessel sailed into Iranian waters.

The episode was the latest provocation in Mideast waters as tensions escalate between Iran and the US over Tehran's nuclear program.

Vietnamese officials "continue to closely follow the developments and work closely with Iranian authorities to resolve this issue in accordance with the law and enact necessary measures to safeguard the rights and interests of Vietnamese nationals," Pham Thu Hang, deputy spokesperson in Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said on Thursday.

The captain of the MV Southys told the Vietnamese Embassy in Iran that all 26 crew members were being treated well and were in "normal health," Hang told reporters at a scheduled briefing.

Iran celebrated its capture of the vessel in dramatic footage aired on state television Wednesday, the day before the 42nd anniversary of the 1979 seizure of the US Embassy in Tehran.

Ship-tracking data analyzed by The Associated Press from MarineTraffic.com showed the vessel still off Iran's southern port of Bandar Abbas on Tuesday. A satellite photo from Planet Labs Inc. also showed the vessel off Bandar Abbas in recent days.



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Iran seized Vietnamese oil tanker: US officials Iran says stopped US navy  
seizing tanker in Sea of Oman