



Israel's PM dissolves war cabinet

Countdown begins for Netanyahu's downfall

Political tension in Israel over the conduct of the regime's war on the Gaza

Strip spilled out into public view again Monday. Israeli officials said

on Monday that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dissolved the

war cabinet following the resignation earlier this month of centrist leader

Benny Gantz. An official told AFP that the wider "security cabinet will continue to decide on matters regarding the war".

Israeli media said the move, which was not expected to trigger any major policy shift, was meant to counter pressure from far-right politicians seeking a greater say in decision-making. Political analysts believe that countdown to the fall of the Netanyahu's cabinet from power could begin after the dissolution of the war cabinet.

The war cabinet was formed after Gantz had left the opposition to join Netanyahu's cabinet following Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack.

Gantz and another member of his party, Gadi Eisenkot, both former military chiefs, had agreed to join the cabinet on condition that a war cabinet be formed, said another Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to discuss the issue with the media.

With Gantz and Eisenkot out of the cabinet, "there is no longer a need for" the war cabinet, said the

official.

"It means that the security cabinet will meet more often. The security cabinet is the body responsible for making decisions (related to the war) anyway."

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi and Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer, who were all part of the war cabinet, also sit on the security cabinet - the key forum ratifying decisions regarding the war including truce and captive release negotiations. Gantz announced his resignation on June 9 after failing to get Netanyahu to approve a post-war plan for Gaza.

Israeli media reported that Netanyahu dissolved the war cabinet to avoid including far-right coalition members in the sensitive forum, fearing harm to relations with key Western allies such as the United States.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who are both security cabinet members and opposed to a truce before Hamas is "eliminated", have put pressure on Netanyahu to add them to the war cabinet.

Israel's war has wiped out entire Palestinian families:

Investigation



He is among the very last survivors of his Gaza family, a clan so close they knew without thinking how blood and marriage bound them across generations and city blocks.

Then, branch by branch, 173 of Youssef Salem's relatives were killed in Israeli airstrikes in a matter of days in December. By spring that toll had risen to 270.

Bones and flesh strewn over the ruins of family homes. Blond curls of a young cousin peeking through bricks. Unrecognizable bodies piled on a donkey cart. Lines of burial shrouds.

These images are what survivors are left with from hundreds of families in Gaza like the Al-Aghas, Salems and Abu Najas.

To a degree never seen before, Israel is killing entire Palestinian families, a loss even more devastating than the physical destruction and the massive displacement.

An Associated Press investigation identified at least 60 Palestinian families where at least 25 people were killed - sometimes four generations from the same bloodline - in bombings between October and December, the deadliest and most destructive period of the war.

Nearly a quarter of those families lost more than 50 family members in those weeks. Several families have almost no one left to document the toll, especially as documenting and sharing information became harder.

Youssef Salem's hard drive is stocked with photos of the dead. He spent months filling a spreadsheet with their vital details as news of their deaths was confirmed, to preserve a last link to the web of relationships he thought would thrive for generations more.

"My uncles were wiped out, totally. The heads of households, their wives, children, and grandchildren," Salem said from his home in Istanbul.

In the last two decades, 10 members of his family were killed in Israeli strikes. "Nothing like this war," he said.

The AP review encompassed casualty records released by Gaza's health ministry until March, online death notices, family and neighborhood social media pages and spreadsheets, witness and survivor accounts, as well as a casualty data from Airwars, a London-based conflict monitor.

Presidential candidates outline their foreign policy priorities

Campaigning for the upcoming presidential election in Iran continued on Monday with the six candidates outlined their programs to win the votes of people.

Since the campaign kicked off following the approval of candidates by the country's top election supervisory body, one key area of focus for the hopefuls has been foreign policy.

During a live roundtable discussion held on Friday, Saeed Jalili, a former nuclear negotiator and head of the Supreme National Security Council, emphasized the necessity of capitalizing on global opportunities while addressing threats through collaborative and diplomatic engagements with nations worldwide.

He stressed the need for foreign policy endeavors to directly benefit the Iranian people, emphasizing the importance of seizing global opportunities to enhance the nation's well-being.

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, the speaker of the Iranian parliament and a presidential hopeful, also expounded on his foreign policy perspectives.

He underscored the myriad of challenges and pressures faced by the Islamic Republic since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and asserted that the nation has ascended to a prominent position in the geopolitical arena.

In one of the televised sessions, the former Tehran mayor referred to unfinished foreign policy initia-

tives and promised that his administration would take them forward with full vigor. In an interview with Al Alam News Network of the IRIB World Service, Qalibaf outlined his potential future government's strategy to counter Western sanctions against Iran and protect Iranian interests.

Masoud Pezeshkian, the former health minister and one of the six presidential candidates, participated in a roundtable and outlined a vision rooted in both personal insights and national service. Pezeshkian prefers increased interaction with the outside world.

He advocates for a strategy grounded in diplomacy and dialogue, rejecting confrontational approaches on the

global stage.

In his live TV appearances and interviews this week, he strongly emphasized the power of dialogue as a potent tool for fostering understanding and cooperation. Mostafa Pourmohammadi, who previously held ministerial portfolios in different administrations, also provided a sneak peek into his government's foreign policy agenda during televised roundtables.

He asserted that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy, emphasizing that a nation capable of securing its borders effectively can also achieve success on the international stage. According to the presidential candidate, effective communication fulfills most of

the country's requirements, stressing the importance of continuity across various domains, while prioritizing security and economic interests.

In one televised program, he affirmed that the Islamic Republic "must engage with the global community, fulfilling its responsibilities to defend the rights of the oppressed and strengthen the axis of the oppressed against oppressors."

During a televised roundtable on Saturday, Alireza Zakani, Tehran's Mayor and former senior lawmaker, also outlined his potential government's approach to foreign policy, emphasizing an idea-oriented strategy rooted in dignity. Zakani underscored the

paramount importance of foreign policy in governmental priorities, citing the significant role of Iranian Islamic culture in the West Asia region.

During Saturday morning's press conference, Seyyed Amir-Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, a former parliamentarian, articulated his foreign policy mantra as "gentleness with allies and tolerance with foes," underscoring its alignment with the late president Ebrahim Raisi's approach.

He emphasized prioritizing the strategic outlook towards the East and fostering neighborly relations in Iran's foreign policy agenda, in line with the Raisi administration's policy that proved effective.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran rebukes G7 statement over its nuclear program

International Desk

Iran called upon the Group of Seven on Sunday to distance itself from "destructive policies of the past" after the group warned Iran against advancing its nuclear program.

"We urge Tehran to cease and reverse nuclear escalations, and stop the continuing uranium enrichment activities that have no credible civilian justifications," the Group of Seven said in a statement on June 14.

"Iran must engage in seri-

ous dialogue and provide convincing assurances that its nuclear program is exclusively peaceful, in full cooperation and compliance with the IAEA's monitoring and verification mechanism, including the Board of Governors' resolution of 5 June," the G7 said. The 35-member Board of Governors passed a resolution on June 5, accusing Iran of withholding sufficient cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The resolution proposed by Britain, France and Ger-

many demands that the Islamic Republic step up its cooperation with the IAEA and provide "technically credible explanations which satisfy the Agency's questions."

Kanaani said that Tehran would continue its "constructive interaction and technical cooperation" with the IAEA, but called its resolution "politically biased." He said that the G7 statement's reference to the anti-Iran resolution by the IAEA indicates the resolution's political approach.