

The Sabra Report

Raising Awareness and Encouraging Discussion About Israel

Netanyahu Urges Coalition with Gantz And the Right, Which Vows to Back Him As PM

Times of Israel, September 19th 2019

Recap:

Israel's 2nd election in 6 months failed to produce a party with a majority.

The Context:

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with leaders of the right-wing religious bloc, signed a document pledging to enter a coalition as a single unit and recommend Netanyahu as the next Prime Minister [1]. The all-or-nothing alliance aims to prevent a different unity coalition, composed of Likud, Blue and White, and Yisrael Beytenu, that would pursue liberal policies and shun the ultra-Orthodox parties. While not enough to form a coalition on its own, Netanyahu hopes that President Reuven Rivlin will treat his 55-seat bloc as a single party and task Netanyahu with forming the next government. Under Israeli law, Rivlin picks a party leader to form a government after the final vote is in [2].
- Netanyahu's agreement with the religious right-wing bloc is intended to pressure Netanyahu's rival, Benny Gantz, into dropping his demand for a "secular" agreement. Netanyahu expressed an openness to share the Prime Minister role with Gantz, similar to the 1984 agreement in which Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Shamir each governed for two years.
- Gantz's Blue and White party, which secured more seats than Likud, criticized Netanyahu for essentially guaranteeing "third elections [while] trying to foist the blame onto us" by offering a non-starter deal. Gantz added that if "[Netanyahu] stepped aside, there would be a unity government within a day."
- If Netanyahu is not Prime Minister next month during a pre-trial hearing on bribery and fraud charges, he will likely have to resign if indicted. His bloc partners floated the idea of giving him immunity as Prime Minister [3].
- With Israeli politics in flux, Netanyahu canceled his annual speech at the U.N. General Assembly and US President Donald Trump appeared to distance himself from Netanyahu, saying "our relationship is with Israel [4]."

Conversation Points:

- Will an end to the Netanyahu era significantly change Israel's relationship with the United States, the regional struggle against Iran or the Palestinian conflict?
- Did centrist inertia and infighting help advance the agendas of Israel's fringe parties?
- Are Netanyahu's motives political or personal?

High Court Refuses to Freeze Deportation of Migrant Workers'

Lee Yaron, Haaretz, September 19th 2019

Recap:

The Interior Ministry plans to deport 100 Filipina migrant workers whose visas have expired, along with their Israeli-born children. The women arrived in Israel legally, but their visas were not renewed after giving birth in Israel [5].

The Context:

- Some 60,000 foreign caregivers – mostly women – are currently employed in Israel. Half of them are from the Philippines, with smaller numbers from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Moldova [6].
- Israeli law stipulates that female foreign workers who become pregnant must send their babies home as a condition for their visas' renewal, but many fail to do so and stay in the country illegally to give their children a better life. Four families with school-aged children were arrested in the last several weeks [7].
- Attorney David Tadmor invoked the Compulsory Education Law when filing a petition against the policy, saying the Population and Immigration Authority is not abiding by its own rule of allowing students to finish the school year without fear of arrest [8].

Conversation Points:

- Should a child's status be determined by the status of their parents?
 - Is it fair to expect a parent to send a child away?
 - Should the government's attitude towards those that care for Israel's elderly and infirmed be more humane?
-

Ukraine Plans to Implement Magen David Adom EMS Model

Brian Blum, Israel 21c, September 17th 2019

Recap:

Magen David Adom (MDA) has seen an uptick in visits by senior medical officials from around the world who seek to learn from Israel's national rescue organization [9].

The Context:

- MDA operates 161 stations across Israel which supports 715 ambulances, 379 mobile intensive care units, 24 mobile mass casualty incident units, 500 motorcycles, two helicopters, and eight off-road vehicles. An additional 45 ambulances are leased to communities in confrontation zones and periphery areas of the country.
-

- Senior Ukrainian officials met with MDA to learn about its system of quickly activating volunteers and the its range of rescue vehicles.

Conversation Points:

- What else, in addition to Israeli technology, might contribute to MDA being such a unique and effective organization?
-

Notes:

1. [Netanyahu to Gantz: Let's form a unity government](#), Ynet, September 19th 2019
2. Ibid.
3. [Netanyahu Calls for Unity Government After Election Deadlock](#), Felicia Schwartz and Dov Lieber, Wall Street Journal, September 19th 2019
4. [Weakened Netanyahu seeks Israeli unity government with rival Gantz](#), Jeffrey Heller, Reuters, September 19th 2019
5. [In Policy Reversal, Israel Could Deport Foreign Workers, Israeli-born Children](#), Lee Yaron, Haaretz, September 2nd 2019
6. [Judge orders Filipino couple and 2 Israeli-born daughters kept in jail](#), Times of Israel, August 21st 2019
7. Ibid.
8. [In Policy Reversal, Israel Could Deport Foreign Workers, Israeli-born Children](#), Lee Yaron, Haaretz, September 2nd 2019
9. [MDA's System of Operation and Technology on The Way to Ukraine](#), The Yeshiva World, August 22nd 2019
10. Ibid.

The Sabra Report is a newsletter intended to stimulate conversation about Israel by recapping major events & providing context. Our conversation points are meant to encourage discussion amongst friends and family.

The Sabra Report is written by Irving Safdieh.

DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!
SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AT
www.sabrareport.com
