

The Sabra Report

Raising Awareness and Encouraging Discussion About Israel

Arab Mayors Slam Israel's 'Bad Decision' to Enlist Shin Bet to Fight Crime

Jack Khoury & Jonathan Lis, Haaretz, October 4th 2021

Recap:

The Shin Bet will join forces with Israeli police to fight illegal weapons in the Arab community.

The Context:

- ✧ 95 Arabs were killed this year in Israel's Arab communities. Over half of Arab Israelis live under the poverty line in towns with crumbling infrastructure, poor public services and few job prospects [1] which fuels the rampant gang violence.
- ✧ The Shin Bet, Israel's shadowy intelligence agency known for targeting Palestinians in the West Bank, will be enlisted to assist local police officers. Arab politicians called "police for Jews and Shin Bet for Arabs" a blatant double standard [2].
- ✧ The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) will also play a role in turning the tide but mostly by preventing weapons smuggling from its caches [3]. Theft of IDF weaponry accounts for a large percentage of the 500,000 illegal guns in the Arab-Israel sector [4].
- ✧ Over 70% of murders in Israeli Jewish communities are solved by the police, although only 23% are solved in Israeli Arab communities [5]. Many Israeli Arabs plagued by the violence see no other choice but to allow the Shin Bet to play its part. "I'll accept any means to combat organized crime in Arab society, let the devil in," said Rahat mayor Fayez Abu Suheiban.

Conversation Points:

- ✧ Why are police and local governments failing the Arab community?
- ✧ Is Israel right for tapping the Shin Bet?
- ✧ Is "police for Jews and Shin Bet for Arabs" a double standard?

Israel Foreign Minister in Bahrain for Landmark Visit

Al Jazeera, September 30th 2021

Recap:

Israel's foreign minister visited Bahrain for the highest-level official Israeli visit since the countries established ties last year.

The Context:

- ✧ The whirlwind trip was Israel's first since Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Sudan agreed to establish ties with Israel. The Israelis joined Bahrain's tiny Jewish community in marking Simchat Torah.
- ✧ Lapid also toured the US Navy's Fifth Fleet in the Persian Gulf, sending a message to Tehran. Iran's Foreign Ministry criticized Bahrain's rulers for "ignoring the Zionist regime's daily crimes [6]." Bahrain's pivot to Israel is largely a reaction to Iran's provocations in the region.
- ✧ The accord enraged Palestinians, who see it as an abandonment of a longstanding commitment in the Arab world not to normalize relations with Israel [7]. Demonstrators filled the streets of Manama, Bahrain's capital, to protest the visit.

Conversation Points:

- ✧ What steps can Israel and its new Arab allies take to solidify their economic, security and political relationships?
- ✧ Is the enemy of your enemy a friend you can count on?

New Guidelines: Israel Restricts Its COVID-19 'Green Pass' Rules, Sparking Protest

Arab News, October 4th 2021

Recap:

Israel restricted its COVID-19 Green Pass to allow only those who have received a vaccine booster. Nearly 2 million vaccinated people will lose access.

The Context:

- ✧ 564 of 38,088 active COVID patients are in serious condition while Israel's death toll since the start of the pandemic is 7,827 [8]. Over 70% of cases in Israeli hospitals are unvaccinated individuals.
- ✧ Israel is the first country to make a booster shot a requirement for its digital vaccination passport. Israelis staged demonstrations around the country in protest of the green pass system, calling it a form of forced vaccination. Last month, Israel's vaccine czar warned that the country should prepare for the rollout of a fourth dose [9]. A US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) panel recommends booster shots to those over 65 but not the whole population.

- ✧ Israel's coronavirus cabinet approved the loosening of Green Pass restrictions in museums and libraries to allow school trips [10].

Conversation Points:

- ✧ Should Israel force a universal booster if scientists are still split on its merits?
- ✧ When will Israel open its doors to foreigners!? Y'all, we're waiting!

Notes:

1. [Police minister says IDF will play no role in fighting Arab community](#), Times of Israel, October 4th 2021
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. [Israeli-Arab violence is greater threat to Israel than Hezbollah](#), YONAH JEREMY BOB, Jerusalem Post, OCTOBER 4th 2021
5. [The Gangland Murders Forcing Israel to Its Breaking Point](#), Noga Tarnopolsky, Daily Beast, October 4th 2021
6. [Lapid's visit to Bahrain includes a trip to a US Navy base, off Iran's coast](#), Times of Israel October 1st 2021
7. [Bahrainis protest Israel FM visit to the Persian Gulf country](#), IFP News, September 30th 2021
8. [Israel continues to see decline in current COVID infection wave](#), Ynet, October 4th 2021
9. [Israel tightened its COVID vaccine pass to require a booster shot to get into most indoor venues](#), Marianne Guenot, Business Insider, October 4th 2021
10. [Israel continues to see decline in current COVID infection wave](#), Ynet, October 4th 2021

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.

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