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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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06.09.2024



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A front-row seat to the implosion of Israel's government

Amid an existential war, Israel's government is fracturing under unprecedented internal conflicts and divisions as power struggles threaten to dismantle its leadership and transform a once formidable state into an irreparably fractured entity.



(Photo Credit: The Cradle)

Imagine a once-dominant sports team now in disarray: players rebelling against their coach, the coaching staff at odds, and fans, representing the Israeli public, protesting en masse in the streets. This is the current state of affairs in Israel.

Just two days ago, Israel witnessed yet another [massive protest](#) ignited by the deaths of six captives held in Gaza. The discovery of their bodies triggered widespread anger and led to hundreds of thousands of Jewish Israelis taking to the streets of Tel Aviv and other major cities. Amid clashes with police, they demanded Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu conclude a ceasefire agreement with Hamas, while calls were made for a [general strike](#) by the national labor union.

The occupation forces, the cornerstone of Israel's expansionist ambitions, are faltering under internal disputes. [Public spats](#) between Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, and far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir reveal a government in chaos, with clashing agendas and eroding strategy.

Even the Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, has [criticized](#) extremist influences within the government, further exposing the deepening rifts. Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar has taken to calling the forces of extremism "[Jewish terrorism](#)," which he believes will "endanger Israel's existence."

Netanyahu's Napoleonic parallels and internal discord

Prime Minister Netanyahu's recent actions have exposed these fractures further. On 17 July, during a Knesset debate, Netanyahu dismissed calls for an independent civilian probe into the 7 October Al-Aqsa Flood resistance operation, [comparing](#) these demands to bureaucratic distractions faced by military leaders during the Napoleonic wars.

He suggested that any inquiry should wait until after the war on Gaza ends, revealing a reluctance to prioritize transparency during wartime.

Netanyahu's comparison to Napoleon is telling: just as Napoleon's retreat from Russia [signaled his downfall](#), Netanyahu's avoidance of accountability foreshadows a similar retreat into failure. As Hamas snipers and ambushes inflict daily casualties on Israeli forces, what once seemed like a swift, decisive campaign has devolved into a protracted conflict, reflecting disloyalty and despair within Netanyahu's ranks.

The Knesset vote back in June to advance the [Haredi Draft Law](#), requiring ultra-Orthodox Jews to serve in the military, has also sparked feelings of betrayal among Israeli reservists. For years, the Haredim, who enjoy significant political influence within the state, have avoided conscription, citing religious study as their basis for exemption.

Reservists, already overextended by the widening war, feel abandoned by a government prioritizing political alliances over national security needs, [deepening the divide](#) between Israel's secular and religious communities.

Clearly, the discord extends beyond political disagreements, deeply permeating Tel Aviv's security apparatus. On 20 August, a mother of one of the Israeli prisoners speaking at an independent "civilian commission" [revealed](#) that Mossad director David Barnea had told her that a prisoner deal is impossible "because of politics." The Mossad later denied this claim.

Meanwhile, families of captives accused Ben Gvir of obstructing prisoner exchange efforts, further inflaming public sentiment and intensifying discord within the occupation government.

Jewish terrorism and the erosion of military unity

Ben Gvir embodies the growing disarray within Israel's governance. On 19 April, he tweeted a single word – "[Dardaleh!](#)" Hebrew slang for weak or disappointing – following Israel's alleged attack on Iran. This tweet publicly mocked the Israeli military, stripping away the veneer of strength that Tel Aviv strives to project.

Ben Gvir's recklessness didn't stop there. After Iran's initial [retaliatory strikes](#) earlier that month, which he claimed destroyed two Israeli military bases and caused heavy casualties – statements starkly contradicting the official narrative – Ben Gvir deepened the existing fissures within Israel's leadership.

His remarks struck a blow to the carefully curated image of military unity that Israel's leadership tries to maintain, embarrassing a military apparatus that prides itself on [projecting invincibility](#).

Ben Gvir's provocations extend to frequent [visits to and inflammatory remarks](#) over the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem, a site of immense religious significance and historical tension. These visits, accompanied by armed Israeli security forces, far from being mere symbolic gestures, have ignited conflict not only with Palestinians but also within Israel's government and the international community.

On 13 August, during Tisha B'Av – one of many such inflammatory appearances – Ben Gvir's actions were widely condemned across Israel. Gallant and Bar expressed deep concern about creating "internal division" and the growing phenomenon of "[Jewish terrorism](#)."

Tel Aviv's projection of its own fears

This warning echoes the psychological concept of "[projection](#)," theorized by Sigmund Freud, where individuals or groups project unwanted traits or fears onto others as a defense mechanism. In Israel's case, the incessant branding of Gazans as "terrorists"

mirrors the violent, extremist actions increasingly surfacing within its leadership and society.

The occupation government, fervent in its denunciation of external terror, now faces the unsettling truth that its own societal fabric is fraying, with many within its ranks embracing the very tactics they decry.

Complicating matters further, Ben Gvir's wife, Ayala Nimrodi, [plays a role](#) in the Temple Mount Administration, entrenching its influence over one of the most volatile religious sites in West Asia. While her involvement may not significantly impact decision-making, it underscores the personal investment that the pair have in [asserting Jewish control](#) over the site.

This illustrates a concerning level of unprofessionalism – even by Israeli standards within the occupation government – where personal and political lives dangerously intertwine. Much like Sara Netanyahu, the [scandal-plagued](#) wife of Israel's prime minister, Nimrodi's role highlights how personal interests can entangle with national policy, exacerbating tensions and alienating key figures within the government.

The Kahanist divide

Ben Gvir's [background](#) further amplifies the severity of these developments. A disciple of Meir Kahane, whose Kach party was banned in Israel for its racist and violent ideology and who was listed on the US State Department's terror list, Ben Gvir has long been controversial.

His Kahanist roots are characterized by a belief in Jewish supremacy – an ideology that views Jews as Übermenschen and others as Untermenschen. This supremacist mindset is not confined to Ben Gvir alone but permeates Israeli governance. The distinction between left and right has blurred, leaving only the right and the far-right, with this ideology influencing policies that perpetuate inequality and tension.

Ben Gvir is not just a dissonant voice; he represents a rift that has always simmered beneath the surface, now threatening to unravel the illusion of leadership that Israel's political structure has long projected.

This isn't a case of a once-cohesive leadership being torn apart, but rather the exposure of an inherent fragility masked by the façade of unity. Ben Gvir's actions are the sparks igniting these long-present cracks, revealing the underlying instability of the Zionist enterprise.

And it is causing Israeli Jews to abandon the state and flee to other safer countries; over 500,000 since 7 October, many who cite both [insecurity and rising Jewish extremism](#) as reasons for their decision.

From supremacy to chaos

Amid a regional war, Israel's government is mired in conflict, with Ben Gvir at the center of several disputes. His recent threat to dissolve the cabinet highlights his destabilizing influence. The deep mistrust between Netanyahu and Ben Gvir stems from the latter's determination to push an extremist ideology now pervasive within Israeli politics, blurring the lines between far-right and mainstream.

Ben Gvir's actions have not only strained his relationship with Netanyahu but have also deepened divisions among other key figures, such as Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, who clash over policies that could undermine Israel's security. Those policies have also caused conflict between Gallant and Netanyahu, with the latter threatening to fire his own defense minister on several occasions.

Meanwhile, Justice Minister Yariv Levin's push for judicial reforms has sparked widespread protests, further fragmenting the cabinet and threatening Israel's legal bases and separations of powers.

The Israeli cabinet now resembles an old episode of *The Jerry Springer Show* – a chaotic spectacle where every figure is at each other's throats, accusations fly, and the underlying dysfunction is glaringly exposed.

In this entertaining political circus, Ben Gvir's provocations, including his threats to dissolve the cabinet, are not mere maneuvers – they are strategies designed to exploit weaknesses within Israel's leadership.

Just as Ben Gvir once tore the emblem from the car of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin – assassinated in 1995 by a Jewish extremist who opposed the Oslo Accords – in symbolically challenging unity, he and other likeminded officials now threaten to dismantle that unity altogether, and shatter it from within.

SEP 4, 2024