



Trump asks Herzog to 'fully pardon' PM

In a letter, U.S. president calls Netanyahu's trial 'a political, unjustified prosecution'

Michael Hauser Tov and Ben Samuels

The U.S. president asked Israel's president Wednesday to "fully pardon" the prime minister in his long-running corruption trial.

In a letter to Isaac Herzog, Donald Trump called the criminal trial against Benjamin Netanyahu politicized and unjustified.

"While I absolutely respect the independence of the Israeli Justice System, and its requirements, I be-

lieve that this 'case' against Bibi, who has fought alongside me for a long time, including the very tough adversary of Israel, Iran, is a political, unjustified prosecution," Trump wrote.

Describing Netanyahu as "a formidable and decisive War Time Prime Minister," Trump said that Netanyahu is "now leading Israel into a time of peace, which includes my continued work with key Middle East leaders to add many additional countries to the

world changing Abraham Accords."

"Netanyahu has stood tall for Israel in the face of strong adversaries and long odds, and his attention cannot be unnecessarily diverted," Trump continued.

"Now that we have achieved these unprecedented successes, and are keeping Hamas in check, it is time to let Bibi unite Israel by pardoning him, and ending that lawfare once and for all," Trump concluded.

Netanyahu faces charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three separate criminal cases. He is the first sitting prime minister in Israeli history to have taken the witness stand as a defendant.

Herzog's office said in a statement that "anyone seeking a presidential pardon must submit a formal request in accordance with the established procedures."

"President Herzog holds President Trump in the highest regard and continues to express his deep appreciation for President Trump's unwavering support for Israel, his tremendous contribution to the return of the hostages, to reshaping the situation in the Middle East and Gaza especially, and to ensuring the security of the



A burned-out vehicle on Wednesday, at the scene of Tuesday's attack by settlers near Nablus.

Majdi Mohammed/AP

IDF calls violent settlers 'at-risk youth' and accuses the police of being too soft on them

Yaniv Kubovich and Matan Golan

Officials in the military command whose area of responsibility includes the West Bank acknowledge an increase in Jewish terrorism in recent months but say it is caused by "anarchist, at-risk youth."

A source in the IDF's Central Command said in a briefing Wednesday that

"These teenagers need intervention from welfare and education institutions. They aren't representative of the 560,000" settlers in the West Bank.

At the same time, Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir condemned the violence. "The Israel Defense Forces will not tolerate a criminal minority tarnishing a law-abiding public," he said. "These actions violate our values,

cross a red line and divert forces' attention from their mission: protecting settlements and carrying out offensive operations. We are determined to stop this phenomenon and will act firmly until justice is served."

Only one person, a minor, was arrested Wednesday on suspicion of arson and assault after dozens of settlers attacked Palestinians near the West Bank city

of Nablus on Tuesday. In that incident, settlers assaulted Palestinians and set fire to tents in the village of Deir Sharaf and a nearby Bedouin encampment. After security forces arrived, the settlers – some of them masked – fled toward the Beit Lid industrial zone, where they allegedly torched trucks, agricultural fields and several buildings. They also vandalized a mili-

tary vehicle and reportedly assaulted soldiers.

The source in the Central Command noted that in October, there were 86 incidents of so-called nationalist crime in the West Bank, compared with 25 incidents in October 2024.

"These incidents could destabilize the entire security situation here," the

See **SETTLERS**, Page 2

Teen sexually assaulted; complained about cellmates

Nir Hasson

An autistic 14-year-old male youth who has been accused of security violations and is being held in detention was sexually assaulted by older cellmates. The police have opened an investigation of the incident, and the youth was transferred into a cell of his own. Before the assault, the youth had

complained about serious violence committed against him by his cellmates, and his lawyers warned the Juvenile Court and the Prison Service that he was in danger, but the court did not order him released or transferred to another cell.

The youth, who lives in

Jaffa, was arrested a month ago while visiting his family in Ramallah, on suspicion that he was trying to prepare explosive devices and had contacted Hamas and the Islamic State, photographing for them security installations in Israel. According to the charges, the

youth joined a group called "The cyber movement and the armed jihad" on the Signal application, where he expressed his wish to become a shaheed (a martyr).

The indictment states that the youth prepared explosives and took pictures of several structures in Israel for

the benefit of the group. The youth's mother told Haaretz that he is known to have a 100 percent disability, and that he is an isolated child. "He is a boy who doesn't know how to communicate with other people. They are presenting him as a terrorist, but he is sick and helpless, someone

who doesn't understand what is happening around him," she said.

Already during the first days of his detention, the youth complained about violence he had experienced at the hands of prison guards and other detainees. His public defense lawyer, Yigal Dotan, and a representative



The Russian Compound prison.

Noam Revkin-Fenton

See **TEEN**, Page 2

Palestinian teen dies from IDF tear gas after month in coma **Page 2**

Archaeologists crack a mystery: What were clay cornets used for?



Some of the hundreds of cornets found at Teleilat Ghassul in the 1930s.

Sharon Zuhovitzky

inside cornets through residue analysis led to a theory of a possible use in early copper smelting, known for using a lost-wax casting process. Also, the whiff of ritual ran through the theories. The suggestion that they had served as lamps was rejected by skeptics who noted the absence of soot.

But they had. Now, based on the first analysis of the objects from production to discard, Sharon Zuhovitzky, Paula Waiman-Barak and Yuval Gadot writing in Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University have seen the light. Cornets were vigil objects: Beeswax candles with a linen wick nestled inside the ceramic cone that people may have made at home and brought their own personal candle to carry on ceremonial processions of fire.

Cornets are considered indicative of Chalcolithic Israel and Jordan, and have not been found in any other period, before or after.

This proposal is based on analyzing 35 complete cornets and 550 broken-off cornet bottoms found in the 1930s in Teleilat Ghassul, a vast Chalcolithic site in Jordan a few kilometers from

See **CORNET**, Page 4

Ruth Schuster

Archaeology involves the art of figuring out what ancient people did with objects they clearly prized, but we don't understand. What use the ancient Romans made of hollow metal dodecahedrons, we do not know. The flashy but brittle crystal daggers and arrowheads of prehistoric Spain seem sub-pragmatic for killing.

Now a new paper ana-

lyzes the puzzle of ceramic cornets, which look like variations on a theme of ice cream cones. These baffling objects began to appear in the early Chalcolithic in parts of Israel and Jordan around 6,000 years ago, became quite common – if not used in every settlement of the time – and then petered out and disappeared forever more.

Some settlements featured over 1,000, others

none. It bears adding that cornets may have more common than we realize because broken bits of their upper part can be confused with bowls. Not the tapered bottoms though.

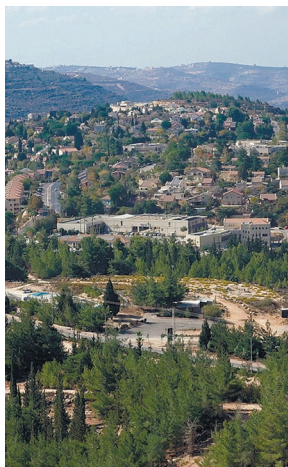
A great deal of speculation has gone into the use of the cornets. What were they for? One postulation involved an association with dairying; another that they served as V-shaped bowls. The discovery of beeswax

HAARETZ

Online now

Senior police officer detained Ben-Gvir appointee is suspected of breach of trust

Tax breaks for settlements? Bill would grant tax discounts in 'threatened' areas



Sharon Aronowicz/AFP

haaretz.com

'Harms the war effort':

Defense minister announces proposal to shutter Army Radio

Jasmin Gueta

Defense Minister Israel Katz announced on Wednesday that he will submit a resolution for government approval to shut down Army Radio, Israel's popular military-run national radio station, staffed largely by soldiers but operating as a mainstream national news and culture outlet.

He said that Army Radio was established "to serve as a voice and an ear for Israel Defense Forces soldiers and their families, and not as a platform for voicing opinions, many of which attack the IDF and its soldiers."

He added that "operating a civilian radio station run by the military is an anomaly with no parallel in any democratic country." According to him, "the continued operation of the radio station implicates the IDF against its will in political discourse, seriously damaging its status as the people's army as well as its state character."

Katz noted that "from the 1950s to today, many defense ministers and chiefs of staff have examined a number of options,

such as shutting down the station, removing it from the defense establishment, privatizing it or closing its news division, but none of those processes were ever implemented."

He added that in the past two years, "Many soldiers and civilians, including bereaved families, complained many times that

Media, time to wake up

Opinion, Page 5

they feel the station does not represent them and even harms the war effort and morale.

"Worse, our enemies interpret these messages as if they are being conveyed by the IDF itself."

In August, Katz convened a committee to review the Army Radio operations. Media industry observers feared the composition of the committee indicated its aim to shut down Army Radio, or at least its news and current affairs division.

The Attorney General's

Office criticized the committee's work, saying it raised concerns about political interference in public broadcasting, and posed questions regarding freedom of expression and freedom of press.

The minister intends to order the termination of the station's broadcasts by March 1, 2026, and to establish a professional team within the Defense Ministry to lead the implementation of the shutdown.

Following Katz's announcement, Army Radio declared a labor dispute due to what the Histadrut – Israel's largest labor union – described as "bad-faith and heavy-handed conduct" on the part of the defense minister.

According to the labor union, no negotiations on the consequences of the closure took place, "despite the decision having significant implications for workers' rights and conditions, including job security due to expected contract terminations."

The labor dispute will affect around 100 civilian IDF employees working at Army Radio, the Histadrut said.