

Israel's Ruling Coalition Crumbles as Lawmaker Quits, Citing Abuse of Palestinians

Snap elections loom on the horizon as the government led by Naftali Bennett now finds itself a minority in parliament

By [The Cradle](#)

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*The Israeli government, led by **Prime Minister Naftali Bennett**, has become a minority in the Knesset, after Arab-Israeli lawmaker **Ghaida Rinawie Zoabi** resigned, citing the occupation army’s [deadly harassment](#) of Palestinians.*

“The scenes from the Temple Mount of violent policemen confronting a crowd of worshippers, and the [funeral](#) of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Aqla, led me to only one valuable conclusion: no more,” Rinawie Zoabi wrote in a letter released on 19 May.

“I cannot continue to support the existence of a coalition that disgracefully harasses the society I came from,” she added.

The former member of the Knesset (MK) also called the abuse perpetrated on Palestinians throughout the holy month of Ramadan “unbearably difficult.”

With this latest loss, the Israeli premier finds himself facing down the likely possibility of a snap election – Israel’s fifth in three years.

On 9 May, Israeli media [reported](#) that Bennett himself expected his government to collapse soon.

According to informed sources, Bennett held a meeting with a senior policy adviser on what to do in the event of the resignation of his government, and in strategies in case of a new election.

Last month, **MK Idit Silman** [resigned](#) her seat in parliament, ending the coalition government’s parliamentary majority and dropping Bennett’s support base of lawmakers

from 61 to 60 out of 120.

According to Israeli media, Silman was offered a deal by former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to be on the Likud list in the next Knesset elections and a spot as minister of health in the next government.

As this new political crisis bears down on Israel, Netanyahu has been [gearing up](#) to attract the Jewish supremacist vote under the rallying cry of “the Arabs are taking over the country.”

A report by *The Times of Israel* from 18 May claims the Likud Party has several new laws in mind, tailored to attract voters upset with the waves of Palestinian retaliatory operations against the Israeli occupation.

Over recent weeks, operations by Palestinians in [Tel Aviv](#), [Ariel](#), and [Elad](#) have left 20 Israelis dead.

Recent polls also show that a large portion of Israeli citizens have [lost faith](#) in the future of their nation.

In response to this trend, Likud promises to introduce legislation that would deport relatives of Palestinian resistance members who hold Israeli citizenship; criminalize the flying of the Palestinian flag or burning the Israeli flag, punishable by imprisonment; and revoke the citizenship of those who protest during “times of war.”

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