

**Revealed: Gantz-Lapid deal on PM post, ministers**

The union of Israel Resilience and Yesh Atid has clearly laid out how many portfolios each will get and how the two party leaders will share the prime minister's role in a swap set for February 2022.

The *Blue and White* party presented the political agreement formulated by joint leaders Benny Gantz and Yair Lapid, which led to a shake-up in the center bloc ahead of the 2019 elections.

The agreement includes the distribution of portfolios and ministers, a rotation from Gantz to Lapid in the prime minister's chair on January 2, 2022, including the possibility of legislation to facilitate this rotation, joint decision-making processes, the addition of Gabi Ashkenazi to the list of candidates for Israel Resilience and the appointment of the next Knesset speaker by Yesh Atid.

The agreement stipulates that Lapid, Gantz and Ya'alon will work together as one faction during the period of the 21st Knesset and in any governments serving throughout this term. This means that they will be able to split in the future and act as two separate factions (Yesh Atid and Israel Resilience-Telem).

"There is unanimity between the parties regarding the need for a change of rule in Israel, for the benefit of the citizens of the State of Israel," the agreement states. "The parties decided to join hands and to work together in the upcoming elections for the benefit of the State of Israel and its citizens, and to run together in the elections and to work after the elections to form a government with them at its head."

Gantz and Lapid also divided up ministerial roles should they form the next government:

The order by choice is as follows:

1. Benny Gantz
2. Yair Lapid
3. Moshe Ya'alon
4. Gabi Ashkenazi
5. Yesh Atid representative
6. Israel Resilience representative
7. Yesh Atid representative
8. Yesh Atid representative
9. Israel Resilience representative
10. Yesh Atid representative

**Netanyahu defends partnership with far-right party amid AIPAC criticism**

Prime minister remains defiant in the face of possible breakdown of relations with pro-Israel lobby, calling their condemnation of *Otzma Yehudit* merger as 'hypocritical'; adds leftist critics in Israel want 'extreme Islamists in the Knesset.'

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is defending his partnership with a small ultranationalist party despite local and international condemnation.

Netanyahu tweeted Saturday that the criticism, including from pro-Israel Jewish organizations in the US, was marked by "hypocrisy and double standards." He accused leftist critics in Israel of having once acted "to put extreme Islamists into the Knesset" to weaken the right.

Netanyahu is seeking a fourth straight term as premier in the April 9 elections.

Earlier this week, his Likud party formed a partnership with a smaller merged party that includes members of the *Otzma Yehudit* (Jewish Power) movement. *Otzma Yehudit* embraces the ideas of the late rabbi Meir Kahane, who wanted a Jewish theocracy and advocated forced removal of Palestinians.

On Friday, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee retweeted a statement made by the American Jewish Committee a day earlier, strongly condemning the partnership with the far-right party, calling their views "reprehensible."

## **Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu to be indicted on corruption charges, pending hearing**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will be indicted on bribery and breach of trust charges arising from three separate corruption investigations, pending a hearing, Israel's attorney general announced Thursday evening.

The announcement, so close to April's general election, marks a dramatic moment in Israeli politics and is a major blow to Netanyahu as he seeks a fifth term in office.

He has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing, denouncing the investigations as a media-led witch hunt. In a prime time broadcast shortly after the announcement, Netanyahu blamed the left for pressuring Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit -- a Netanyahu appointee -- to issue an indictment.

"The left understands that they will not beat me at the ballot box," Netanyahu said. "They exerted extraordinary pressure on the Attorney General to issue an indictment even though there is nothing, in order to influence the elections and to crown a left-wing government."

"This entire house of cards will collapse. I am sure of it 4,000%," he added, referencing one of the cases against him. Netanyahu is entitled to a hearing on the impending indictment before charges are formally laid, but that is not expected to take place until long after the election. Under Israeli law, Netanyahu is not required to step down if he is indicted. He is only required to step down if he is convicted and that conviction is upheld through the appeals process, which could take years.

Netanyahu's main challenger in the upcoming elections, former military Chief of Staff Benny Gantz, called on him to resign after the Attorney General's announcement.

"Because of the circumstances which have arisen, sitting [in a future government] with Benjamin Netanyahu is not something which is on the table," Gantz said Thursday evening in response to Netanyahu's statement.

"Benjamin Netanyahu -- I turn to you this evening. Get over yourself and show national responsibility. Resign from your position. If you prove that you are innocent, you can return to the public realm and again lead your movement," Gantz added.



## **New polls put Gantz-Lapid ahead of Netanyahu**

Three surveys show Blue and White surging ahead in April 9 elections, with 35-36 seats to Likud's 26-32. According to the last polls:

Party	Seats (total 120)
Kachol Lavan – Israel in the center	36
Likud – National Liberal Movement	30
Ha'avoda - Labor	8
Yahadut Hatorah- United Torah Judaism	7
Hayamin Hahadash -The new right	6
Hadash - Ta'al list – Democratic Front of Peace	6
Balad-Raam list – National Democracy Assembly	6
Shas – Torah observant Sephardi	5
Israel Beitenu – right wing nationalist	4
Habait Haiehudi – the Jewish house	4
Meretz- social democratic	4
Kulanu- social liberalism	4

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## Israeli director wins Academy Award for Best Short Film

Israeli director Guy Nattiv won an Academy Award Sunday night for his Live-Action Short Film "Skin." The win was made all the more special for the 45-year-old Tel Aviv native because he won the Oscar with his wife, American actress Jaime Ray Newman, who served as a producer on the film. "I moved here five years ago from Israel," a stunned Nattiv told the crowd at the Dolby Theatre. "This film is about education. It's about teaching your kids a better way."



## Hamantaschen for Purim:

### **You will need –**

- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- 14 tbsp butter, cold and cut into cubes
- 2 cups flour
- 2 egg yolks
- Grated lemon peel (from ½ lemon)
- Chocolate chips/ chocolate bars



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## Israel's privately funded moon mission lifts off

Israel's non-profit Spacell launched its spacecraft from Florida's Cape Canaveral Thursday on board a Falcon 9 rocket, in a bid to become the fourth country to make a soft landing on the moon. The unmanned craft, weighing 1,300 pounds and standing approximately five feet tall, began an approximate seven-week journey to the moon, from where it will send back images of the rocky surface and conduct experiments on the lunar magnetic field.



### **How to make it -**

1. In a food processor, process powdered sugar, butter and flour until the mixture is crumbly
2. Add the egg yolks and lemon peel and process as little as possible, until you get a uniform ball of dough (if the dough is dry or/and crumbly add a tablespoon of milk, if the dough is too sticky add a tablespoon of flour)
3. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for two hours
4. Heat the oven to 350 degrees
5. Roll the dough over floured baking paper and cut the dough to circles.
6. Put chocolate chips/ 2 chocolate cubes at the center of each circle. Pinch 3 edges over the filling to form the Hamantaschen
7. Place the Hamantaschen on a baking pan and bake for 13-15 minutes, until lightly golden. Wait for full cooling.