

Israel parliament approves **death penalty** bill for Palestinians convicted of deadly attacks

The bill would make the death penalty the default punishment for Palestinians

● **Palestinians in the West Bank are automatically tried in Israeli military courts**

● **The bill appears to conflict with Israel's Basic Laws**

● **The Palestinian Authority condemned the law's adoption**

AFP | Jerusalem

Israel's parliament approved a bill yesterday that would allow the execution of Palestinians convicted on terror charges for deadly attacks, a move that has been criticized as discriminatory and immediately drew a court challenge.

Sixty-two lawmakers, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, voted in favor and 48 against the bill, championed by far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir.

There was one abstention and the rest of the lawmakers were not present.

Ben Gvir in the run-up to the vote had worn a lapel pin in the shape of a noose, symbolising his support for the legislation.

"We made history!!! We promised. We delivered," he posted on X after the vote.

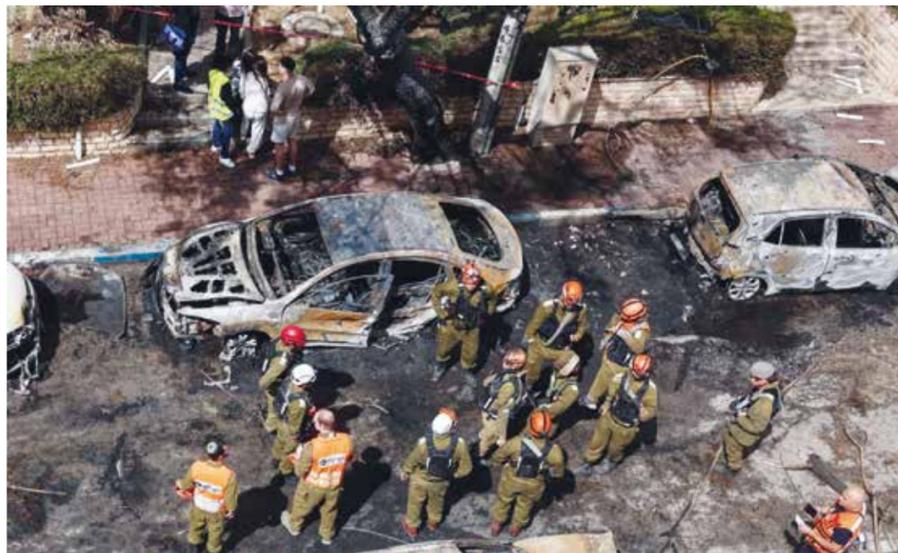
The bill would make the death penalty the default punishment for Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank found guilty of intentionally carrying out deadly attacks deemed "acts of terrorism" by an Israeli military court. The bill says that the sentence may be reduced to life imprisonment under "special circumstances."

Palestinians in the West Bank are automatically tried in Israeli military courts.

Meanwhile, under the bill, in Israeli criminal courts anyone "who intentionally causes the death of a person with the aim of harming an Israeli citizen or resident out of an intention to put an end to the existence of the



Protesters hold placards outside the Red Cross offices in Ramallah, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, during a rally against a bill approved by Israel's parliament that would allow the execution of Palestinians convicted on terror charges for deadly attacks.



First responders stand by the wreckage of vehicles as they work at a site hit during an Iranian strike over Petah Tikva

State of Israel shall be sentenced to death or life imprisonment."

Criminal courts try Israeli nationals, including Palestinian citizens and residents of east Jerusalem.

The bill sets the execution

method as hanging, adding that it should be carried out within 90 days of the sentencing, with a possible postponement of up to 180 days.

'Parallel tracks'

The bill appears to conflict with Israel's Basic Laws, which prohibit arbitrary discrimination, and shortly after it was passed, a leading human rights group announced that it had filed a petition with the Supreme

Court demanding the legislation's annulment.

"The law creates two parallel tracks, both designed to apply to Palestinians," the Association for Civil Rights in Israel said in a statement.

"In military courts — which have jurisdiction over West Bank Palestinians — it establishes a near-mandatory death sentence," the rights group said.

In civilian courts, the law's stipulation that defendants must have acted "with the aim of negating the existence" of Israel "structurally excludes Jewish perpetrators," the group added.

The association argued the law should be annulled on both jurisdictional and constitutional grounds.

During the debate in parliament, opposition lawmaker and former deputy Mossad director, Ram Ben Barak, expressed outrage at the legislation.

"Do you understand what it means that there is one law for Arabs in Judea and Samaria, and a different law for the general public for which the State of

Britain, France, Germany and Italy expressed "deep concern" over the bill, which they said risked "undermining Israel's commitments with regards to democratic principles."

Israel is responsible?" he asked fellow parliamentarians, using the Israeli name for the West Bank.

"It says that Hamas has defeated us. It has defeated us because we have lost all our values."

'Discriminatory application'

The Palestinian Authority condemned the law's adoption, saying that "Israel has no sovereignty over Palestinian land."

"This law once again reveals the nature of the Israeli colonial system, which seeks to legitimize extrajudicial killing under legislative cover," it added.

While the death penalty exists for a small number of crimes in Israel, it has become a de facto abolitionist country — the Nazi Holocaust perpetrator Adolf Eichmann was the last person to be executed in 1962.



Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and violence there has soared since Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel triggered the Gaza war.

UN worried by Israeli threats to occupy south Lebanon

AFP | United Nations, United States

The UN aid chief warned yesterday that southern Lebanon could become another occupied territory in the Middle East after renewed Israeli threats to seize the area following its war with Hezbollah.

Tom Fletcher drew parallels to Gaza, the Palestinian territory facing a humanitarian crisis, as he told the Security Council that fighting in Lebanon has already displaced 1.1 million people.

"Given the trajectory that some Israeli ministers have described and given what we have seen in plain sight in Gaza, how



will you protect civilians?" he said.

"Given the intensity of the coercive displacement that we are seeing, how should we prepare, collectively as the international community, for a new addition to the list of occupied territories?" Earlier Tuesday, Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz said the military would occupy a swathe of southern Lebanon even after the end of the war against Hezbollah.

Katz's statement was not the first Israeli declaration signalling an intention to occupy parts of the south, but it was the clearest since the Middle East war spread to Lebanon on March 2. Fletcher, who addressed the Security Council from Beirut, said he had witnessed "anxiety and tensions at levels I have not witnessed in many years, working in and on Lebanon."

In Lebanon, more than 1.1 million people have been displaced over the past four weeks, including more than 370,000 children," he said.

"Over 200,000 people have crossed over into Syria in the past month. A cycle of coercive displacement is unfolding.

Damaged and destroyed vehicles are pictured at a parking lot in Dekwaneh, on the eastern outskirts of Beirut, on March 31, 2026, after the area was hit by Israeli bombardment.