

Israel builds execution chamber for Palestinian prisoners as Ben-Gvir threatens assassinations in Gaza

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19 August 2026

The Israeli government is building an execution facility to hang Palestinian prisoners, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir announced Tuesday in a statement from his office. In video released from the site—a prison in central Israel that his office did not name—Ben-Gvir walks through the wing being built for condemned prisoners and says “gallows will be erected” there.

Israel has killed 73,409 people in Gaza since October 2023, by the Gaza Health Ministry’s count issued Wednesday, and South Africa has charged it before the International Court of Justice with genocide against the Palestinians of Gaza.

The killing has continued through the “ceasefire” Israel agreed to on October 10, 2025: the ministry has recorded 1,273 Palestinians killed in the ten months since, alongside the 174,335 wounded in the war overall.

The genocide is one front of the war the United States and Israel are waging across the Middle East. Israel is bombing Lebanon and Syria, and the United States is blockading Iran’s ports.

On Monday US President Donald Trump threatened to bomb Oman, the mediator between Washington and Tehran, if it “gets in the way” of ending the war with Iran.

“We are making history,” Ben-Gvir declared. “Terrorists deserve only one thing: death by hanging.” The facility, he said, will include “viewing chambers where crime victims will be able to come and watch.”

The announcement came three days after Ben-Gvir appeared Saturday on a podcast hosted by Rom Braslavski, a freed Israeli hostage.

“Let me be the one who hangs them,” Braslavski

said. “I don’t want a rope; I want a button on a gun. With my own hands, I will execute every terrorist in the State of Israel.”

Ben-Gvir replied: “I will turn the world upside down to make that happen.”

On the podcast, Ben-Gvir also called for the Israeli military to carry out “targeted assassinations in Gaza, taking down 30 to 40 every night,” declaring that the people to be killed are “not worthy of life... They shouldn’t live. They’re not even people.” He added: “I see all of Gaza as ours.”

Ben-Gvir is a follower of the fascist rabbi Meir Kahane, whose Kach party Israel banned as a terrorist organization in 1994. A Jerusalem court convicted Ben-Gvir in 2007 of racist incitement and supporting a terrorist organization, and his criminal record was estimated at 13 convictions, according to a report in *Haaretz* in March. In December 2022 Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made him the minister in charge of Israel’s police and prisons.

The gallows will be used to enforce the “Death Penalty for Terrorists” law, which the Knesset passed 62-48 on March 30, with Netanyahu coming to the chamber to vote yes in person.

Human Rights Watch wrote March 31 that the law “aims to kill Palestinian detainees faster and with less scrutiny,” and four UN special rapporteurs called it April 2 “a grave escalation in Israel’s discriminatory oppression of Palestinians” and demanded its repeal.

In the military courts that try Palestinians from the West Bank, the law imposes death for a killing classified as an act of terrorism even when the prosecution does not ask for it. Judges may substitute life imprisonment only for unspecified “special

reasons.” The law bars commutation and requires execution within 90 days of a sentence.

Israelis are tried in civilian courts, where the law reaches only a killing carried out with the intention of “negating the existence of the State of Israel,” Human Rights Watch wrote March 31. That wording makes a death sentence against a settler who kills a Palestinian “nearly impossible,” *Haaretz* reported March 30.

A second law, which the Knesset approved 93-0 on May 11, created a military tribunal empowered to impose death sentences on as many as 300 Palestinian detainees accused over the October 7, 2023 attacks—defendants the March law, which is not retroactive, does not reach.

The tribunal may impose death by majority vote of its judges.

Israel has hanged one person by sentence of its civilian courts in its history: the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, in 1962. The laws Ben-Gvir is preparing to enforce would produce the next—and, by design, the first of many.

No death sentence under either law had been reported as of Wednesday. The chamber is being built ahead of the first verdict.

More than 9,600 Palestinian and Arab prisoners were in Israeli jails at the start of April, according to a joint count by the Palestinian Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, the Palestinian Prisoners’ Society and the prisoner rights group Addameer.

Israel is holding more than 1,000 Gaza Palestinians without any charge under the statute it calls the Unlawful Combatants Law, NPR reported May 30.

By the count B’Tselem, the Israeli human rights group, published in January, at least 84 Palestinians from Gaza, the West Bank and Israel itself have died behind bars since October 2023.

Its executive director, Yuli Novak, said “the Israeli regime has turned its prisons into a network of torture camps for Palestinians.”

Prisoners have spent 1,000 days in isolation, barred from contact with anyone beyond the prison walls, the Commission said Sunday, and Israel still refuses to let the Red Cross into its prisons.

Abdullah al-Zaghari, who heads the Prisoners’ Society, described the preparations for executions as a “crime against humanity” and called for international action, the Middle East Monitor reported Wednesday.

On Tuesday an Israeli strike killed at least six people at a packed cafe in a camp for displaced people beside Gaza City’s port, and on Wednesday a strike on a police station in the city killed nine, Palestinian media reported.

Lebanon’s Health Ministry counted 4,346 dead and 12,301 wounded from Israeli bombing in the five and a half months since March 2, figures the *Middle East Monitor* reported Monday. Israeli warplanes hit the runway at Abu al-Duhur, a Syrian airbase in Idlib province, on Tuesday.

Washington’s blockade of Iranian ports remains in force, and the Navy is moving the carrier USS George Washington from the Pacific to take over from the USS Abraham Lincoln, past its 250th day of deployment, Stars and Stripes reported August 13.

As the 60-day negotiating deadline Washington signed with Iran on June 17 expired Monday, Trump told Fox News that if Oman—now negotiating with Iran over reopening ship traffic through the Strait of Hormuz—“gets in the way,” the US military will “bomb the s****” out of it.

In May Trump told a cabinet meeting: “Oman will behave just like everybody else, or we will have to blow them up.”



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