

Report reveals private Israeli plane lands in Saudi capital in preparation for Biden's visit



This file picture shows a plane on the landing strip of King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia's capital city of Riyadh. (via social networks)

Riyadh, July 12 (RHC)-- A private Israeli jet has landed in Saudi Arabia amid speculation that the Persian Gulf kingdom and the Tel Aviv regime would normalize diplomatic relations as U.S. President Joe Biden is going to visit the Arab country within the next few days as part of a regional trip.

The aircraft, which was previously used by the Israeli spy agency Mossad, departed from Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport and landed in the Saudi capital city of Riyadh on Monday afternoon, according to Simon Arann, a political affairs commentator for the Israeli Arabic-language Makan television network.

The report comes a day after the Israeli prime minister expressed hope that the regime will establish formal diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia. "Israel extends its hand to all the countries of the region and calls on them to build ties with us, establish relations with us, and change history for our children," Yair Lapid said during a weekly cabinet meeting.

He asserted that Biden will carry "a message of peace and hope from us" when he embarks for Saudi Arabia. Israel and Saudi Arabia do not have official diplomatic relations, but have shared clandestine security ties. The kingdom is widely believed to be among a handful of Arab states weighing open ties with Israel.

Back on May 30, Lapid said the Tel Aviv regime was coordinating with the United States and Persian Gulf nations on a process to normalize and establish full diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia. "We believe that it is possible to have a normalization process with Saudi Arabia. It's in our interest," then Israeli foreign minister told Army Radio.

"We've already said that this is the next step after the [so-called] Abraham Accords to talk about a long and careful process," he added, referring to the 2020 normalization deals that Israel reached with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan under former US president Donald Trump.

Lapid warned that the process of normalization with Saudi Arabia would be a lengthy one with progress coming in small steps, asserting that both sides have security interests at stake.

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