

Israeli forces clash with protesters near Netanyahu's residence

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A demonstrator who was beaten in the face by a police officer during a protest close to the

Caesarea home of prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu on June 3, 2023.

Tel Aviv, June 3 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have clashed with protesters who had gathered near prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's private residence on Friday night to express their anger over his controversial judicial reform plan. They arrested a total of 17 people, three of whom were detained close to Netanyahu's private residence and 14 others outside police stations.

Security forces can be seen in a video trying to forcefully evict the protesters from the area and shoving and beating them. "The police officers are acting with ferocious violence," one protester said.

The Resistance to the Dictatorship group, which organized the protest, said, "The violence of the police... is suitable for dictatorial regimes." "The attempt to violently suppress the protest will not succeed. If the coup d'état goes through, police violence against those who protest against the government will be routine," it said.

Netanyahu has been seeking to give the regime's extremist cabinet more influence in the process of selecting the supreme court's judges, while seeking to empower the politicians and the Knesset to override the court's rulings.

The introduction of the controversial reforms in January triggered months of unprecedented anti-Netanyahu protests, with critics describing the plan as a threat to the independence of the courts by the prime minister, who is on trial on graft charges. Faced with overwhelming public pressure, Netanyahu claimed in late March he would pause the scheme and engage in talks with the opposition.

The regime's extremist cabinet, however, has vowed to push ahead with the overhaul plan. Several Israeli leaders have warned that the entity is facing "real danger" as back-to-back protests have hit cities amid bitter rifts over the extremist direction of the regime. They have included Israeli president Isaac Herzog who has warned of "collapse" and "implosion".

Former Israeli minister of military affairs Benny Gantz and former prime minister Yair Lapid have said that Netanyahu would be responsible for the breakout of an internal war.

Netanyahu was reinstated as premier after stitching together a coalition of far-right and ultra-Orthodox parties, dubbed as the most extremist in the history of Israel.

His allies include the Religious Zionism formation and Jewish Power Party, whose leaders Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir oppose Palestinian statehood and both have a history of inflammatory remarks about Palestinians.

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