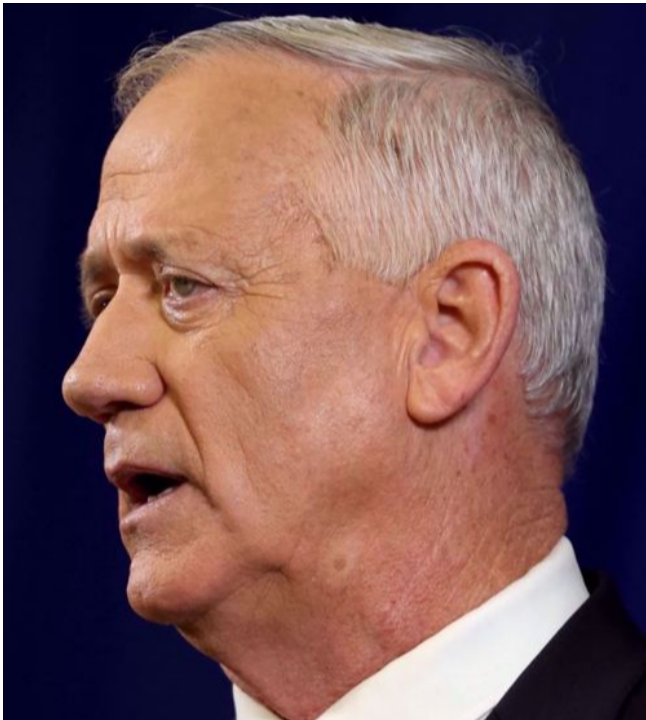


Netanyahu's key rival Benny Gantz quits Israeli war cabinet



Israeli war cabinet minister Benny Gantz announces his resignation during a televised address in the Israeli city of Ramat Gan, near Tel Aviv on June 9, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

Tel Aviv, June 10 (RHC)-- Israeli war cabinet member Benny Gantz has resigned from Benjamin Netanyahu's government, delivering a blow to the prime minister who has been celebrating a Pyrrhic Victory in the rare rescue of 4 Palestinian-held captives in the Gaza Strip.

Gantz had been expected to resign on Saturday, but he postponed the announcement for one day due to Nuseirat massacre, and left his post on Sunday. The retired army general, who has served as minister without portfolio since 2023, is regarded to be the main political rival to Netanyahu.

Before the resignation of the Israeli war cabinet member, Netanyahu had urged him not to leave the administration, telling the retiree to remain in Israel's emergency government, emphasizing that it was time for unity in Israel, not division.

Meanwhile, the White House said on Sunday it expected Netanyahu to agree with the Americans' Gaza ceasefire proposal unveiled by Washington on Friday.

However, two far-right Israeli ministers, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, threatened to quit and collapse the governing coalition if Netanyahu agreed to the ceasefire proposal.

Gantz, a former military chief of staff and political centrist, is viewed by analysts as U.S. President Joe Biden administration's likely choice for Netanyahu's replacement.

The death toll from Israeli strikes on a densely-populated refugee camp in central Gaza has risen to 274. Tel Aviv has unleashed a brutal genocidal war against the Palestinian people trapped in the Gaza Strip since October 7, killing at least 37,084 Palestinians.

Most of the casualties have been women and children and more than 1.7 million Palestinian people in the besieged Gaza Strip -- where water, food, medicine, power and fuel is blocked by the Israeli regime forces -- have been internally displaced during this time.

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