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Netanyahu hits London with ‘Islamic Britain’ jibe

The Israeli PM’s remark comes as the new Labor government weighs taking measures against the Jewish state following months of strained relations

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has described the UK as the “*Islamic Republic of Britain*,” as the country’s new Labor government weighs taking measures against Israel.

Speaking on an Israeli Army Radio podcast on Friday, Netanyahu criticized the British media’s coverage of Israel, while comparing it to reporting during the 1967 Six-Day War.

“Go find that in Britain today, which you could call the *Islamic Republic of Britain*,” he said, as cited by Israeli media.



FILE PHOTO: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. © Getty Images / Amir Levy

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Netanyahu then echoed a 2024 joke made by US Vice-President JD Vance, saying Britain could become the first *“Islamic republic with nuclear weapons.”*

According to the latest census-based figures, Muslims account for around 6% of the UK’s population, while Pakistan, officially the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, has possessed nuclear weapons since the 1990s.

The British Foreign Office called the comments *“completely unacceptable,”* noting that the issue had been raised with the Israeli government.

Relations between London and Israel have deteriorated since the UK formally recognized the State of Palestine in September of 2025, a move rejected by Netanyahu’s government.

The exchange comes weeks after Andy Burnham became prime minister. Before taking office, Burnham said Labour *“didn’t get it right”* on Gaza, asserting that Britain needed to put greater pressure on the Israeli government, including through the use of sanctions and measures targeting trade with Israeli settlements.

Nonetheless, Britain has maintained military-export ties with Israel. While London did suspend some arms licenses in 2024 due to concerns that the equipment could be used to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law, it exempted components supplied through the multinational F-35 program.

Britain also provided military support during this year’s conflict with Iran. London deployed aircraft to intercept Iranian attacks and authorized US forces to use British bases for operations against Iranian missile launchers and related sites. British security cooperation with Israel has included surveillance flights over Gaza and intelligence sharing.

[READ MORE: Netanyahu defies Trump’s Gaza peace plan \(VIDEO\)](#)

The remarks follow reports that there is growing frustration with Netanyahu in the US. Axios reported on Friday that President Donald Trump has declined to endorse Netanyahu ahead of Israel’s October election so far, despite being repeatedly asked about it. Earlier this month, the Israeli PM rejected a 15-



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point Gaza plan backed by Trump, while insisting that Israeli forces would not withdraw until Hamas was fully disarmed.

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