

Dangerous law: on Israel's 'nation state' law

The ['nation state' law passed by Israel's Parliament](#) amid strong protests by Opposition lawmakers, has raised concerns about its commitment to peace in the region. The legislation, which will become one of Israel's powerful Basic Laws that have constitutional status, lays down that "Israel is the historic homeland of the Jewish people and they have an exclusive right to national self-determination in it". The law strips Arabic, the first language of 1.8 million citizens, of its national language status; states that Jerusalem, "whole and united", is its capital; and vows to "promote and encourage" the establishment and consolidation of Jewish settlements, which it sees as a national value. Supporters of the Bill say it is aimed to boost Israel's Jewish identity and will not discriminate against minorities. But the reality looks more complicated in Israel and the occupied territories. As it is, the Arab community, which makes up a fifth of Israel's population, faces discrimination when it comes to opportunities and rights. The Israeli right's anti-minority politics is no secret. By providing exclusive right to national self-determination only to the Jewish people and by downgrading Arabic's status, the law sends a clear message. For decades, the Israeli far-right sought Jewishness as the ethnic religious character of the state. The new Basic Law sets the stage for that transition, challenging the basic concepts of equality, which even Israel's declaration of independence promised to all its inhabitants. Arab MPs have called the legislation racist and a form of apartheid aimed at creating two systems within one country.

This year, on Jerusalem

The emphasis on Jerusalem and the promise to promote settlements pose a direct threat to any peace process with the Palestinians. [Jerusalem remains a disputed territory](#), with Palestinians seeing its eastern part as the capital of their future state. Israel's claim over the city remains a key point of dispute between the two sides. Besides, if Israel sees Jewish settlements as a national value and continues to promote them in the Palestinian territories, it cannot command confidence when it says it is still committed to the two-state solution. The law further erodes the credibility of Israel's professed support of an independent Palestinian state. Israel has just passed two other pieces of legislation — one places limits on Palestinians under occupation in accessing Israel's High Court, and the other bans individuals and groups seeking political action against the country or the prosecution of Israeli soldiers abroad, from entering Israeli school premises. Together, these laws allow the Israeli state to institutionalise discrimination against the minorities at home, deepen occupation in the Palestinian territories and stifle even the limited rights of the Palestinians living under occupation.

Sign up to receive our newsletter in your inbox every day!

Please enter a valid email address.

The U.S. policy of separating children from undocumented migrant parents is cruel

Our existing notification subscribers need to choose this option to keep getting the alerts.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com