

Israel backs bill to make mosques quieter

15th November, 2016



Israel's government has approved a bill to make mosques quieter. If the bill is passed into law, Israel's mosques will not be able to use loudspeakers during the call to prayer. The call to prayer happens five times a day across the Muslim world. The first time is at dawn and the last is after sunset. The bill has to pass several more stages in Israel's parliament to become law. The bill says

the volume of loudspeakers at mosques is too high and damages the quality of life for people who live near mosques. Israeli politician Moti Yagev proposed the bill and said that hundreds of thousands of Israelis, "suffer regularly and daily from noise caused by the [prayer] calls from mosques".

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he supported the bill. He said: "Israel is committed to freedom of religion, but it must also protect citizens from the noise of the announcements." An Arab member of Israel's government said the bill was racist. He said it was, "another law in a series of racist...laws that only aim to create an atmosphere of hatred...against the Arab public". Another critic said: "The real aim of the bill is not to prevent noise, but rather to create noise that will hurt all of society and the efforts to establish [harmony] between Jews and Arabs." Arabs make up roughly 20 per cent of Israel's population. Most Arabs are Muslim. Jews constitute around 75 per cent of Israel's population.

Sources: Haaretz.com / Aljazeera.com / alaraby.co.uk / jpost.com

Writing

Freedom of religion is one of the most important things in society. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

government / bill / mosques / loudspeakers / dawn / quality of life / suffer / noise / freedom / religion / citizens / racist / atmosphere / society / harmony / population

True / False

- a) A new law in Israel bans loudspeakers at mosques. T / F
- b) The first call to prayer is after dusk. T / F
- c) An Israeli politician says loudspeakers at mosques are too loud. T / F
- d) The politician said over a million Israelis suffer every day. T / F
- e) The Prime Minister of Israel said he supports banning loudspeakers. T / F
- f) An Arab politician said the call to ban loudspeakers was racist. T / F
- g) A critic said the bill was to create harmony between Jews and Arabs. T / F
- h) Arabs make up around 20% of the population of Israel. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. approved | a. daybreak |
| 2. happens | b. stop |
| 3. dawn | c. point |
| 4. aim | d. agreed to |
| 5. damages | e. climate |
| 6. supported | f. about |
| 7. series | g. backed |
| 8. atmosphere | h. takes place |
| 9. prevent | i. sequence |
| 10. roughly | j. harms |

Discussion – Student A

- a) How important is freedom of religion?
- b) Is the bill racist?
- c) What did a critic mean by, "create noise that will hurt all of society"?
- d) What will this bill do for relations between Arab Muslims and Jews?
- e) What do you know about Israel-Palestinian relations?
- f) What is your solution to this?
- g) What is the world's most beautiful place of prayer?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Benjamin Netanyahu?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. If the bill is passed | a. more stages |
| 2. The call to prayer happens | b. dawn |
| 3. The first time is at | c. from the noise |
| 4. The bill has to pass several | d. of religion |
| 5. hundreds of | e. into law |
| 6. Israel is committed to freedom | f. roughly 20 per cent |
| 7. protect citizens | g. thousands of Israelis |
| 8. The real aim | h. Jews and Arabs |
| 9. establish harmony between | i. five times a day |
| 10. Arabs make up | j. of the bill |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How important is prayer?
- Is there a certain way we should pray?
- Do your prayers ever get answered?
- Do you think the Israeli bill should become law?
- Would it be better to lower the volume rather than ban loudspeakers?
- What do you think of people who "suffer regularly" from noise?
- What advice do you have for Benjamin Netanyahu?

Spelling

- Israel's government has adropve a bill
- pass svraeel more stages
- the emlouv of loudspeakers
- damages the iqualyt of life
- Israeli iitpaclino Moti Yogev proposed the bill
- suffer ulrleryag
- freedom of ioreling
- create an tmeaseorhp of hatred
- hurt all of cesyiot
- efforts to establish rhonyam
- Arabs make up yrolugh 20 per cent
- 75 per cent of Israel's nalipotpou

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. h	3. a	4. c	5. j
6. g	7. i	8. e	9. b	10. f

Role Play

Role A – A Place of Worship

You think a place of worship is the place that needs quiet the most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't really need quiet. Also, tell the others in which of these is it OK to make noise (and why): the countryside, a museum or a hospital.

Role B – The Countryside

You think the countryside is the place that needs quiet the most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't really need quiet. Also, tell the others in which of these is it OK to make noise (and why): a place of worship, a museum or a hospital.

Role C – A Museum

You think a museum is the place that needs quiet the most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't really need quiet. Also, tell the others in which of these is it OK to make noise (and why): the countryside, a place of worship or a hospital.

Role D – A Hospital

You think a hospital is the place that needs quiet the most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't really need quiet. Also, tell the others in which of these is it OK to make noise (and why): the countryside, a museum or a place of worship.

Speaking – Quiet

Rank these with your partner. Put the things that need quiet the most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| • a place of worship | • a museum |
| • a library | • a train carriage |
| • your bedroom | • a classical concert |
| • the countryside | • a hospital |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.