
Israel Parliament Takes First Step To Hold New Elections Due To Deadlock

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Jerusalem: Israel's parliament on Monday took a first step toward holding new elections due to deadlocked coalition negotiations following April polls, giving preliminary approval to a law to dissolve itself.

Three more votes are required for final approval of the law, which would result in new elections being held. The vote was 65-43 with six abstentions, according to parliament's website.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been unable to reach a deal to form a governing coalition ahead of a Wednesday night deadline to do so.

He was due to speak in parliament at 8:00 pm (1700 GMT).

Ex-defence minister Avigdor Lieberman has prevented a deal by refusing to budge from a key demand.

Holding elections so close to one another would be unprecedented in Israel, and there have been concerns over the cost and prolonged political paralysis that would result.

It would also be a major setback for Netanyahu, who received support on Monday from his close ally US President Donald Trump.

"Hoping things will work out with Israel's coalition formation and Bibi and I can continue to make the alliance between America and Israel stronger than ever. A lot more to do!" Trump, currently

visiting Japan, said on Twitter, using Netanyahu's nickname.
