



Tens of thousands of Israelis demonstrated outside parliament and workers launched a nationwide strike on Monday, as a surging mass protest movement threatened to paralyze the economy in its efforts to halt Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's [plan to overhaul the judiciary](#).

Departing flights from the country's main international airport were grounded, large mall chains and universities shut their doors, and Israel's largest trade union called for its 800,000 members — in health, transit, banking and other fields — to stop work. Diplomats walked off the job at foreign missions, local governments were expected to close the preschools they run and cut other services, and the main doctors union announced its members would also strike.

The growing resistance to Netanyahu's plan came hours after tens of thousands of people burst into the streets around the country in a spontaneous show of anger at the prime minister's decision to fire his defense minister after he [called for a pause](#) to the overhaul. Chanting "the country is on fire," they lit bonfires on Tel Aviv's main highway, closing the thoroughfare and many others throughout the country for hours.

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