

Coronavirus: Israel's Mossad Acquires 100,000 'Unusable' Test Kits

The health ministry said tests missing key components, as Israel records 529 confirmed COVID-19 infections

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Israel's external intelligence agency, the Mossad, joined the country's battle against the global [coronavirus](#) pandemic and has acquired 100,000 test kits for the disease from two countries with which it does not share diplomatic ties, Israeli media [reported](#), adding that the kits were "unusable".

The Mossad is expected to get millions of coronavirus test kits, the reports said.

Israel's health ministry said the kits that the Mossad obtained overnight on Wednesday were "unusable", and they were missing the swabs needed to conduct the tests.

"Unfortunately, what Mossad has delivered is not what we are in need of," Itamar Grotto, the deputy director-general of the health ministry, told Ynet.

The sources of the test kits remain unidentified.

Yossi Melman, a security analyst and Middle East Eye contributor, estimates that the Mossad obtained the test kits "probably from the United Arab Emirates".

"Since Israel refuses to reveal the name of the country that supplied the equipment that is in demand worldwide, it is likely the UAE. Certainly, not another friend of Israel, such as Egypt or Jordan, both of which need it for their own populations," Melman said.

The equipment includes test tubes for throat checks and must be approved by the Israeli Ministry of Health to ensure they meet the required standards.

Melman added that both the Mossad and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are trying to take visible action against the pandemic.

He added that hundreds of Israeli businessmen and firms are also trying to purchase the needed test kits to meet the shortage in the country.

The Mossad often coordinates with countries with which Israel has no official diplomatic ties, such as [Oman](#), the UAE, [Sudan](#), Bahrain and Qatar.

Israel has recorded 529 coronavirus cases as of Thursday, with six people in serious

condition, and no fatalities.

Last week, Netanyahu [issued](#) an order requiring that all citizens returning from abroad go into self-quarantine.

Last week, Israel [mobilised a cyber spy unit](#) in the internal intelligence agency Shin Bet to monitor and identify people infected with the coronavirus.

There are currently 20 labs in Israel dedicated to testing for the coronavirus infection.

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