Middle East

Israel's Mobileye CEO urges that Netanyahu be replaced immediately

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[1/2] Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu holds a press conference with Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Cabinet Minister Benny Gantz (not pictured) in the Kirya military base in Tel Aviv , Israel... *Acquire Licensing Rights* **Read more**

JERUSALEM, Oct 29 (Reuters) - The head of self-driving auto technologies firm Mobileye (MBLY.O) and one of Israel's leading businessmen, Amnon Shashua, on Sunday urged the immediate ouster of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government.

Shashua, in a high-profile public rebuke from Israel's private sector, said Netanyahu's government was guilty of "failures, dissonance and incompetence" since Hamas gunmen crossed from Gaza in a deadly rampage of southern Israeli towns on Oct. 7.

"We must cut our losses and do it quickly. The only solution to the current situation in Israel is to replace the government, and it needs to happen immediately," Shashua wrote in an opinion piece in financial daily Calcalist.

Netanyahu caused his own uproar on Sunday by taking a jab at his intelligence chiefs, saying they never warned him Hamas was planning its attack, but later retracted his comments and issued an apology.

Netanyahu's office, asked by Reuters, declined to comment on Shashua's editorial.

The government, Shashua said, which seemed more concerned about its political survival than "the good of the country," could be replaced without calling a new election, minimizing political turmoil, with the formation of a new coalition within the current parliament.

Netanyahu has not taken responsibility over intelligence and operational failures, saying only that there would be time to ask tough questions, including of himself, after the war.

Israeli officials have said events leading up to and including the handling of the Hamas attack would be investigated, but that the current focus was on the conflict.

Shashua co-founded Mobileye firm in 1999. It was bought by Intel (INTC.O) in 2017 for $15.3 billion and last year again went public. He also founded One Zero digital bank and AI firm AI21 Labs.

Reporting by Steven Scheer and Ari Rabinovitch; Editing by Bernadette Baum

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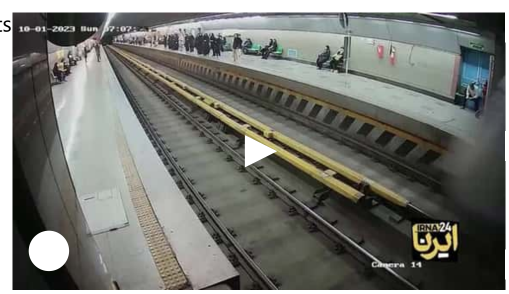

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