

Saudi Arabia Blamed for Cholera Crisis in Yemen

RIYADH (Dispatches) – The United Nations has blamed Yemen's cholera crisis on the perpetrators of the ongoing war against the impoverished country and their foreign supporters.

Stephen O'Brien, the UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs, told the UN Security Council that the "man-made" outbreak of the deadly disease was "a direct result" of the Saudi-led aggression and "serious violations of international law."

"This cholera scandal is entirely man-made by the conflicting parties and those beyond Yemen's borders who are leading, supplying, fighting and perpetuating the fear and fighting," he said.

"You will have to lean much more heavily and effectively on the parties and those outside Yemen who are leading this policy and action," the aid official told the council.

The U.S. and the UK have been the main purveyors of weapons, training and intelligence to Saudis during the course of the unprovoked war, which

began in March 2015.

The UN official warned that the suspected cholera cases across Yemen had surpassed 320,000 while at least 1,740 had lost their lives after being infected.

'Hajj Pilgrims at Risk'

The World Health Organization has warned that the cholera outbreak in Yemen could spread during the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia in September.

The WHO said on Friday that the pilgrimage draws two to four million Muslims each year, of whom about 1.5 to two million are foreigners, raising the risk from illnesses such as dengue, yellow fever, Zika virus and meningococcal disease as well as cholera.

The WHO cholera expert, Dominique Legros, said reinforced surveillance and rapid tests to detect cases early helped Saudi Arabia avoid a cholera outbreak for many



Yemeni men suspected of being infected with cholera receive treatment at a makeshift hospital in Sana'a on July 13, 2017.

years.

"Don't forget that today we are speaking of Yemen but they are receiving pilgrims from a lot of endemic countries, and they managed not to have an outbreak, essentially by making sure that living conditions, access to water in particular,

hygienic conditions, are in place," he said at a regular UN briefing. "They are well-prepared in my view."

Cholera, which causes severe diarrhea and dehydration, is transmitted through contaminated drinking water and could prove fatal in up to 15 percent of untreated cases.

UN Urges Bahrain to Free Activist



Bahraini rights activist Nabeel Rajab is seen in this file photo.

MANAMA (Dispatches) – The United Nations's human rights office has urged Bahrain to "unconditionally and immediately" release prominent activist Nabeel

Rajab, whom Manama has sentenced to two years in prison.

"We note that Mr. Rajab has been in detention since June 2016. We call on the Bahraini authorities to

immediately and unconditionally release him," said Liz Throssell, a spokeswoman for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva on Friday.

Rajab has been arrested multiple times over the recent years over anti-regime protests in Bahrain. The activist was pardoned for health reasons in 2015 but was re-arrested in June 2016 pending trial for tweets and statements deemed insulting to the ruling regimes in the country and Saudi Arabia.

Earlier in the week, he was handed down a two-year sentence for insulting the ruling Bahraini dynasty.

Meanwhile, a prominent Bahraini human rights advocate has reportedly gone on hunger strike in protest against the torture and ill-treatment she has endured as the ruling

Al Khalifah regime presses ahead with its heavy-handed crackdown on pro-democracy campaigners and opposition figures in the tiny Persian Gulf kingdom.

Informed sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Ebtisam al-Saegh, who works for Salam for Democracy and Human Rights, has been on an open-ended hunger strike since Tuesday to express outrage at being tortured during interrogation at the notorious Criminal Investigation Building after her last arrest on July 3, and being denied the right to meet her family members or contact her lawyer.

The sources noted that Saegh's health condition was deteriorating, stressing that she had been kept in solitary confinement since her arrest earlier this month.

Turkey Detains Dozens Over Istanbul Terror Attacks

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkey has detained 44 people suspected of planning terrorist attacks carried out in Istanbul last year by a militant group affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), an official says.

In a statement, Istanbul Governor Vasip Sahin said the suspects had links to the outlawed "Kurdistan Freedom Falcons," an offshoot of the PKK, and that they had been detained during anti-terror operations carried out in four Turkish provinces.

The official said one of the detainees had been suspected of organizing a December 2016 bombing attack near the Besiktas soccer stadium in Istanbul, which killed 46 people. The governor added that another suspect had been the organizer of a car bomb attack on a bus carrying riot police last June. That attack left 11 people dead.

Meanwhile, Turkish police have arrested a prominent film director who has made a controversial movie showing President Recep Tayyip Erdogan under gunpoint during last summer's failed coup.

The official Anadolu news agency said on Thursday that Ali Avci was detained on suspicion of links to the U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom Turkey blames for July's failed coup that sought to oust Erdogan last year.

Gulen has denied the charges of having masterminded the coup.

Turkish security forces also detained another man, identified as Fetullah Karabiber, who was found in Avci's house and was already wanted by authorities, the report added.

The fugitive man has been suspected of using an encrypted messaging application allegedly used by Gulen's movement.

Avci's new film "Uyanis" (Awakening) is not in theatres yet. However, its trailer



A man reacts at memorial site for the victims of a December 10, 2016 blasts, outside Besiktas' Vodafone Arena football stadium, in Istanbul, December 13, 2016.

has already sparked controversy on the first anniversary of the July 15 attempted putsch.

The trailer showed a scenario, where the coup plotters had succeeded and killed Erdogan's family members in their house in the Kisikli district of Istanbul while Erdogan is shown under gunpoint.

Zionist Regime OK's 800 Settler Homes in al-Quds

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime's municipality in al-Quds has reportedly approved a plan to construct 800 settler units in the city's eastern part, which has been occupied by Tel Aviv since 1967.

According to a report by Israeli newspaper Maariv, the plan includes the building of 276 units in the Israeli settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev, 120 in Neve Ya'akov, 200 in Ramot and 202 in Gilo.

Since the 1967 occupation of the West Bank and East al-Quds, the Zionist regime has been crowding the Palestinian territories with settlements, each of which comprise hundreds of settler units.

The unlawful move defies the international bans against construction upon occupied land.

The new decision now has to clear the regional committee for planning and construc-

tion as well as the Israeli Interior Ministry.

"The construction in Jerusalem (al-Quds) is necessary and important," said the city's Israeli-appointed Mayor Nir Barkat, adding that the work "will strongly continue" to get as many Israeli youths as possible to live in "the capital."

The Zionist regime lays claim to the entirety of al-Quds, while Palestinians want East al-Quds as the capital of their future state.

Zarif...

(Continued From Page One)

hope and satisfaction in the ability of the people of Iran, Syria, and Iraq to retake the region from extremist groups, and said that his own state of Iran has been "at the forefront" of the struggle.

Iran has been working closely with the governments of Russia and Turkey to help broker the Astana peace talks between the Syrian government and certain sectors of the foreign-backed opposition.

While Iran supports a ceasefire, Zarif emphasized that such an agreement would "obviously" exclude groups like Daesh and the Al-Qaeda affiliate Nusra Front. Both groups are active in Syria and Iran is involved in military operations against them.

Both Iran and Russia have the approval of the Syrian government to engage in combat operations against extremist organizations operating in the Arab country.

Zarif condemned "countries in the region" who fund and provide arms to extremist organizations and who "provide the ideology of hatred and exclusion which lies at the heart of these extremist movements."

Iran has been consistently confirmed to be in full compliance with the deal, by the International Atomic Energy Organization that was appointed to monitor its implementation.

In spite of Iran's efforts toward compliance and dialogue, U.S. ambassador to the UN recently referred to Iran, along with North Korea, as a "threat" preventing the global ban of nuclear arms. Iran supported the recently-debated measure in the UN to place a global ban on nuclear weapons, while the U.S. was among the most vocal opponents to a global ban.

Hezbollah...

(Continued From Page One)

Lebanon and produces smaller munitions, the report said.

Last week, Zionist war minister Avigdor Liberman described Hezbollah's access to sophisticated weaponry as a redline for Israel, stressing that Tel Aviv would prevent the resistance group from owning such capabilities.

"We take everything seriously. We are certainly aware of the reports and we will do what needs to be done. This is a significant phenomenon and we cannot ignore it. Precise weapons such as these missiles are a challenge. Compared to past wars they will hit deep inside Israeli territory," Liberman pointed out.

The occupying regime of Israel launched two wars on Lebanon in 2000 and 2006, during both of which the resistance fighters inflicted heavy losses on the regime's military. About 1,200 Lebanese, most of them civilians, lost their lives during the 33-day war in the summer of 2006.

In April, Hezbollah's deputy leader Naim Qassem said the group's high level of defense readiness had deterred Israel from launching a new act of aggression against the country, warning that any such war would end in a "guaranteed loss" for the regime.

Earlier in April, Lebanese Prime Minister Sa'ad Hariri warned against signs of the Zionist regime's desire to wage another war on Lebanon after Tel Aviv unveiled the latest addition to its missile system.

AP: Trump...

(Continued From Page One)

justification for the U.S. to say Iran is not complying. But the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN agency that is monitoring the nuclear deal, has said Iran is in compliance.

As a candidate in the 2016 presidential election, Trump was an outspoken critic of the deal but offered conflicting opinions on whether he would try to scrap it, modify it or keep it in place with more strenuous enforcement. Trump and some top members of his administration remain critical of the deal, but so far, the president has not announced a decision to pull out.

Scuttling the nuclear deal would put further distance between Trump and foreign leaders who are already upset over his move to withdraw the U.S. from the global climate change agreement known as the Paris accord. Other powers that brokered the nuclear deal along with the U.S. have said there's no appetite for renegotiating it.

Despite the sanctions relief, Iran remains on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism for its support of anti-Zionist groups and is still subject to non-nuclear sanctions, including for alleged human rights abuses and for its backing of Syrian President Bashar Assad's government.

The nuclear deal was sealed in Vienna in July 2015 after 18 months of negotiations led by Secretary of State John Kerry and diplomats from the other four permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — Britain, China, France and Russia — and Germany. Under its terms, Iran agreed to curb its nuclear program in return for billions of dollars in sanctions relief.