

400,000 Syrians Face 'Catastrophe' Without Aid

GENEVA (Dispatches) – The Damascus suburb of Eastern Ghouta is besieged by terrorist and 400,000 civilians there need humanitarian access otherwise they face a "complete catastrophe", the UN special advisor on humanitarian affairs Jan Egeland says.

He spoke at a press conference after a meeting of the Humanitarian Task Force on Syria, noting that a "very bleak report" was delivered from the UN side.

In Eastern Ghouta, Egeland said there are signs of "acutely malnourished" children and people are dying because it is impossible to have a medical evacuation.

Thought for Today

Allah knows me very well and I also know myself more than you. Please, Lord ! make me better than what they imagine me to be and please excuse those weaknesses of mine which they are not aware of.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

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UNICEF:

Saudi Siege Could Kill More Hunger-Stricken Kids in Yemen



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RIYADH (Dispatches) – The UN children's fund has voiced alarm over humanitarian repercussions of the crippling Saudi blockade against Yemen, where some 400,000 kids are already at risk of death due to acute malnutrition.

In a statement, UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake warned that "the recent closure of all ports and airports is making an already catastrophic situation even worse."

Earlier this week, the Saudi military tightened the blockade against Yemen, closing all ports and halting aid shipments after Yemeni forces fired a missile that hit near Riyadh amid their retaliatory operations.

The blockade was first imposed in March 2015, when Riyadh and a coalition of its allies unleashed a brutal military campaign against the poorest Arabian Peninsula state.

The recent closures have further hindered the flow of aid supplies to the impoverished country, drawing sharp criticisms from the UN and several international aid groups.

"Today, nearly 400,000 children in Yemen are at risk of death from severe acute malnutrition. To potentially add tens of thousands more children to this toll – tens of thousands more personal catastrophes for children and grieving

parents – is simply inhuman," the UNICEF statement said.

Lake further highlighted a call on Wednesday by Mark Lowcock, the UN humanitarian chief, for "safe" and "rapid" access to the areas hardest hit by the Saudi blockade, particularly the Hudaydah port and the Sana'a airport.

Yemen's Ansarullah movement has warned that Yemeni forces will continue missile attacks against Saudi Arabia as long as Riyadh and its allies press ahead with their military aggression against the impoverished nation.

Mohammed Abdulsalam, the Ansarullah spokesman, said that Yemen's missile launches are purely aimed at defending the nation in the face of Saudi attacks, Yemen's al-Masirah television network reported.

On Saturday, Yemeni forces, backed by popular Houthi fighters, had launched a Borkan H2 long-range missile at King Khalid International Airport in northeastern Riyadh, the first to reach the Saudi capital.

Saudi military authorities said at the time that the missile had been fired at an international airport by Houthi fighters, who have been on the forefront of fighting against the Saudi war machine since 2015.

The Houthi forces have launched a number of long-range missiles across the border in recent years. However, Saturday's strike appeared to be the deepest yet within Saudi territory.

Hamas Censures Abbas for Coordination With Zionist Regime



The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas began handing over control of the border crossings in the Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority on Nov 1, under a reconciliation agreement.

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – The Palestinian Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, has criticized the leader of Fatah movement and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, for his decision to resume security coordination with the Zionist regime, nearly a month after the two movements reached a landmark national reconciliation deal.

The move by the Palestinian Authority (PA) "distorts the reputation of the Palestinian people, its struggles and history," said Hamas spokesman

Fawzi Barhoum in a statement, expressing his disapproval of the PA's new security stance in the occupied territories.

"Hamas is surprised by the PA in the West Bank's resumption of security coordination and cooperation with the Zionist enemy, which is the equivalent of the greatest danger to the Palestinian people, its unity and its legitimate rights, including the right to resist the occupation," Barhoum further said.

Hamas's statement came a day after PA Police Chief Hazem Atallah said that all branches of the PA security forces had fully restored security cooperation with Tel Aviv two weeks ago. He fervently defended the resumption, saying "this is for our people, the safety of our people and for the rights of our people."

Back in July, Abbas announced that security coordination with Tel Aviv had been halted in protest against the regime's installation of metal detectors near the entrance to the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East al-Quds.

According to a September poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, some 73 percent of Palestinians backed Abbas's decision on suspending security coordination with Tel Aviv.

The development came as Hamas and Fatah signed a provisional unity agreement in the Egyptian capital Cairo on October 12, in which the former agreed to hand over the full administrative control of the besieged Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority to end a decade-long standoff between the two sides.

Fatah and Hamas have been at odds ever since the latter scored a landslide victory in parliamentary elections in 2006. Since 2007, Hamas has been governing Gaza, with Fatah based in the autonomous parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank. The two rival Palestinian factions finally agreed on a unity government in April 2014, but it fell apart months later.

Report:

Daesh Leader May Be in Eastern Syrian City

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The media bureau of Syria's Operations Command Center says Daesh terrorist group's leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi may be holed up at a terrorist-held pocket in the country's eastern province of Dayr al-Zawr.

The media outlet announced in a statement on Friday that al-Baghdadi might be hiding in the city of al-Boukamal, which lies on the Euphrates River and the border with Iraq.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, and Omar Abu Laila, a Europe-based opposition activist, however, denied the report that al-Baghdadi is in Boukamal.

The Lebanon-based Arabic-language al-Manar television network reported on Wednesday that Syrian army soldiers, backed by pro-government fighters from popular defense groups, had entered Boukamal.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Oleg Syromolotov told Sputnik news agency on June 22 there was a "high probability" that al-Baghdadi had been killed in a Russian airstrike on the southern outskirts of the northeastern Syrian city of Raqqah, about 160 kilometers (99 miles) east of Aleppo, in late May.

U.S. officials later said they believed he was still alive.

Daesh clawed back some part of the city of al-Boukamal, the last Daesh stronghold that has been recently captured by the Syrian government forces, a monitor group claimed on Friday.

Following the Syrian army's declaration of capturing al-Boukamal

in the eastern countryside of Dayr al-Zawr province in eastern Syria on Thursday, the Daesh terrorists unleashed a wide-scale counteroffensive on the city, capturing over 40 percent of it, said the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The terrorists claimed they recaptured neighborhoods in the northern and northeastern as well as the northwestern parts of the city, the UK-based watchdog group said, adding the Syrian forces' control in the city shrunk to the southern, southwestern and the southeastern parts of the city.

Now, intense battles are raging between Daesh terrorists and the Syrian government forces and allied troops in al-Boukamal.

Turkish Police Arrest 101 With Links to Daesh

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkish police have detained 101 people suspected of having links to the Daesh terrorist group in the capital, Ankara.

On Thursday, police conducted a string of simultaneous raids on more than 250 locations, after authorities issued arrest warrants against a total of 254 suspects, the official Anadolu news agency reported.

No further details were immediately available on the operation.

Turkish officials say Ankara has detained over 5,000 Daesh suspects and deported about 3,290 foreign militants from 95 different countries in the past

few years.

In recent years, Daesh terrorists have carried out a series of gun and bomb attacks in Turkey. According to figures released by the country's Interior Ministry, over 300 have been killed in major assaults.

The presence of purported Daesh members in Turkey seems to be a side-effect of Turkish support for anti-Damascus terrorists in Syria.

Meanwhile, a total of 2,648 undocumented migrants were detained in nationwide operations across Turkey, security force said Wednesday.

Turkish border guards rounded up

MANAMA (Press TV) – The media rights group Reporters Without Borders has warned about the suffocation of press freedom in Bahrain and Manama's ruthless repression of political dissidents and pro-democracy campaigners, condemning the recent sentences handed down to a blogger and a journalist over terrorism-related charges.

The Paris-based international non-governmental organization, known by its French acronym RSF, announced in a statement that critical voices were increasingly being suppressed in Bahrain as the margin of freedom was gravely shrinking.

RSF also called on the Al Khalifah regime to stop arbitrary arrests and trial of journalists and bloggers under

the pretext of combating terrorism.

The group further noted that Bahrain's campaign of silencing media outlets was not limited to local press, like independent and opposition-linked al-Wasat newspaper that was closed in early June.

On January 16, Bahraini officials had suspended the online version of the opposition newspaper.

RSF said the restrictions had also affected local journalists, who work as field correspondents for foreign news agencies and networks like AFP, Reuters, The Associated Press and France 24.

Reporters Without Borders also expressed concern about the situation of the press in the tiny Persian Gulf

kingdom, arguing that access to information was more restricted than ever before.

It stated that detained journalists were subjected to various forms of ill-treatment in addition to medical negligence.

On October 30, a Bahraini court sentenced blogger Ali al-Mearaj to life in prison and newspaper journalist Mahmood al-Jazeera to 15 years behind bars.

Thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the country in mid-February 2011.

They are demanding that the Al Khalifah dynasty relinquish power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established.

Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any sign of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown.

Scores of people have lost their lives and hundreds of others sustained injuries or got arrested as a result of the Al Khalifah regime's crackdown.

On March 5, Bahrain's parliament approved the trial of civilians at military tribunals in a measure blasted by human rights campaigners as being tantamount to imposition of an undeclared martial law countrywide.

Bahraini monarch King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah ratified the constitutional amendment on April 3.

Reporters Without Borders:

Press Freedom Suffocation in Bahrain