

If the right usurped from us is given back to us we shall take it, otherwise we shall go on claiming it.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Qatar Emir to Meet Trump on April 10

CAIRO (Reuters) – Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will meet U.S. President Donald Trump on April 10 in Washington, the state news agency QNA reported on late Thursday. Trump met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman at the White House on March 21 and his meeting with Qatari Emir will be followed by a meeting with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed. The White House said Trump would meet al-Thani to discuss ways to advance "common security and economic priorities" between the United States and Qatar.

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U.S. Approves \$1.3bn Worth of Artillery Sale to Saudi Arabia



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (L) meets U.S. President Donald Trump at the Oval Office of the White House on March 20, 2018 in Washington, DC.

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – The U.S. administration has given the green light to the sale of \$1.3 billion worth of artillery to Saudi Arabia, ignoring reports that its weapons have greatly contributed to a high rate of civilian deaths amid Riyadh's war on Yemen. President Donald Trump's administration told Congress of the planned sale late on Thursday, according to the State Department. The package of arms planned to

be sold to the Saudis include about 180 Paladin howitzer artillery-firing vehicles, systems that look like a combination of a tank and a cannon and are capable of firing 155mm shells. Congress has now 30 days to stop the new U.S. arms sale to Saudi Arabia although it seems highly unlikely as the White House normally seeks the approval of key lawmakers before making such announcements.

This is the second major weapons deal between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia during a trip by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to the U.S. The young prince arrived in Washington two weeks ago and has already signed a deal that involved more than \$1 billion in missiles. Saudi Arabia was the first country Trump visited after taking office last year. It was announced during his visit to Riyadh that Washington could sell \$110 billion in military

equipment to Saudi Arabia in a period of 10 years. The State Department said at the time that the deal could grow to \$350 billion over a decade. The massive arms sales come despite repeated international calls on the U.S. to stop supporting the Saudis with modern weaponry, which the kingdom has, according to many reports, used in its devastating war on Yemen.

Around 14,000 civilians, many of them civilians, have been killed in over three years of Saudi military adventurism in Yemen. Washington has denied it is directly supplying the Saudis with weapons in the war but numerous reports have suggested that U.S. arms have played a part in massive civilian casualties.

This is while the U.S. military admitted last month that the U.S. Central Command does not track how Riyadh uses Washington-supplied planes and munitions. A report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) revealed last month the U.S. has increased its arms sales by 25 percent over the past five years. It also said some half of U.S. arms exports during that period have gone to the Middle East, and that Saudi Arabia registered a 225-percent rise in military purchases - almost all from the U.S. and Europe.

'Netanyahu, Trump Clash Over Syria Early Withdrawal Plan'



A U.S. soldier (L) sits on an armored vehicle behind a sand barrier at a newly-installed position near the tense front-line between the so-called Syrian Manbij Military Council and Turkish-backed militants, in Manbij, northern Syria, April 4, 2018.

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – A recent telephone conversation between Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Donald Trump grew tense over Trump's earlier expression of his tendency to withdraw U.S. forces from Syria "very soon," according to two U.S. officials. Netanyahu and Trump discussed regional developments over the phone on Wednesday, according to the official account from the United States. But two unidentified U.S. officials said later that Netanyahu had objected to Trump's remark that he would like U.S. forces out of Syria shortly, according to The Times of Israel.

that countries that wanted the U.S. to remain in Syria would have to pay for that presence, singling out Saudi Arabia. "Saudi Arabia is very interested in our decision, and I said, 'Well, you want us to stay, maybe you're going to have to pay,'" he told reporters at the White House. "We do a lot of things in this country. We do [them] for a lot of reasons, but it's very costly for our country and it helps other countries a hell of a lot more than it helps us. So we're going to be making a decision." The Zionist prime minister's objection to Trump's stated Syria plan came despite reassurances by U.S. officials that Trump has changed his mind.

There were no more details on the give-and-take between the Zionist prime minister and the U.S. president. On March 29, Trump said the U.S. would "be coming out of Syria, like, very soon. Let the other people take care of it now." The U.S. has reportedly more than 2,000 troops stationed in eastern Syria, in addition to several thousand others in the Arab country's north. "We spent \$7 trillion in the Middle East. And you know what we have for it? Nothing," Trump said. Other U.S. officials have since been attempting to walk back Trump's remarks, which had already been in contrast to the mainstream U.S. position. Just on Friday, the Pentagon sounded differently from Trump, saying the American military plans in Syria remained unchanged. On April 3, Trump also signaled

Apart from the troops on the ground, the U.S. and a number of its allies have been bombarding what they say are Daesh positions inside Syria since September 2014, without any authorization from the Damascus government or the United Nations. After the Wednesday telephone conversation between Netanyahu and Trump, a White House statement said, "President Trump reiterated the commitment of the United States to Israel's security," and that "the two leaders agreed to continue their close coordination on countering Iran's malign influence and destabilizing activities." Netanyahu later tweeted that he had "thanked President Trump for his commitment to Israel's security and America's support for Israel at the United Nations." Neither of the official accounts referred to the tense moments of the conversation.

'U.S. Ties Salman's Kingship to Normalization With Zionist Regime'

RIYADH (Dispatches) – A dissident Saudi prince has revealed a series of "conditions" set by the U.S. and the Zionist regime for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to secure their help in ascending to the throne at home, among them the normalization of Riyadh's ties with the Zionist regime. Khalid bin Farhan Al Saud, who fled Saudi Arabia in 2007, made the remarks to the pan-Arab al-Hewar television channel in Germany, where he has obtained political asylum, Lebanon's al-Ahd news network reported. Besides normalizing ties with the occupying regime, the kingdom would have to guarantee security for Israeli vessels travelling through the Straits of Tiran

between the Gulf of Aqaba from the Red Sea proper if bin Salman seeks to become a monarch, he added. The Zionist regime's vessels are allowed to freely traverse across the waters under the 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, which Riyadh ostensibly does not recognize. Moreover, the regime would have to be given a role in the so-called Neom project. A brainchild of bin Salman, the project envisages the creation of a transnational city and economic zone in the Tabuk region in northwestern Saudi Arabia, which lies close to the border with Jordan and Egypt. Last but not least, Saudi Arabia is required to support a "peace" plan,

under which Palestinians would be denied their right to the holy occupied city of al-Quds. Saudi Arabia has been the main sponsor of the Arab Peace Initiative, which envisions a so-called two-state solution to the Zionist-Palestinian conflict. The kingdom does not officially recognize the regime, but the two sides have widely been reported to have cooperated for years behind the scenes. In June 2017, bin Salman, 32, replaced his cousin, Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, as the first in line to the Saudi throne. Nayef is reportedly under house arrest. The young prince then launched a self-promotion campaign meant to consolidate his grip to power,

as part of which hundreds of royals and high-profile business man were arrested and tortured over "corruption" charges. Most of them were later released under hefty cash settlements with Riyadh. Bin Slaman has also tried to portray himself as a "reformist" and advocate of women's rights by introducing a string of economic and social changes. Under bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's de facto leader, the kingdom has stepped up its overtures towards the regime. Last week, the crown prince told the Atlantic during his tour of the U.S. that like Palestinians, Israelis had the "right" to have "their own homeland."

Roadside Bomb Explosion Kills One in Damascus

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – One person was killed and six others wounded on Friday when an explosive device ripped through a car in the capital Damascus, state news agency SANA reported. The bomb went off behind the Khansa Mosque in the Barzeh neighborhood north of Damascus, said the report. The incident is a reminder of the early years of crisis in Syria when the bombings started to hit the country seven years ago. This incident comes as the capital

Damascus is largely safe after the majority of the terrorist groups had evacuated the Eastern Ghouta countryside of Damascus, except for the district of Douma. Militants in Douma are currently negotiating with the Syrian army over their evacuation from that area. Barzeh neighborhood in northern Damascus had been under the terrorists' control before the government forces recaptured it in 2017 after the evacuation of terrorists to northern Syria.

Afghanistan Accuses Pakistan of Air Strikes

KABUL (Reuters) – Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of air strikes causing "huge financial damages" in its province of Kunar bordering Pakistan, highlighting long-standing mistrust between the neighbors, even as both seek ways to improve security. The incident came ahead of a visit to Kabul by Pakistani Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi for talks with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on cooperation to halt militant attacks.

Pakistani jets dropped four bombs on Wednesday evening in Kunar's Dangam district, Afghanistan's ministry of foreign affairs said in a statement, without elaborating on the damage or making any mention of casualties. "Afghanistan warns that continuing violations of international norms ... will have further consequences on the relations between the two countries," the ministry added. Pakistan rejected as "baseless"

the allegation that it violated Afghan airspace, however. In a statement, its foreign affairs ministry said Pakistan's security forces were countering militant groups based in Afghanistan that launch attacks across the border. Military officials of the two countries met on Thursday in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi, where Pakistan shared details of the operations with Afghanistan, it added. The operations took place on the Pakistani side of

the border, Pakistan said. Afghanistan should focus on plugging gaps on its side of the border and refrain from the "blame game", the ministry said. Afghanistan's Western-backed government has long accused Pakistan of harboring Afghan Taliban insurgents, a charge that Islamabad denies. Islamabad, in turn, accuses Afghanistan of not doing enough to eradicate Pakistani Taliban militants.