

# Bahrain King Ratifies Law Banning Opposition From Elections

MANAMA (Press TV) – Bahrain’s king has signed into law a contentious bill recently adopted by the parliament, which bans figures of dissolved opposition parties and organizations from running in parliamentary elections.

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa signed off on “The Exercise of Political Rights,” an amended version of the kingdom’s election law which passed the National Assembly in late May, the official Bahrain News Agency reported.

The new version prohibits “leaders and members of political associations dissolved for violating the kingdom’s constitution or its laws” from standing in the elections.

It also bans anyone “convicted of a felony, even if they have been granted amnesty.”

The measure is viewed as an at-

tempt by the regime in Manama to bar dissidents from entering the 40-seat parliament ahead of the elections in November.

Already in its current composition, the legislature hardly contains any anti-regime figures.

Bahrain stifled a peaceful popular uprising in 2011, and has since been coming down hard on any instance of dissent.

The opposition parties boycotted the polls in 2014.

Since then, the authorities have outlawed two of the most important opposition groups, al-Wefaq and the National Democratic Action Society (Wa’ad).

The regime has further stripped many of the oppositionists of their citizenship.

Scores have also been killed and hundreds arrested during Bahrain’s



*Bahraini protesters hold up images of jailed Shia opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman and other protesters sentenced to death as they chant slogans demanding their freedom during a protest in Daih, March 3, 2015.*

crackdown on dissent.

The island hosts the U.S. Fifth Fleet. It closely aligns its policies with those of Washington and its most valued regional ally, Saudi Arabia.

## Trump-Kim... (Continued From Page One)

“Many people in the world will think of this as a form of fantasy from a science fiction movie,” the North Korean leader said, according to pool of reporters.

Earlier, the White House said Trump will leave Singapore on Tuesday night, adding that nuclear talks with North Korea are moving “more quickly than expected.”

### Doubts in Place

An Iranian official cast doubt on the endurance of a document signed between the two, saying the fate of the agreement is not certain.

“I don’t know who the North Korean leader is negotiating with. It is not a certainty that he [Trump] would not violate the agreement before the North Korean leader returns back home,” Iran’s government spokesman, Mohammad Baqer Nobakht, told reporters on Tuesday.

Nobakht further questioned Trump’s credibility a month after his move to pull the United States out from the landmark nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries, including the US, in 2015.

He said Trump does not represent the wise American people and added that the Americans would definitely distance themselves from him in the next election before he could threaten other nations.

The Iranian government spokesman noted that in some countries, some individuals have assumed posts they do not deserve and would only harm their people.

China and Russia have reacted positively to the historic summit between the American and North Korean leaders, with Beijing suggesting sanctions relief for Pyongyang in light of the new diplomatic developments.

Speaking following the summit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang suggested that sanctions relief could be considered for North Korea with the new agreements.

“The UN Security Council resolutions that have been passed say that if North Korea respects and acts in accordance with the resolutions, then sanction measures can be adjusted, including to pause or remove the relevant sanctions,” he told a daily news briefing.

Geng also reaffirmed that Beijing has always abode by all UN resolutions on North Korea, stressing China’s “obligation to play its deserved role in the progress of shifting to a non-nuclear peninsula.”

“China has consistently held that sanctions are not the goal in themselves. The Security Council’s actions should support and conform to the efforts of current diplomatic talks towards denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, and promote a political solution for the peninsula,” he added.

Additionally, Russia gave a positive assessment of the deal between the U.S. and North Korean leaders, noting, however, that “the devil is in the detail.”

Russia’s TASS news agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying that Moscow is ready to assist in implementing the agreement and hopes settling the nuclear crisis will unblock normal economic cooperation.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in hailed the outcome of the summit, calling it a historic event that will end what he called the last remaining conflict of the Cold War and write a new history of peace and cooperation on the Korean Peninsula, Yonhap reported.

“I congratulate and welcome the success of the historic North Korea-U.S. summit with a burning heart,” Moon said in a statement read by Cheong Wa-dae spokesman Kim Eui-kyeom on his behalf.

Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also welcomed the document signed by North Korea’s leader as a “first step” towards denuclearization.

“Through this U.S.-North Korea summit, Chairman Kim Jong-un’s intent for complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula was confirmed in writing,” Abe told reporters,” said Abe. “I support this as a first step to the comprehensive resolution of issues concerning North Korea.”

## Dozen... (Continued From Page One)

people in the provinces of Hasakah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr after they did not agree to support U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) terrorists.

“The United States has organized these militants in a bid to target the positions of the Syrian army, and recapture areas liberated by the Syrian army soldiers and their allies from the menace of terrorism,” the letters pointed out.

They noted, “The United States has on occasions offered direct support to Daesh terrorist group – the latest of which was on May 24 when U.S.-led fighter aircraft struck Syrian army military sites between Albu Kamal border town and Hmeimim Air Base less than 24 hours after government forces thwarted Daesh assaults on its positions.”

“The U.S.-led coalition’s continued war crimes and crimes against humanity against Syrian people, its support for terrorism and use of terrorists and separatist militants to achieve its despicable political purposes confirm that the sole purpose of this contingent is to undermine Syria’s sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and prolong its crisis,” the Syrian foreign ministry pointed out.

## Hamas... (Continued From Page One)

The Syrian nation and government “always stood in solidarity with the Palestinian people and supported its rights,” he said, adding, “Iran has greatly supported the Palestinian people and the resistance, and the connection with Iran today is very special and very developed.”

## Iran’s... (Continued From Page 2)

Council, and in fact co-sponsored and drafted by the United States, that is the source of embarrassment for America. To walk away from an international agreement and then threaten a sovereign country is the real source of embarrassment since Iran was in full compliance while the U.S. never was.”

“In 2008, the Zionists told the world that Iran was only some days away from acquiring an atomic bomb,” he said. “The Zionists said there had to be a military strike to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. What has happened since?”

“Of course, blaming and threatening Iran is not new,” the ambassador said. “This has been going on for 40 years. The Iranian people and the Iranian government are accustomed to this nonsense. United States intervention in the internal affairs of Iran goes back a long time, including the war with Iraq, when the United States supported Saddam Hussein. Then America invaded Iraq in 2003 in their so-called ‘intervention for democracy and elimination of WMDs.’ Iran has always resisted and will always resist U.S. threats.”

“America was in Iran 40 years ago,” the ambassador said. “About 100,000 U.S. advisers were in Iran during the rule of the shah, who was among the closest allies of America. America was unable to keep this regime in power because the Iranian people revolted against such dependency and suppression. Since the fall of the shah in 1979, for 40 years, America continued to violate international law, especially the Algeria agreements it signed with Iran in 1981.”

“The Middle East has many problems: insecurity, instability, problems with natural resources such as water, etc.,” Khoshroo said. “All of these problems have been made worse by foreign intervention as well as Israel’s lawlessness. The issue of Palestine is at the heart of turmoil in the Middle East for Muslims. Any delay in finding solutions to these wounds in the Middle East exposes this region to more dangerous threats. Americans say they want the Middle East to be free from violent extremism, but this will only happen when the Middle East is free from occupation and foreign intervention. The Americans are selling their weapons throughout the Middle East. They calculate how much money they can earn from destruction. They don’t care about human beings. They don’t care about security or democratic process or political process. This is worrisome.”

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was quoted as saying by state news agency IRNA.

“This will help all Iranians to participate in investment in oil projects,” he added. Iran’s oil minister Bijan Zanganeh said last month that foreign investment was needed to develop its oil industry, but that it could survive if foreigners decided to stay away.

## ‘Over 920,000 Displaced Across Syria Over Past 4 Months’



*The photo shows Syrian children at a Syrian refugee camp in the Lebanese town of Bar Elias on April 23, 2018.*

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The United Nations says more than 920,000 people have been displaced inside Syria during the first four months of 2018, the highest level since foreign-backed terrorism began in the Arab country seven years ago.

Panos Moutmtzis, the UN regional humanitarian coordinator for Syria, told reporters in the Swiss city of Geneva on Sunday that Syria continued to witness massive displacements of people

over the past few months.

“We are seeing a massive displacement inside Syria ... From January to April, there were over 920,000 newly displaced people,” Moutmtzis said, adding, “This was the highest displacement in that short period of time we have seen since the conflict started.”

Moutmtzis pointed out that most of the newly displaced had been forced on the move by escalations in fighting in the former terrorist bastion of Eastern Gh-

outa and within the northwestern province of Idlib, which is largely controlled by various extremist groups.

His comments came as Syrian government forces seek to flush out terrorists and wrest full control over Idlib, which has some 2.5 million inhabitants.

At the same time, the foreign-backed terrorist groups in the province are increasingly fighting amongst themselves.

“We worry about seeing really 2.5 million people becoming displaced,” Moutmtzis said, adding that the UN was currently drawing up a range of contingency plans in case the situation escalated.

“The current composition makes (the situation) highly explosive,” Moutmtzis warned.

He noted that Idlib was part of the “de-escalation” agreement for Syria reached between Iran, Russia and Turkey and warned of the dire consequences if the province sank into full-blown conflict.

UN figures show that the number of people internally displaced in the violence-hit country has risen to 6.2 million. This is while there are still some 5.6 million Syrian

refugees in neighboring countries.

The UN is currently providing aid to some 5.5 million people across the country each month. But Moutmtzis voiced deep concern over the lack of funds for the massive aid operation, with only 26 percent of the \$3.5 billion needed inside Syria this year materializing to date.

“The humanitarian response on the ground is really at a breaking point. We are stretched to a maximum,” he said. “Our warehouses are empty.”

Syria has been gripped by terrorism caused by multiple factions and groups since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Zionist regime and its Western and regional allies are aiding terrorist groups that are wreaking havoc in the Arab country.

In recent months, terrorists have lost much of the territory they once held in Syria.

A conference co-hosted by the UN and the EU in April said that conditions for the return of refugees had not been fulfilled yet, noting that voluntary repatriation might not take place in safety and dignity.

## Zionist PM Questioned by Police in Corruption Case

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime’s police questioned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday over his dealings with the country’s largest telecommunication company, Israel Radio said, one of three corruption cases weighing on his political future.

A vehicle carrying police officers pulled up at the entrance of the prime minister’s official residence, where a clutch of protesters called for Netanyahu to resign over the investigations.

Police declined immediate comment, but Israel Radio said Netanyahu was being questioned over allegations he awarded regulatory favors to Bezeq Telecom Israel in return for favorable coverage on a news site the company’s owner controls.

Netanyahu, who has been questioned twice before in so-called Case 4000, and Bezeq have denied wrongdoing.

In the case, Netanyahu stands accused of favoring the Israeli telephone communications giant Bezeq in exchange for positive coverage on its Walla! portal, one of the most popular among Israelis. He reportedly en-

gaged in the corrupt practice between 2014 and 2017 while he was also occupying the post of the communications minister.

The Tuesday questioning would use the testimony of Nir Hefetz, Netanyahu’s former ally, as its subject. Hefetz “gave police text messages and incriminating recordings allegedly indicating a quid-pro-quo relationship” between the premier and Bezeq’s boss, Shaul Elovitch, the paper wrote.

Last month, Haaretz revealed comments made in 2015 by Elovitch, in which he had said that he understood Netanyahu “was willing to commit suicide for me,” referring to the duo’s especial relationship.

Also on Tuesday, police are to question two suspects in “Case 2000.” In that case, Netanyahu is accused of helping the Yediot Aharonot newspaper against its competitor Yisrael Hayom likewise in return for favorable coverage of the prime minister.

For many months now, thousands have been holding weekly protests against the premier, urging him to resign.

## Egypt Targets Bloggers, Social Media Users in New Draft Law

CAIRO (MEMO) – Social media users, blogs and personal website which have more than 5,000 followers will be governed in the same way media outlets are in Egypt, if a new draft law is brought into effect.

The Egyptian Parliament has approved draft laws which regulate the work of media outlets, journalists and the Higher Council for Media Regulation, El-Shorouk news site reported, and referred the laws to the State Council for legal review before they are submitted to the president for ratification.

According to the site, Article 19 of the draft law prohibits media outlets including online websites from publishing or broadcasting false news, or news that incites to violence, hatred, discrimination, racism or intolerance as well as blasphemy. The draft law includes personal website or online blogs with at least 5,000 followers.

The Egyptian parliament passed three draft laws which regulate the work of the Higher Council for Media Regulation, the National Press Authority and the National Media Au-

thority.

Since coming to power in a military coup in 2013, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has ordered a crackdown on dissent including on online activists who are highlighting the abuses carried out by his regime.

Journalists are regularly accused of belonging to the now outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, the party from which the ousted President belonged, and jailed following military court hearings in which they are rarely given the opportunity for defense.