

Zionist Regime to Build New Settlements in Negev

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist officials have approved plans for the construction of three new settlements in the Negev desert irrespective of the international outcry against the Tel Aviv regime's land expropriation and settlement expansion policies in occupied Palestinian territories.

The so-called West Jerusalem (al-Quds) Local Planning and Building Committee approved plans for the building of the settlements in the Negev desert, Palestinian's official news agency Wafa cited a report broadcast by English-language i24NEWS television network.

The report added that the plans need the endorsement of the Board for Planning and Building Committee, before they could be submitted to the cabinet.

Around 250 settlers units are scheduled to be built in the planned Daniel settlement, while another 450 units will be built in Ir Ovot settlement.

Less than a month before U.S. President Donald Trump took office, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2334, calling on the Zionist regime to "immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the



This file photo taken on January 25, 2017 shows a partial view of the Israeli settlement of Ariel near the occupied West Bank city of Nablus.

occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem" al-Quds.

About 600,000 Zionists live in over 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East al-Quds.

Palestinians want the West Bank as part of a future independent Palestinian state, with East al-

Quds as its capital.

The last round of Zionist-Palestinian talks collapsed in 2014. Among the major sticking points in those negotiations was the regime's continued settlement expansion on Palestinian territories.

Trump backtracked on Washington's support for a "two-state solution" earlier this year,

saying he would support any solution favored by both sides.

"Looking at two-state or one-state, I like the one that both parties like. I'm very happy with the one both parties like. I can live with either one," the U.S. president said during a joint press conference with Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington on February 15.

Nations ...

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Chinese companies are also interested in Iran's oil and gas projects. State energy firms CNPC and Sinopec have invested billions of dollars in Iran's giant Yadavaran and North Azadegan oil fields and eye participating in further developments of the deposits.

CNPC is also about to take over Total's stake in the giant Iranian South Pars gas project after the French company decided to leave amid U.S. sanctions.

Iran plans to increase the production potential of its oil fields by 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) in the form of 34 projects, estimated to cost more than \$6 billion.

Russia 'Deeply Disappointed'

As many as 12 projects in Iran's petroleum sector have been presented to Russia's Gazprom, Rosneft, Gazprom Neft, Zarubezhneft, Taftneft and Lukoil for development.

President Vladimir Putin has said Russia is prepared to continue its oil investment in Iran at the level of \$50 billion in the face of U.S. plans to reimpose sanctions on the Iranian oil and gas sector on November 4.

On Tuesday, Russia said it was "deeply disappointed by U.S. steps to reimpose its national sanctions against Iran" as it pledged to do "everything necessary" to protect its shared economic interests with Tehran.

"This is a clear example of Washington violating UN Resolution 2231 (on the Iran nuclear deal) and international law," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The statement dismissed U.S. hopes to browbeat Iran into submission through exerting fresh pressures on the country.

"As long-term experience has shown, it will not be possible to gain concessions from Iran using pressure," it said.

Russia called on the international community to save the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and "not to allow such significant achievements in multilateral diplomacy to be sacrificed in the name of American aspirations to settle political scores with Iran."

Ex-Knesset ...

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He added: "There is ethnic cleansing in this law that allows building Jewish-only towns without any Arabs. This is more than what the Arabs could absorb. All of that comes over human rights".

Despite holding Israeli citizenship, Palestinians in occupied territories lived under a military administration between 1948 and 1966 and faced curfews, severe restrictions on free speech and political rights, and persecution in front of military courts. Rather than being referred to as Palestinian citizens, they are often called "Arabs" or "Arab Israelis".

There are around 1.6 million Palestinian citizens today, making up 20 percent of Occupied Palestine's population. Many have been left unsurprised by the new law, which they see as simply making official what they have felt for decades: that they are second-class citizens compared to Zionists.

Still, warned Bahloul, there is only so much that can be tolerated. "The ability of the Arab minority to be silent, patient and endure these laws is limited... I am not trying to scare anyone here, but if this violent campaign against Arabs in the form of laws continues, I think there will be a possibility for the creation of new facts," he said.

Bahloul's resignation was one of the most high-profile reactions against the law, along with three Druze soldiers who made headlines when they announced on social media that they would stop serving in the Zionist army in protest.

Over the past few weeks, Bahloul has been outspoken about the need for Arab and Druze citizens of Occupied Palestine to work together against the law.

The Druze, a religious sect within Islam that has had a presence in the Levant since the 11th century, number about 110,000 in northern Occupied Palestine, with another 20,000 in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

The Druze community has strongly criticized the legislation as they have been subject to compulsory service in the military or police since 1956. Druze in the Golan Heights do not serve in the army and many have refused Israeli identity cards since the beginning of the occupation during the 1967 war.

UNICEF:

New Cholera Outbreak Spreading Fast in Yemen's Hudaydah



A Yemeni woman and a child suspected of being infected with cholera receive treatment at a hospital in the capital Sana'a on July 24, 2018.

SANAA (Press TV) – The United Nations children's agency, UNICEF, has warned that a fresh cholera outbreak is spreading quickly in Yemen's vital seaport of Hudaydah, amid ongoing attacks by the Saudi-led coalition against the besieged provincial capital. "Over a year after cholera broke out in Yemen, killing more than 2,000 people, the disease is back and spreading fast in ... Hudaydah," said the UN agency in a report on Monday, adding

that port city has been "a target of continued airstrikes" by the so-called coalition in an attempt "to regain control of the city."

Cholera infection first became epidemic in Yemen in October 2016 and spread until December the same year, when it dwindled. The second outbreak began in the Arabian Peninsula country in April last year.

Backed by Saudi-led airstrikes, Emirati forces and militants loyal to Yemen's former

president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, launched the Hudaydah offensive on June 13 despite international warnings that it would compound the impoverished nation's humanitarian crisis.

Over 70 percent of all humanitarian aid, and food imports pass through the docks of Hudaydah, which was one of the worst-hit cities in Yemen's cholera outbreak last year – the worst in the world at its height. The Saudi-led coalition's current blockade on the city has triggered an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the impoverished country.

The Saudi-led coalition, which has been waging a war against Yemen since early 2015, claims that the members of the Houthi Ansarullah movement are using Hudaydah for weapons delivery, an allegation rejected by the fighters.

Saudi Arabia and some of its allies launched a brutal war, code-named Operation Decisive Storm, against Yemen in March 2015 in an attempt to reinstall

Hadi, a staunch ally of Riyadh, and crush the Houthi movement, which is a significant aid to the Yemeni army in defending the country against the invading forces. It has also been running state affairs in the absence of an effective administration during the past three years.

The imposed war initially consisted of a bombing campaign but was later coupled with a naval blockade and the deployment of ground forces into Yemen.

UN vaccinations in Hudaydah UNICEF further said in an attempt to mitigate the risks of the new cholera outbreak, on Saturday, it launched a week-long cholera oral vaccination campaign, with the cooperation of Yemen's Ministry of Health, targeting the most vulnerable 500,000 women, children and men in and around the city.

It added that "other mitigating measures implemented by humanitarian organizations include the continued provision of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities."

Iraq Sentences 5 Daesh Terrorists to Death

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – A court in Iraq has sentenced five Iraqi nationals to death by hanging over their membership in the Daesh terrorist group and involvement in criminal acts in the war-ravaged Arab country.

Abdul Sattar al-Biraqdar, spokesman for Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council, said in a statement that the country's Central Criminal Court issued the verdicts against the convicts after they confessed to having fought against security and military

forces in Nineveh and Anbar provinces and carrying out terrorist attacks, Arabic-language al-Furat television network reported.

The development came only a day after the same Iraqi court sentenced 55-year-old French citizen Lahcen Ammar Gueboudj and German national Nadia Rainer Hermann, 22, to life imprisonment on charges of affiliation to Daesh terror group.

The Criminal Court of Nineveh sentenced an unnamed

Daesh terrorists to death on July 8 after he was convicted of killing 16 people at Mosul General Hospital, and planting hundreds of bombs east of the provincial capital city of Mosul, located some 400 kilometers (250 miles) north of Baghdad.

Biraqdar said the convict has confessed to executing civilians, and planting 250 explosive devices across the town of Bartella.

On June 30, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who is also the

commander-in-chief of Iraqi forces, pledged to hunt down Daesh militants across Iraq after recent attacks and abductions carried out by the terrorist group.

"We will chase the remaining cells of terrorism in their hideouts and we will kill them, we will chase them everywhere, in the mountains and the desert," Abadi said.

Abadi declared the end of military operations against Daesh in the Arab country on December 9, 2017.

Hariri Faces Int'l Push for Accelerating Gov't Formation in Lebanon

BEIRUT (Xinhua) – Lebanese Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri says there is a push by the international community to accelerate the formation of a government in Lebanon.

"There is an international push to form a government in Lebanon and to start with the reform plans adopted by CEDRE," he was quoted by online newspaper Elnashra as saying.

Hariri was referring to the international conference for supporting Lebanon's development and reforms held in April in Paris, France, which pledges over 11 billion U.S. dollars in aid for Lebanon.

"I am being blamed for the delay in government formation while every political party is insisting on its cabinet's share. They should sacrifice for the interest of this country," he said.

Hariri is facing various hurdles in his attempt to form a 30-member national unity government comprising all the country's political parties, due to differences of opinion between rival politicians over the representation of the main Christian parties, as well as the Druze sect.

Hariri said that he is in contact with all political parties with regard to government formation.

"I have a notebook with all the demands of political parties and I want to form a government of national unity," he said.

Lebanon held the first general election in nine years on May 6, after being postponed for three times in 2013, 2014 and 2017. Despite the big loss of its seats in the parliament by his party, the Future Movement, Hariri is backed by most of the new parliament members to continue to serve as the prime minister.