

Zionist Regime Seizes Palestinian School in West Bank

TUBAS, West Bank (Dispatches) – Zionist troops on Tuesday dismantled and seized caravans belonging to a local Palestinian school in Tubas area in the West Bank's northern Valleys and detained the faculty staff.

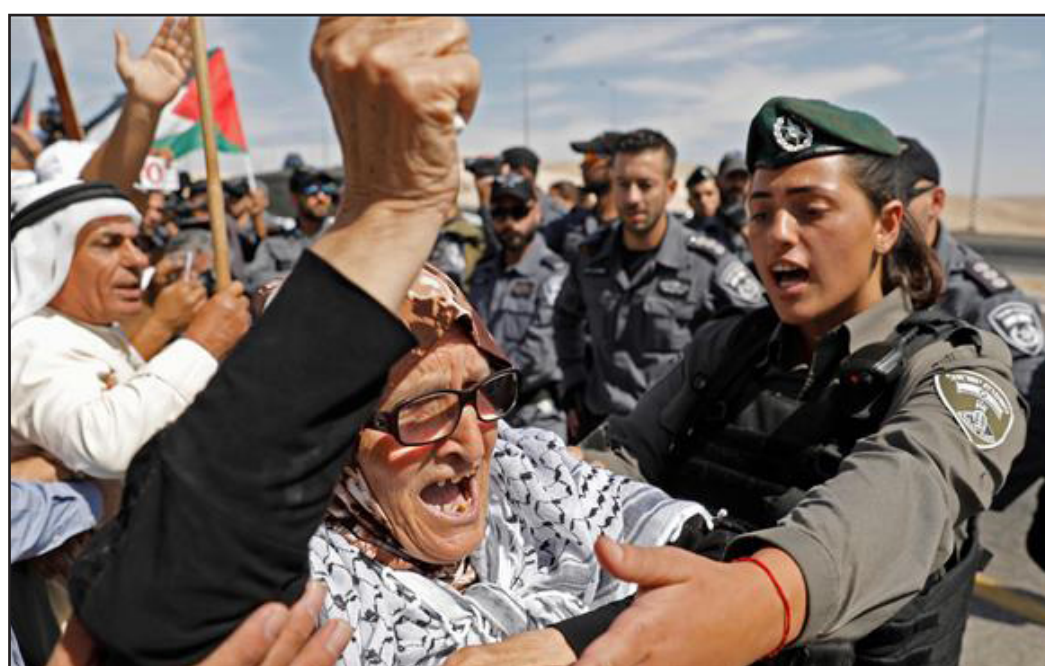
The school serves about 24 Palestinian students in the area of Khirbet Ibiziq. It is one of nearly a dozen public schools named as "Challenge Schools" located in areas classified as area (C).

According to Aref Daraghmeh, Palestinian human rights activist in the area, Zionist troops closed down roads leading to the school and dismantled two caravans.

Sa'ed Qabaha, director of Education Ministry in Tubas area told Xinhua that the Zionist regime is confiscating the right of dozens of students from the area to receive public education.

In another development, the French Foreign Ministry has called on the Zionist regime to "permanently abandon their plans to demolish Khan al-Ahmar and to remove the uncertainty surrounding the fate of the village" as the Tel Aviv regime presses ahead with its land expropriation policies in the occupied territories irrespective of great international outcry.

The ministry said in a statement that France takes note of the decision by Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to postpone the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar for the time being, stressing that the Bedouin village is "located in an area that is key to the contiguity



Palestinian demonstrators shout slogans near Zionist troops during a protest on October 5, 2018 along a highway leading to the Bedouin village of Khan al-Ahmar, which the regime authorities plan to demolish, in the occupied West Bank.

of a future Palestinian state and therefore the viability of the two-state solution."

"France, in collaboration with its European partners, has repeatedly called on Israeli authorities not to proceed with the destruction of Khan al-Ahmar and the forced evacuation of its inhabitants," the statement pointed out.

Some 180 residents of Khan-al Ahmar village

face being forcibly evicted and transferred by the Zionist army.

Zionist authorities have reportedly offered the villagers a choice of two possible destinations: a site near the former al-Quds municipal garbage dump, near the village of Abu Dis, or a site in the vicinity of a sewage plant close to the city of Ariha.

Erdogan ...

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Saudi officials originally said that Khashoggi had left the consulate soon after arriving. They later said he died during a brawl inside the consulate, and then attributed his death to a chokehold.

Turkish investigators suspect Khashoggi was dismembered, and the whereabouts of his body, or body parts, is still unknown. "By admitting to murder, the Saudi authorities have taken a significant step. Now we expect them to put all those responsible forward and we expect them to be penalized before the law," Erdogan said.

Erdogan also said he would propose to King Salman that the 18 suspects arrested in Saudi Arabia should stand trial in Istanbul.

"I'm making a call today. This call is to the highest-level executives. The incident took place in Istanbul. Therefore, the adjudication of these 15 plus three people should be carried out in Istanbul. That's my proposal. The decision is at his (the king's) discretion, but this is my proposal. This is where the incident occurred."

Erdogan also suggested that other countries could have been involved in the operation, saying that other state actors should also be held to account if necessary.

Earlier on Tuesday, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said that Turkey has yet to share any information on the Khashoggi case with other countries, but is prepared to do so.

Speaking in Ankara, Cavusoglu said Turkey was "ready to cooperate" if the UN and other international bodies requested an independent investigation into Khashoggi's death.

India...

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Affairs Ministry T.S. Tirumurti, while the Iranian and Afghan sides were led by their respective deputy ministers of transport.

India is also attempting to put in place a separate corridor linking Gujarat and West Bengal to Kazakhstan and eastern Russia via Iran's Bandar Abbas.

Plans are afoot to link Gujarat's Mundra Port with Bandar Abbas and connect it to Iran-Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan railway network and onwards to eastern Russia.

The idea is to not only access markets of this landlocked region but also create a corridor to import natural resources from the region in a shorter period than being done currently, according to officials.

Officials from India and Kazakhstan are meeting in Delhi next week to fine-tune proposals for the corridor which will run parallel to the International North South Transport Corridor and the Chabahar corridor.

While Gujarat is geographically closer to Bandar Abbas, the goal of the proposed corridor is to connect eastern India with Eurasia.

The proposal for the new corridor comes as Moscow is launching talks with Delhi for the creation of a corridor connecting Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Oman and India.

The resource-rich and growing economies of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are also seeking access to oceans and the nearest gateway for the purpose is via Iran.

Official...

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accounting for almost 70 percent of the aggregate cereal production in Iran.

Irrigated wheat covers only one-third of the total wheat area of 6.1 million hectares, with the bulk of the wheat crop depending on rainfall. This makes the staple grain susceptible to drought in one of the world's driest countries, with an average 250 millimeters of rain a year.

Most of the rainfed wheat crop is concentrated in the west and north-

western regions of the country.

Iran's use of improved seed technology over the past five years has boosted the country's self-sufficiency in wheat by more than 30%, where all its needs are currently covered by domestic supplies, according to Esfandiari.

Iran is a partner of international CIMMYT and ICARDA programs for breeding resistant wheat varieties in the face of climate change.

Esfandiari said with the implementation of these plans, the yield of wheat will increase by about 25% in rainfed lands and 30% in irrigated areas over the next five years.

Iranian private millers are not allowed to use domestic wheat for flour exports. As a result, they put orders for imports from a variety of producers.

In March, Russia clinched a deal to export up to 1 million tonnes of wheat per year over the next five years to increase the utilization of the Iranian wheat flour mills and consequently expand the Iranian exports of flour.

With U.S. sanctions reimposed in August, however, Iranian shipments might be headed for choppy waters.

Foodstuffs are purportedly not restricted by U.S. sanctions, but banking sanctions and asset freezes are making it difficult for trading houses to do business with Iran.

The United States also appears to be capitalizing on a shortfall in global grain supply, with much higher stocks than rival exporters.

The wheat crop in the world's biggest exporters such as Argentina, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine has suffered this year which experienced a scorching hot, dry summer.

Russia and Ukraine, as the Black Sea bread baskets, went through a spring drought, followed by a summer heatwave in the European Union. Australia, another important exporter, is also facing dry weather which threatens its crops.

China...

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The U.S. withdrawal from the Cold War-era nuclear arms treaty with Russia could give the Pentagon new options to counter Chinese missile advances but experts warn the ensuing arms race could greatly escalate tensions in the Asia-Pacific.

U.S. officials have been warning for years that the United States was being put at a disadvantage by China's development of increasingly sophisticated land-based missile forces, which the Pentagon could not match thanks to the U.S. treaty with Russia.

Trump has signaled he may soon give the Pentagon a freer hand to confront those advances, if he makes good on threats to pull out of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which required elimination of short- and intermediate-range nuclear and conventional missiles.

Dan Blumenthal, a former Pentagon official now at the American Enterprise Institute, said a treaty pullout could pave the way for the United States to field easier-to-hide, road-mobile conventional missiles in places like Guam and Japan.

That would make it harder for China to consider a conventional first strike against U.S. ships and bases in the region. It could also force Beijing into a costly arms race, forcing China to spend more on missile defenses.

"It will change the picture fundamentally," Blumenthal said.

Kelly Magsamen, who helped craft the Pentagon's Asian policy under the Obama administration, said mismanagement of expectations surrounding a U.S. treaty pullout could also unsettle security in the Asia-Pacific, she cautioned.

"It's potentially destabilizing," she said. Experts warn that China would put pressure on countries in the region to refuse U.S. requests to position missiles there.

Abraham Denmark, a former senior Pentagon official under Obama, said Guam, Japan and even Australia were possible locations for U.S. missile deployments.

"But there are a lot of alliance questions that appear at first glance to be very tricky," he cautioned.

Iraqi PM-Designate Under Pressure Over Candidates for Security Ministries



In this file picture, an Iraqi man inspects a mass grave near the town of Sinjar, situated over 400 kilometers northwest of the capital Baghdad.

BAGHDAD (Xinhua) – An Iraqi lawmaker on Tuesday said that Prime Minister-designate Adel Abdul-Mahdi, who is forming Iraq's new cabinet, is under great pressure over candidates of

the security ministries.

Ayman al-Shimary, from Saairon parliamentary bloc, which is backed by the prominent Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, told reporters in Baghdad that

the "security ministries became a controversial issue among the political parties. Each bloc wants its candidate to be named for one of those ministries."

Shimary said Sadr previously warned that those sensitive ministries should be run by experienced, qualified and independent ministers, who are far from the influence of the political parties.

"Mahdi has been under pressure by the political parties over the posts of National Security president as well as the ministers of defense and interior," Shimary added.

He said that his Saairon bloc had given up its share of posts in Mahdi's cabinet list in order to give Mahdi freedom to choose his cabinet members, adding that if there is no way but to choose candidate from the lead-

ing parties, then those who will run security ministries must resign from their parties.

Last week, Mahdi's office said in a statement that the prime minister-designate will submit his cabinet list and ministerial program this week.

On Oct. 2, the Iraqi parliament elected Barham Salih as president of Iraq, who later named Mahdi as prime minister-designate and tasked him with forming the new government for the next four years.

Mahdi has since been busy with tough negotiations with different political blocs in parliament over the members of his cabinet.

According to the Iraqi constitution, the prime minister-designate has 30 days to form a cabinet and present it to parliament for approval.

Egypt Sentences 16 Brotherhood Loyalists to 15 Years

CAIRO (Dispatches) – An Egyptian court has sentenced 16 loyalists of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood group to 15 years in prison over "inciting anti-state violence and protests", official MENA news agency reported.

The 16 members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood of former President Mohamed Morsi, were arrested in 2014 in the Nile Delta province of Sharqiya, north of the capital Cairo, for spreading leaflets against the armed forces and the police and shouting anti-government slogans during protests.

The prosecution charged the defendants with holding illegal protests, blocking traffic, using guns and fireworks and terrifying citizens.

Morsi was deposed by the army in early July 2013, in response to mass protests against his one-year rule and his Muslim Brotherhood.

The group was later blacklisted by the new government of President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi as "a terrorist organization."

Most Brotherhood leaders, members and supporters, including Morsi

himself and the group's top chief Mohamed Badie, are currently in jail.

Many of them have received appealable death sentences and life imprisonments over charges varying from inciting violence and murder to espionage and jailbreak.

Morsi is serving a 20-year prison sentence over inciting deadly clashes between his supporters and opponents in late 2012 and a 25-year jail term over leaking classified documents to Qatar.

Since Morsi's ouster, Egypt has been facing a wave of terror attacks that killed hundreds of policemen and soldiers as well as civilians.

A Sinai-based militant group affiliated with the Daesh regional terrorist group claimed responsibility for most of the attacks in Egypt over the past few years.

Meanwhile, Egyptian forces have killed hundreds of terrorists and arrested thousands of suspects during the country's anti-terror war declared by Sisi, the army chief then, following Morsi's ouster.

'Japanese Journalist Captured in Syria 3 Years Ago Freed'

TOKYO (Reuters) – A man believed to be a Japanese freelance journalist who was captured three years ago in Syria has been freed, a Japanese government spokesman said on Tuesday.

"We received information from Qatar that Mr. Jumpei Yasuda had been released,"

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters. "We were informed that he is in an immigration facility in Antakya (in Turkey)."

Suga said the government was making checks to confirm that the man was in fact Yasuda. But he said that in light of the available information that was highly likely, add-

ing that Yasuda's wife had been notified.

Japanese media reported that Yasuda, 44, had been captured by an al-Qaeda affiliate after entering Syria from Turkey in 2015.

Since then, he has appeared occasionally in online videos looking increasingly unkempt with graying hair.