

AMMAN (Dispatches) – A Jordanian court has leveled “terrorism” charges against a man suspected of wounding eight people in a November knife attack at a popular tourist site.

The suspect, Moustafa Abourouis, 22, faces up to 20 years in prison after the stabbing of three Mexicans, a Swiss woman, a Jordanian tour guide and a security officer at the Roman city of Jerash.

At a hearing open to the press, prosecutors accused Abourouis of committing a “terrorist act” and “promoting the ideas of a terrorist group” – a reference to the Daesh terrorist group.

Avarice is disgrace; cowardice is a defect; poverty often disables an intelligent man from arguing his case; a poor man is a stranger in his own town; misfortune and helplessness are calamities; patience is a kind of bravery; to sever attachments with the wicked world is the greatest wealth; piety is the best weapon of defense.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Ahead of Potential Announcement

Palestine Threatens to Quit Oslo Accords

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – Palestinian officials have threatened to withdraw from key provisions of the Oslo Accords, which define relations with the Zionist regime, if U.S. President Donald Trump announces his Middle East peace plan next week.

Chief Palestinian negotiation Saeb Erekat told AFP that the Palestinian Liberation Organization reserved the right “to withdraw from the interim agreement”, the concrete part of the Oslo deal, if Trump unveils his plan.

The Trump initiative will turn the Zionist regime’s “temporary occupation (of Palestinian territory) into a permanent occupation”, Erekat said.

Other Palestinian officials have also once again slammed the U.S. Middle East plan, ahead of the possible announcement by U.S. President Donald Trump.

The U.S. deal, also known as the “Deal of the Century,” has been rejected by Palestinians, who said they were not consulted on it.

Palestinian President’s Spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeinah said that the Palestinian leadership will hold a series of meetings on all levels in order to “foil the ‘Deal of the Century.’”



The picture taken on June 16, 2019, shows a poster in Gaza City denouncing US President Donald Trump’s so-called peace plan, reading, “The deal of the century will not pass.”

“If the so-called ‘Deal of the Century’ is announced, it would have grave consequences on the entire region, because it will harm sovereignty of states in the region and their identities,” he warned, urging the Muslim world to support the Palestinian position.

The Secretary General of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Saeb Erekat criticized Trump as “trying to forge peace between the two Israeli election contenders, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and opposi-

tion leader Benny Gants, and not between Palestinians and Israelis.”

Meanwhile, top leaders of Palestinian political factions reiterated the public rejection of the U.S. deal.

“The so-called ‘Deal of the Century’ is an attempt to rip apart the Palestinians and their legitimate national rights,” said Deputy Secretary General of the Palestinian Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine Qais Abdelkarim in a statement.

“It is a green light to Israel to an-

nex more of the West Bank’s territory for its ‘Greater Israel project,’” added Abdelkarim.

Ahmad Majdalani, Secretary General of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, said that the U.S. plan would only push the Palestinian statehood project farther away.

“The only new thing is the attempt to draw the parameters of this liquidation project to make it look like it will be dealt with apart from the national rights of the Palestinian people,” said Majdalani.

Along the same lines, member of the Palestinian People’s Party politburo Walid al-Awad accused the U.S. of trying to salvage Netanyahu ahead of upcoming election on March 2.

Furthermore, Fatah party Central Committee member Jamal Muheisen called for popular movements to face the U.S. deal.

“The Arab and Muslim worlds are required to undertake their responsibilities in light of the U.S. arrogance, and not to stay bound to statements and condemnations,” Muheisen said.

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the U.S. president will not gain “a single Palestinian or Arab to agree on the Deal of the Century.”

Hezbollah Raps U.S. as Source of Lebanon’s Problems



A protester throws a tire on a burning pile blocking the road in the capital Beirut on January 22, 2020.

BEIRUT (Tasnim) – Lebanon’s Hezbollah resistance movement has lashed out at the U.S. for its interfering policies against the Mediterranean country.

Hezbollah’s second-in-command Sheikh Naim Qassem lashed out at U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for voicing concern about the role of Hezbollah in the new Lebanese government, saying the U.S. itself is the root cause of the problems in the Arab country.

Al Ahed news quoted Sheikh Qassem as saying in an address in the Lebanese city of Baalbek that the U.S. has proved to be the root cause of all crises, conflicts, chaos and problems that have plagued regional countries in the contemporary era.

On the U.S. administration’s stance on the new government of Lebanon, Sheikh Qassem said the U.S. secretary of state is rudely voicing concern about the presence of Hezbollah in the new government, while “all concerns and problems of Lebanon result from the U.S. interference in the internal affairs of the country.”

The U.S. has no right to comment on Lebanon and the structure of its government, the Hezbollah deputy

chief stressed, adding, “Experience has proved that the Lebanese government will be formed with the resolve of the country’s nation and with its options whether the U.S. likes it or not.”

“We work for the interests of the people, and the government, with all of its parties, is responsible for fulfillment of the demands of people,” Sheikh Qassem underlined, adding that the government in Beirut must not care about the parties that seek to spark chaos.

His comments came after Pompeo withheld support for Lebanon’s new government as the cabinet has met for the first time.

Asked in a Bloomberg News interview if the U.S. would work with a government dominated by Hezbollah, the U.S. state secretary said, “I don’t know the answer to that yet... We’re prepared to engage, provide support, but only to a government that’s committed to reform.”

After weeks of nationwide protests brought down former prime minister Saad Hariri, Lebanon’s President Michel Aoun tapped Hassan Diab, a university professor backed by Hezbollah, to lead the new government.

Zionist Regime Launches Fresh Attacks on Gaza

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime’s fighter jets have reportedly attacked the besieged Gaza enclave once again.

The attacks were purportedly aimed at the positions of Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas resistance movement, and al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of Islamic Jihad resistance group in the north-west and east of Khan Yunis town.

Details of possible damage have not been released yet.

The occupying regime claims the attacks are in retaliation for Hamas’ alleged launch of “incendiary balloons” allegedly directed toward the occupied territories.

Earlier this week, Zionist regime planes sprayed toxic chemical substances and dangerous pesticides on farmlands near the Gaza Strip in the latest case of the regime’s acts of

aggression against the besieged Palestinian coastal enclave.

Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported on Wednesday that the Israeli army sprayed the area in close proximity to the fence separating the Gaza Strip from the Israeli-occupied territories for three days last week.

The report added that the Zionist regime’s war ministry has defended the aerial spraying after having refrained from it throughout last year, claiming that it was necessary to destroy “vegetation that obscures soldiers’ view of the area.”

Gaza has been under siege by the Zionist regime since June 2007.

Since 2008, the regime has waged three wars against Gaza, where about two million Palestinians live under a 12-year Israeli blockade. Thousands of Gazans have been killed in each of these deadly wars

After Turkey Quake

Residents Fear Aftershocks More Than Cold

ELAZIG (Dispatches) – A dozen people bundled up in colorful blankets crouched around a makeshift fire in eastern Turkey. It is an icy night in Elazig and Esra Kasapoglu shivers but she says “it’s out of the question to return home.”

Several residents in Elazig, the province that was struck by a powerful 6.7 magnitude earthquake Friday evening, preferred to spend another night outside, despite temperatures reaching minus 10 degrees celsius (14 Fahrenheit).

An aftershock with a 5.1 magnitude on Saturday night heightened residents’ fears, with thousands rushing into the streets, shouting “earthquake, earthquake!”

There have been more than 500 aftershocks with magnitudes ranging between 1.0 and

5.1, according to the Turkish government’s disaster and emergency management agency (AFAD), following Friday’s quake which killed 31.

“Our building is old and there are small cracks. God knows if it will survive in the event of another earthquake. We’ll stay here all night,” Kasapoglu says.

“Our morale has taken a hit. Earlier, my son ran out of the house shouting when a jacket fell off the coat rack.

“When I am at home, I watch the chandelier every minute to see if it does not swing,” she adds.

Rescuers search for survivors trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings after the powerful earthquake.

Turkish broadcasters showed footage of rescuers pulling people out from under the debris,

some around 21 hours after the quake.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said an estimated 22 people were still trapped. AFAD said later that 43 people had been rescued so far.

Rescue teams worked through the night with their hands, drills and mechanical diggers to remove bricks and plaster from collapsed buildings in Elazig.

“Our houses collapsed ... we cannot go inside them,” said a 32-year-old man from the town of Sivrice, epicenter of the quake.

“In our village some people lost their lives. I hope God will help us,” said the man, who gave only his first name, Sinasi.

“Our animals died. Our families gathered around the fire to spend the night, covered with blankets,” Sinasi said as he and

a relative tried to warm themselves by a small fire.

President Tayyip Erdogan canceled his plans in Istanbul on Saturday and traveled to Elazig and Malatya to inspect rescue efforts. He also attended a funeral for a woman and her son killed in the quake, which he described as a “test” for Turkey.

He said steel-framed houses would be rapidly built in the region to provide housing for displaced residents.

AFAD warned residents not to return to damaged buildings because of the danger of further aftershocks. It said beds, blankets and tents were sent to the area, where some people sheltered in sports halls.

Turkey’s Kizilay aid group also sent food, heaters and other materials to the region.

Afghan Forces Launch Air, Ground Attacks on Taliban, Killing Dozens

KABUL (Dispatches) – Afghan forces used ground attacks and air strikes in multiple operations against the Taliban during the last 24 hours, killing 51 militants in an escalation that signaled renewed deadlock in talks.

Afghanistan’s Defense Ministry said on Sunday that government forces had conducted 13 ground offensives and 12 air strikes in nine provinces, adding that 51 “terrorists” had been killed, 13 wounded and six arrested.

Local officials in the northern province of Balkh said at least three women and four children were killed in the air strikes, prompting protests in front of the provincial governor’s office.

The government pledged to send a fact-finding mission to investigate the reports of civilian deaths.

Meanwhile, the Taliban said it had staged two more attacks targeting security forces over the weekend, following sporadic assaults last week.

Afghan security forces’ checkpoints in Kunduz were attacked on Saturday night, Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said in a statement, adding that 10 members of the security forces were killed and three wounded. Taliban militants also captured a large weapons cache, he said.

In a separate statement, the Taliban said its militants had ambushed an Afghan forces patrol in Balkh, killing eight security personnel.

Meanwhile four Taliban militants have been killed after Afghan Special Operations Forces conducted an airstrike in the country’s southern province of Helmand in the latest raid against the Taliban militants and their supply lines, special forces command says.

“The sortie was launched in Washer district, western part of Helmand province on Saturday. One militants’ vehicle and a motorcycle were also destroyed by the strike,” Afghan National Army Special Operations Corps said in a statement.

Helmand province is a known Taliban stronghold.

In another incident, a hand grenade attack on an Afghan wedding ceremony wounded at least 20 people, including several children, a provincial official said Sunday.

At least one of the injured children was in critical condition, said Adel Haider, a spokesman for the police chief of the eastern Khost province, which borders Pakistan.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for Saturday night’s attack.