

Palestinians Angered by Zionist Regime's Al-Quds Cable Car Plan



Palestinians are irked by the Zionist regime's plan to link the western part of the occupied city of al-Quds to its eastern part, which they want as the capital of their future state.

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – **Palestinians express dismay as the Zionist regime advances a highly-controversial plan to link the western part of the occupied city of al-Quds to its eastern part, which they want as the capital of their future state.**

The transportation system is slated for inauguration in 2021 and is planned to shuttle some 3,000 people per hour from a former railway

station in western al-Quds to the eastern Old City in al-Quds.

“The Israeli cable car project is an obscene violation of the cultural, historical, spiritual, geographic & demographic character of al-Quds,” al-Quds Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), tweeted.

Besides peeking right into the part of the city,

which is endeared by the Palestinians due to its housing the al-Aqsa Mosques compound -- Islam's holiest site --, the cable car would be passing by major Palestinian parts in the city, thus ignoring a good part of its demography. The \$63-miloin plan, however, moved forward this week when a special committee headed by the Zionist regime's finance minister gave it the green light.

“The foundations of the project will be built on our land,” said Khaled al-Zeer, a Palestinian from Silwan, neighborhood in East al-Quds, AFP reported. “(It) will give the impression that it is a Jewish city and remove the Palestinian heritage from it,” he added.

Yotanan Mizrachi, an Israeli archaeologist opposing the plan, called it a “political project” that will cause “irreversible damage to the historic city.” “(It is) going to influence the way we see and understand the archaeology and the antiquity” of the city, he noted.

The Zionist regime captured the Palestinian territory of the West Bank in a war in 1967, and then annexed East al-Quds. Ever since, Tel Aviv has continued to expand its illegal settlements and other projects in the area.

Tel Aviv's attempts at manipulating the cultural and demographic configuration of the Palestinian territories comes while the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved a resolution in May 2015 that described the regime as an “occupying power” and rejected its sovereignty claims over all of al-Quds.

Twitter Workers Charged With Spying on Saudi Critics

RIYADH (AFP) – **The Saudi Arabian government has reportedly recruited two Twitter employees to get personal account information on some of their critics, prosecutors with the U.S. Department of Justice say.**

Two former Twitter employees and a third man were charged in San Francisco Federal Court Wednesday with spying on Twitter users critical of the Saudi royal family, the U.S. Justice Department announced.

The two Saudi citizens and one U.S. citizen allegedly worked together to unmask the ownership details behind dissident Twitter accounts on behalf of the government in Riyadh and the royal family, the department said.

According to a court filing, they were guided by an unnamed Saudi official who worked for someone prosecutors designated “Royal Family Member-1,”

which The Washington Post reported was Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Those charged were Twitter employees Ali Alzabarah and Ahmad Abouammo, along with Ahmed Almutairi, a marketing official with ties to the royal family.

“The criminal complaint unsealed today alleges that Saudi agents mined Twitter's internal systems for personal information about known Saudi critics and thousands of other Twitter users,” said U.S. Attorney David Anderson.

“U.S. law protects U.S. companies from such an unlawful foreign intrusion. We will not allow U.S. companies or U.S. technology to become tools of foreign repression in violation of U.S. law,” he said in a statement.

The lawsuit comes as U.S.-Saudi relations continue to



U.S. protesters gather in front of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington as they call for justice in the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, on October 25, 2018.

suffer strains over the brutal, Riyadh-sanctioned murder one year ago of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who wrote for, among others, The Washington Post.

A critic of Crown Prince Mo-

ammed, Khashoggi was killed and dismembered inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

According to the Post, U.S. intelligence has concluded that the prince himself was closely linked to the murder.

Syrian Talks to Reconvene in Geneva on November 25

GENEVA (Dispatches) – **A UN envoy has concluded an opening round of talks on the political future of Syria meant to bring political reconciliation after 8-1/2 years of foreign-backed war, saying they went better than expected and would reconvene later this month.**

Acknowledging that discussions were sometimes “very painful” Geir Pedersen said the delegates to the Constitutional Committee from the government, opposition and civil society addressed them with professionalism.

“I believe it has gone much better than most people would have

expected,” he told journalists in Geneva.

“The next round of discussions will start on November 25,” Pedersen said.

He said the discussions focused on issues of sovereignty, territorial integrity and terrorism, without going into details.

There was no immediate deal on the release of thousands of detainees in the country, one of the points that Pedersen had previously said was an important step needed to build confidence between the parties.

Turkey Detains At Least 13 of al-Baghdadi's Relatives

ANKARA (Dispatches) – **Turkish security forces have detained at least 13 relatives of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the recently killed ringleader of the Daesh terrorist group, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced.**

“Al-Baghdadi's close circle is paying a lot of attention to our country. We recently captured his sister's husband and their child in [Syria's] Azaz, and sent them to migration camps. Let's see what decision our Ministry of Justice will make. His wife has been in our hands for 1-1.5 years. It will be the same process. The number of [al-Baghdadi's relatives

detained by Turkey] is already in the double digits”, Erdogan told reporters.

He added that together with the wife of the killed Daesh ringleader, a child, whose kinship to al-Baghdadi was proved by DNA analysis, had been detained.

Later, he specified the exact number of al-Baghdadi's associates and relatives apprehended by the country's security forces.

“We now have 13 people from his inner circle”, the Turkish president said.

The statement comes after another presidential comment that Turkish security forces

detained the wife of the killed Daesh leader. Prior to that, Turkish authorities captured al-Baghdadi's older sister and her family.

Al-Baghdadi was reportedly killed in an operation in Syria's Idlib.

The Russian Defense Ministry's spokesman, Igor Konashenkov, said that Russia did not have reliable information that the U.S. military had actually killed al-Baghdadi. The Daesh terrorist group reportedly confirmed the death of its leader on 31 October and gave the new leader's name as Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurayshi.

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the inspector's rejection an “outrageous provocation.”

“All board members need to make clear now and going forward that such actions are completely unacceptable, will not be tolerated and must have consequences,” Wolcott said in remarks released to journalists.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo criticized Iran's decision to inject gas into the Fordow centrifuges. In a statement, he made no reference to Trump's decision to leave the deal in May 2018, which sparked the crisis.

The resumption of enrichment at Fordow comes after the expiry of a deadline Tehran set for the remaining parties to the nuclear agreement to come up with a mechanism that would allow foreign firms to continue doing business with Iran without incurring U.S. penalties.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov expressed concern about Tehran's announcements but said European powers should do their part.

“They are demanding that Iran fulfill all (obligations) without exception but are not giving anything in return,” he told reporters in Moscow.

The Kremlin has previously called sanctions against Iran “unprecedented and illegal”.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Iran had made “grave” decisions and its resumption of uranium enrichment was a “profound change” from Tehran's previous position.

The next few weeks will be dedicated to increasing pressure on Iran to return within the framework of the pact, the French president said during a trip to Beijing, adding that this must be “accompanied by an easing of some sanctions”.

More Important Steps Yet to Be Taken

Iran's ambassador to the UK described the reduction in Tehran's commitments as a “wake-up call” to other parties, warning European signatories of a crisis over the collapsing accord.

Hamid Baedinejad told a group of UK mainstream media representatives on Thursday that Tehran's move was “adopted as a warning to the other sides and the international community that we are at a crisis.”

Baedinejad said Iran will continue to increase its nuclear activity every two months unless it receives the economic benefits it was promised when it signed the nuclear deal with world powers.

“We hope this warning would encourage all other parties to implement their commitments. ... Now it depends on the other side — if they don't take this warning seriously ... we will be in a very difficult situation,” he warned.

The Iranian ambassador also dismissed European arguments that it is difficult for them to circumvent the U.S. sanctions.

“They have taken commitments that are defined in very clear terms and they should be able to implement those commitments,” Baedinejad said.

Muhammad Saeidi, a former deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said Tehran has even more important measures to take if other parties fail to fulfill their commitments.

“I believe in case of other signatories' failure to live up to their commitments, we have other very important measures which they will witness when the time for the next steps arrives,” he told Tabnak news website, stressing that the next steps will be more important than the fourth one.

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Arabia have asked the impoverished country to participate in the coalition at their cost so that MKO terrorists can be used for possible acts against Iran.

On Wednesday, The Wall Street Journal reported that Iran had sent a letter to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) warning that commercial routes in the Red Sea, west of Saudi Arabia, are unsafe following three attacks on its tankers in recent months.

Iran's SABITI tanker was hit by two missiles near the Saudi port city of Jeddah, marking the most recent attack last month.

“We believe that this is an attack organized by one or more states, since two other Iranian flagged tankers were similarly attacked in the same approximate area” and with “similar damages to the ships,” the letter, dated October 30, read.

The letter went on to explain that Iran's Happiness-1 and Helm tankers had also been sabotaged in April and August, respectively.

“A major concern in this respect is that the organized and directed pattern of these attacks within a short time and similar locations have rendered the Red Sea as an unsafe route for ships to adopt for their voyages,” it added.

Last month, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that “a regime with the help of some regional countries” had orchestrated the assault on SABITI without providing any further information.

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held in Mianeh, Basij forces were immediately dispatched to the quake-hit areas and rescued the villagers who were under the debris,” he told Tasnim news agency.

Army units in northwestern provinces of East Azarbaijan and Ardabil have also been put on alert for rescue and relief operations.

Crisscrossed by several major fault lines, Iran is one of the most earthquake-prone countries in the world. In 2003, a magnitude 6.6 quake in Kerman province killed 26,000 people and flattened the ancient city of Bam.

At least three other significant quakes struck in 2005, 2012, and 2017, which killed over 1,000 people.

Foreign ...

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Iran's rial has rebounded from its record lows of 190,000 to the dollar to stabilize at above 110,000 and employment continued to rise. According to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank estimates, Iran's economy will rebound to near zero percent growth next year.

“The Iranian economy stays afloat in part because it is diversified—a trait that Washington often overlooks,” Foreign Policy said.

Iran's service, agricultural, and non-oil industrial sectors were able to cushion the blow from the collapse of oil revenues under sanctions in 2017 during which crude oil accounted for only 43 percent of Iranian exports—as compared with 78 percent in Saudi Arabia.

“The non-oil sectors generate most of Iran's economic output and jobs. They have proven more resilient under U.S. sanctions than the energy sector, which relies heavily on access to the global market,” the U.S.-based magazine said.

Sitting pretty over \$100 billion of reserves which can cover any gaps, Iran's top state officials are taking proactive steps to live out Trump's dreams. The government plans to underwrite its operating budget without oil revenue which will shore up Iran's economic stability at least over the next year, Foreign Policy said.

The magazine touched on the objectives of the maximum pressure campaign, saying while Washington sought to raise the cost of Iran's regional role, Iran “now seems likely to spend its second year under U.S. sanctions buttressing an already strong regional position.”

“Neither the Islamic Republic nor its regional activities have suffered a deathblow from the return of sanctions. But diplomacy involving the United States and Iran may have taken a fatal hit,” it said.

According to Foreign Policy, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Khamenei “likely views Iran's domestic and regional situation as stable, and so he will feel no need to allow high-level meetings between Iranian officials and a U.S. administration perceived as hostile—especially during an election year in the United States.”

On Sunday, Ayatollah Khamenei underlined the need for a ban on negotiation with the US, saying it is one of the ways to block American infiltration.

“A repeated ban on negotiation with the United States is one of the important means to block their infiltration into our dear Iran,” the Leader said as Iran marked the 40th anniversary of the U.S. embassy takeover.

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“The Islamic Republic of Iran as one of the major victims of terrorism and at the same time as one of the strongest combatants against this phenomenon, believes that terrorism and extremism have led to the growth of violation, violation of human rights, and has threatened the economic and social development of nations,” he said.

He also highlighted Tehran's efforts in promoting the human rights, and said Iran has promulgated major policies, adopted new laws and regulations and set up new mechanisms in this regard.

These efforts include ratifying the charter of citizenship rights, prohibiting torture and new criminal procedure codes, he went on to say.

Karbala...

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The religious leadership and the people of both countries, however, will counter such conspiracies, Baqeri added.

The Iraqi and Lebanese governments should resolve their people's problems, he said, adding no one has the right to meddle in the two countries' affairs.

Similar to Iraq, Lebanon has also witnessed mass anti-government demonstrations, which led to the resignation of Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri late last month.