

Zionist Troops Shoot Dead Palestinian Man

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – Zionist troops have shot and killed a Palestinian young man in the West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry says.

The young man was shot by the Zionist troops in the village of Kifl Hares near the city of Salfit in the West Bank, and died later from a deep wound in his neck, the ministry said.

The incident took place after clashes broke out in the village between Zionist troops and Palestinian young men, sources in the village said.

Zionist troops opened fire at the Palestinian. The troops had stormed the village on Thursday night, the sources added.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Ishtaye held the occupying regime responsible for killing the Palestinian young man.

“The Israeli occupier is fully responsible for the killing of the Palestinian young man in Salfit with no reason and with no justification,” said Ishtaye.

The killing “is part of a series of crimes the Israeli occupation forces are committing against the Palestinian people,” he added.

Provincial governor Abdullah Kamil named the victim as Ibrahim Moustapha Abou Yacoub, 29, AFP said.

The Israeli military, however, gave another



Zionist troops take aim at Palestinian protesters in the occupied West Bank on July 2, 2020.

account, claiming “two assailants were throwing Molotov cocktails” at the troops. “Troops responded with fire,” it added.

Three other Palestinians were also reportedly wounded during the clashes.

Kifl Hares is located south of the city of Nablus. The incident came as the Zionist regime has announced its intention to annex some areas of

the city as part of 30 percent of the West Bank that it plans to expropriate under a U.S.-backed pro-Zionist scheme.

Tensions run high across the Palestinian territories since Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s announcement of the plan that has been met with far-and-wide regional and international objection.

Lavrov: U.S. Domestic Issues Behind Taliban Speculation

MOSCOW (Dispatches) – An internal political fight in the United States is behind “unscrupulous speculation” of Moscow’s alleged ties with Taliban militants in Afghanistan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was quoted as saying by Interfax news agency on Friday.

A top U.S. general said on Thursday that the United States believed Russia has given support to Taliban militants in Afghanistan in the past, but does not have intelligence to confirm it directed attacks against Americans or to corroborate that it paid bounties to kill U.S. troops.

Last month, The New York Times said in a controversial report that a top-secret unit within

the Russian military intelligence, or the GRU, had allegedly offered monetary rewards to Taliban-linked militants who would kill U.S. troopers in Afghanistan last year.

The report claimed that U.S. President Donald Trump had been briefed about the matter in March. Trump has denied that assertion.

The Kremlin, too, has rejected the report.

However, Russia’s top security official said on Tuesday the United States created and nurtured the Taliban militant group in Afghanistan in a decade-long covert operation.

“Frankly speaking, it was the United States that laid the foundation for the Taliban move-

ment,” head of Russia’s Security Council Nikolai Patrushev said in an interview with the Argumenty i Fakty weekly.

The Taliban militant group, Patrushev said, is the result of “Operation Cyclone... one of the longest and most expensive operations in the history of the CIA,” which was carried out by the U.S. spy agency in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989.

The operation “was aimed at financially and militarily supporting Afghan mujahedeen, who later formed the backbone of terrorist forces not only in Afghanistan but throughout the region,” Patrushev added.

The so-called mujahedeen fought the former Soviet Union forces in Afghanistan during the

1980s.

The senior security official said Russia “has never cooperated with the Taliban.” He said the Russian Supreme Court officially designated Taliban a terrorist group in 2003.

The U.S. and a number of its allies invaded Afghanistan and toppled a Taliban regime in 2001 despite their support for the militants when they fought the Soviet Union under a different name during the 1980s. The U.S. claimed the Taliban were harboring the al-Qaeda terrorist group.

In February, the U.S. and the Taliban signed a deal that would see the phased withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan.

Saudi...

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“The status ... of religious scholars is a matter of consensus among all Islamic doctrines and divine laws, and Islam stresses the need for Muslims to safeguard the standing and sanctity,” the clerics said in a joint statement.

“Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, May God bless him, is a religious authority. He is a revered and respected personality for the Shia community in our country and elsewhere in the world,” they said.

“He is a source of rationality for the entire Iraqi nation, irrespective of their faiths and sects. He has had a leading role in stabilizing Iraq and defending its sovereignty, and his famous [July 2014] fatwa to stand against terrorism and terrorists greatly contributed to the protection of Iraq against division and bloodshed.”

The clerics also denounced London-based Asharq al-Awsat’s insulting cartoon as “irresponsible, unethical, and contrary to the fundamentals of professional journalism.”

“It is actually an act that provokes discord, and threatens the stability of our country and nurtures sectarianism,” they said.

On Sunday, thousands of Iraqi protesters converged outside the gates of the heavily-fortified Green Zone in Baghdad, which is home to several embassies and government offices, including parliament and the prime minister’s office, seeking to break into the Saudi embassy.

The participants demanded that the Iraqi government adopt a clear stance on the insult. Security forces used tear gas to disperse the protesters who were trying to enter the area.

Turkey ...

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Since last year, Erdogan has backed the idea of returning the building’s mosque status in several speeches, in an attempt to satisfy his Muslim base which has always seen Ataturk’s decision as catastrophic.

The decision to reverse its designation could be taken simply by Erdogan. However, intense international pressure - from Washington to Moscow - to maintain the building as a museum has seen his government prefer to share the burden of the decision with the judiciary.

Following the court’s ruling, Erdogan’s government still needs to take the actual steps to make the necessary changes in the building to open it for public prayers.

Hours before the court issued the verdict, UNESCO released a statement warning the Turkish government that it has certain responsibilities for the building under its World Heritage status.

“This inscription entails a number of legal commitments and obligations,” the statement said. “Thus, a state must ensure that no modification is made to the outstanding universal value of the property inscribed on its territory. Any modification requires prior notification by the state concerned to UNESCO and then, if necessary, examination by the World Heritage Committee.”

The government intends to preserve the building’s valuable frescos and mosaics by using a curtain system to veil them during the time of prayers. Islam bans iconography in places of worship.

Some other religious experts, including the former head of Islamic authority in Turkey, said that the building could be used as a mosque without any amendments because the mosaics were placed too high and the worshippers wouldn’t be able to see them.

The Turkish public’s feelings about the Hagia Sophia are mixed. Kemal Kilicdaroglu, chairman of the main opposition party, the CHP, said in a statement earlier this week that it would not stand in the way, while other parties have been considerably muted in their criticism of the move.

Several surveys indicate that the move to convert the Hagia Sophia is popular among citizens across party lines, however, a plurality - 43.8 percent according to the latest poll by Metropoll conducted in June - believes the government is using the issue to distract the public from deteriorating economic conditions.

Under Erdogan, the Turkish government has reconverted four other Byzantine-era churches named Hagia Sophia in the cities of Trabzon, Kizilirmaci, Iznik and Edirne.

U.S. ...

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January 8. Iran has also issued an arrest warrant and asked the Interpol for help in detaining President Donald Trump, who ordered the assassination, and several other U.S. military and political leaders behind the strike.

On Wednesday, Washington cried foul at the UN over Callamard’s report, with State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortugus calling the document “tendentious and tedi-

ous.”

“The U.S. is responsible for this criminal act, & can’t whitewash this by chastising the UN. We’ll never forget, we’ll never forgive,” Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousvi responded.

“Assassination of this national hero and defender of regional peace and security proved that Daesh and terrorism is part of the U.S.’ ploy for plundering the region, and that Washington’s claim of fighting terrorism is a completely hollow and baseless claim,” he added.

Iran’s ambassador to the UN office in Geneva denounced the assassination as an act of state terrorism that has threatened world peace and security.

Addressing the 44th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council on Thursday, Esmaeil Baqaei Hamaneh said the U.S. assassination was an illegal measure and a big crime that threatens world peace and security.

He said the U.S. and the country that hosted the American drones used in the operation to assassinate the Iranian commander must be held accountable for the crime.

The U.S. action was a violation of the international law, the UN Charter, and the humanitarian law, Baqaei Hamaneh added, saying the assassination was an immoral and dangerous act.

The assassination of a popular commander that hurt the Iranian people’s feelings is another proof of the United States’ hostile stance towards the Iranian nation over the past 40 years, he noted.

Pompeo...

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international accord under which Iran agreed to curb its nuclear work in return for the lifting of sanctions.

The United States has reimposed sanctions to throttle Iran’s oil trade and pressure Tehran to renegotiate the deal, give up its ballistic missiles, and cease its influence in the region.

Houthis have been fighting along with the Yemeni army a Saudi aggression that has devastated the country and left more than 100,000 people dead.

“The United States and Saudi Arabia have imposed a siege on the Yemeni people,” Mousavi said. “With such baseless accusations, they are trying to evade accountability and responsibility for their crimes in Yemen.”

The U.S. recently submitted the UN Security Council a draft resolution on the extension of the arms embargo, with American Ambassador to the UN Kelly Craft saying Washington would push the council to vote on the draft as soon as mid-July.

Iran’s Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif responded to the motion by calling the United States an “outlaw bully” that the United Nations should not surrender to.

Russia and China have strongly opposed the draft and signaled their intention to veto it.

“Just amid the hopeless & unlawful push by the American regime to extend Iran’s arms restrictions, U.S. - with that long record of piracy - seizes a ‘boat carrying weapons.’ What a coincidence! An expectable, but outworn and futile plot,” Mousavi tweeted on Thursday.

Locals...

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consequences if it is proven that foreign elements have been involved.

“It is still too early to talk about and make any judgment regarding the main cause and reason for the blast, and relevant security bodies are investigating all the details of the incident,” he said.

“If they conclude that foreign elements have been involved, they will announce it, and there will be consequences,” he told reporters during a visit to central Isfahan province. On July 2, Iran said an incident affected a shed under construction at the Natanz complex, but it caused no casualties and failed to stop enrichment work at the facility.

Last Friday, Iran’s Supreme National Security Council said the “main cause” of the explosion in Natanz nuclear facility has been determined and will be announced at an appropriate time.

“Due to some security considerations, the cause and manner of this incident will be announced at a proper time,” SNSC spokesman Keyvan Khosravi. Said.

In his Friday comments, Mousavi pointed to media reports that attribute the explosion to the Zionist regime, and said such reports are aimed at portraying the “hollow” regime of Israel as powerful.

Israelis boast responsibility for any incident happening anywhere in the world, he said, playing down claims that Tel Aviv was involved in the Natanz explosion.

The occupying regime of Israel follows a policy of deliberate ambiguity about acts of sabotage in sovereign lands.

“Not every event that happens in Iran is necessarily related to us,” Zionist war minister Benny Gantz said this week.

Public Demand for Political Shake-Up in Bahrain High: al-Wefaq

MANAMA (Press TV) – A high-ranking official with Bahrain’s main Shia opposition group, al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, says death sentences being slapped against human rights campaigners and political dissidents will increase the public demand for the restructuring of the country’s political system.

“Death sentences in Bahrain come against the backdrop of public demands, and in spite of the fact that long-term jail terms continue to be issued. The goals of the [Al Khalifah] regime are clear: It wants to discourage the nation from pursuing their legitimate demands, and to break their steadfastness,” al-Wefaq Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Hussein al-Daihi wrote in a post published on his Twitter page.

He added, “Such rulings are also the results of lack of political participation and engagement, for which the corrupt judiciary must be held accountable. All through the popular uprising, dozens of crimes have been committed against the sons of Bahrain inside and outside prisons, and many people have died or endured various forms of torture. Nevertheless, we have not heard of a single stiff sentence against one

of the perpetrators. This is while death sentence awaits all those who campaign for freedom and political justice.”

Daihi’s remarks came shortly after Bahraini activists launched an online campaign against death sentences in the Persian Gulf kingdom.

Bahrain has seen anti-regime protests over the past nine years. The major demand has been the ouster of the Al Khalifah regime and establishment of a just and conclusive system representing all Bahraini nationals.

The Manama regime, in return, has ignored the calls and is pressing ahead with its heavy-handed crackdown and persecution of human rights campaigners and political dissidents.

Bahrain’s parliament approved the trial of civilians at military tribunals on March 5, 2017. The move drew widespread condemnation from human rights bodies and activists, and was described as imposition of an undeclared martial law across the country.

Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah rubber-stamped the constitutional amendment on April 3 that year.

Chile Approves Resolution to Adopt Law Boycotting Zionist Settlement Goods

SANTIAGO (Dispatches) – The Chilean Senate has approved a resolution calling on President Sebastian Pinera Echenique to adopt a law boycotting settlement goods and banning commercial activity with companies that operate in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The motion passed with 29 votes in favor and six abstentions, no votes were cast against the move.

The resolution also called on the government to promote legislation that would ban all Zionist settlement products; prohibit any company involved in the Israeli occupation from benefiting from any agreement or bid

signed by Chile; apply tourism guidelines for the Zionist regime and Palestine that would not allow the promotion of trips to the occupied territories using pictures of East al-Quds or Bethlehem “among other Palestinian cities”; forbid any kind of cooperation, including monetary, with the regime’s colonization of occupied Palestine; and ensure that no tax benefits will be afforded to any organization operating in Chile if it is involved in the occupation of Palestine.

President of the Palestinian National Council Salim Al-Zanoun thanked the Senate for its decision which he said constituted a vic-

tory for the right of “our people to establish an independent state with its capital, al-Quds, on the borders of June 4, 1967”, and affirming the international consensus regarding the application of international law and the terms of reference of the so-called peace process.

On July 2, Chile, the country with the largest population of Palestinians in Latin America, lit up its Telephone Tower with the Palestinian keyfieh in support of the Palestinian people and rejection of the regime’s plans to annex some 30 percent of the occupied West Bank