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In the Name of the Most High

Viewpoint

War on Yemen: 10,000 and Counting

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

The reckless Saudi-led, U.S.-backed war on Yemen has so far killed at least 10,000 civilians, but that's just the tip of the iceberg.

The United Nations says food shortages, medical shortages, destroyed hospitals, and hasty burials have conspired with mass internal displacement to make tracking casualties all but impossible.

Just a week after the UN human rights office reported 3,799 civilians killed over the course of the war, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick, told a news conference the overall toll is in excess of 10,000.

With many areas turned into war zones, there aren't reliable records on casualties, and with millions displaced within the country and some 200,000 having fled abroad, it's often impossible to tell who was killed and who simply fled elsewhere.

All these factors are likely to mean we never fully know the death toll of this war, but UN officials see ample reason to believe it's on the high end, and with more than half of the population reliant on food aid which isn't always quick in being delivered, there is always a risk of the toll getting precipitously worse.

The reason is simple: The Saudi-led coalition maintains that "lawful targets allegedly shielded with protected civilians may be attacked, and the protected civilians may be considered as collateral damage, provided that the collateral damage is not excessive compared to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated by the attack."

They say this to justify targeting civilian infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and markets. What's more, the so-called collateral damage is excessive compared to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated by the attack.

What all this means, quite simply, is that they target everything and everyone even if the deployment of violence does breach the principle of proportionality - which requires the belligerent regime changers to refrain from causing damage disproportionate to the military advantage to be gained.

The motivation behind the adoption of such guidelines by the regime changers is clear: it allows their occupying forces to relax the rules of engagement, while framing those who are defending the people of Yemen as morally deplorable and in breach of international law.

Put differently, if any one of Yemen's 10,000 civilians is killed during a Saudi-led airstrike, then it is not the U.S.-backed attacking forces that are to blame, but rather the resistance fighters, who allegedly used civilians as shields. Moreover, it increasingly appears that it is enough to claim - in advance - that the resistance movement of Ansarullah is using human shields in order to warrant the killing of non-combatants.

Whatever this is, the potential ramifications of the mere accusation are extremely worrisome. By claiming that the resistance fighters are using human shields, the Saudi-led attacking forces provide themselves with a preemptive legal defense, which is criminal and unjustified under international law and the principle of proportionality.

It is past time for the international community to make it absolutely clear to Saudi Arabia and its criminal coalition that their war on Yemen is illegal under international law and UN protocols. They have no right whatsoever to kill civilians in Yemen under any pretext. They also have no right to deny responsibility for their crimes against humanity in the poorest nation in the Middle East.

Top Military Commander:

Iran Will Unleash Hell Against Any Stupid Move



Iran's Air Defense Commander Brigadier General Farzad Esmaili

TEHRAN (Dispatches) If the enemies violate Iran's territory, they will face "a hell on the ground, at the sea and in the air," the commander said in a state-

ment, issued on the anniversary of formation of Iran's Air Defense.

The top commander also noted that his forces are constantly boosting their capabilities and di-

versifying their options to combat threats.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has also stressed that

Senior Official:

Saudis Withholding Hajj Blood Money

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- The head of Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization said on Wednesday Saudi Arabia continues to withhold all co-operation toward compensating the victims of a deadly crush during Hajj pilgrimage rituals last year.

At least 465 Iranian pilgrims lost their lives during the deadly crush, which occurred after two large masses of pilgrims converged at a crossroads in Mina near Mecca during Hajj rituals on September 24, 2015.

"Saudi Arabia refuses to offer the smallest amount of cooperation in this regard (providing compensation for the victims); and not only does it not pay any blood money, but also, interestingly, it has failed to turn over the bodies of martyrs from many countries other than the Islamic Republic," Saeed Ohadi told Fars News Agency.

Days into the crush, Saudi Arabia published a death toll of 770 but refused to update it despite surging fatality figures from individual countries whose nationals had been among the victims of the crush. Observers say Saudi Arabia is refusing to release an official death

toll because it fears that the large figure will speak of the regime's catastrophic mismanagement of the Hajj rituals.

Iran says about 4,700 people, including the 465 Iranians, lost their lives in the incident.

Iran has canceled the participation of its pilgrims in this year's Hajj rituals due in September because of Saudi Arabia's refusal to guarantee the safety of pilgrims.

Saudi Arabia, which has also cut diplomatic ties with Iran, has halted flights to and from Iran.

Iranians were made unable to perform the Umrah Hajj (minor pilgrimage) this year after Riyadh refused to cooperate over the procedures required to enable their travel to Saudi Arabia.

Ohadi, the Iranian Hajj official, said the resumption of the Umrah pilgrimage would be contingent upon Saudi Arabia applying justice to the Saudi officers who abused two Iranian teenagers while performing body search on passengers at the airport in the Saudi port city of Jeddah last year.

The Mina tragedy came days after a massive construction crane

collapsed into the Grand Mosque in Mecca, killing more than 100 people, including a number of Iranians, and leaving over 200 others wounded.

Ohadi said he hoped the Saudi officials would come to their senses and cooperate over the compensation of the victims of the two incidents.

Iran's reaction to any assault will not be confined to defense alone, but aggressors will have to face a crushing response.

"The enemy should realize that it will receive a heavy blow in case of launching an attack, and that our defense will entail response as well," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a gathering of Air Defense commanders on Sunday.

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:04
Evening(Maghreb)	19:50
Dawn(Fajr)"Tomorrow"	05:09
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:36

The Holy Qur'an



And recite to them the story of Nuh when he said to his people: O my people! if my stay and my reminding (you) by the communications of Allah is hard on you -- yet on Allah do I rely-- then resolve upon your affair and (gather) your associates, then let not your affair remain dubious to you, then have it executed against me and give me no respite:

The Holy Qur'an (10.71)

Press Digest

Turkish Lobby

TASNIM: Iran has to do more to get into the Russian consumer market. Turkish lobbies did everything they could to keep their companies in the Russian market even when there was rift between Moscow and Ankara. They also did everything they could not to allow Iranian companies penetrate the Russian market. Iranian consumer products also cannot get into the supermarket chains of Russia because of the trade barriers that Europeans have put there. They use their lobbies to stop Iranian products from being sold in Russia.

Geopolitical Advantage

ASR IRAN: It is Iran's geopolitical position that is an advantage in international relations not its economy – just like Turkey. As a regional power, Iran has huge geopolitical potentials. Its stability is a decisive factor for foreign powers. The country should always sit at the negotiating tables armed with a geopolitical, economic, political and security package. Without a strong economy Iran's geopolitical position means nothing at all.

Cultural Woes

MASHREQ: Parliament is duty-bound to ensure all the guidelines of the Leader in art and culture are fully considered and implemented by the government. As maintained by the Leader, the sector is not doing a fine job and nothing much happens. It is time for the government to think much more seriously about art and culture and come up with proper policies and plans to get the sector off the ground.

Saudi-Israeli Ties

KAYHAN: Saudi Arabia is a dying regional power. To do some damage control, it has no option but to ally with a foreign power. To this end, the regime has behind closed doors improved its diplomatic ties with the Zionist regime of Israel. The decision makes sense; the Saudis failed to undermine Iran, Syria, Iraq and Yemen on different fronts. The new alliance between Tel Aviv and Riyadh will similarly go nowhere. They will fail to get others on board for any new anti-Iran campaign, much less coalition.

Pakistan, Iran Agree to Ditch Dollar

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) -- Iran and Pakistan have signed an agreement to re-establish banking relationship and carry out trade transactions in local currencies.

Pakistan's Federal Minister of Commerce Khuram Dastgir Khan supervised the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Iran's Ambassador Mehdi Honardoost in Islamabad, local media reported on Wednesday.

"The two sides agreed in principle to open banks accounts in their respective central banks for trade transactions in their local currencies," an unnamed official at the Ministry of Commerce was quoted as saying.

They also agreed to take further steps toward promoting trade and investment ties and materialize a free trade agreement which the two countries have been considering for some

time.

Pakistan is negotiating a deal to import 1,000 megawatts of electricity from Iran. Pakistan's western cities near the border currently receive 100 megawatts of electricity from Iran.

Energy-starved Pakistan suffers about 12 hours of power cuts per day and is keen to import Iranian oil, gas, iron and steel.

A multibillion-dollar gas pipeline to transfer Iranian gas to Pakistan is their biggest bilateral project which has yet to see the light of day.

The energy crisis in Pakistan has worsened in recent years over 4,000 megawatts of electricity shortfall. The nation of 190 million people can only supply about two-thirds of its gas needs.

Iran in turn is interested in Pakistani textiles, surgical goods, sports goods and agricultural products.

The absence of a payment mechanism was a key hurdle in trade ties between the two neighbors after the lifting of sanctions on the Islamic Republic in January.

Honardoos said, "Both the countries must work on developing long-term economic and trade policies and initiate interaction between their free trade zones."

In March, President Hassan Rouhani paid an official visit to Pakistan where the two countries signed a "strategic action plan" to raise their trade to \$5 billion in the next five years.

According to official figures, bilateral trade stood at about \$1.3 billion before U.S.-led sanctions on Iran in 2012 brought it down to \$432 million.

A multibillion-dollar gas pipeline to transfer

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