

RIYADH (Al Jazeera) – Saudi authorities say that only people immunized against COVID-19 will be allowed to perform the year-round Umrah pilgrimage, starting from the holy month of Ramadan.

The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah said in a statement that only "immunized people" will be granted permits to perform Umrah as well as prayers in the Grand Mosque in the holy city of Mecca. These include individuals who have received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, those having received one dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before performing the pilgrimage, or a person who has recovered from the virus, the ministry said.

The mind of a wise man is the safest custody of secrets; cheerfulness is the key to friendship; patience and forbearance will conceal many defects.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Jordan Bans Media Coverage of Royal Rift

Shabwa Governor Warns of Saudi-UAE Plot to Destroy Yemen's Gas Facilities



This file photo shows Jordan's Prince Hamzah bin Hussein, a former crown prince and the half-brother of King Abdullah II.

AMMAN (Dispatches) – The prosecutor general in Jordan's capital Amman has banned the publication of any information about an alleged plot said to involve the king's half-brother, Prince Hamzah, state television said.

Tuesday's order came after Prince Hamzah, who has been highly critical of the government,

pledged loyalty to King Abdullah II late on Monday, two days after he said he had been placed under house arrest.

"I will remain... faithful to the legacy of my ancestors, walking on their path, loyal to their path and their message and to His Majesty," he said in a signed letter, quoted by the royal palace shortly

after he vowed not to obey orders restricting his movement.

"I will always be ready to help and support His Majesty the King and his Crown Prince," he was quoted as writing.

King Abdullah II removed Prince Hamzah as heir to the throne in 2004.

"In order to keep the security

services' investigation into Prince Hamzah and the others secret, [it is decided] to ban the publication of anything related to this inquiry at this stage," prosecutor Hassan al-Abdallat said in a statement read on state television.

Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister Ayman Safadi said on Sunday that Hamzah and others, who had been under investigation for some time, had liaised with a foreign regime about a plot to "undermine the security" of the kingdom.

He added that a foreign spy agency had contacted Hamzah's wife on Saturday to organize a plane for the couple to leave Jordan, without elaborating.

Jordan's Ammon news agency on Sunday cited an "informed source" as saying that a former Mossad officer called Roy Shaposhnik had offered to move the wife of the former crown prince out of the country with their children.

In a video released by Prince Hamzah's lawyer on Saturday, the prince accused Jordan's leaders of corruption, apparently hoping to tap into the public's frustrations.



This file photo shows a view of the Balhaf liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Yemen.

SANA'A (Press TV) – The governor of Yemen's southern province of Shabwa has warned Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) against further attacks on the Yemeni gas facilities, noting that the Saudi-led coalition is plotting to bring the country's strategic ports to a standstill.

Ahmed Hassan al-Amir said on Monday that the objective of the two adversaries was to eliminate the Balhaf gas liquefaction and LNG facilities and the export facilities of an eponymous industrial port town in the province.

He said intense artillery fire against the facilities on Sunday could confirm the plot to stop the production and export of gas in Yemen, Yemen's Arabic-language al-Masirah television network reported.

Saudi Arabia, backed by the United States and its other regional allies, not least the UAE, launched the devastating war on Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of reinstating the government of Yemen's former President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi and crushing the popular Houthi Ansarullah movement.

Having failed to fulfill the objective, the campaign has left tens of thousands of Yemenis dead, and

displaced millions. It has also destroyed Yemen's infrastructure and spread famine and infectious diseases nationwide.

Amir further said the establishment of Saudi and Emirati military bases in and around Balhaf could also lay bare the scheme to shut down Yemen's ports.

Shabwa's governor called for the anti-Yemen coalition to be held responsible for the destruction of gas facilities in Balhaf. He urged the people and tribes of the province to work for the expulsion of invaders and their mercenaries from the province.

With the all-out blockade on Yemen in place since the onset of the bloody war, the country is witnessing the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The tight siege, among others, has led to the closure of the Sana'a International Airport, the largest and most important airport in Yemen, and closed the Hudaydah port, which acts as a lifeline for the impoverished nation.

Last month, Yemen's Ministry of Transportation said 80 percent of activities in ports had been halted because of the airstrikes.

Zionist Troops Kill Palestinian, Wound Wife

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – Zionist troops shot dead a Palestinian motorist who they claimed tried to ram them at a checkpoint in the occupied West Bank on Tuesday - an account disputed by his wife, who was with him in the car.

Salem Eid, the mayor of Biddu village, where the man lived, said Palestinians may raise the incident at the International Criminal Court, whose prosecutor announced last month it would formally investigate war crimes in the Palestinian territories.

The Palestinian health ministry said the man, identified

as 42-year-old Osama Mansour, had been killed and his wife had sustained bullet fragment injuries. The military statement said no troops were hurt in the late night incident.

"They told us to stop the car and we stopped and turned it off," the man's spouse, Sumaya Mansour, 35, told Palestine TV. "Then they looked at us and told us to go, we turned the car on and moved and all of them started shooting at us."

The woman was taken to Palestine Medical Complex in the central West Bank city of Ramallah, where her con-

dition was reportedly stable.

Eid challenged the military's accusation that the driver had carried out an attack, noting that he was a father of five and his wife was with him in the vehicle.

Eyewitnesses told Wafa that Zionist troops fired a stun grenade at the car at 3:30 a.m. (0030 GMT). They added that Zionist troops started firing shots as soon as the man pulled over the car.

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry denounced the incident, describing it as "a field execution".

In another incident, clashes

were reported between Palestinian residents and the Zionist troops in Bir Nabala on Monday evening.

Zionist troops have on numerous occasions been caught on camera brutally killing Palestinians, with the videos going viral online and sparking international condemnation.

The occupying regime has been criticized for its extensive use of lethal force against and extrajudicial killing of Palestinians who do not pose any threat to the occupation forces or to the Zionist settlers.

Russian Airstrikes Kill Daesh Terrorists in Syria

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – At least 29 Daesh terrorists have been killed over the past 72 hours by Russian airstrikes in the Syrian desert region, a war monitor reported on Tuesday.

The Russian warplanes carried out around 70 airstrikes over the past 72 hours on positions of the Daesh terrorists in the desert region in the central province of Hama and the eastern Dayr al-Zawr province, said the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The death toll could likely rise due to the number of critically wounded militants, the Britain-based watchdog group added.

After losing key areas across Syria, Daesh terrorist now have a presence in the sprawling desert region in eastern Syria.

Terrorists frequently carry out attacks and ambushes against Syrian government forces in the desert, prompting the Syrian and Russian warplanes to strike their positions.

Meanwhile, a convoy of more than a dozen U.S. military trucks has reportedly carried tons of grain from Syria's northeastern province of Hasakah to the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region in northern Iraq.

Local sources, requesting anonymity, told Syria's official news agency SANA that 14 military vehicles loaded with wheat crops from silos of Tal Alou village in al-Ya'rubiyah region entered the Iraqi territories on Monday after crossing al-Waleed border crossing.

A few days earlier, 12 U.S. military vehicles passed through Semalka border crossing and headed towards northern Iraq. They were carrying wheat from silos in northeast Syria.

Local sources in Syria's northeastern town of al-Malikiyah also reported back on March 26 that 18 U.S. military vehicles, loaded with wheat crops, had crossed Semalka border, and entered the Iraqi territory.

This comes as U.S. forces also continue to smuggle crude oil from Hasakah to Iraq.

The US military has stationed forces and equipment in northeastern Syria, with the Pentagon claiming that the troops deployment is aimed at preventing the oilfields in the area from falling into the hands of Daesh terrorists.

Damascus, however, says the deployment is meant to plunder the country's resources.

Saudi Court Sentences Aid Worker to 20 Years in Prison

RIYADH (Dispatches) – A Saudi court has sentenced a local aid worker to 20 years in prison, weeks after his family reported that his release was imminent.

Abdulrahman al-Sadhan, 37, was sentenced to 20 years in prison in addition to a two-decade travel ban, his sister announced on a series of Twitter posts.

Abdulrahman was detained in March 2018 from the Red Crescent offices in Riyadh, where he worked. He was arrested without a warrant or charge and his family initially knew nothing of his whereabouts.

Areej al-Sadhan, Abdulrahman's sister who is based in the United States where she is a citizen, said the hearing on Monday was the seventh to take place in his case.

In February, Areej tweeted that Abdulrah-

man had been permitted to make a call to the family - the second communication they had received from him during the course of his detention - to let them know he would soon be released.

The Saudi regime's ally, the United States, says it is concerned about reports on the sentencing of the aid worker.

"We will continue to monitor this case closely throughout any appeals process. As we have said to Saudi officials at all levels, freedom of expression should never be a punishable offense," State Department spokesman Ned Price said.

The Saudi government media office CIC did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

"No words can describe how I feel! This

BRUTAL & UNJUST ruling is just a reminder of the horrible situation the Saudi ppl [people] are in," Areej tweeted after the court session on Monday.

Saudi de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has moved to crush dissent while introducing cosmetic social and economic reforms to modernize the kingdom. Saudi authorities have detained senior royals, activists, intellectuals and clerics.

Last month, women's rights activist Loujain al-Hathloul was released after nearly three years in prison, having served half of her custodial sentence.

Two Saudi activists with U.S. citizenship have also been freed on bail pending trials on terrorism-related charges.