

# Zionist Regime Bans Muslims From Ibrahimi Mosque

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist troops have banned Muslims from praying at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the occupied West Bank city of Al-Khalil as Jews mark their New Year, Wafa news agency has reported.



A view of the Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil, West Bank on August 10, 2021

The Muslim holy site, however, remains open for Zionist settlers.

The decision was condemned by Palestinian officials, who described the move as an attack on basic human rights and a violation of freedom of worship.

Director of the Ibrahimi Mosque Sheikh Hafthi Abu Sneinah told Wafa that Zionist troops denied Palestinians access to the holy site along with its courtyards as the illegal settlers were preparing to mark the Jewish New Year.

“A flagrant affront to the feelings of Arabs and Muslims, a grave breach of the freedom of worship and a blatant violation of international human rights charters and conventions,” Ahmad Tamimi, head of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization’s human

rights department, said.

## Settlers Break Into Al-Aqsa

Meanwhile, dozens of Zionist settlers entered the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in occupied East Al-Quds flanked by Zionist troops on Wednesday, as the occupying regime celebrates the Jewish new year.

Local media reported that al-

most 156 settlers entered Al-Aqsa through the Moroccan Gate on the western side of the compound, which has been controlled by the regime authorities since the beginning of the occupation of East Al-Quds and the West Bank in 1967.

Palestinian Authority news agency Wafa reported that Palestinian worshippers and guards at Al-Aqsa said they felt uncomfort-

able with the presence of Zionist troops and settlers touring the Muslim holy site, adding that they saw these tours as “provocative”.

Al-Aqsa is one of Islam’s most revered sites.

As the Zionist regime celebrated Rosh Hashanah from Monday until Wednesday, Zionist extremists have called for the storming of the Al-Aqsa compound in a bid to increase presence on the site.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday morning Zionist troops fired tear gas and stun grenades at Palestinian residents in Silwan, a neighborhood south of Al-Quds’ Old City and Al-Aqsa that is facing the regime’s demolition and expulsion orders, Wafa reported.

Zionist settler groups regularly enter the Al-Aqsa compound - which they refer to as the Temple Mount - during religious holidays.

In July, dozens of far-right Zionist settlers broke into al-Aqsa compound one day before the Muslim feast of Eid al-Adha. On 18 July, they also forced their way into Al-Aqsa.

## Shall... (Continued From Page One)

Taliban’s appointments did not appear to meet its calls for an inclusive government.

“It does not look like the inclusive and representative formation in terms of the rich ethnic and religious diversity of Afghanistan we hoped to see and that the Taliban were promising over the past weeks,” said Peter Stano, spokesperson for the EU’s diplomatic arm.

Brussels has said an inclusive Afghan government is a requirement for any engagement with the Taliban-led administration.

The Taliban have said the government is temporary and would eventually be replaced with one that includes both political opponents and more representatives from ethnic groups outside of the dominant Pashtuns.

## Syrian... (Continued From Page One)

dozens of terrorists were still present in a district and inside a displacement camp on the edges of Daraa al-Balad, awaiting the outcome of ongoing negotiations about their fate.

They now expect army forces to seek to fully retake other patches of the Daraa countryside that have remained outside their control since the 2018 deal.

Although bombings and assassinations had remained rife around the province since then, the escalation in Daraa al-Balad this summer has been the most violent in three years.

Back in 2018, Syrian Army troops managed to establish control over Dara’a province, which is bordered by Jordan to the south and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights to the west.

The situation in the province significantly worsened in August, when terrorists killed four soldiers and wounded eight more as they attacked state institutions and the local army.

The establishment of full government control over Dara’a is highly important because it borders the occupied Golan Heights which the occupying regime of Israel has used to treat wounded terrorists fighting against the Syrian government since 2011.

The territory’s return to Syria’s government control could sever collaboration between the Zionist regime and the terrorists and accordingly deal a blow to Tel Aviv’s plans to annex the Golan Heights.

Since 2011, Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy, leading to the emergence of Daesh and other terrorist groups in the country.

The U.S. has also been maintaining an illegal military presence on the Syrian soil, collaborating with militants against Syria’s legitimate government, stealing the country’s crude oil resources, bombing the positions of the Syrian army and anti-terror popular forces, and imposing crippling sanctions on Damascus.

## Statue... (Continued From Page One)

faced death threats after his company’s role in removing Richmond’s other Confederate statue was made public last year. He said the Lee statue posed their most complex challenge.

“It won’t transport in this height, so we need to lift the rider off the horse and transport it that way. From a thickness standpoint, we don’t know how long it will take. Are there iron supports? It’s a total mystery,” Henry said Wednesday.

Northam ordered the statue’s removal last summer, citing nationwide pain over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis after a white police officer pressed a knee into his neck. Litigation tied up his plans until the Supreme Court of Virginia cleared the way last week.

The 21-foot (6-meter) high bronze sculpture sat atop a granite pedestal nearly twice that tall, towering above Monument Avenue since 1890 in this former capital of the Confederacy.

State, capitol and city police officers closed streets for blocks around the state-owned traffic circle before its removal, using heavy equipment and crowd-control barriers to keep crowds at a distance. The Federal Aviation Administration granted the state’s request to ban drone flights, and the event was livestreamed through the governor’s Facebook and Twitter accounts.

“This is a historic moment for the city of Richmond. The city, the community at large is saying that we’re not going to stand for these symbols of hate in our city anymore,” said Rachel Smucker, 28, a white woman who moved to Richmond three years ago. “I’ve always found it to be offensive, as a symbol of protecting slavery and the racism that people of color still face today.”

The pedestal is to remain for the time being, although workers are expected to remove decorative plaques and extricate a time capsule on Thursday.

After Floyd’s death, the area around the statue became a hub for protests and occasional clashes between police and demonstrators. The pedestal has been covered by constantly evolving, colorful graffiti, with many of the hand-painted messages denouncing police and demanding an end to systemic racism and inequality.

The sculpture was valued for its artistic quality, and stood among four other massive Confederate statues that were removed by the city last summer.

The decisions by the governor and Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney to remove the Confederate tributes marked a major victory for civil rights activists, whose previous calls to remove the statues had been

steadfastly rebuked by city and state officials alike.

A statue of Black tennis hero and Richmond native Arthur Ashe erected in 1996 is expected to stay.

“I think it’s pretty apropos that the only remaining monument on this tree-lined street is Arthur Ashe, and I’m pretty confident he’ll withstand the test of time,” Stoney said.

A previous wave of advocacy and resistance led to a rally of white supremacists in the city of Charlottesville erupting into violence in 2017. Other Confederate monuments started falling around the country.

In Virginia, local governments were hamstrung by a state law protecting memorials to war veterans. That law was amended by the new Democratic majority at the statehouse and signed by Northam, allowing localities to decide their fate as of July 1, 2020.

Stoney then moved swiftly, citing the continuing demonstrations and concerns that protesters could get hurt if they tried to bring down the enormous statues themselves. Protesters had already toppled a statue of Confederate President Jefferson Davis before Stoney’s decree. Work crews then removed statues of Gen. Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, Confederate naval officer Matthew Maury and Gen. J.E.B. Stuart from the thoroughfare, where their pedestals remain.

Northam’s plans to remove the Lee statue stalled until the Supreme Court of Virginia cleared the way last week in unanimous rulings against two lawsuits, saying that in a democracy, “values change and public policy changes too.”

The changes have remade the prestigious avenue, which is lined with mansions and tony apartments and is partly preserved as a National Historic Landmark district. Northam has tapped the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts to lead a community-driven redesign for the whole avenue.

As for the Lee statue, Northam has said his administration will seek public input on what should happen to it next.

## Raisi...

(Continued From Page One)

the negotiation course,” he said, adding, “Naturally, it defies logic to expect Iran to offer a constructive reaction to such attitude.”

The IAEA has, on several occasions, relied on information provided by the U.S. and the Israeli spy agency of Mossad to allege the presence of “uranium traces” on some locations inside the Islamic Republic.

Raisi said Iran was the only country that stood by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in the face of the United States and Europeans’ non-commitment.

The president said Iran expected Europe to assume a “strategically independent” line and stop having its policies mirror those of the U.S.

He stated that the Islamic Republic wanted to expand its relations with the European Union and its constituent members “in the areas of common interests.” This, however, rested on the observance of the “mutual respect principle,” focus on areas of commonality, and “prevention of extrinsic elements” from impacting on the relations, the chief executive noted.

“This necessitates the European side’s actual will and its refusal from hinging [its interaction with Iran] to the will of unilateral powers such as the U.S.,” he added.

All, the president also said, have to try to achieve an inclusive government in Afghanistan where the Taliban have risen back to power.

He, meanwhile, referred to the women and children’s rights in the Central Asian country as the Islamic Republic’s “serious concerns,” adding, “We will try our utmost to ensure the preservation of the Afghan nation’s absolute rights.”

Two decades of direct interference by the U.S. and the Western military alliance of NATO proved that the “presence of foreign governments, especially the U.S., in Afghanistan failed to contribute to the establishment of security there, and resulted in nothing but warfare, bloodshed, and destruction for the country,” he said.

President Raisi also took exception to Europe’s refusal to duly condemn the early 2020 “terrorist” assassination of Iran’s senior anti-terror commander General Qassem Soleimani by the U.S.

The entire world witnessed that Iran was the only country to truly confront Daesh’s terrorism in Iraq and Syria, Raisi asserted.

He called General Soleimani, who used to direct Iran’s military advisory assistance to Baghdad and Damascus in the face of the group, “a hero of terror fight in the region and the world,” censuring European countries for failing to adopt a “just position” on his assassination.

Michel for his part expressed “serious” determination on the part of the EU to boost its relations and economic cooperation with Iran.

He acknowledged the adverse effects that sanctions had left on the two sides’ relations, noting that it was for the same reason that the concept of strategic independence had assumed some significance in the eyes of the bloc.

Michel alleged he was seriously in favor of the idea of the body’s rather advancing its own interests, and remain an “honest partner” for Iran.

Tweeting afterward, he also said, he had talked with Raisi on “the importance to resume quickly the negotiations to bring the JCPOA back on track.”

“The EU and Iran have a common interest to work together on regional and global issues, including on Afghanistan,” the official noted, and acknowledged Iran’s playing “an important historical role in hosting Afghans” through years.

# Iraqi Forces Take Full Control of Anbar Desert

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – The Iraqi army has announced it has taken full control of the Anbar desert region, adding terrorist operations in the province has decreased.

The Command of Al-Anbar Operations in Iraq said on Tuesday that the country’s army forces have finally managed to take complete control of the Al-Anbar desert.

Lieutenant-General Nasser Al-Ghannam, the Anbar Operations Commander, said in a statement to the Iraqi News Agency (INA) that “the Anbar desert is sprawling and wide and it has surrounded the province, and extends to the Saudi-Jordanian-Syrian border,” adding that “it was the scene of terrorist groups’ activities. But currently, there are no Daesh terrorist elements in the Al-Anbar desert.”

According to the report, the commander announced that Iraqi forces managed to take full control of the Al-Anbar desert after clearing it of the remnants of Daesh terrorist elements.

“During their latest operation against the remnants of the Takfiris in the Al-Anbar desert, the Iraqi army forces destroyed a number of vehicles and captured some others. They also demolished terrorist groups’ dens in the Hussainiyat desert areas, which were previously considered dangerous but are now entirely under control and safe,” he stated.

Iraqi army forces have continued their series of counter-terrorist operations in different parts of the country to clear its regions from remnants of Daesh



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terrorists.

Popular Mobilization Units, also known as Hashd al-Sha’abi, have had a huge role in defeating the terrorist in the country.

The resistance forces say that

the Daesh attacks are supported and used by the United States to prolong its stay in the country amid growing calls on the government to push them out of Iraq.

# Turkey-Egypt Talks Remain Inconclusive

ANKARA/CAIRO (Reuters) – Turkey and Egypt agreed on Wednesday to continue talks to repair and eventually normalize strained ties after wrapping up a second round of discussions meant to address differences, the two countries said in a joint statement.

The talks were held in Ankara over two days and led by the respective deputy foreign ministers.

They marked the second high-level political consultations between the estranged regional rivals since May, when Egypt hosted a Turkish delegation amid a push by Ankara to ease tensions with a handful of countries. Ankara’s ties with Cairo have been frosty since the Egyptian military toppled Egypt’s former president, Mohamed Mursi of the Muslim Brotherhood - strongly supported by Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan

- in 2013.

The two are also at odds over the Libyan war, where they backed opposing sides, and control of Mediterranean waters. Wednesday’s talks addressed bilateral and regional issues, including Libya, Syria, the east Mediterranean, and the Zionist-Palestinian conflict, the countries said in the joint statement.

“The two sides agreed to continue these consultations confirming their desire to make progress in areas under discussion and the need for further steps to facilitate normalization of their relations,” it said.

The talks with Egypt, which have so far yielded little, come as Turkey also ramped up diplomatic efforts to ease tension with other regional rivals Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

# Rare Falcon Sells for Record-Breaking \$464,000 at Saudi Auction

RIYADH (Dispatches) – An Ultra White Gyrfalcon (Falco rusticolus) has sold at a live-televised Saudi auction for nearly half a million dollars, setting a new world record for the most expensive falcon ever sold.

The sale of the bird of prey fetched 1.75 million Saudi riyals (\$464,400) during the International Falcon Breeders Auction (IFBA) which was held at the headquarters of the Saudi Falcon Club, located in Malham just over 40 miles north of the capital Riyadh.

The young falcon came from the Pa-

cific Northwest Falcons Farm based in the U.S. and measures 16.5 inches long and weighs 980 grams. Last month Arab News reported that on the eighth-day of the event, a Super White Gyrfalcon from a Canadian-based breeder sold for \$93,347 which was considered the highest amount paid at a Saudi auction.

According to the Saudi Falcon Club’s spokesman Walid Al-Taweel, the auction started last month and brought together breeders from 14 countries with around 400 falcons sold, totaling a record ten million riyals (\$2.7 million)

Other falcon-related events are also set to take place in the kingdom, including a major Saudi falconry exhibition next month over ten days. “It will be the only platform in the kingdom that draws companies and individuals from inside and outside the kingdom selling falconry hunting equipment,” Taweel was quoted as saying by the Saudi news agency SPA.

Falconry is considered an important part of Bedouin history in the Arabian Peninsula dating back almost 10,000 years according to archaeological evidence.