

Arab States Boycott Regional Meet in Divided Libya's Capital



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Aboul Gheit was also absent. Najla al-Mangoush, foreign minister in the Tripoli-based administration, condemned what she called "attempts by certain sides to crush Libyans' desire to transform Arab solidarity into a reality".

Libya, which holds the rotating presidency of the organization, is "determined to play its role in the Arab League (and) rejects any attempt to politicize the League's founding documents," she said.

Libya fell into a decade of violence following the 2011 overthrow of dictator Moamer Kadhafi in a NATO-backed rebellion.

The resulting power grab gave rise to myriad home-grown militias and prompted interventions by Arab powers as well as Turkey, Russia and Western states.

Since March last year, an administration in Libya's east backed by military leader Khalifa Haftar -- who has been close to Russia and Egypt -- has challenged the government of Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah, arguing it has outlived its mandate.

The unity government was the product of a United Nations-mediated peace process following the country's last major battle in 2020.

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Egypt Frees Businessman, Son After 2 Years of Detention

CAIRO (AP) – Egyptian authorities released a prominent businessman and his son after more than two years in pre-trial detention while officials investigated possible terrorism-related charges, their family said.

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Iran ... (Continued From Page One)

"The IRGC is the most unique anti-terror force in the world, which routed the Daesh terrorist group with the help of regional nations and despite the U.S. support for the group. The IRGC eliminated global threats of Daesh," Qalibaf said, emphasizing that the IRGC has made great sacrifices in its fight against terror.

Iran's intelligence minister of Iran stressed his ministry's full support for the IRGC, denouncing the European Parliament's "worthless, hasty and ill-advised" blacklisting.

Ismail Khatib said Iran reserves the legitimate and inalienable right to take retaliatory action against any move violating the Islamic Republic's national security.

He said the Western governments' weak intelligence evaluation and improper knowledge of the Iranian people and the logic of administration in Iran have made them resort to such worthless symbolic measures in order to provide artificial respiration for the failed and foreign-orchestrated project on creating chaos and riots in the country.

The European Union has turned into a puppet of the U.S. state-sponsored terrorism, the Zionist regime, and the despicable anti-Iranian groups, Khatib stated, warning that the Western interfering plots against Iran as well as their regional policies will end in total failure.

The United States, known for sponsoring terrorist groups, has already placed both the IRGC and its foreign arm, the Quds Force, on its list of "foreign terrorist organizations".

Gen. Salami on Saturday praised sacrifices made by the IRGC, particularly the Quds Force and its late commander General Qassem Soleimani, saying the top anti-terror icon "played the biggest and most leading role in eliminating worldwide terrorism".

"As for the IRGC's endeavors, especially the Quds Force and the leadership of Martyr Soleimani, the volcano of terrorism created by the Americans would have engulfed the Europeans and the security that prevails in Europe today would have been destroyed," the IRGC chief said.

"The fire was reaching the edge of Europe and had it not been contained, it would have covered all the geographical spheres of Europe. But the Europeans and Americans are accustomed to replacing the executioner with the martyr, and the oppressor with the oppressed," he added.

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Project... (Continued From Page One)

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At Least... (Continued From Page One)

him to lock the door because a man was unloading multiple rounds of ammunition at the dance club across the street. Mass shootings are recurrent in the United States, and the attack in Monterey Park was the deadliest since May 2022, when a gunman killed 19 students and two teachers at a school in Uvalde, Texas. The deadliest shooting in California history was in 1984 when a gunman killed 21 people at a McDonald's restaurant in San Ysidro, near San Diego.

The tragedy marked not just the fifth mass killing in the U.S. since the start of the year but also is the deadliest since May 24, 2022 - when 21 people were killed in a school in Uvalde, Texas, according to The Associated Press/USA Today database on mass killings in the U.S. The latest violence comes two months after five people were killed at a Colorado Springs nightclub.

The U.S. Department of Justice said there were over 7,000 reported hate crimes in the United States in 2021, affecting more than 9,000 people. Two thirds of those were race-related, it said. More than 44,000 people died from gunshot wounds in 2022, more than half of which were suicides.

President... (Continued From Page 2)

energy production and to control the inflation rate in the country. Raisi also defended government's employment records and said nearly one million jobs have been created in Iran since he took office in August 2021. In his speech, the Iranian president also hailed the Iranian people for their patience and resistance during the recent riots in the country.

He also slammed a decision earlier this week by the European Union's parliament to designate the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps as a terrorist entity, stating that the Iranian military force has been at the forefront of fighting against terrorism in the region.

Iranian lawmakers approved Sunday the outlines of the budget bill for the next calendar year to start on March 21, 2023, a member of parliament said. The bill got approval with 70 percent of votes in favor, Shamseddin Hussein, a member of the parliamentary commission in charge of reviewing the 1402 budget bill noted.

Iran... (Continued From Page 2)

which has been committed repeatedly by far-right extremists targets Muslims, insults their sacred values, and serves as further example of the alarming level reached by Islamophobia, hate, intolerance, and xenophobia," it said.

"The OIC Secretary-General urges the Swedish authorities to take necessary measures against the perpetrators of this hate crime."

Taha also called for increased international efforts to prevent re-occurrence of such acts and for solidarity to fight Islamophobia.

Forbes... (Continued From Page 2)

terms of purchases or their own aircraft construction." Heidari's mention of helicopters is interesting since Russia has various utility and attack helicopters Iran may hope to acquire for its aging rotary fleet, Forbes said.

Farzin Nadimi, a defense and security analyst and Associate Fellow of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, predicts possible types Iran might buy or even co-produce "include Mi-38, Mi-26, Mi-28N, and Ka-32/226/60/52."

"I think Mi-38 and Ka-32 or a modern version of it are more likely," he told the magazine.

The Mil Mi-38 is a medium transport helicopter, and the Ka-32 is a variant of the Kamov Ka-27 military helicopter.

Regarding a possible attack helicopter acquisition, Nadimi believes Iran might opt for the Mi-28N over the Ka-52 since the latter "hasn't had a brilliant performance in the recent war."

The bulk of Iran's existing attack helicopter fleet comprises the AH-1J International variant of the Cobra that Tehran acquired from the U.S. in the early 1970s. Iran built two versions of the AH-1J in the 2010s: the Toufan I and Toufan II.

In a 2019 report, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) anticipated that after the UN arms embargo on Iran expired in October 2020, Tehran might consider purchasing Russian Su-30 fighters, Yak-130 trainers, and T-90 main battle tanks. "Iran has also shown interest in acquiring S-400 air defense systems and Bastion coastal defense systems from Russia," added the report.

While Iran opted for the more advanced Su-35 over the Su-30, possibly because the aircraft were already produced for Egypt, there has been no indication Iran is currently interested in either the Yak trainer or the T-90 tank, Forbes said.

In 2016, Iran finally took delivery of the Russian S-300 air defense missile systems it had ordered from Russia back in 2007. It has also developed the indigenous Bavar-373, which Iranian officials have said is superior to the S-300 and a peer to the more advanced S-400.

Nadimi believes it's likely that Iran will receive the S-400. He also doubts that such an acquisition would negate Tehran's claims about the Bavar-373.

"The Bavar-373 is officially placed between S-300 and S-400 capability-wise, so Iran won't feel any shame in assimilating it, especially considering the fact that Bavar-373 service entry is believed to be behind schedule," he said.

Nadimi also believes the Bastion-P "might be an area of interest".

Explosion Kills 2 in Yemen's Oil-Rich Shabwa

ADEN (Dispatches) – Two Yemenis were killed and four others injured in an explosion in the country's southeastern oil-rich province of Shabwa on Saturday, a military official told Xinhua.

A local military officer told Xinhua on condition of anonymity that an improvised explosive device (IED) on the roadside exploded when a motorcade of military vehicles that escorted trucks carrying diesel passed by in the Ar Rawdah district of Shabwa.

The IED, which was planted and remotely detonated, also destroyed a military vehicle, the source said.

Security forces and a medical team were sent to the site and carried the wounded soldiers to a nearby hospital for treatment, he noted.

So far, no group has claimed the responsibility for the attack. The Yemen-based Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula network has

exploited years of deadly Saudi-led conflict to expand its presence in the war-ravaged country. It frequently uses hit-and-run tactics while hiding out in rocky terrains and mountainous areas of Abyan and other neighboring provinces including Shabwa.

Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with its Arab allies and with arms and logistics support from the U.S. and other Western states, launched the devastating war on Yemen in March 2015.

The objective was to crush the popular Ansarullah resistance movement, which has been running state affairs in the absence of a functional government in Yemen, and reinstall the Riyadh-friendly regime of Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi.

While the Saudi-led coalition has failed to achieve any of its objectives, the war has killed hundreds of thousands of Yemenis and spawned the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Dubai to Have World's First 3D-Printed Mosque

DUBAI (MEMO) – The emirate of Dubai is planning to build the world's first 3D-printed mosque which will be ready by early 2025. According to a report by The National last week, Dubai's Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities Department (IACAD) announced that construction of the 2,000-square-meter mosque in Bur Dubai will start in October and once completed, the mosque will accommodate 600 worshippers. Bur Dubai is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the UAE.

The director of IACAD's engineering department, Ali al-Suwaidi said in a press conference that "The cost is 30 percent higher than build-

ing the mosque in the normal way because it is the first of its kind in the world."

"We expect the cost will be similar in the future with 30 years building guarantee," he added.

The 3D printing of the building's structure will take approximately four months to complete with a further 12 months to fully fit out the mosque's facilities, the IACAD said. Three workers will operate the 3D robotic printer, which will print two square meters per hour.

The project is the emirate's latest step in its Dubai 3D Printing Strategy, launched in 2016 by ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum.

In 2015 plans were also unveiled to build the world's first 3D-printed office, which was opened the following year. In 2019, a U.S.-based firm constructed the world's largest 3D-printed building – the Dubai Municipality's Centre for Innovation.

Hamad al-Shaibani, Director General of IACAD, said Dubai is already a pioneer in using 3D printing technology and sustainability that will reduce its carbon footprint. "Using 3D printing will reduce the construction material wastes. It is friendly to the environment. The mosque represents the vision of our wise leadership," he said.