

Hezbollah: Lebanon's President Must Be Elected Without Foreign Interference

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – A high-ranking official of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement has stressed the need to elect the country's new president through dialogue and domestic consensus without any foreign interference.

"We believe that Lebanese people should elect a president for their Lebanon. What will save our country is to spring into action and pick the next head of state without further waste of time. Those who intend to prolong the political process for the election of the president should know that such an approach will not benefit them," the head of Hezbollah Executive Council, Sayyed Hashem Safied-dine, said during a ceremony in the southern Lebanese village of Khayeb.

He added that enemies have used all means at their disposal in order to plunge the country into chaos, noting that Hezbollah and its allies have, however, withstood such attempts and thwarted the seditious moves.

"Despite all the lies and campaigns that certain parties and embassies have launched against Hezbollah, the movement has always remained committed to the



Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri (C) during a session to elect a new president

principle of de-escalation," he said. "We care about Lebanon more than anyone else. We are decent and strong enough to defend our rights and our nation. The deceptive gestures and tall tales of foreign embassies are actually meant to create chaos within the Lebanese society. We must exercise vigilance and deal with enemies' bids fiercely," the Hezbollah official highlighted.

Moreover, the deputy chairman of the Executive Council of Hezbollah, Sheikh Nabil Qaouk, said "latest developments" have increased

the chances for "consensus" on presidential election.

"It is our foremost priority to elect a president, prevent collapse of the economy and rescue the country. The main priority of the rival camp, however, is to embark on a new adventure and alter the domestic political equations," the senior Hezbollah official said.

"They want to seize control of the country to change its identity, position and regional role, and put it on the path of normalization [with the Zionist regime]," Sheikh Qaouk added.

"There are now international sides, besides lawmakers and political forces in Lebanon that have changed their stance in favor of the consensus plan. They have come to realize that the only way out of the ongoing crisis is through dialog," he said, noting that such a change of position has "infuriated" the rival camp and prompted it to wage a "smear campaign against Hezbollah and its supporters."

Lebanon's presidency has seen stalemate several times since the 1975-1990 civil war. The country has also had only a caretaker government since May 2022.

The Arab country has been mired in an economic crisis that the World Bank has described as one of the worst in recent history, which comes amid crippling sanctions imposed by the U.S. and its allies.

The Lebanese pound has lost more than 95 percent of its value on the black market since 2019.

According to the United Nations, the ongoing financial crisis in Lebanon has caused poverty rates to reach more than 80 percent of the population, and food prices have risen by an astonishing 2,000 percent.

The police officer branded both women criminals and officers went on to say that Ali Muhana's son deserved to be held in isolation for over 200 days.

The protesters were asked to sign a plea stating that they will not take part in any unauthorized protests, then police returned their IDs and released them. It is unclear if charges will be pressed against them or not.

Bahrain continues to imprison its population at the highest rate of any country in the Middle East, with an estimated 1,300 political prisoners in a country of half a million. Formula One has held races in Bahrain since 2004.

Since 2017, Bahraini authorities have banned all independent media in the country and dissolved all significant opposition groups, according to Human Rights Watch.

Prior to the arrests, Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, the director of Bird, took a call with the protesters and posted a short video on Twitter.

In it, Muneer Mushaima is heard chanting "we demand the release of prisoners", while Najah Yusuf shouts "we demand our basic rights, shame on Formula One for racing in Bahrain and making millions in profit at the cost of our suffering".

Alwadaei said the arrests had come "after we received assurances from Formula One CEO Stefano Domenicali that protesting the race will not result in reprisals".

Ministry...

(Continued From Page 2)

"Iran has utilized all recognized rights and has explored available political and legal channels, as well as international regulations. Protection of Iran's nuclear capabilities and capacities has been carried out in light of such measures," Kanaani said.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and the IAEA issued a joint statement on Saturday at the end of a two-day visit by Grossi to Tehran, saying both sides recognized that such positive engagements between Iran and the IAEA can pave the way for wider agreements among state parties.

Prisoner Exchange

Kanaani also reiterated Iran's readiness for a long-awaited prisoner swap with Belgium, days after the European country's Constitutional Court gave the green light for such a move.

Following the decision "by the Belgian Constitutional Court, we can now say that the way to implement the agreement has been opened, and the Islamic Republic of Iran certainly welcomes this change," he said.

The move would see Belgian national Olivier Vandecasteele -- jailed in Iran for 40 years for several charges including spying -- swapped for Iranian diplomat Assadollah Assadi.

Under a treaty Belgium and Iran signed in 2022, Vandecasteele would have been eligible to be swapped for Assadi but in December Belgium's constitutional court suspended the implementation of the treaty.

On Friday, however, the Belgian Constitutional Court cleared the way for a swap by rejecting a legal challenge to a law allowing prisoner exchanges with Iran.

Assadi, an Iranian diplomat who was stationed in Austria, was arrested in 2018 after Belgian, French and German security establishments falsely accused him of plotting to set off a bomb at a rally outside Paris by MKO terrorists.

After three years in detention, Assadi was sentenced in Belgium to 20 years in prison in May 2021.

"We have stated that he [Assadi] must be released unconditionally, compensation must be paid, and a commitment should be given not to repeat such actions," Kanaani said, adding that "with the recent change, we hope to see an opening regarding the diplomat's case."

Vandecasteele, 42, was handed multiple sentences totaling 40 years on a range of charges on January 10, but with the sentences to run concurrently he would need to only serve 12.5 years behind bars, Iran's judiciary said noting that his verdict could be appealed.

Paper...

(Continued From Page 2)

In contrast to its warming of ties with the Zionist regime, Azerbaijan's relations with Iran were strained in January following an attack on the Eurasian country's embassy in Tehran.

Azerbaijan closed its diplomatic mission and evacuated staff over what it called a "terrorist act," with President Ilham Aliyev blaming it on the "Iranian establishment."

This is while an initial investigation pointed to "personal and family-related problems" as the motive of the assault.

Awaiting...

(Continued From Page One)

The 6th Imam further says: "When the Qa'em shall arise, he will rule with justice, the tyrants of his time shall fear him, the righteous will be safe, the earth shall reveal its treasures, all the truth-seekers will seek his company and no follower of any religion would remain except that they see Islam and declare their faith in it."

The identity of the Saviour of mankind ought to be crystal clear now. He is the Awaited One, whose tidings were given by the Prophet of Islam, who said in unambiguous words that the Mahdi will be from his progeny, the offspring of his Immaculate Daughter, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA), and in the lineal descent of his younger grandson, Imam Husain (AS) – the Martyr of Karbala. Every year, the 15th of Sha'ban makes the seekers of truth become better aware of the identity of the eagerly awaited Saviour of mankind, the Promised Mahdi. He was born in Samarra in the year 255 AH to Imam Hasan al-Askari (AS) – the Prophet's 11th Infallible Heir. His mother was Narjis, a noble Byzantine princess who on her mother's side was a direct descendant of Simeon, the loyal disciple of Prophet Jesus (AS). Now we understand why God will make Prophet Jesus reappear along with the Prophet of Islam's 12th and Last Heir to disown all those who had made him a godson.

Today, when terrorists of all hue and colour are masquerading as Jihadis on the orders of their Zionist, American, and Wahhabi masters, by indulging in the most heinous crimes against humanity on the pretext of setting up what they call a caliphate, it is only belief in Imam Mahdi (AS) and his global government of peace, prosperity, and justice that keeps alive the hopes of Muslims in these tyrannical times.

The triumph of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 was indeed a sign of the coming of the Promised Saviour, and so are the current events in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, and elsewhere, coupled with the acute desperation of the fast declining American empire. These are definite indications that it is only Imam Mahdi who will shatter the satanic plots by cleansing Hijaz of the filth of the heretics, and peacefully inviting all humanity towards the straight and unwavering path of God with love and affection.

True believers from all over the world will rally to the Imam's call on his reappearance, which would be preceded by five definite signs, according to a statement from Imam Ja'far Sadeq (AS), who says:

"Before the uprising of the Mahdi there will be five definite signs: (uprisings of the Yemeni, the Sufyani, a loud call from the sky, the martyrdom of Nafs Zakiyyah (or the pure soul) and the rift in the desert (where the earth will swallow an army sent to Hijaz by the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt)."

This hadith is ample proof that the Arabian Peninsula would be cleared of the agents of the US and the Zionists. Another point to note is the Islamic Revolution in Yemen and preparation of Yemeni Muslims for the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (AS), along with the flags of the east from Khorasan (Iran) that will converge on Iraq to save that country from the bloody hordes of Sufyani who would be unleashing bloodbaths in Syria.

The faithful throughout the world have never doubted these tidings and they pray fervently every day, especially on the 15th of Sha'ban, for the hastening of the reappearance of the Awaited Saviour of mankind.

Turkey Summons U.S. Envoy Over Top General's Visit to Kurdish-Held Syria

ANKARA (Xinhua) – Turkey's Foreign Ministry on Monday summoned the U.S. ambassador to Ankara for the visit of a top U.S. commander to a Kurdish-held area in northeastern Syria, the semi-official Anadolu Agency reported.

Ankara "asked for an explanation" regarding the visit of Mark Milley, U.S. chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to northeastern Syria on March 4, the agency quoted anonymous Turkish diplomatic sources as saying. Milley met U.S. troops sta-

tioned there under the control of the Kurdish-led so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), spearheaded by the so-called Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

Tensions between Ankara and Washington have long simmered over the U.S. backing of the YPG in northern Syria. The Kurdish militants cooperated with Washington in operations against Daesh, but Ankara has long been asking the U.S. to cease its partnership with the YPG.

Ankara sees the Kurdish group

as the Syrian branch of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union, has rebelled against the Turkish government for over three decades.

Damascus also condemned a recent visit by Milley to northeast Syria, saying the move is "illegal" and a "flagrant violation" of the country's sovereignty.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry made the remarks in a statement,

saying "Syria strongly condemns this flagrant violation by the US military official of the sovereignty and territorial integrity."

The ministry called on Washington to immediately stop its systematic and continuous violations of international law as well as its support for militant groups in Syria.

The ministry said such practices will not make Damascus stop its fight against terrorism and it will remain steadfast in protecting its sovereignty, security and stability.

commotion of foreigners, are being legally prosecuted by the judicial authorities and immediate and decisive action is expected," the ministry added.

Zionist...

(Continued From Page One)

are living with food insecurity, amid serious concerns by Israeli economists that a financial meltdown could occur more "powerfully and faster" than they had originally forecast.

According to the Israel's Hebrew-language Channel 14, the figure translates to more than 530,000 families and high-lights that over 976,000 adults are suffering from food insecurity as well.

The findings were announced during a recent labor, welfare and health committee of the Knesset, where its member Israel Eichler called for quicker distribution of food baskets among needy families throughout the occupied territories.

He added that Zionist institutions should pay for at least half of the cost of the basic household food baskets.

Earlier this year, a report on the food security situation in Occupied Palestine issued by the so-called national insurance institute of Israel showed that 522,000 families in the occupied territories live in a state of food insecurity, including 265,000 families living in a state of severe food insecurity.

The report noted that the survey in-

cluded in the report was conducted in the first half of the year 2021, and before the cessation of unemployment benefits that were granted to most of the unemployed individuals and workers who were put on unpaid leave due to the global pandemic in 2020.

It stated that "the data indicate that in 2021, the year in which corona health and economic crisis that began in March 2020 continued, the level of food security of the population increased."

The report showed that the level of food security in Arab society increased from 56.8 percent in 2016 to 57.6 percent in 2021, which means that 42.4 percent of Arab families are experiencing food insecurity. This is three times higher than the general rate. In contrast, approximately 11 percent of Jews live in food insecurity.

Recent weeks have seen the Israeli shekel value drop to a three-year low against the dollar, Tel Aviv Stock Exchange underperform and leading companies pulling their money from Israeli accounts.

On Saturday night, hundreds of thousands of protesters took part in demonstrations in Tel Aviv and other occupied cities for the ninth straight week to reject a plan to overhaul Israel's court system.

The legislation that prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his right-wing and extremist allies hope to pass would limit the supreme court's powers to rule against the legislature and the executive, while giving legislators decisive powers

in appointing judges.

On March 1, American credit rating agency Fitch Ratings Inc. warned that the planned judicial changes could have a "negative impact" on Israel's credit profile.

Fitch cautioned that the judicial overhaul could weaken institutional checks, leading to "worse policy outcomes or sustained negative investor sentiment."

Bahrain ...

(Continued From Page One)

Meanwhile, F1 makes millions from our suffering. Shame on them."

Hajer Mansoor's sign read: "My son Sayed Nizar completed six years of his arbitrary sentence this week. He was arrested when he was 18 and subjected to harrowing torture. The UN called for his release. @F1 shame on you for refusing to meet torture victims."

In October last year, both women filed a legal complaint against F1 saying it had breached the human rights standards it pledged to follow by hosting the Grand Prix in Bahrain.

After being held for around two and a half hours at Eastern Riffa police station, Bahraini authorities confiscated the protesters' signs and took their IDs.

According to Bird, the most senior police officer present shouted at Yusuf and Mansoor, asking them why they protested and calling Mansoor's son, who is in prison, a criminal.

Leader...

(Continued From Page One)

chain of the enemy's plots to create chaos in the country, manipulate public opinion, and instill fear among students.

On Monday, the interior ministry issued a statement, saying no trace of toxic and dangerous substances have been found in any of the students referred to medical centers as a result of poisoning.

The ministry said a number of elements disturbing the psyche and health of the society through spreading lies in parallel with the commotion raised by foreigners to create an inflammatory atmosphere and anxiety are facing legal action.

According to reports from 250 classes across the country, the ministry said, a limited number of students have expressed feelings of complications and discomfort.

Meanwhile, "it was found that more than 90% of the students' expressions of discomfort were caused by anxiety and worries created in the classroom and school environment", it said.

"According to the investigations, some of the cases that have caused agitation in some schools are due to adventurous actions," the ministry said, adding the cases are being examined.

"A number of elements disturbing the psyche and health of the society, who have tried to create an inflammatory atmosphere and anxiety by publishing lies and disturbing minds along with the blind