

BEIRUT (Reuters) – Lebanon will start sending Syrian refugees back to their home country at the end of next week, Lebanese President Michel Aoun said on Wednesday. Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. The government estimates that the country's population of over 6 million includes roughly 1.5 million refugees from neighboring Syria, though well under 1 million are registered with the UNHCR. An official source said that the returns would only include those who had voluntarily signed up to go back with Lebanon's General Security agency, in coordination with the country's social affairs ministry, and would not be forced to leave.

Minds get tired like bodies. When you feel that your mind is tired, then invigorate it with sober advice.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

# Zakzaky: Saudi Arabia Involved in Zaria Massacre on U.S., UK Orders

ABUJA (Dispatches) – Nigeria's most senior Muslim cleric Sheikh Ibrahim al-Zakzaky says that Saudi Arabia was involved in the Zaria massacre in the Nigerian capital Abuja, acting on the orders of the United States and Britain.

"We believe that Saudi Arabia was not the main cause of the [massacre], but acted on behalf of the U.S. and the UK and carried out the orders of Washington and London," Sheikh Zakzaky said in an interview with Al-Alam news network broadcast on Tuesday.

He said the U.S. and the UK were not willing to pay the price of the plot and, therefore, compelled Saudi Arabia to implement it.

In December 2015, Nigerian army troops attacked Sheikh Zakzaky's residence and a place of worship belonging to the Islamic Movement in Nigeria, killing hundreds of his supporters and detaining the cleric and his wife.

The Nigerian troops burned Zakzaky's house down and afflicted him and his wife with serious injuries that caused the cleric to lose his left eye. Sheikh Zakzaky and his wife Zeenat also lost three



Nigeria's most senior Muslim cleric Sheikh Ibrahim al-Zakzaky speaks in an interview with Al-Alam news network on October 11, 2022.

sons during the Zaria massacre.

During the interview, he recalled that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman once claimed that the kingdom suppressed a movement in Africa similar to the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah and prevented him as the leader of the movement from establishing an Islamic government similar to the one in Iran.

"We did not see a single person from the Saudi army there, but it

was the Nigerian army that carried out the massacre and this means that the Saudi government paid for it," he said.

The prominent Nigerian cleric added that his country's government has told various lies about the massacre. "First, they said that not a single person had been killed, but then they said the army had killed 17 people because they chanted slogans in support of their leader."

According to Sheikh Zakzaky,

however, more than 1,000 people were killed in the massacre, with at least 800 Shias and more than 200 others.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zakzaky thanked the Iranian government and nation's support for the Nigerian resistance movement.

"Thank God, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the government and the people, are all with us. They are doing everything in their power to support our oppressed people," he said.

"They have done everything they could, and we thank them for that, and we thank the government that was and still is by our side," he added.

The cleric also said that Muslims see Iran as a role model, noting that even non-Muslim nations, like Nicaragua and the Philippines, have been inspired by the Islamic Republic.

"Although these countries were not Islamic, they have followed the example of the Islamic Revolution. The Ahl al-Bayt school, which was unknown before the revolution, has also been expanded. These are among the results of the Islamic Revolution."

## Hezbollah Vows 'Vigilance' Until Maritime Deal Finalized



Lebanese people react during a speech by the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah's Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, in Beirut on October 11, 2022.

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Lebanon's Hezbollah says the resistance movement will not recognize any maritime deal between Lebanon and the Zionist regime until it is officially signed.

The remarks by Hezbollah's Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah came after reports that Lebanon and the occupying regime have agreed to a draft deal.

"The pending hours are fateful. As the people of Lebanon, we are awaiting an official position on the part of our president and the Zionist enemy," Hezbollah's Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said.

He said "we will remain vigilant" until such a deal is finalized, noting a proper deal should meet the Lebanese government's demands.

"In such case, we would not have any problem with this matter," he said, reminding, "From the beginning, we said that we stand by the Lebanese administration."

"What is of importance to the resistance is for the Lebanese people to be able to extract oil and gas from Lebanese fields," Nasrallah stated.

Also on Tuesday, a senior Hezbollah lawmaker said Lebanon's firm position and the resistance movement's efforts had helped the country safeguard its maritime rights in indirect talks with the Zionist regime

and eventually forced the enemy to retreat.

"Had it not been for this force that frightened the enemy, we would not have been able to retrieve and maintain our rights," MP Hussein al-Jishi said.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun, meanwhile, said in a tweet that "the final version of the offer is satisfactory for Lebanon and answers its demands and preserves its rights to its natural wealth."

Various media outlets affiliated with the Zionist regime have also said that the agreement amounted to a "great victory" for Hezbollah.

Lebanon and the Zionist regime took part in indirect talks to discuss demarcation in 2020. But the talks stalled after Lebanon demanded a larger area, including part of the Karish gas field, where the occupying regime has given exploration rights to a Greek firm.

The talks were supposed to discuss a Lebanese demand for 860 square kilometers of territory in the disputed maritime area, according to a map sent to the United Nations in 2011. However, Lebanon then said the map was based on erroneous calculations and demanded 1,430 square kilometers more further south, including part of Karish.

## Palestinians Strike Over Zionist Lockdown on Al-Quds Camp

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – Palestinians launched a rare strike in east Al-Quds Wednesday over a days-long operation by Zionist troops in a refugee camp after a soldier was shot dead.

Businesses were shuttered in the Old City and along the main commercial street of the city's eastern sector, which is usually bustling with shoppers and traffic.

The strike follows the killing on Saturday of a Zionist soldier at a checkpoint near the Shuafat Palestinian refugee camp, which prompted a massive manhunt for the suspected attacker, who remains on the run.

Entrances to the refugee camp have been mostly shut, while the raids have affected schools and healthcare.

In Al-Quds' Old City, Nawal Jodeh said her daughter lives in the camp with her family.

"When I talked to her, she said the situation is bad there," the 50-year-old told AFP.

"I heard the sound of shooting and teargas canisters," she added.

Heavily armed security personnel have clashed with Palestinians in the camp.

The United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees said the violence and extra checkpoints had prompted it to close its schools and healthcare centre in the camp.

"The situation is really tense there on the ground," spokesman Kazem Abu Khalaf told AFP, adding that tons of uncollected garbage are piling up.

During a visit to the camp on Tuesday, Arab lawmaker Ahmad

Tibi said the Zionist regime's aggression amounted to "collective punishment".

"Sick people are not able to get outside to be treated, bakeries are empty, some physicians and doctors and nurses were not able to get in," he told AFP.

The strike across Palestinian neighborhoods of east Al-Quds came as thousands of Zionists gathered in the city to mark a week-long holiday.

Zionist troops have deployed reinforcements for the holiday amid a spike in violence against the Palestinians.

A second Zionist soldier was shot dead Tuesday in an attack near Nablus in the northern West Bank.

The regime's military said Wednesday it had blocked roads

leading to the city, where Palestinians were also observing the strike.

Zionist troops have launched near daily raids in the West Bank in recent months.

Dozens of Palestinians have been killed by Zionist troops, including resistance fighters and civilians.

Four Palestinian teenagers have been shot dead in the West Bank since Friday, according to the Palestinian health ministry.

Additionally, a 12-year-old boy shot in an earlier Israeli raid died from his wounds on Monday.

The occupying regime seized the West Bank in the Six-Day War of 1967 and later annexed east Al-Quds in a move never recognized by the international community.

## Report: U.S. Cancels Key Meeting With Saudi Arabia, GCC

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – The Biden administration has cancelled a meeting between the United States and Saudi Arabia that was previously under review, the news platform Semafor reported, citing a letter from the American embassy in Riyadh.

The meeting that was reportedly cancelled was the U.S.-GCC Working Group, which would have focused on integrated air and missile systems.

"The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat and hereby informs the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council that United States officials will not be able to participate in the planned meetings of the United States – Persian Gulf Cooperation Council Working Group Integrated Air and Missile Defense," the letter read, as reported by Semafor.

The cancelling of the meeting appears to be a major follow-through of the administration's announcement earlier on Tuesday, when na-

tional security spokesman John Kirby said the U.S. would be reviewing its relationship with Saudi Arabia, following a decision by OPEC+ to cut the production of oil by two million barrels a day.

"I would expect that the multilateral, mid-level engagements you're referring to will be rescheduled at some point," State Department spokesman Ned Price said in response to a reporter's question during a news briefing on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Joe Biden said there would be "consequences" for Saudi Arabia following the decision by the OPEC+, in which Riyadh is a top producer.

In an interview with CNN on Tuesday, Biden said he would soon take unspecified action and that OPEC+ had "aligned" with Russia to slash output.

"There's going to be some consequences for what they've done with Russia," he said. "I'm not going to get into what I'd consider and what

I have in mind. But there will be consequences."

The remarks came after Democratic Senator Bob Menendez, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the United States must immediately freeze all cooperation with Saudi Arabia, including arms sales to the country.

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre also said a policy review would be conducted with regards to relations with Saudi Arabia but gave no timeline for action or information on who would lead the re-evaluation. The United States will be watching the situation closely "over the coming weeks and months," she said.

Last week, OPEC+ approved its deepest cuts to the production of oil since 2020 at a meeting in the Austrian capital, Vienna, curbing supply in an already tight market despite pressure from the United States and others to pump more. The 2-million-barrel cut per day is equal to 2 percent of global supply.

## Report: TikTok Profiting From Displaced Syrians

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – TikTok is taking up to 70 percent of donations given to Syrians displaced due to the foreign-backed war on their country during live streams in which they ask for help on the platform, according to a BBC investigation.

Residents in camps in northwest Syria, including children, go live on the app for several hours at a time to plead with viewers to send digital gifts which can be converted to cash.

The BBC report, published on Wednesday, followed 30 TikTok accounts broadcasting live from Syrian camps across five months. It found that streams could earn up to \$1,000 an hour - but only a small portion was going to those in the videos.

The streams are being facilitated by middlemen, who provide families in the camps with phones and equipment. The middlemen told the BBC they worked with agencies affiliated to TikTok.

As an experiment, a Syrian reporter purporting to be from the camps launched a live stream, and was sent \$106 by BBC staff in London. The balance of the account later showed \$33 - suggesting that TikTok had taken a 69 percent cut.

In a statement, TikTok said: "We are deeply concerned by the information and allegations brought to us by the BBC, and have taken prompt and rigorous ac-

tion. "This type of content is not allowed on our platform, and we are further strengthening our global policies around exploitative begging."

After being contacted for comment, TikTok banned all of the 30 accounts.

The social media giant declined to confirm the exact amount of its commissions from digital gifts, but said it was significantly less than 70 percent.

The \$33 received during the experiment was reduced by 10 percent when withdrawn from a local money transfer shop. The middlemen usually take around 35 percent, according to the report, leaving a Syrian family with just \$19 from a \$106 donation.

Hamid, one of the middlemen who works with 12 families broadcasting for several hours a day, said he was supported by foreign agencies working directly with TikTok.

"They help us if we have any problems with the app. They unlock blocked accounts. We give them the name of the page, the profile picture, and they open the account," Hamid said.

Such agencies are contracted by TikTok around the world to help content creators produce appealing livestreams. Commission is paid based on the duration of the stream and the value of the digital gifts.