

# Zionists Demolish Palestinian Village for 216th Time

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – **Zionist troops on Monday again demolished a Palestinian Bedouin village in the southern Negev region in the occupied West Bank.**

The occupying regime’s troops stormed the village and brought it to the ground for the 216th time, Aziz al-Touri, a member of the Committee for the Defense of al-Araqib, told Anadolu.

Al-Touri stressed that the village residents are determined to rebuild their homes once again, as they do after every destruction by Zionist troops.

The homes in Al-Araqib, which are inhabited by 22 Palestinian families, are made of wood, plastic, and corrugated iron.

The village was first destroyed in 2010. Zionist regime authorities claim that the site where it is located falls under “state land.”

Al-Araqib residents are Arabs who were displaced in 1951 when the occupying regime claimed the area as “state land.”



*Al-Araqib was first built during Ottoman era, according to a Tel Aviv-based NGO.*

Zochrot, a Tel Aviv-based NGO, said in a recent report that al-Araqib was first built during the Ottoman era and its lands were purchased by residents.

Zionist regime authorities seek to seize control of the lands and expel its residents, with dozens of villages and Bedouin communities facing the same threat in the Negev area,

according to Zochrot.

Zionists Seize Scores of Palestine Homes in West Bank

The development comes days as Zionist regime authorities have started plans to confiscate at least 70 Palestinian homes in the occupied southern West Bank.

Imad Hamdan, director of the Al-Khalil Construction Committee, a

Palestinian government body, said on Sunday that the regime authorities plan to hand over the Palestinian homes to Zionist settlers in the Old City of the governorate of Al-Khalil.

“The Israeli raid of Nasreddine Building is the start of the implementation of the Israeli plan,” Hamdan added.

At the same time, Hamdan stressed that the Palestinians “are the genuine owners of these homes and shops.” The official reiterated that Palestinian ownership of these buildings is protected by local and international laws, which prevent forced expulsion.

More than 600,000 Zionists live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Al-Quds.

All Zionist settlements are illegal under international law. The United Nations Security Council has condemned Israel’s settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

## Turkey’s Massive Quake Raises Environmental Concerns

ANKARA (Xinhua) – **Hit by devastating earthquakes in early February, Turkey now faces environmental challenges on the disposal of the waste and rubble left over from the destroyed buildings and roads.**

Two massive earthquakes destroyed cities on large swaths of land in southern Turkey on Feb. 6, killing nearly 51,000 people.

Referred to as “the disaster of the century” by the Turkish government, the catastrophe caused some 227,000 buildings to collapse or sustain heavy damage, according to data from the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Cli-

mate Change.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has promised to rebuild new homes for the millions of people affected by the disaster within a year.

In the cities ravaged by the tremors, where reconstruction is currently underway, workers had started to clear a staggering amount of rubble about two weeks after the disaster.

“In my city Kahramanmaras, there are literally mountains of rubble in the open, and it’s causing a serious problem,” said Durmus Sezgin, a resident and civil engi-

neer from Kahramanmaras, one of the places hit hardest by the February earthquakes.

He said that hundreds of excavators are working round the clock, kicking up plumes of dust while sifting through the wreckage, demolishing any remaining building that local authorities considered unfit for habitation.

The rubble that has been stored in temporary dumps have raised concerns about pollution from different chemicals such as asbestos, a cancer-causing fiber used in the past as insulation material, but now banned in most countries, includ-

ing Turkey, said Sezgin.

“People have been breathing dust from the rubbles in the dumps continuously, and they are worried about being exposed to hazardous chemicals, lead, and microplastics,” said Selim, a doctor from quake-hit city of Hatay who wishes to be identified by his given name.

Responding to criticism, Deputy Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mehmet Emin Birpinar tweeted on April 27 that dust suppression systems were being used to stop the spread of potentially hazardous materials like asbestos.

## Al Jazeera Says Long-Held Correspondent Released in Egypt

DUBAI (AP) – **The satellite news network Al Jazeera said Monday that a correspondent for one of its channels held in Egypt since 2019 has been released from pre-trial detention.**

The Qatar-funded network in Doha said that Hisham Abdel Aziz, a producer with its Al Jazeera Mubasher channel, had been freed.

Authorities in Egypt did not acknowledge his release. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

He was freed on Sunday, said Khaled el-Balshy, head of Egypt’s Journalists’ Union. Abdel Aziz’s wife posted an image Sunday of Abdel Aziz online, thanking God

for him.

The network has said that Abdel Aziz, an Egyptian who had been based in Qatar for the public affairs channel, was stopped at Cairo International Airport in June 2019 while he was traveling for a family trip. They say he was “subjected to enforced disappearance for around a month” before being found in custody. In the time since, authorities repeatedly had applied and been granted repeated 45-day extensions for his detention.

Al Jazeera long had been targeted by Cairo since the country’s 2013 military takeover that installed Gen. Abdel Fattah el-Sissi into the presidency. Qatar had backed Egypt’s elected president, the late

Islamist Mohammed Morsi, after the 2011 Arab Spring. Morsi belonged to the pan-Arab group the Muslim Brotherhood, viewed by some Persian Gulf Arab nations as a threat to their hereditary rule.

Amid the 2013 takeover, Al Jazeera’s channels covered many of the Brotherhood’s protests live, to the anger of Egypt’s military government. Egypt revoked Al Jazeera’s press credentials, raided its offices and arrested several reporters. The arrest and trial of three Al Jazeera English journalists — Australian Peter Greste, Egyptian-Canadian Mohamed Fahmy and Egyptian producer Baher Mohamed — sparked an international outcry.

The three received 10-year prison sentences, but were later released in 2015.

Egypt joined Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in boycotting the country in a political dispute that lasted from 2017 until 2021.

However, the release comes as Qatar has been normalizing its diplomatic relations with those who launched the boycott. El-Sissi also attended the opening last year of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar at the invitation of its ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Al Jazeera says two more of its journalists remained detained by Egypt, who also had been detained while on vacations there.

UN...  
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Sudan’s turmoil has seen aid workers killed, hospitals shelled, humanitarian facilities looted, and foreign aid groups forced to suspend most of their operations.

“The scale and speed of what is unfolding is unprecedented in Sudan,” said Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for UN chief Antonio Guterres. “We are extremely concerned by the immediate as well as long-term impact on all people in Sudan, and the broader region.”

Top UN humanitarian official Martin Griffiths arrived in Nairobi on an urgent mission to look for ways to bring relief to millions.

“The humanitarian situation is reaching breaking point,” he said on Twitter, later calling it “catastrophic”.

The UN World Food Programme said it expected to soon resume food distribution in some parts of the country after a suspension following the deaths of three of its aid workers.

“Over 15 million people faced severe food insecurity in Sudan before this conflict. We expect these numbers to grow significantly as the fighting continues,” WFP said.

At least 528 people have been killed and almost 4,600 wounded in the violence, according to Sudan’s health ministry, but the real death toll is feared to be far higher.

Fighting has spread across Sudan, including to the long-troubled Darfur region.

The UN said at least 96 people were reported killed in El Geneina, West Darfur, where supplies were seen strewn across the floors of badly damaged hospitals.

Daglo’s RSF emerged from the Janjaweed unleashed in a scorched-earth campaign in Darfur from 2003 by former strongman Omar al-Bashir, who faces charges of war crimes and genocide.

Further complicating Sudan’s battlefield situation, Central Reserve Police were being deployed on the side of the army across Khartoum to “protect citizens’ properties” from looting, police said.

The fighting was pushing Sudan’s already ailing health sector toward “disaster”, warned the WHO’s regional director for the eastern Mediterranean, Ahmed al-Mandhari.

He sounded an alarm over the growing threat of cholera, malaria and other diseases as the rainy season nears and safe water supplies are becoming scarce.

Regional powers have joined negotiations to help end the violence.

An envoy of Burhan’s met on Sunday in Riyadh with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, who called for the restoration of calm in Sudan.

The same envoy, Dufallah al-Haj Ali, is due to visit Cairo and meet Egypt’s foreign minister on Tuesday.

But, experts have cast doubt over foreign mediation efforts. Veteran Sudan analyst Alex de Waal described them as “half-hearted and belated”.

He accused the previous U.S. administration of delegating policy to its “favored allies in the Middle East”, who feared democratic transition in Sudan and “preferred to deal directly with their favored generals”.

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be honored in as short a time as possible.

The spokesman further touched on the possibility of a prisoner exchange between Iran and the U.S., saying Tehran is ready for such a swap.

Kanaani noted that the exchange of prisoners began a long time ago between Tehran and Washington with the mediation of third parties and that the two sides reached an agreement to this effect.

It was the U.S., however, that failed to fulfill its pledge under the deal and the prisoner exchange hit a snag as a result, he added.

“The process has continued for a long time through a third party. Unfortunately, it did not go well due to the U.S.’s bad faith. We consider it a human issue and hope to see practical action on the opposite side.”

Kanaani said Iran considers boosting relations with its neighbors as a key to mutual security, emphasizing that the country’s principled policy is “neighbors first”.

“Iran considers strengthening relations based on the neighborliness policy as the most important factor to achieve mutual security. Iran’s principled policy puts neighbors first,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani told reporters.

Touching on the recent Iran-Saudi rapprochement, the spokesman said the two countries are at the initial stage of resuming bilateral ties and the reopening of embassies, noting that three Iranian diplomatic missions in Riyadh and Jeddah have already started their activities.

He also expressed Tehran’s gratitude to Saudi Arabia for its cooperation in transferring 65 Iranian citizens who had been evacuated from Sudan.

“By the way, in these initial steps of diplomatic activities, we saw good coordination between the two countries regarding a humanitarian issue. The tragic events we are witnessing in Sudan created opportunities for humanitarian measures. The transfer of 65 Iranian citizens from Sudan was a positive event that took place in the shadow of Saudi authorities’ cooperation with Iran. I must thank Saudi authorities for their valuable cooperation. It was really a very complicated issue,” he said.

Kanaani further said a planned two-day visit by the Iranian president to Syria will take place on Wednesday.

He said Iran and Syria enjoy strategic cooperation, stressing that Iran will stand by Syrians in the reconstruction phase just as in the country’s fight against terror.

The visit will focus on issues of interest of both sides, and Raisi will hold talks with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, especially on economic cooperation. They are also expected to sign several cooperation agreements.

Kanaani also said a series of practical steps have been taken to clear up misunderstanding with Azerbaijan.

The two countries, he said, have held three rounds of talks to de-escalate tensions, adding he was optimistic about the political process.

## Zionists Release Gazan Detained While Accompanying Wife for Eye Treatment

GAZA (Middle East Eye) – Following months of waiting, Khaldiya Abumustafa finally got a permit from the Zionist regime allowing her to leave Gaza City to enter the occupied West Bank and undergo eye surgery, accompanied by her husband.

Excited to regain the ability to see properly - as a result of medical treatment not available in the Gaza Strip - Khaldiya arrived with her husband Hassan Abumustafa at the Erez border on the morning of 24 November 2021.

When they reached the other side of the crossing - the only land crossing for Palestinians who want to move between Gaza and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory - Khaldiya was asked to wait in the hall, while her husband was called for interrogation.

Around 15 hours had passed before a Zionist officer entered

the hall where she was losing hope to show up for the hospital’s appointment, and ordered her to go back home without her husband.

“Your husband is staying with us - he is under arrest,” the officer told her.

Hassan, who had already received an exit permit and a security approval by the regime authorities to cross the Erez, was surprised to be informed that he would be prosecuted over allegations of “belonging to a terrorist organization”.

Following several interrogations and court sessions, he was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

On Tuesday, after serving his term, Hassan was released and went back to his family in a Khan Younis refugee camp, in the southern Gaza Strip.

Khaldiya, however, has yet to undergo eye surgery.

“My wife has a damaged cornea. She needed to undergo a corneal transplant urgently so that her condition would not exacerbate. And since it was hard to do it in Gaza, we started the necessary procedures to obtain a medical referral for a hospital in the West Bank,” Hassan told Middle East Eye on the second day of his release.

“We got an Israeli permit from the first attempt, and we immediately headed to Erez.”

Patients who receive exit permits to receive medical treatment in the occupied Palestinian territories are allowed one companion to accompany them - though minors may encounter more difficulties in obtaining permits, which often results in children travelling alone without their parents.