

UN: Zionist Settlers Destroy 5,000 Palestinian Trees in Five Months



Palestinians inspect the destroyed olive trees in their field in Marda village south of Nablus in the occupied West Bank on 30 March 2022.

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – **Zionist settlers damaged more than 5,000 trees in Palestinian villages across the occupied West Bank in the last five months.**

UN data shows that 4,000 trees were damaged in 84 incidents between 20 December 2022 and the end of April.

Another 1,150 trees were vandalized in the last week, according to figures compiled by the Israeli newspaper Haaretz.

Palestinian farmers and their lands are a tar-

get of repeated attacks by Zionist settlers, which include physical assault, vandalism and theft, especially during harvest seasons, according to the UN.

Almost half of the Palestinian agricultural lands are planted with an estimated 10 million olive trees in the West Bank and besieged Gaza Strip.

While Zionist settler violence against Palestinians is common in the West Bank, attacks have grown in recent years at an alarming rate, ac-

cording to UN human rights experts.

At least 849 attacks were recorded in 2022 - 228 of which led to casualties. Around 13,130 Palestinian-owned olive trees were damaged in that period.

Human rights groups have previously accused Zionist regime authorities of enabling settler violence and failing to prosecute Zionist offenders or protect Palestinians.

“Armed and masked Israeli settlers are attacking Palestinians in their homes, attacking children on their way to school, destroying property and burning olive groves, and terrorizing entire communities with complete impunity,” UN experts said last year.

“Disturbing evidence of Israeli forces frequently facilitating, supporting and participating in settler attacks, makes it difficult to discern between Israeli settler and State violence,” they added.

Nearly 700,000 settlers live in more than 250 settlements and outposts across the West Bank and East Al-Quds in violation of international law.

On Sunday, Zionist troops demolished a Palestinian primary school in the occupied West Bank, citing safety issues and drawing sharp criticism from the European Union which had funded the project.

The EU said it was “appalled” after Zionist troops arrived at dawn at the school site, which a Palestinian Authority official said served 45 students and consisted of five classrooms.

Biden Aide Discusses Yemen Peace With Saudi Arabia’s MBS

RIYADH (Dispatches) – **The United States’ national security adviser Jake Sullivan has met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and reviewed what the White House called “significant progress” in Yemen peace efforts, the White House said.**

On a trip aimed at bolstering sometimes strained ties with Riyadh, Sullivan also held joint talks with the crown prince, UAE national security adviser Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed al-Nahyan and India’s national security adviser Ajit Doval.

Sullivan’s meeting came after a period in which U.S.-Saudi

ties have been damaged by oil production cuts by Saudi-led OPEC+ and the 2018 killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

“He reviewed significant progress in talks to further consolidate the now 15-month long truce in Yemen and welcomed ongoing UN-led efforts to bring the war to a close, as well as covering a range of other issues,” the White House statement said.

During the meeting on Sunday, Sullivan, President Joe Biden’s top national security aide, also thanked the crown prince for

Saudi support to U.S. citizens during evacuations from Sudan, the statement added.

U.S. special envoy Tim Lenderking travelled to Oman and Saudi Arabia earlier this month to seek to advance Yemen peace efforts, the State Department said.

Saudi Arabia invaded Yemen in March 2015 in collaboration with a number of its allies and with arms and logistical support from the United States and several other Western states.

The objective was to return power to Yemen’s former Riyadh-backed regime and crush

the popular Ansarullah resistance movement, which has been running state affairs in the absence of a functional government in Yemen.

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.

A UN-mediated ceasefire between Ansarullah and the self-proclaimed Yemeni regime, which is supported by Saudi Arabia, broke down last October six months after it went into effect.

U.S....

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reeling from a former U.S. Marine, identified as Daniel Penny, choking a homeless black man to death on the New York subway they were both riding in.

The death of Jordan Neely, 30, last Monday has stoked an outcry over the lack of city support for those suffering from mental illness and homelessness and revived anger over treatment of non-white Americans.

Neely, who was Black, was homeless, according to media reports. The 24-year-old Penny, who was white, was questioned by police and released on Monday, media said. Protest organizers have called the act a “lynching” and an example of “white vigilantism” against people of color.

Meanwhile, federal officials were looking into whether the gunman who killed eight people at a Dallas-area mall expressed an interest in white supremacist ideology Sunday as they worked to discern a motive for the attack.

Federal agents have been reviewing social media accounts they believe were used by Mauricio Garcia, 33, and posts that expressed interest in white supremacist and neo-Nazi views, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press.

Garcia also had a patch on his chest when he was killed by police that read “RWDS,” an acronym for the phrase “Right Wing Death Squad,” which is popular among right-wing extremists and white supremacy groups, the official said.

In addition to reviewing social media posts, federal agents have interviewed family members and associates of Garcia to ask about his ideological beliefs, the official said. Investigators are also reviewing financial records, other online posts they believe Garcia made and other electronic media, according to the official.

The Texas Department of Public Safety identified Garcia as suspected of killing eight people at a Texas outlet mall, a day after the attack turned an afternoon of shopping into a massacre.

Garcia was fatally shot Saturday by a police officer who happened to

be near the suburban Dallas mall.

A law enforcement official said investigators have been searching a Dallas motel near an interstate where Garcia had been staying. The official said police also found multiple weapons at the scene after Garcia was killed, including an AR-15-style rifle and a handgun.

In a statement, President Joe Biden said the assailant wore tactical gear and fired an AR-15-style weapon. He urged Congress to enact tighter restrictions on firearms and ammunition.

“Such an attack is too shocking to be so familiar. And yet, American communities have suffered roughly 200 mass shootings already this year, according to leading counts,” said Biden, who ordered flags lowered to half-staff.

Republicans in Congress, he said, “cannot continue to meet this epidemic with a shrug.”

The shooting was the latest attack to contribute to the unprecedented pace of mass killings this year in the U.S. Barely a week before, five people were fatally shot in Cleveland, Texas, after a neighbor asked a man to stop firing his weapon while a baby slept, authorities said.

This year has seen an average of about one mass killing per week, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University.

Indians...

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have had a history of jealousy over the distribution of economic resources and opportunities, but this time their anger just could not be contained,” one of the participants in the peace talks, Khurajam Athouba, said.

India reserves some government jobs, college places and elected seats - from village councils to parliament - for those categorized as scheduled tribes, in a form of affirmative action to tackle historical structural inequality and discrimination.

“We are urging both sides to really put an end to the violence or they will have to live under strict curfew for months,” said Athouba, a member of the Coordination Committee on Manipur Integrity.

Global...

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Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar and Brunei. The meeting produced a joint statement to “reinforce financial resilience . . . through the use of local currency.” But what must have been most unsettling for the U.S. was the explanation given for the decision by Indonesian President Joko Widodo. Widodo said that the move is necessary to protect from “possible geopolitical repercussions.” What did he mean by that? “Be very careful,” he explained. “We must remember the sanctions imposed by the U.S. on Russia.”

Yellen was right. Widodo said that U.S. sanctions on Russia exposed just how vulnerable countries are if they rely on U.S. dollars and U.S. foreign payment systems. He said that using ASEAN’s Local Currency Transaction system to trade in local currencies would help address the need for Indonesia to prepare itself for the possibility that the US could similarly sanction it.

The EEU and ASEAN are not the only organizations mapping their flight from the U.S. dollar. BRICS is a massive international organization whose primary purpose is to balance U.S. hegemony in a new multipolar world. Comprised of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, it represents 41% of the world’s population. BRICS, too, is talking about conducting trade in the currencies of its members or even in a new BRICS’ currency.

Lula recently suggested that “the BRICS bank have a currency to finance trade between Brazil and China, between Brazil and other BRICS countries” so that countries are not compelled “to chase after dollars to export, when they could be exporting in their own currencies.” Russian State Duma Deputy Chairman Alexander Babakov also recently said that BRICS is working on creating its own currency.

A BRICS currency could challenge the dollar beyond the borders of BRICS. “Because each member of the BRICS grouping is an economic heavyweight in its own region, countries around the world would likely be willing to do business” in the currency, suggested a report in the Financial Post.

One such region is Africa. In July, the Russia-Africa summit will be held in St. Petersburg. Olayinka Ajala, senior lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Leeds Beckett University and the author of “The Case for Neutrality: Understanding African Stances on the Russia-Ukraine Conflict,” told me in a recent correspondence that a “main focus of Russia and China at the moment is to get African countries to support the proposed BRICS currency.” He says that “this will be a major topic in the upcoming conference.” Ajala explains that “Africa is a consuming continent, meaning they import lots of goods and services.” He says that “with a population of over 1.2 billion, if Russia and China are able to convince African countries on the need to ditch the dollar, it will be a huge blow to the U.S.”

From Africa to Southeast Asia and Latin America, from Russia and China to India, Iran and Saudi Arabia, countries are mapping their course for a flight from the U.S. dollar. As a mechanism for transition from U.S. hegemony to a multipolar world, the economic effects would be great, but the geopolitical effects could be even greater.

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—Courtesy: Antiwar.com

Jordan Reportedly Conducts Airstrike in Southern Syria

AMMAN (Dispatches) – **Jordan has reportedly carried out an air strike in southern Syria to kill a prominent drug smuggler and his family, according to a war monitor.**

The UK-based so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights attributed the strike to Jordan, but there has been no immediate confirmation from Amman.

The drug dealer, Marai al-Ramthan, his wife, and six children were killed in the eastern countryside of Syria’s Sweida province, near the Syrian-Jordanian border,

according to the monitor. The Observatory says that al-Ramthan was “considered to be the most prominent drug trafficker in the region, and the number one smuggler of drugs, including Captagon, into Jordan” from that area.

Jordan has yet to comment on the strike. The attack occurred after a May 1 meeting in Amman with several Arab foreign ministers during which Damascus had agreed to cooperate with neighboring countries “affected by drug trafficking and smuggling across

the Syrian border.”

According to a statement from Jordan’s foreign ministry, Damascus said it would cooperate with Jordan and Iraq to identify sources of drug production and smuggling on its borders with the two countries, and it would seek to “take necessary steps to end smuggling operations.”

On Sunday, the Arab League welcomed Syria back into the bloc after a more than decade-long suspension. The main destinations for the \$10 billion Capta-

gon industry are oil-rich Persian Gulf countries, but Jordan has also become a transit route for the Captagon trade.

Jordan’s army warned of a shoot-to-kill policy against drug traffickers last year, and in February 2022, it said that it had killed 30 smugglers since the start of the year and foiled attempts to smuggle 16 million Captagon pills into the kingdom from Syria. Jordan has launched previous strikes targeting drug smugglers in Syria, some dating back to 2014.

Baghdad Int’l Conference Calls for Cooperation to Preserve Transboundary Waters

BAGHDAD (Xinhua) – The Baghdad 3rd International Water Conference called for regional and global cooperation to preserve transboundary waters from pollution and the impact of global warming.

The appeal was made in a final statement issued Sunday, the second day of the water conference, which called on the riparian countries of the Tigris and Euphrates river basins to join the 1992 Helsinki Water Convention and the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention to preserve transboundary waters from pollution to sustain

biodiversity in the region.

Helsinki Water Convention calls to prevent and control water pollution across national frontiers, and ensure the reasonable and impartial use of transboundary waters, and the UN Watercourses Convention establishes basic standards and rules for cooperation between watercourse states on the use, management and protection of international watercourses.

Among its 16 points, the statement also called to support Iraq in the field of transboundary water resources sustainability to ensure the eco-

system and preserve biodiversity and urge the riparian countries to conclude bilateral agreements on defining a fair and reasonable share of water resources.

On Saturday, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia’ al-Sudani said in his speech at the conference’s opening ceremony that Iraq is suffering from water scarcity due to climate change, stressing that “urgent international intervention is necessary to save the Tigris and Euphrates rivers” to help Iraq in ensuring its water security and the future of its generations.