

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The occupying regime's military has systematically evaded accountability in the deaths of 20 journalists over the past two decades, launching slow and opaque investigations that have never resulted in prosecution or punishment, an international press-freedom group said in a report Tuesday. The Committee to Protect Journalists issued its report ahead of the one-year anniversary of the death of Shireen Abu Akleh – a Palestinian-American journalist who was killed while covering a Zionist military raid in the occupied West Bank. The army has said Abu Akleh was likely killed by Zionist fire, but said the shooting was accidental and not announced any disciplinary action.

That knowledge which remains only on your tongue is very superficial. The intrinsic value of knowledge is that you act upon it.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Zionists Emigrate to Athens Amid Housing, Political Crisis

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Shira relocated to the posh Athenian neighborhood of Kolonaki from Tel Aviv six months ago. And she is not alone. The Greek capital is emerging as a magnet for Zionists looking to escape a cost of living crisis at the occupied territories, and more recently, the regime's political turmoil.

Hebrew now peppers the background chatter in boutiques around the Acropolis, and cafes in the seaside suburb. While data on the number of Zionists moving to Athens is hard to come by, evidence points to a sizeable wave crossing the Mediterranean.

"It's a huge number," Dimitris Melachroinos, CEO of Spitogatos, Greece's leading online real estate platform, told MEE.

In the last 12 months, searches from the occupied territories for homes on Spitogatos increased 55 percent, propelling Zionists from 17 on the list of users to eighth place, according to data



People set up tents to protest against the soaring housing prices in the occupied territories and social inequalities in Al-Quds on June 20, 2022.

shared with MEE.

When the occupied territories was struck by massive protests in March over prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plans to overhaul the regime's judiciary, searches broke all records, hitting 48,000 compared to 24,000 in the same period last year.

"It wasn't normal," said Melachroinos, explaining that interest

in Greek real estate usually pops after the busy summer tourist season. "At first I thought there was an error in the data. Israeli demand is growing rapidly, it's just crazy."

Moti Kahana, an Israeli American who once specialized in bringing Jews from countries like Syria and Afghanistan to the occupied territories, has now

switched roles to facilitating emigration from the occupied territories over what he calls the regime's "slide into fascism".

"The number one destination for Israelis wanting to leave Israel right now is Greece," Kahana said.

"Greece shares a Mediterranean culture with Israel and its close. You can live in Greece, work in Israel, and even visit your mom on the weekends," he told MEE.

The new boom is being driven by ordinary Zionists and smaller investors. Real estate insiders tell MEE that the average price for Zionists looking to purchase a property in Athens is between 90-200k Euros (\$99-\$220k) in gentrifying neighborhoods like Exarchia, Kypseli and Omonia.

"Most of my clients aren't rich people. They are ordinary Israelis who can't buy back home or are tired of the rat race in Israel. Athens is a great option," Farache said.

Worker Salaries Up by 45% Days Before Vote Turks Abroad Wrap Up Voting in Landmark Election



Turks living abroad have tended to support President Erdogan over his 21-year rule.

ISTANBUL (AFP/AI Jazeera) – Millions of Turks living abroad wrapped up voting on Tuesday, in a tense election that has turned into a referendum on President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's two-decade rule.

Sunday's presidential and parliamentary ballot will pass judgment on Turkey's longest-serving leader and the social transformation spearheaded by his party.

The vote is Turkey's most consequential in generations and the toughest of the 69-year-old's tectonic career.

Polls show Erdogan locked in a tight battle with secular rival Kemal Kilicdaroglu and his powerful alliance of six parties that span Turkey's cultural and political divide.

The first votes were cast by Turks who moved from poorer provinces to Western Europe over the decades under job schemes aimed at combating the continent's labor shortage in the wake of World War II.

Such voters comprise 3.4 million of Turkey's 64.1 million registered electorate and tend to support more conservative candidates.

Official turnout on the morning of the last day of overseas voting on Tuesday was reported at 51 percent

-- a touch lower than in past elections.

The Turkish government is raising its workers' salaries by 45 percent, Erdogan has said, five days before Turks vote in presidential and parliamentary elections.

Erdogan announced the pay rise on Tuesday at a meeting in Ankara that discussed the economic and social rights of public workers through a framework called the Public Collective Bargaining Agreement Framework Protocol.

"We are increasing wages by 45 percent, including the welfare share," the president said, according to a statement on the government's website. "Thus, we are raising the lowest public worker wage to TL15,000 [\$768 per month]."

Erdogan added that he would continue to work on raising the wages and pensions of civil servants.

"In July, we have preparations based on the inflation difference and welfare share," he said.

Turkey's economy is a key issue heading into Sunday's elections. Unorthodox interest rate cuts sought by Erdogan sparked a devaluation of the Turkish lira in late 2021 and sent inflation to a 24-year peak of 85.5 percent last year.

Angered by Syria's Return to Arab Fold U.S. Extends 'National Emergency' on Damascus

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – U.S. President Joe Biden has extended for another year the national emergency declared with respect to Syria as Washington fumes over Damascus's return to the Arab League after more than a decade.

In a press release, the White House said Biden took the measure "to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by [Syria]."

"I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared with respect to the actions of the government of Syria," the White

House quoted the U.S. president as saying.

In May 2004, then-president George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13338, which classified the Syrian government's conduct as a national emergency. Successive presidents extended the classification each year, citing false excuses.

Under Biden's decision, the U.S. national emergency on Syria will remain in effect until May 2024.

The development came one day after the Arab League, a 22-member intergovernmental organization of Arab states,

agreed to welcome Syria back into the fold.

It means Syria can resume its participation in Arab League meetings, consolidating a regional push to normalize ties with the government of President Bashar al-Assad.

Meanwhile, the U.S. has already voiced its anger over Syria's return to the Arab League. "We do not believe that Syria merits readmission to the Arab League at this time, and it's a point that we've made clear with all of our partners," U.S. State Department spokesperson Vedant Patel said.

Since March 2011, Syria has been gripped by a campaign of militancy and destruction supported by the U.S. and its allies.

In recent years, however, Syrian government forces, backed by Russia and Iran, have managed to win back control of almost all of the country's areas from terrorist groups.

The U.S. military has stationed its forces and equipment in northeastern Syria, sponsoring Daesh terrorists and plundering the country's natural resources. Washington has also imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Syria.

Palestinians Condemn Zionist Tenders for Over 1,000 New Settler Units

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has condemned the Zionist regime's decision to publish tenders for more than 1,000 new settler units in the occupied West Bank.

In a statement, the ministry said, "Israel flouts all international positions and demands, the signed agreements, and United Nations resolutions that call for and demand the cessation of settlement activity, as it is illegal, illegitimate, and a crime that threatens to undermine the principle of the two-state solution and the opportunity to establish the Palestinian state on the ground with East Al-Quds as its capital, in accordance with United Nations resolutions."

It said the occupying regime "is taking advantage of double international standards to implement more of its expansionist colonial plans, and to move forward with the creeping gradual

annexation of the occupied West Bank."

The ministry said settlement expansion was "a blatant challenge to the will of the international community, and a disregard for the American and international positions that warn of their dangers on the conflict, and a dangerous escalation of the situation."

"Cessation to all forms of settlement activities is the correct approach to restoring confidence between the Palestinian and Israeli parties in preparation for launching a real negotiated political process that puts an end to the Israeli escalation and leads to resolving the conflict through peaceful political means."

The tenders have been issued despite the regime's commitment made in U.S.-backed talks in February that discussion of new settlement units would be halted for the next four months.

The Israel Land Authority reportedly pub-

lished on its website separate tenders for 1,248 new housing units.

Emboldened by Washington's support, the occupying regime has stepped up settlement construction in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, which pronounced settlements in the West Bank and East Al-Quds "a flagrant violation under international law."

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

Palestinians want the West Bank as part of a future independent Palestinian state, with East Al-Quds as its capital. The last round of Zionist-Palestinian talks collapsed in 2014. Among the major sticking points in those negotiations was the regime's settlement expansion.

Images of Massive U.S. Embassy Compound in Lebanon Elicit Questions

BEIRUT (Middle East Eye) – Photographs of the new U.S. embassy compound under construction in Lebanon shared on Twitter have sparked questions and conspiracies.

The photographs, posted by the U.S. embassy in Beirut with the caption, "things are progressing at our new compounds", had gotten 2.1 million views by the time of publication.

The U.S. announced plans to build the new embassy in 2017 and the compound has been under construction ever since.

Many have questioned why the U.S. needs to build what will be the world's second-largest embassy in the world after the American embassy in Baghdad, given that the Mediterranean country is home to only six million people.

"This is bigger than the Pentagon," one Twitter user said. "What's planned for this compound other than issuing visas???"

"Room for hundreds of spies and infiltrators? A weapon factory too? another Twitter user asked.

"Any secret bio labs tucked away in that military complex-like building?" asked another.

The embassy is expected to cost

\$1bn and will occupy 43 acres once completed. The price tag has also raised eyebrows because it comes as Lebanon is facing an economic crisis.

The U.S. investment comes after Washington's top Middle East diplomat claimed last year that Lebanon faced the potential of a complete "unraveling" of the state and "disintegration".

Lebanon has been without a functioning government since Former President Michel Aoun's term ended in October without a replacement.

"Thanks for destroying all those trees for a massive military base no real Lebanese wants in their country. Hooray for the Yanks..." said a third.

Washington's embassies in Lebanon were previously targeted by protests because of anti-U.S. sentiments in the country.

The U.S.'s embassy in mainly Muslim West Beirut was decimated in a 1983 bombing that killed eight CIA agents. It then moved to predominantly East Beirut, but that building was hit in 1984 by a truck bombing that killed 241 U.S. Marines and 58 French soldiers.