

Zionist Troops Fire Tear Gas to Disperse Protesters Along Lebanon Border

KFAR CHOUBA, Lebanon (Dispatches) – Zionist troops fired tear gas to disperse scores of protesters along Lebanon's border Friday, leaving some Lebanese demonstrators and troops suffering breathing problems.

The tension on the edge of the Lebanese border village of Kfar Chouba began earlier this week over the Zionist regime's digging in the area that belongs to Lebanon.

On Wednesday, a Lebanese villager tried to stop a Zionist bulldozer from digging a trench along the border. Once the villager's legs were covered with sand as the bulldozer moved ahead, UN peacekeepers jumped in and convinced the driver to move back. Videos of the elderly man with his legs stuck in the sand dune went viral on social media.

The Zionist regime ended an 18-year occupation of southern Leb-



Lebanese soldiers, demonstrators and journalists duck down after Zionist troops fired tear gas, in the southern Lebanese border village of Kfar Chouba on Jun. 9, 2023.

anon when its troops withdrew from the area in May 2000.

Friday's protest took place on the edge of Kfar Chouba hills, which is Lebanese land occupied by the Zionist regime. Kfar Chouba hills and the nearby She-

baa Farms, are areas occupied by the Zionist regime during the 1967 Mideast War and claimed by Lebanon.

On Friday, some of the protesters tried to break through a fence in the rugged area overlooked by

a Zionist military post. Zionist troops fired tear gas to disperse them while Lebanese troops and UN peacekeepers later moved in and pushed the protesters back.

Lebanese troops were on alert in the area and reinforcements were brought in.

Andrea Tenenti, a spokesman for the UN peacekeeping for known as UNIFIL, said peacekeepers are on the ground working to decrease tension in the area.

"We have urged the parties to utilize our coordination mechanisms effectively to prevent misunderstandings, violations, and contribute to the preservation of stability in the area," Tenenti said. He added that UNIFIL leadership is in contact with the parties, seeking a solution.

The protesters later held Friday prayers in the area and then tried to go back to the protest site again.

UNICEF Concerned Over Report of Aid Group Ban From Afghan Education

NEW YORK (Reuters) – The UN children's agency says it is following up with Afghanistan's Taliban authorities over whether international organizations would be excluded from education projects, which could affect hundreds of thousands of students.

"UNICEF is deeply concerned by reports that over 500,000 children, including over 300,000 girls, could lose out on quality learning through community based education within a month if international non-governmental organizations working in the field of education are no longer

allowed to operate," said UNICEF's Afghanistan spokesperson, Samantha Mort.

The agency was seeking clarification, she said.

Spokespeople for the Taliban administration did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Taliban administration that took power in 2021 has closed most secondary schools to girls, stopped female students attending universities and stopped many Afghan women from working for aid groups and the United Nations.

However, international organizations, including the UN, have

been heavily involved in education projects, including community-based classes, often held in homes in rural areas.

Two humanitarian aid sources said that in recent days humanitarian agencies had heard that provincial authorities had been directed to stop the involvement of international organizations in education projects.

The Taliban administration had not confirmed any orders to aid agencies seeking clarity.

In New York, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters: "If this would come to pass this

would be another horrendous step backwards for the people of Afghanistan."

"We've not gotten anything official, anything in writing," he said, adding that the UN message to the Taliban administration was that "every person has a right to an education."

The UN estimates that 8.7 million Afghans are in need of humanitarian aid for education this year and it was planning to reach about 3 million people under a humanitarian package for the year, which was revised this week to reflect lower funding.

Kakhovka Dam Collapse Another Blow to Middle East Wheat Security

KIEV (Middle East Eye) – Fingers are pointed in Ukraine and Russia, as both countries accuse the other of having caused the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam as water burst from the structure on Tuesday flooding homes and agricultural fields across Ukraine's southeast.

But the impact goes further much further afield, a result of Ukraine's status as one of the world's leading producers of agricultural crops such as wheat and barley.

Flooding from the Kakhovka Dam, in Ukraine's Kherson region, has already led to a spike in global crop prices, with wheat up 2.4 percent on Tuesday, and corn up

one percent, before coming down slightly by Thursday.

Analysts have now said that the Middle East will feel the effect of the damage to agricultural produce in a region that has become a breadbasket for the world, much as it did when exports slowed at the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine last year.

Fadel el-Zubi, a former representative in Iraq for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, told Middle East Eye that flooding from the dam would severely hinder Kherson's ability to produce grain.

"The floods will end agriculture

in the area and hinder fish farming, and prevent farmers from accessing the lands," Zubi said. "Plus, chemicals and pollution will seep into the water, and we could see mines move to the surface and detonate."

UN economists believe that this year's wheat, barley, and rapeseed harvest in Ukraine's southern areas will be completely lost as a result of the flooding.

But crops planted in spring, such as maize, soybeans, and sunflowers could survive if the flooding subsides.

Kakhovka is a Soviet-era dam sitting on the Dnipro River. Water

stored in the dam was used to supply farms growing fruits, grains, and wheat.

It held a colossal 18 cubic kilometers of water that was also used for the nearby hydroelectric power plant and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

Hussam Ayesha, a Jordanian economic expert, told MEE that the affected winter harvest cannot be replaced, meaning grain prices in the Middle East can be expected to rise.

Wheat is a lifeline for Egypt, with the country's 100-million-strong population heavily reliant on bread as a staple food.

President... (Continued From Page One)

and Laos railway. Nevertheless, the development of this massive rail project has come in an expected slow fashion, if not far-fetched.

Obstacles across those 25 countries are quite obvious, one of which is gauge differences. Roaming across the southern corridor of TAR, one could spot at least three types of gauges. Iran and Turkey use the standard gauge (1,435 mm), while India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka use the so-called Indian gauge (1,676 mm). Moreover, most of the countries in Southeast Asia employ the metre gauge (1,000 mm).

Thus, for a journey starting from Bangkok, if the cargo manages to transport all the way via rail to Istanbul, it will first have to change from meter gauge to Indian gauge (from Myanmar to Bangladesh), then switch to the standard gauge when it passes Pakistan and enters Iran.

Copper Cathode Production President Raisi also opened a copper cathode production plant in Varzeqan where Iran's second largest copper reserves.

The plant uses heap leaching method to process 14 million metric tonnes of copper ore per year and produce 3,000 tonnes of cathode.

Raisi told a crowd of people in Tabriz that an independent company had been set up to control the copper industry in the region.

The Sungun copper mine, the largest open-cast copper mine in Iran, has been controlled by National Iranian Copper Industries Co. (NICICO) a company that is mostly focused on vast copper mines and smelters in Iran's southeastern province of Kerman.

Raisi said the new independent company would spend its entire revenue in projects in East Azarbaijan and will operate independent of the NICICO.

No Retreat in Face of Enemies President Raisi insists his government will not back down from ensuring sustainable economic growth despite the brutal U.S.-led sanctions against Tehran, further underlining his administration's determination to tackle existing problems.

"We do not view surrender and retreat as the way to deal with the conspiracies and plots of our enemies. We are determined to solve problems. We can overcome such challenges only by means of becoming strong and building a strong Iran," he told a group of religious scholars, clerics and Friday prayer leaders in Tabriz.

He said the enemies have been devising conspiracies over the past 44 years to undermine the Islamic establishment in Iran.

"Despite all the hardship imposed on the Iranian nation, the people have turned all threats and sanctions into opportunities," he said.

The president touched on the challenges that his administration has been facing ever since it took office in early August 2021 and the steps that the government has taken to confront them, namely overcoming budget deficit without borrowing directly from the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), controlling liquidity growth, significantly increasing production, ensuring food security through timely supply of basic commodities, setting records in foreign trade and expanding trade exchanges especially with neighboring countries.

Raisi said the enemies have resorted to spreading rumors, targeting the psychological status of the nation with inaccurate economic figures, and falsely suggesting high levels of inflation as parts of their persisting cognitive and hybrid warfare against Iran in efforts to hinder the nation's progress.

"Despite all these conspiracies, we are trying to stabilize the country's economy. With trust in God as well as people's support and help, we will definitely succeed in this path," he said.

Raisi said U.S. authorities have admitted that Washington's so-called campaign of "maximum pressure" against the Islamic Republic has failed to achieve its evil aims.

Iran... (Continued From Page One)

against the Islamic Republic. Mohsen Naziri Asl, Iran's permanent representative at the United Nations office in Vienna, touched upon the United States' self-proclaimed desire to return to the JCPOA on Wednesday.

"Despite the arduous negotiations that lasted for more than 18 months, mainly due to the lack of American political will and determination, we could not bring the talks to a conclusion," he said.

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parts, including the Dome of the Rock. The Zionist lawmaker said his plan was aimed at ending Jordan's guardianship of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Hussein, the incumbent Grand Mufti of Al-Quds, denounced Israeli attempts to Judaize and split Al-Aqsa Mosque, let extremist settlers worship in the holy site and change its historical and legal status.

He warned that such actions would spark a religious war that would affect the whole world, and no one would escape its consequences. He also held Zionist officials responsible for the harmful effects of increasing tensions in the occupied West Bank.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque compound is located above the Western Wall plaza and contains both the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

According to an agreement signed between the occupying regime and the Jordanian government after Israel's occupation of East Al-Quds in 1967, non-Muslim worship at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound is prohibited.

Many of the Knesset members are right-wing extremists, who apparently support the demolition of the Islamic site in order to build a Jewish temple instead.

Palestinians want the occupied West Bank as part of their future independent state and view Al-Quds' eastern sector as the capital of their future sovereign state.

Libya Forces Thousands of Egyptians to Leave Country on Foot

CAIRO (Middle East Eye) – Thousands of people, the majority of them Egyptians, have been forced to leave Libya by foot after being detained and deported, according to migrant solidarity groups and media reports.

The deportations have mainly taken place over the first few days of June, and followed mass raids on smuggler warehouses in border towns in eastern Libya.

The monitoring group Migrant Rescue Watch told Middle East Eye that deportations were ongoing as recently as Thursday night.

"The migrants were loaded on several trucks," said Rob Gowans of Migrant Rescue Watch. "Some were transferred to Benghazi and some deported to Egypt."

An Egyptian security source told Reuters that only 2,200 of the 4,000 people deported were in Libya illegally. Deportees were detained at

the border and then marched 2km into Egypt, the Egyptian security source added.

A Libyan security source also put the number of those deported at 4,000, while migrant solidarity groups reported that an estimated 6,000 were being detained in conditions that they described as 'traagic' in a customs hangar at the Musaid border crossing to Egypt.

A Libyan security source reported that the raids were conducted following a shoot-out between smugglers and security forces.

Videos posted on Twitter, which could not be independently verified by MEE, appear to reveal the scale of the crackdowns in the eastern towns of Tobruk, Emsaed and Musaid. They show crowds of migrants being rounded up in detention centers, herded onto trucks and marched near what is described as the Libyan-Egyptian border.

Human Rights Watch criticized the deportations and the behavior of the Libyan forces during the operations.

"The conditions under which these people are rounded up appear to be incredibly violent and inhumane," said Hanan Salah, Human Rights Watch's associate director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"This is absolutely unacceptable the way that people are being hoarded into a certain space and yelled at, with obscenities shouted at them... they are being forced to walk and run for long periods. They're apparently not being given the basic necessities they need. The de facto authorities or those who conducted it need to explain themselves."

According to a 2021 UN report, the majority of Egyptians in Libya are forced to rely on smugglers to get across the border.