

DAMASCUS (Sputnik) – Five Syrian soldiers were killed and an army officer was seriously wounded in a terrorist bombing in Dayr al-Zawr, eastern Syria. The incident happened following the detonation of a roadside bomb in the path of a Syrian army vehicle near Ayyash district, about fifteen kilometers northwest of Dayr al-Zawr. The bomb was planted by terrorists on a side road. The injury of the officer was described as deep and the rescue forces took him to hospital. The roads leading to the location of explosion were blocked and an investigation into the terrorist attack was launched.

If you cannot get things as much as you desire
then be contented with what you have.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Prisoner Exchange Talks to Resume Soon

Ministry: 8,000 Yemeni Children Killed in War

SANA'A (Dispatches) – Children suffered the most during the Saudi-led war on Yemen, the country's Ministry of Human Rights' spokesman said.

Aref Al-Amiri, the spokesperson of the Sana'a-based Ministry of Human Rights of the National Salvation Government of Yemen said on Monday in an interview with the Arabic-language al-Maalomah news website that about 8,000 children were killed during the eight years of war which started in 2015 against the country by a coalition of regional and Western states.

He said that Yemeni children are living in very difficult physical and mental conditions, lack of health, murder, displacement, asylum and violation of all their rights due to the continuation of the blockade on the impoverished country.

"The United Nations does not abide by its obligations to support the rights of Yemeni children. More than 8,000 children have been killed since the beginning of the American, Saudi and Emirati aggression against Yemen."

Meanwhile, Abdullah al-Suwaidi, the adviser to the Ministry of Transportation of Yemen, also told al-Maalomah that as a result of the attacks by the Saudi coalition in the last eight years, the damage to Yemen's land, sea and air transportation infrastruc-



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structure amounts to \$6 billion.

Saudi Arabia initiated a brutal war of aggression against Yemen in March 2015, enlisting the assistance of some of its regional allies, including the United Arab Emirates, as well as massive shipments of advance weaponry from the U.S. and Western Europe.

The Western governments further extended their political and logistical support to Riyadh in their failed bid to restore power in Yemen to the country's former Saudi-installed government.

The former Yemeni government's president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi resigned from the presidency in late 2014 and later fled to Riyadh amid a political conflict with Ansarullah. The movement has been running Yemen's affairs in the absence of a functioning administration.

The war further led to the killing of tens of thousands of Yemenis and turned the entire nation into the scene of the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

In another development, the latest

round of talks between the warring sides in Yemen to exchange prisoners has concluded, with an increasing focus on a longtime political detainee.

The talks began on Friday in Jordan's capital Amman under the auspices of the United Nations, which has brokered negotiations and cease-fires between the warring sides.

The government confirmed on Sunday that the latest round of talks ended and would resume after the Eid al-Adha holidays which end in early July.

Notably, sources told Al Jazeera Arabic that the Ansarullah movement had agreed to begin negotiations on the release of prominent politician Mohammed Qahtan, whom they have held for eight years.

Qahtan was a senior figure in the opposition al-Islah Party, which has links with the Muslim Brotherhood.

In mid-April, the Ansarullah and the Saudi Arabia-backed forces engaged in a three-day exchange of prisoners, which ultimately saw close to 900 detainees released.

It was the largest exchange of prisoners since more than 1,000 prisoners were freed in October 2020, signaling a confidence-building measure that boosted hopes in intense diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the war that is nearing its nine-year mark.

UN Expert: Afghanistan's 'Gender Apartheid' Should Be International Crime



The Taliban have barred girls from secondary school, pushed women out of many jobs and ordered them to cover up outside.

GENEVA (AFP) – The UN's top expert on rights in Afghanistan urged countries Monday to consider making "gender apartheid" an international crime, helping hold the Taliban accountable for its grave and systematic abuses against Afghan women.

Since ousting a foreign-backed government in August 2021, the Taliban authorities have imposed a ruling, barring girls from secondary school, pushing women out of many government jobs, preventing them from travelling without a male relative and ordering them to cover up outside the home.

"It is imperative that we do not look away," Richard Bennett told the UN Human Rights Council.

Presenting his latest report, the UN special rapporteur on the situation in Afghanistan told the council that the Taliban's actions could constitute the crime against humanity of "gender persecution".

In addition, "grave, systematic and institutionalized discrimination against women and girls is at the heart of Taliban ideology and rule, which also gives rise to concerns that they may be responsible for gender apartheid", he said.

Such "serious human rights violations, which although not yet an explicit international crime, requires further study," he insisted.

Framing gender apartheid as an international crime would highlight that other countries and the broader international community "have a duty to take effective action to end the prac-

tice", the report said.

"Women often talk about being buried alive, breathing, but not being able to do much else without facing restrictions and punishments," said Shaharazad Akbar, the head of the Rawadari rights group and former head of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

"Taliban have turned Afghanistan to a mass graveyard of Afghan women and girls' ambitions, dreams and potential," she told the council.

The UN has already labeled the situation in Afghanistan under the Taliban as "gender-based apartheid", but the term is not currently recognized under the Rome Statute among the worst international crimes.

Bennett and others called Monday for countries to consider changing that.

Akbar backed the call, urging the council to "support the inclusion of gender apartheid in the Draft Convention on Crimes Against Humanity."

Bennett's report -- drafted jointly with the UN working group on discrimination against women and girls -- called on countries to "mandate a report on gender apartheid as an institutionalized system of discrimination, segregation, humiliation and exclusion of women and girls".

This should be done, the report said, "with a view to developing further normative standards and tools, galvanizing international legal condemnation and action to end it and ensure its non-repetition".

UAE, Qatar Reopen Embassies After Years-Long Diplomatic Rift

DUBAI (Al Jazeera) – The United Arab Emirates and Qatar have announced the reopening of their embassies after a six-year-long break in ties.

The two countries issued statements on Monday saying the Qatari embassy in Abu Dhabi and a Qatari consulate in Dubai as well as an Emirati embassy in Doha had resumed operations.

The statements did not say if ambassadors were in place or if the missions were open to the public.

The two countries' foreign ministers spoke by phone to congratulate one another on the reopening of the diplomatic missions, Qatar said.

"The United Arab Emirates and the State of Qatar announced the restoration of diplomatic representation between the two countries," said a statement on the UAE's official WAM news agency.

The UAE joined Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt in imposing a boycott and blockade of Qatar

in 2017 over what they called Doha's support for "terrorist" groups. Qatar has vehemently denied all the allegations.

Qatar weathered the unprecedented diplomatic crisis thanks to its gas riches and close ties with Turkey and Iran.

The boycott was officially lifted in January 2021. Late last year, Qatar welcomed visiting leaders from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE as it hosted the FIFA World Cup.

Turkey, which had thrown its weight behind Qatar during the crisis, has since mended ties with rival Persian Gulf countries, including the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The reopening of the diplomatic missions comes at a time of easing Persian Gulf rivalries after Saudi Arabia and Iran announced in March the end of a seven-year break in ties.

A round of reconciliations has followed, including Qatar and Bahrain resuming relations in April.

16mn Refugees in Arab World

Iraq President Calls on UN to Alleviate Suffering of 600,000 IDPs

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid has called on the United Nations to support Iraq and help alleviate the suffering of 600,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) who live in harsh and complex conditions.

This came during a meeting with the Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Abdallah al-Dardari.

During the meeting, Rashid called for strengthening the existing relationship between Iraq and the United Nations through its specialized agencies, to resolve the problems related to the internally displaced persons and to promote the economy and devel-

opment in the country.

He noted that no assistance has been provided to the IDPs on the ground, and called to end their file by returning them to their areas of residence.

For his part, al-Dardari reiterated the UN's commitment to taking care of the marshes and other files, stressing that his next visit will include a new vision that depends on implementation and achievement.

He also reiterated the United Nations' support for Iraq in the areas of water management, training, studies, energy and boosting investment.

According to UN OCHA, there are approximately 1.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq and 4.1 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Insecurity,

lack of livelihoods and destroyed or damaged housing hamper people's ability to return home.

Meanwhile, the International Committee of the Red Cross has said that there are about 16 million refugees in the Arab world due to ongoing conflicts. Regional spokeswoman for the ICRC, Imene Trabelsi, told Anadolu that the largest file in the area covers Syrian refugees, whose number exceeds five million, most of them in neighboring Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.

"Refugees in nearby countries, especially Lebanon and Jordan, live in additional fragility, because those countries are suffering from economic crises and internal difficulties, which makes their situation in these countries more difficult," explained Trabel-

si. "On World Refugee Day, 20 June, it must be noted that one of the great challenges is the wave of internal displacement in the Arab world, which is witnessing armed conflicts. In Syria alone, the number of [internally] displaced persons exceeds six million; inside Yemen, the number is more than five million."

These IDPs, said Trabelsi, face real suffering in areas of conflict, live in fragile conditions and are unable to access the most basic services such as adequate housing, health services and clean water. "The ICRC is not present on the Turkish border on the Syrian side, where there are Syrian refugees, because Turkey is not a conflict zone, and the Turkish Red Crescent is carrying out its duty with the refugees there."

Kuwait Forms Cabinet With New Oil, Finance, Defense Ministers

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) – Kuwait formed a new government on Monday after the previous cabinet was dissolved following the third parliamentary elections in three years amid infighting that has paralyzed the country's political system.

The 15-member Cabinet was appointed by Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al Sabah, who in turn was reappointed to that post by his father, the emir, last week. They will join the 50 members of parliament elected earlier this month to form the National Assembly. It is the fifth Cabinet in less than a year.

Kuwait is alone among Persian Gulf Arab

countries in having a democratically elected assembly that exerts some checks on the ruling family. But in recent years, the disputes between the cabinet and parliament have left it unable to enact even basic reforms.

Ten of the 15 cabinet members, plus the prime minister, are reappointees, but there is a new defense minister, Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahad al-Ahmed al-Sabah, and oil minister, Saad Al Barak.

Finance Minister Manaf Abdulaziz Al Hajri, was reinstated. He earlier replaced Abduwahab al-Rushaid, an outspoken young figure known for his criticism of the government's fiscal poli-

cies.

A general election in September had delivered a mandate for change, bringing 27 new lawmakers to the 50-member assembly. However, in March, Kuwait's Constitutional Court annulled the decree dissolving the previous parliament and reinstated it. A few weeks later, the ruling Al Sabah family dissolved that parliament for a second time, setting up the most recent vote, in which most of the lawmakers elected in September regained their seats.

The relationship between the parliament and the cabinet will be strongly shaped by who wins the race to be speaker.