

UN Summer Camps Let Kids 'Just Be Kids' in Gaza



Palestinian refugee students attend an activity as part of "Fun Weeks" summer camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in a school in Beach refugee camp in Gaza on July 11, 2023.

GAZA (Reuters) – More than 130,000 Palestinian boys and girls in Gaza have joined summer camps run by the United Nations to give them a break from the stresses of living in a strip of land that is under an economic blockade and often embroiled in conflict with the Zionist regime.

The Palestine children, including those with disabilities, will over four weeks participate in a series of activities including greening, recycling, sports, drawing, handicrafts, and lan-

guage learning, the agency said.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said a recent agency study found that 38 percent of children in Gaza showed symptoms of functional impairment affecting their daily lives.

UNRWA runs 284 schools in Gaza, serving at least 290,000 students.

"The most important thing is 130,000 chil-

dren get the opportunity just to be kids despite the economic situation, despite the ongoing conflict, they can come to summer weeks of UNRWA and just be children," said Thomas White, the Director of UNRWA Affairs in Gaza.

Palestinians have lived through several wars with the Zionist regime since 2008, including five days of fighting in May, which have made healing almost impossible as the causes remain unchanged, say local and international experts.

They put the number of children needing mental health help at nearly a quarter of the enclave's 2.3 million population that lives under a crippling blockade enforced by the occupying regime and Egypt, which both control and restrict the Gaza Strip's borders.

"I came here to entertain myself away from the things I had been subject to such as wars and conflicts that I witnessed. I may not be like other children (of the world) but I am trying to stay positive no matter what happens," 13-year-old Joanna El-Halabi told Reuters at one school in Jabalia refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip.

The activity creates around 3,000 short-term jobs for Gaza youth, UNRWA said.

Established in 1949 following the first Arab-Zionist war, the agency provides public services including schools, primary health care, and humanitarian aid in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

Zionist Troops Arrest Over Dozen Palestinians in Raids Across West Bank

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist troops have detained more than a dozen Palestinians during large-scale raids in several areas of the West Bank, as the occupying regime presses ahead with its extensive arrest campaign throughout the occupied territories.

Palestine's official Wafa news agency, citing local sources, reported on Wednesday that Zionist troops rounded up three Palestinians after they carried out a raid on the Aqabat Jaber refugee camp in the eastern West Bank city of Ariha.

The sources added that there were two siblings among those arrested, noting that they were detained after the troops broke into and ransacked their homes.

The local sources noted that a young Palestinian man sustained a gunshot wound in the leg after regime troops opened fire during the confrontations that broke out after the raid.

Three people, including two former prisoners, were also arrested in the city of Tulkarm.

Zionist troops detained one former prisoner in the city of Al-Khalil, and another two in

Al-Quds.

Israeli forces also raided the central West Bank city of Ramallah, where they arrested a Palestinian.

In the city of Nablus, located approximately 49 kilometers (30 miles) north of Al-Quds, they arrested two Palestinians.

Zionist troops launch raids on various cities of the West Bank almost on a daily basis under the pretext of detaining what it calls "wanted" Palestinians. The raids usually lead to violent confrontations with residents.

Over the past months, the re-

gime has ramped up attacks on Palestinian towns and cities throughout the occupied territories. As a result of these attacks, dozens of Palestinians have lost their lives and many others have been arrested.

Thousands of Palestinians are held in Israeli jails. Hundreds have been imprisoned under the practice of administrative detention, which allows incarcerating Palestinian inmates without trial or charge.

Some Palestinian prisoners have been held in administrative detention for up to eleven years.

Iraq to Buy Pakistan's JF-17 Fighter Aircraft

BAGHDAD (MEMO) – Iraq is reportedly planning to buy JF-17 fighter aircraft from Pakistan, becoming the fifth country to do so, according to a report by Pakistan's The News International, citing unnamed sources.

If the deal goes ahead, Iraq will join Malaysia, Nigeria, Azerbaijan and Myanmar in receiving the fighter jets, which have been manufactured jointly with China. The latest agree-

ment is still pending approval from the Iraqi parliament.

Iraq is believed to have signed a contract with a Pakistani company to purchase an unspecified number of aircraft, thought to be JF-17 Block III. Iraqi Defense Minister Jumaa Inad has been quoted as saying, "We signed a contract with a Pakistani company to purchase aircraft."

The deal, reportedly worth \$664 million and involving 12

JF-17 Block III jets is a result of several rounds of negotiations dating back to 2021. It will be the largest defense deal between the two countries in decades.

It has been reported elsewhere that the agreement was reached during Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's visit to Baghdad last month.

The development comes less than two months after Iraqi state media reported that Baghdad

was still interested in purchasing 14 Dassault Rafales from France. At the time, Iraq's Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Major General Yehia Rasool, was quoted as saying that, "France is considered one of the developed countries in the field of military industries, including the air force." He added that "Iraq is cooperating with France in many fields, including air defense."

Leader...

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Khamenei said, is a necessity for effective propagation.

"Without having a spirit of jihad, mistakes will come up in understanding the state of affairs and behaviors in propagation. But a spirit of jihad when accompanied by scientific work and a scientific outlook, guarantees the effect of work in propagation."

The Leader underlined the absolute necessity of the presence of Muslim clerics in the middle of the field. He said Muslim clerics have always been full of hope, active, and present with a spirit of jihad in the middle of the field.

Ayatollah Khamenei also emphasized the great importance of religious propagation and clarification in the present era.

The Leader underlined the need to know the audience, recognize the structure of the global scene, and possess a jihadi spirit in order to have an impact in propagating and clarifying ideas.

The younger generations, he said, must be the focus of creative propagation based on new methods and tools.

During the meeting, which was held on the eve of the Islamic month of Muharram, Ayatollah Khamenei stressed the importance of the long-standing tradition of propagation in the seminaries and in the lives of great scholars.

"The significance of propagation as one of the duties of the seminaries has doubled following the establishment of the Islamic Republic, because the establishment of a political establishment based on religion has increased the enmity of the Arrogant Powers towards Islam.

"Propagation in the current era has developed a lot with the presence of all kinds of methods based on science and the spread of tools, including the Internet and artificial intelligence (as a symbol of the post-Internet stage)," the Leader said, adding that common sense says propagation must be the top priority in countering the blood-shedding swords of the enemy's propaganda.

The Leader said in addition to the expansion of propagation hardware in the West, the progress in the methods of making a message believable is one of today's realities.

"Using various sciences, including psychology, the Westerners instill 100-percent false messages as truth in the minds of the audience."

The Leader warned, "If we are negligent and weak in propagation in the face of new developments, we will be afflicted by a cultural transformation. Like the West, we will become caught up in a step-by-step move toward the normalization of major sins, which cannot then be easily remedied."

"As Imam [Khomeini] repeatedly said, 'If Islam is struck in Iran, the effect will remain for years.'"

Another point that Ayatollah Khamenei mentioned regarding propagation was the importance of avoiding being in a defensive position only and the necessity of attacking the mindset of the opposing front.

He spoke about the importance of understanding what happens behind-the-scenes of current activities in both social networks and other environments in order to achieve this.

"We should pay attention to see if this activist, whether they work in propagation, in the mass media, or in social networks, is acting independently or is controlled from behind the scenes, which is often the case."

New...

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commitment to facilitate the export of more Kenyan tea, meat and other agricultural products to Iran and via Iran to Central Asian countries.

Iran also intends to set up a manufacturing plant for Iranian vehicles in Kenya's port city of Mombasa, he added.

In a tweet, Ruto said he "held bilateral talks with President Ebrahim Raisi where Iran agreed to boost Kenya's pursuits in manufacturing, health and the blue economy through research and technology".

Raisi's Africa visit is meant to "promote economic diplomacy, strengthen political relations with friendly and aligned countries, and diversify the export destinations," Iran's foreign ministry said in a statement upon his arrival.

President Raisi and his accompanying delegation visited Iran's House of Innovation and Technology in Nairobi.

During the visit, the Pelikan multipurpose agricultural drone and Dorna mapping drone, both manufactured by Iranian knowledge-based companies, were introduced to Kenya.

More than 35 Iranian knowledge-based companies in this center have introduced and exported their products to Kenya in the fields of medicine, medical equipment, agriculture, construction and architecture.

In addition to meeting Ruto, Raisi will hold talks with his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Museveni and Zimbabwean Presi-

dent Emmerson Mnangagwa.

President Museveni has previously voiced support for Iran's nuclear program. During a 2010 visit by former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Museveni asserted that all sovereign countries had a right to pursue peaceful nuclear programs even as he urged the eradication of all nuclear arsenals.

Uganda is trying to set up a nuclear power plant that authorities this year said would be generating electricity by 2031. The plant, which is being developed with the technical support of the China National Nuclear Corporation, would exploit the East African country's substantial deposits of uranium.

Zimbabwe, like Iran, is under U.S. sanctions. A ministerial delegation from Zimbabwe visited Tehran early this year and agreed to deepen cooperation in areas including petroleum trade.

According to Iran's official IRNA news agency, Raisi is heading a delegation that includes the foreign minister as well as senior businesspeople.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani has described the three-day trip as "a new turning point" which could bolster economic and trade ties with African nations.

He also said on Monday that Tehran and the three African countries share "common political views".

On Saturday, Raisi welcomed Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf in a bid to boost ties with Algiers.

Last week, Iran became a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which includes Russia, China and India.

In March, Tehran agreed to restore ties with Saudi Arabia under a China-mediated deal. It has since been looking to re-establish relations with other countries in the region including Egypt and Morocco.

In June, Raisi undertook a Latin American tour that included Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba before a trip to Indonesia.

Europe...

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Swedish embassy in Baghdad in protest against the Qur'an burning and demanded the expulsion of the ambassador.

People in other Muslim countries also took to the streets in protest against the move.

The perpetrator of the sacrilegious move told a Swedish newspaper later that he intended to repeat his protest in July.

Sweden has repeatedly permitted Qur'an burnings in recent years. In January, a Swedish-Danish right-wing extremist burned a copy of the Qur'an near the Turkish embassy in Stockholm.

West...

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accountable for such heinous crimes," he said.

Iravani said the Syrian Arab Republic remains steadfast in its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

"In alignment with this commitment, the Syrian government has maintained a constructive and cooperative approach towards the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)."

The ambassador said the secretariat report confirms that all 27 declared chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) in Syria have been successfully destroyed.

"To ensure transparency and accountability, Syria has been regularly submitting monthly reports on the progress of chemical weapons dismantlement."

In May and June 2023, Syria submitted its 114th and 115th monthly reports to the OPCW director-general, providing details of the activities carried out to dismantle chemical weapons and their production facilities.

Moreover, Syria has facilitated two visits by a reduced team from the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) to Damascus this year. During these visits, the Syrian National Authority extended its full cooperation by allowing access to sites, collecting samples, and conducting interviews with witnesses.

In line with the suggestion made by the Syrian National Authority, a separate meeting with a higher-level DAT was held in Beirut at the end of the last month, demonstrating Syria's commitment to engagement and cooperation.

Additionally, the Syrian National Authority has agreed to extend the tripartite agreement between the Syrian Arab Republic, the OPCW technical secretariat, and the United Nations Office for Project Services. This extension, effective until the 31st of December this year, aims to facilitate the tasks and activities of the OPCW in Syria.

"Through these actions, Syria is actively demonstrating its dedication to fulfilling its obligations and cooperating with the OPCW in the pursuit of the complete eradication of chemical weapons within its territory," Iravani said.

Egypt Selling \$1.9bn in Assets in Privatization Push

CAIRO (Al Jazeera) – Egypt has announced the signing of a number of deals to sell state assets worth \$1.9bn in a bid to boost its private sector.

Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly made the announcement late on Tuesday.

The contracts are seen as vital to ease pressure on the Egyptian pound, bolster hard currency reserves, and enable a number of economic reforms under a \$3bn IMF loan program.

The new contracts include the sale of stakes in the state-owned communications company Telecom Egypt; minority stakes in three oil and petrochemical sector companies to Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund ADQ for \$800m; \$700m for stakes in a portfolio of hotels to

ICON, the hospitality arm of Egyptian real estate group Talaat Mostafa and a stake in the Ezz Dekheila steel company worth \$241m.

Madbouly said the government is one-quarter of its way in a list of 32 state companies it will sell stakes in as the most populous Arab country continues to grapple with a crippling economic crisis.

Egypt is among the world's top wheat importers, and its economy has taken a battering since the war in Ukraine, one of the world's largest wheat exporters, last year.

Since the war, Egypt's currency has depreciated by nearly half, prompting foreign investors to pull more than \$20bn out of Egyptian treasury markets, and inflation reached record levels.

According to government figures, about a third of Egypt's 105 million people live in poverty.

In April 2022, Egypt announced a plan to attract investments worth \$10bn in the next four years – privatization measures it also needs to meet a number of foreign debt obligations in the next few months.

The government's target was to raise \$2bn from stake sales by the end of June, but delays further drove down the value of the Egyptian pound.

Egypt has plans to sell more stakes in the coming months, including in the Gabal el-Zeit wind farm, military-owned Wataniya Petroleum and a power plant built by Siemens, said Planning Minister Hala el-Said.