

RIYADH (Reuters) – Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz will undergo medical tests on Sunday due to "high temperature and joint pain."

The examinations will be conducted at the royal clinics at Al Salam Palace in Jeddah.

The king, 88, was last admitted to hospital in April for a routine checkup, Reuters reported. King Salman became ruler of Saudi Arabia in 2015 after spending more than 2 1/2 years as the crown prince and deputy premier.

Those who give up religion to better their lot in life seldom succeed.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

## Nakba Day Demonstrations,

# Pro-Palestine Rallies Erupt Across World

PARIS (Dispatches) – Protesters flooded the streets of Paris, Berlin, Milan and London demanding an end to Gaza hostilities on the 76th Nakba Day anniversary. In Berlin, fierce clashes erupted as riot police confronted demonstrators, highlighting the intensity of the protests and the urgency for a ceasefire in Gaza.

In Washington DC, pro-Gaza protesters rallied near the U.S. Capitol as they braved the rain on Saturday.

Chanting "No peace on stolen land" and "End the killings, stop the crime/Israel out of Palestine", they expressed their discontent with the Israeli regime and the U.S. government for prolonging the conflict in Gaza and causing harm to innocent civilians.

"This Congress does not speak for us. This Congress does not represent the will of the people," executive director of American Muslims for Palestine, Osama Abuirshad, said during the protest, adding, "We're paying for the bombs. We're paying for the F-16s and F-35s. And then we do the poor Palestinians a favor and send some food."

In New York, during the Nakba Day protest in Bay Ridge, the NYPD police conducted



Police officers stand by as pro-Palestinian supporters march through central London, on May 18, 2024.

forceful arrests.

Footage captured the moment when Pro-Palestine demonstrators were forcefully thrown to the ground, with one individual subjected to repeated punches by the police.

In Munich, Germany thousands of pro-Palestine demonstrators chanted slogans such as "Free Palestine," "Free Gaza" and "End the Genocide", while waving Palestine flags and holding placards and signs of Key, a Palestinian symbol of returning to homes lost in the Nakba in 1948.

Despite government restrictions against Palestine protests, Berlin held the largest pro-Pal-

estine march since the outbreak of the Israeli war on Gaza, with protesters chanting "Gaza will be free" and "Palestine will be free." Dozens of protesters were arrested by police.

In Vienna, the capital of Austria, thousands of people gathered at the Cultural Square, carrying Palestinian flags and banners with slogans such as "No to Genocide," "Israel is a Terrorist," and "Free Gaza."

Pro-Palestine demonstrators were cautioned against chanting slogans like "Intifada" and "Free Palestine from the river to the sea" during their march.

In Italy, pro-Gaza protests were organized in various cit-

ies. Advocates organized a rally titled "Turin for Gaza" in Turin, as a group of protesters fired the flags of the European Union and U.S.-led NATO during the protest.

Also, some of the Fast-food chain restaurants near the march route faced accusations of being "accomplices of Israel" and had paint splashed on their windows.

Pro-Palestine demonstrations were organized by the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign in Dublin, the capital of Ireland, as many associations, political party representatives, and hundreds of people participated.

With Palestinian and Irish flags in hand, the demonstrators marched to Kildare Street, demanding a ceasefire in Gaza and calling on their government to sanction Israel for what is happening in Gaza.

Ireland is set to officially recognize the Palestinian State by the end of May, coinciding with the ongoing event.

More than 35,300 people have been killed in Gaza since Israel started the military onslaught in response to a retaliatory operation carried out by the coastal sliver's resistance movements.

## UN Aid Chief Warns of 'Apocalyptic' Consequences of Gaza Shortages



Palestinians recover the body of people from under the rubble of homes destroyed by the Israeli airstrikes on the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central part of the Gaza Strip on May 19, 2024.

DOHA (Dispatches) – The stranglehold on aid reaching Gaza threatens an "apocalyptic" outcome, the UN's humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said on Sunday as he warned of famine in the besieged territory.

"If fuel runs out, aid doesn't get to the people where they need it, that famine, which we have talked about for so long, and which is looming, will not be looming anymore. It will be present," Griffiths said. "And I think our worry, as citizens of the international community, is that the consequence is going to be really, really hard. Hard, difficult, and apocalyptic," he told AFP on the sidelines of meetings with Qatari officials in Doha.

An Israeli onslaught on the Southern Gaza city of Rafah, launched in the face of international outcry, has deepened an already perilous humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. Griffiths, the UN's Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, said some 50 trucks of aid per day could reach the hardest-hit north of Gaza through the reopened Erez crossing.

But battles near the Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings in Gaza's South meant the vital routes were "effectively blocked", he ex-

plained. "So aid getting in through land routes to the South and for Rafah, and the people dislodged by Rafah is almost nil," Griffiths added.

The UN said on Saturday that 800,000 people had been "forced to flee" Israel's genocide in Rafah. With fuel, food and medicine running out, Griffiths said the military action in the Southern Gazan city was "exactly what we feared it would be."

"And we all said that very clearly, that a Rafah operation is a disaster in humanitarian terms, a disaster for the people already displaced to Rafah. This is now their fourth or fifth displacement," he said.

On Thursday, the Arab League called for a UN peacekeeping force to be deployed in the Palestinian territories and for an international conference to resolve the Palestinian issue on the basis of the two-state solution.

Griffiths said the statement from the 22-member bloc in Manama was "very important because it focused on the future".

He explained there were a "number of different conferences being mooted and potentially planned" to discuss humanitarian arrangements in Gaza, including in Jordan.

## Palestinian Groups: Foreign Presence on Gaza Coast Constitutes 'Occupation'

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Palestinian groups warned Sunday that any foreign troop presence on the coast of the Gaza Strip would be considered an "occupation force".

The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said Friday that a temporary pier was anchored to Gaza's beach and will be used to funnel humanitarian aid into the besieged enclave, Anadolu news agency reported.

"The U.S. floating pier on Gaza's coast is a source of concern," the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) said in a statement.

"We warn against its potential mis-

use for purposes beyond aid delivery such as displacement or bolstering the Israeli occupation's interests," it warned.

The PFLP called for opening Gaza's crossings, including the Rafah border terminal with Egypt, "to ensure unhindered aid flow without restrictions or conditions".

The Palestinian group reiterated its rejection of any U.S., Israeli or foreign presence in Gaza.

"Any force from the U.S., Israel or any other country on our lands will be considered a legitimate target for our forces," it added.

The Popular Resistance Committees said the U.S. was complicit in the Israeli onslaught on the Gaza Strip.

"The pier is an attempt to distract attention away from the siege, genocide and war of starvation staged by Israel against our people," the group said in a statement.

"Whoever wants to provide relief to our people must first stop the war, killing and massacres and cease military and financial support for the enemy (Israel)," it added.

Israel continued its brutal aggression on Gaza despite a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate

ceasefire.

Over 35,400 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, the vast majority being women and children, and more than 79,300 others injured since October.

More than seven months into the Israeli war, vast swathes of Gaza lay in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.

Israel is accused of "genocide" at the International Court of Justice, which has ordered Tel Aviv to ensure its forces do not commit acts of genocide and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in Gaza.

## Thousands of Israelis Demand Captive Swap Deal, Dismissal of Netanyahu Cabinet

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Thousands of Israelis demonstrated in several cities across the occupied territories, including Tel Aviv and Haifa, demanding a captive swap agreement with Palestinian resistance group Hamas, the dismissal of the cabinet of prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu as well as early elections.

The protesters gathered at Kaplan Square in central Tel Aviv, calling for an immediate deal and the resignation of Netanyahu's regime, the Israeli Broadcasting Authority reported.

The protesters held signs, reading: "It's time to replace Netanyahu." The demonstrators called for a return to the negotiating table immediately and for striking an agreement with the Palestinian factions.

The Israeli army radio reported that the protesters attempted to block part of Ayalon Highway in central Tel Aviv, while police tried to prevent

them.

Around 2,000 also protested in front of Netanyahu's residence in the city of Caesarea, demanding the regime arrange a captive swap agreement, according to the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth.

The protesters described Netanyahu as "guilty" and the "head of corruption", as reported by the daily.

In the cities of Haifa, Netanya, Rehovot, and dozens of other locations across Israel, thousands of Israelis demonstrated, demanding the release of captives in Gaza and the dismissal of Netanyahu's regime, according to the daily.

Earlier, hundreds of Israelis gathered at the intersection of the Science Park in Rehovot to demand a captive swap deal and early elections, Yedioth Ahronoth reported.

It noted that former Mossad chief Danny Yatom

participated in the protest, stressing, "Netanyahu deliberately prevents the release of captive and the end of the war because it puts his cabinet at risk."

Israel continued its brutal aggression on the Gaza Strip despite a United Nations Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire in the enclave.

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## Saudi Crown Prince, U.S. National Security Adviser Meet on Bilateral Deal

CAIRO (Dispatches) – Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan met to discuss an almost 'finalized' draft of a deal between Washington and Riyadh, the Saudi state news agency reported on Sunday.

The meeting in the Saudi city of Dhahran reviewed "the semi-final version of the draft strategic agreements between the two countries, which are almost being finalized," a statement read.

The discussions come in the wake of reports that a Washington and Riyadh are close to an agreement for U.S. security guarantees and civilian nuclear assistance, even as an Israel-Saudi normalization deal envisioned as part of a Middle East "grand bargain" remains beyond reach.

The de facto Saudi leader and President Joe Biden's top security aide also discussed the

need to find a "credible track for bringing about" a solution for the Palestinians, stop the war against Palestinians in Gaza and facilitate the entry of humanitarian aid, the statement said.

The White House said on Friday that Sullivan would visit Saudi Arabia and Israel to discuss bilateral and regional matters, including Gaza and efforts to achieve lasting peace and security in the region.

Saudi Arabia, as the world's largest oil exporter, is not an obvious candidate for a nuclear pact typically aimed at building power plants.

But the kingdom is seeking to generate substantial renewable energy and reduce emissions under an ambitious long-term plan, while critics say Riyadh might want nuclear expertise in case it someday wished to acquire nuclear weapons, despite safeguards enshrined in any deal with Washington to prevent this.