

'Double Standards'

Hiroshima Invite to Zionist Regime Sparks Outcry

TOKYO (Dispatches) – The Hiroshima city government has been accused of “double standards” for inviting the Zionist regime to attend the Aug. 6 annual “peace ceremony,” commemorating the atomic bomb attack on the city.

The criticism came from the city residents and peace activists as Russia and Belarus have been barred from the ceremony for three consecutive years over the Ukraine war, Tokyo-based Kyodo News reported on Monday.

Hiroshima announced that Tel Aviv has expressed its intention to attend the annual “peace ceremony,” raising the number of countries and regimes slated to take part to a record high of 115.

The invitation to the occupying regime, widely regarded as nuclear-armed, included a call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, which has drawn increas-



People stand by the bodies of victims of Israeli airstrikes outside the morgue of al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City on October 12, 2023.

ing international opposition.

“We believe that they will attend after seriously taking our thoughts into account,” a city official said of the invitation to Israel at a press conference.

Among the nuclear powers, Britain and France plan on attending, and arrangements are being made for the U.S., which dropped the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on

Aug. 6 and Aug 9, 1945 respectively.

China has not responded to the invitation yet.

Of other nuclear nations that have not signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, India has showed its consent to attend the ceremony.

Meanwhile, the Nagasaki city government has said it was to

invite the Zionist regime to its Aug. 9 ceremony amid debate over “whether to do so.”

The occupying regime, flouting a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire, has faced international condemnation amid its continued brutal aggression on Gaza since Oct. 7, 2023.

Over 38,500 Palestinians have since been killed, mostly women and children, and 88,000 others injured, according to local health authorities.

Vast tracts of Gaza lie in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.

The regime is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, whose latest ruling ordered it to immediately halt its military aggression in the southern city of Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on May 6.

Gaza...

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Gaza City headquarters of the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA.

Israel in early January claimed had dismantled Hamas’s “military framework” in northern Gaza, but fighters have since regrouped -- pointing to the difficulty of destroying the group which Netanyahu says is one of the goals.

Gaza’s Civil Defense reported “dozens of martyrs and wounded” across the coastal territory, saying rescuers were unable to reach some areas due to the intense fighting.

A Hamas senior official on Monday accused the Israeli premier of stepping up bombardment in order to derail the latest truce effort.

“Whenever a round of negotiations begins and a breakthrough is within reach, he... escalates the aggression,” the Hamas official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Two separate strikes, on Saturday in the central Nuseirat refugee camp and on Sunday in Gaza City, killed people in schools turned into displacement shelters.

The United Nations estimates 90 percent of Gazans have fled their homes.

Netanyahu’s hard-right political allies have threatened to leave the cabinet if he agrees to stop the genocide.

A letter written by experts and published in the British medical journal, the Lancet, estimates that the actual death toll of Palestinians martyred in Gaza could exceed 186,000.

However, the letter emphasized that this figure is likely a dramatic underestimate and does not account for the thousands of people buried under the rubble or for the mounting “indirect” deaths as a result of Israel’s destruction of Gaza’s food distribution, healthcare and sanitation systems.

“The total death toll is expected to be large given the intensity of this conflict; destroyed healthcare infrastructure; severe shortages of food, water, and shelter; the population’s inability to flee to safe places; and the loss of funding to UNRWA, one of the very few humanitarian organizations still active in the Gaza Strip,” the letter said.

The letter estimated that the number of bodies still buried in the rubble is likely to exceed 10,000, as 35 percent of Gaza’s buildings have been destroyed, according to UN data.

Citing the transparency watchdog Airwars, which conducts detailed investigations of incidents of civilian harm in areas of conflict, the names of identifiable victims are often omitted from the ministry’s fatalities lists.

It added that data collection is becoming increasingly difficult for the Gaza health ministry.

The destruction of much of the strip’s infrastructure means it is having to rely on information from media sources and first responders to update its figures.

“This change has inevitably degraded the detailed data recorded previously,” the letter said, adding that the ministry now reports separately the number of unidentified bodies among the total death toll.

The letter urged for an immediate ceasefire and the distribution of humanitarian aid in the strip. It also emphasized the need to accurately record “the scale and nature of suffering” in Gaza.

“Documenting the true scale is crucial for ensuring historical accountability and acknowledging the full cost of the war. It is also a legal requirement,” it said.

Three...

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to Israel’s aggression and will deter the usurping regime from entertaining the notion of mounting a military offensive on the Arab country, he

said. “We will identify the Zionist regime’s pressure levers and strike them in order to weaken the enemy and thwart its expansionist objectives. Even though such confrontation requires great patience and persistence as well as hefty costs, it is worth it as the enemy’s aggression leads to massive destruction and brutal occupation of the country,” Raad stressed.

The resistance group, he said, is laying foundations that will be useful in future stages. “One must get prepared to weather any potential act of aggression from the Israeli enemy.”

Senile ...

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Biden wrote in the two-page letter that “the question of how to move forward has been well-aired for over a week now. And it’s time for it to end.” He stressed that the party has “one job,” which is to defeat presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump in November.

“We have 42 days to the Democratic Convention and 119 days to the general election,” Biden said in the letter, distributed by his reelection campaign. “Any weakening of resolve or lack of clarity about the task ahead only helps Trump and hurts us. It’s time to come together, move forward as a unified party, and defeat Donald Trump.”

Anxiety is running high as top-ranking Democratic lawmakers are joining calls for Biden to step aside despite his defiance. At the same time, some of the president’s most staunch supporters are redoubling the fight for Biden’s presidency, insisting there’s no one better to beat Trump in what many see as among the most important elections of a lifetime.

Biden followed up the letter with a phone interview with MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” show, on which he insisted that “average Democrats” want him to stay in the race and said he was frustrated by the calls from party officials for him to step aside.

“They’re big names, but I don’t care what those big names think,” Biden said.

He threw the gauntlet at his critics, saying if they’re serious they ought to “announce for president, challenge me at the convention” or rally behind him against Trump. Later, Biden joined a call with members of his national finance committee, while first lady Jill Biden campaigned for her husband in a three-state swing focused on engaging veterans and military families.

Houthi ...

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shoulder the problem with Israel. The U.S. in particular, he said, is accustomed to implicating others.

When the U.S. and UK sided with the occupation state and launched retaliatory airstrikes against Yemen, Ansarullah declared all American and British ships to be military targets.

Spokesman...

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citizenship, deprives many Iranians from exercising their citizenship rights.” The spokesman said Iran will pursue closer relations with China, one of the most important countries in the world.

He also said indirect negotiations have been conducted between Tehran and Washington, with details to be disclosed “at an appropriate time”.

“Our diplomatic channels have held indirect talks through various means. We are using all our diplomatic capacity to protect the rights of the Iranian nation. We will announce the details at the appropriate time,” he said.

Three Gazans Found Dead After Release From Israeli Custody

GAZA (Dispatches) – The handcuffed bodies of three Palestinian men freed from the Zionist regime’s custody have been found near Gaza border, and an uncle of one of them and a witness said they had been attacked by Zionist troops shortly after their release.

Abdel Hadi Ghabayen, an uncle of one of the detainees, Kamel Ghabayen, said he set out at 5 a.m. on Sunday looking for his nephew following his arrest by Zionist troops on Saturday. “I found him left on the

ground along with the other two martyrs. They were without clothes, and their hands had plastic cuffs put on them by the Israeli army,” Ghabayen said.

The bodies were found near the Gaza fence on Sunday in the vicinity of the Karam Abu Salem crossing in southern Gaza, he said.

The Israeli military did not respond for a request for comment on these accounts.

Abdel Hadi Ghabayen said one of the men had lost a leg and his body was “in pieces”

after what he said was an attack by Zionist troops carried out shortly after their release.

Abdel Hadi Ghabayen said that when he tried to recover the man’s dismembered leg the Israelis “started shooting at me, so I stopped.” He later carried the bodies of the three on his truck to Nasser Hospital in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

The three -- Kamel Ghabayen, Mohammed Awad Ramadan Abu Hejazi and Ramadan Awad Ramadan Aby Hejaz --

were among several Palestinians detained on Saturday and held for questioning, according to one of the men, Mahmoud Abu Taha.

Abu Taha said they came under fire shortly after their release.

“We reached Karkar Street (in Gaza). After 10 minutes of being there, we found a bomb thrown at the people with me. Thank God I was at the front. The bomb hit 6 or 7 people who were detained with us. Thank God I am alive,” he said.

Zionist Regime’s Budget Deficit Widens Further

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime’s annualized budget deficit ballooned to 7.6 percent of the regime’s gross domestic products (GDP), or 146 billion shekels (around 39.6 billion U.S. dollars), at the end of June, according to preliminary data released by the Finance Ministry on Monday.

This marks the highest deficit-

to-GDP ratio since August 2021.

The surge is attributed to the regime’s mounting expenses for the ongoing conflicts with the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance movements. By the end of June, total war expenses reached 80.5 billion shekels (about 21.8 billion dollars), representing a significant monthly increase of 10.8

billion shekels compared to May.

Ammunition fuel, equipment, maintenance, and payments to soldiers, displaced residents, and affected businesses are driving the main conflict expenses.

Overall regime spending has risen sharply in 2024, reaching 300.3 billion shekels by June, a 34.2 percent year-on-year in-

crease. Meanwhile, revenues grew by a modest 3.3 percent to 238 billion shekels.

This widening gap marks the third consecutive month where the deficit has exceeded the regime’s target of 6.6 percent of GDP for 2024. In comparison, the regime closed 2023 with a deficit of 4.2 percent.

Taliban Say Don’t Recognize Women on Afghan Olympic Team

KABUL (AFP) – Afghanistan’s Taliban government does not recognize the three female athletes who will represent the country at the Paris Olympic Games this month, a spokesman for their sports department said.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has invited a squad of six Afghan athletes -- three women and three men -- in consultation with Afghanistan’s largely exiled national Olympic committee.

“Only three athletes are representing Afghanistan,” said Atal Mashwani, the spokesman of the Taliban government’s sports directorate, referring to the male competitors.

“Currently, in Afghanistan girls’ sports have been stopped. When girls’ sport isn’t practiced, how can they go on the national team?” he told AFP.

All three of the women and two of the male athletes are living outside Afghanistan.

The only one training in the country is a judo fighter, whilst his squad mates will feature in ath-

letics and swimming.

The women will compete in athletics and cycling.

The IOC said it had not consulted Taliban officials about the team and they were not invited to the games.

Spokesman Mark Adams last month confirmed Afghanistan’s national Olympic committee -- including the president and secretary-general who are both living in exile -- remain “its sole interlocutors for the preparation and participation of the Afghan team”.

But Afghan committee CEO Dad Mohammad Payenda Akhtari, who is still in the country, said whilst female athletes were organized abroad, his committee coordinated with Taliban authorities over the male ones.

Mashwani claimed the government was supporting them with training and scholarships.

“We only take the responsibility for three male athletes participating in the Olympics,” he told AFP.

The participants will compete under the black, red and green flag of the old Western-backed government which crumbled after the withdrawal of U.S. troops three years ago.

Since surging back to power in 2021, the Taliban government has enforced curbs squeezing women out of sport as well as secondary schools and universities.

The United Nations has described the restrictions as “gender apartheid”.

The IOC banned Afghanistan from the games in 1999, during the first period of Taliban rule between 1996 and 2001 when women were also barred from sport.

Afghanistan was reinstated after the Taliban were ousted by the post-9/11 invasion, but the Paris games mark the first summer Olympics since their return.

This time the IOC has taken a different approach -- approving the Afghan team under a system ensuring all 206 nations are represented, in cases where athletes wouldn’t otherwise qualify.