

RAMALLAH (Xinhua) – The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced that Palestine has joined the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty launched during the G20 Summit in Brazil. In a statement, the ministry said that joining the alliance aims to strengthen Palestine's presence and advocate for the needs of the Palestinian people in international forums, particularly amid the increasing challenges posed by the Zionist regime. It added that Palestine's participation in the alliance underscores the importance of upholding international law and humanitarian law while preventing the use of hunger as a weapon of war. The ministry stressed Palestine's determination to move forward in eradicating poverty and hunger, promoting human rights, and building international partnerships that contribute to a fairer and more sustainable future.

For those who refused to side with any party, Imam Ali or his enemies, Imam Ali said: They have forsaken religion and are of no use to infidelity also.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

## Israel Using AI Weapons System Co-Produced With Indian Firm in Gaza

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) – Zionist troops are using an AI weapons system in Gaza co-produced by an Indian defence company that turns machine guns and assault rifles into computerized killing machines, Middle East Eye can reveal.

According to documents and news reports seen by MEE, Zionist troops have been using the Arbel weapons system in Gaza following their devastating invasion of the enclave since last October.

Touted as a “revolutionary game changer that improves operator lethality and survivability,” the Arbel system enhances machine guns and assault weapons - such as the Israeli-produced Tavor, Carmel and Negev - into a weapon that uses algorithms to boost soldiers chances of hitting targets more accurately and efficiently.

The past 13 months has seen Zionist troops engage in a catalogue of massacres - from bombing schools and refugee camps and hospitals to conducting executions on the



Israel's army has deployed some AI-enabled military tech in the war in Gaza.

streets of Gaza.

More women and children have been killed by Israeli firepower than in any other conflict over the past 20 years while close to 1,000 entire families have been erased.

Conservative estimates put the total number of Palestinians killed at 44,000 but a letter to President

Joe Biden from a group of almost 100 U.S. medics who had been to Gaza estimated a death toll of more than 118,000 in October. A letter in the UK medical journal The Lancet said the death toll could be more than 180,000.

Although defense analysts say the weapon system may not be as

cutting-edge or as widely used as the “Lavender” or “The Gospel” AI weapons systems - that are reported to have played a huge role in the tremendous death toll in Gaza - Arbel appears to be the first weapons system to directly tie India to Israel's rapidly expanding AI war in Gaza in what could have wide-ranging implications for other conflicts.

In September, a UN report said it was “deeply alarmed by the unprecedented destruction of civilian infrastructure and high death toll in Gaza, which raise serious concerns about the use by Israel of artificial intelligence in directing its military campaign”.

“Credible media reports indicate that the Israeli military lowered the criteria for selecting targets while increasing their previously accepted ratio of civilian to combatant casualties,” the report compiled by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People, said.

## Two Bases Housing U.S. Troops in Syria Targeted by Rockets



An American military convoy stops near the town of Tal Tamr, northeastern Syria.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Two military bases in Syria's eastern provinces of Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr, where U.S. occupation troops and their allied militants are stationed, have come under separate barrages of rockets.

Lebanon's al-Mayadeen television news channel, citing local sources, reported that several projectiles struck the vicinity of a U.S. military facility in al-Shaddadi town, located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) south of Hasakah, on Tuesday.

The development came as U.S. occupation forces were conducting an exercise in the southern al-Jibsa neighborhood of the town.

Moreover, a massive explosion shook the U.S. military installation at al-Omar oil field in Dayr al-Zawr province, as a volley of rockets slammed into the site.

Local sources said U.S. troops sought to intercept the incoming rockets with ground-based air defense systems but to no avail.

A plume of smoke could be seen in the sky for miles around.

There were no immediate reports about possible casualties and the extent of damage caused.

Separately, a U.S. military convoy was forced to retreat from an area in the central province of Homs after Syrian government soldiers blocked it.

Syrian army troops, deployed at a security checkpoint near the village of Tal Dhahab, blocked the road and prevented the passage of four U.S. armored vehicles.

The American troops were subsequently forced to turn around and go back in the direction they came from. There were no reports of clashes or injuries.

In November 2019, the head of U.S. Central Command said there was no “end date” on the U.S.'s intervention in Syria. As of February 2021, there are around 900 U.S. troops operating in Syria, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

## Commission: Israel Holds 270 Palestinian Children in Prisons in Harsh Conditions

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – Some 270 Palestinian children are held in the Zionist regime's prisons amid harsh conditions, a Palestinian commission said on Wednesday.

In a statement marking World Children's Day, the Commission of Detainees' Affairs said this figure does not include minors detained by the Israeli army in the Gaza Strip.

“The occupation continues to detain no less than 270 children, who are mainly held in Ofer and Megiddo prisons, in addition to camps established by the occupation army after

the Gaza war,” it added.

The commission said it documented testimonies about the Zionist regime's abuses against Palestinian children by prison wardens.

“Systematic crimes are being committed by the prison administration against the jailed children, in addition to beatings, torture, and daily abuses,” it added.

On Nov. 7, the Israeli Knesset (parliament) passed a law authorizing the detention of Palestinian minors under 14.

The legislation, a temporary five-year measure, allows

courts to order the detention of children under 14 in closed facilities if convicted of murder involving “terrorism or terrorist activities.”

Upon reaching 14, the child would continue to serve their sentence in prison, according to the Knesset.

According to Palestinian figures, over 11,700 Palestinians have been detained by the Zionist regime's army in the occupied West Bank since October last year, including those who were released after being arrested.

The figure, however, doesn't

include those arrested from the Gaza Strip whose numbers are estimated to be in the thousands.

Tension has been running high in the West Bank due to the regime's brutal war on the Gaza Strip, which has killed nearly 44,000 people, mostly women and children, following a Hamas attack last year.

Nearly 785 Palestinians, including at least 165 children, have since been killed and over 6,400 others injured by Israeli army fire in the occupied territory, according to the Health Ministry.

## Iraq Holds First Census in Nearly 40 Years

BAGHDAD (AFP) – Iraq is holding its first nationwide census in nearly four decades this week, a long-awaited count in a nation that has been blighted by divisions.

The census will provide sorely needed up-to-date demographic data for the country which has an estimated population of around 44 million.

It will be the first census to cover all 18 governorates since 1987, when dictator Saddam Hussein was in power, following repeated delays caused by years of war and political tensions between factions.

“More generally across the country, parliamentary representation will change,” said Hamzeh Hadad, a visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).

With one member of parliament allocated by the constitution per 100,000 Iraqis, “having an official census will mean the numbers will have to be adjusted” based on the new demographic breakdown, he said.

A count conducted in 1997 excluded the three northern provinces that make up the autonomous Kurdistan region.

The upcoming census has reignited tensions between Baghdad and Kurdistan over disputed territories in the north.

The census includes religion but does not differentiate between sects, such as Sunni and Shia Muslims, and, unlike previous counts, it excludes ethnicity.

“There are some crucial details in this census that might be missing to appease all sides to finally allow it to take place,” Hadad added.

Iraq has been keen to conduct the census for budgetary reasons.

Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said the census was important for “development and planning steps in all sectors that contribute to the advancement and progress of Iraq”, where electricity is scarce and infrastructure largely in disrepair.

During the census a two-day curfew

will operate, with families having to stay at home so 120,000 researchers can collect data directly from households.

A questionnaire seen by AFP records the number of people per household, health status, education level, employment status, number of cars and even an inventory of household appliances, so standards of living can be assessed.

Iraq has spent much of the past few decades devastated by conflict and sanctions, including a struggle after the U.S.-led invasion 2003 toppled Saddam and the emergence of the Daesh terrorist group in 2014.

Demographics are likely to have shifted with the exile of hundreds of thousands of Christians, and also of tens of thousands of Izadi families who were displaced from Sinjar by atrocities committed by Daesh.

Iraq has regained some semblance of stability in recent years, despite sporadic violence and political turmoil.

## Report: Ex-French PM Lavishly Paid for Bahrain Anti-Qatar Mission

DOHA (Dispatches) – Former French Prime Minister Manuel Valls pocketed €30,000 (\$31,759) for a three-day trip to Manama in July as part of a delegation of consultants tasked to defend Bahrain's interests in a legal dispute against Qatar, Mediapart reported.

According to the French online newspaper, the trip was funded by Queen Capital International Limited, an offshore dummy corporation registered in Hong Kong. Participants were paid through a former lawyer for the Bahraini royal family, Philippe Feitussi, who leads a legal action in France in favor of the kingdom.

Although he had no specific expertise in the matter, the former socialist prime minister was mandated to explain to the Bahraini authorities the issues surrounding the opening in France of a preliminary investigation into alleged corruption of magistrates of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the context of a territorial dispute between Bahrain and Qatar.

In 2001, the ICJ rendered a decision that divided the territorial waters around the Hawar Islands, which mark the border between the two countries, in Qatar's favor.

Valls did not respond to Medi-

apart's requests for comment to explain why he accepted the mission.

The investigative outlet asked if he did so for financial reasons, despite the state benefits granted to former heads of government in France. Valls racked up public expenses of around \$150,000 in 2023, according to Politico.

Mediapart speculated whether his role was primarily to support the Persian Gulf axis of the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain in a long-running dispute with Qatar, or was it chiefly aimed at undermining the International Court of Justice, whose referral of a case of genocide brought against the Zionist regime was denounced by Valls as “disgraceful” in a January newspaper column.

In September 2020, following the lead of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain signed an agreement to normalize its diplomatic relations with the Zionist regime, under the aegis of U.S. President Donald Trump.

While Manama did not initially appeal the ICJ decision, which asserted Doha's control over the North Field West offshore gas megafield, it began trying to challenge it through various means from 2020, following the blockade of Qatar by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain.