

CAIRO (AFP) – Eight people were killed and three more injured when a six-story residential building collapsed in central Cairo on Tuesday, Egypt's health ministry said.

Nine ambulances were dispatched to the scene as rescuers continue to "lift rubble and search for any wounded or bodies," health ministry spokesman Hossam Abdel Ghaffar said in a statement.

The mind of a wise man is the safest custody of secrets; cheerfulness is the key to friendship; patience and forbearance will conceal many defects.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Reiterating Opposition to Palestinian Statehood

Smotrich Urges Full Occupation of Gaza, West Bank



A Palestinian girl with a national flag painted on her face plays amidst the rubble of buildings destroyed by the Zionist regime's bombardment of the Gaza Strip, in Beit Lahia, in the northern part of the Palestinian enclave, on June 19, 2021.

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime will reject any normalization agreement with Saudi Arabia if it requires the creation of a Palestinian state, the occupying regime's finance minister Bezalet Smotrich says.

Speaking to Bloomberg, the extreme far-right minister said: "If that's a deal-breaker, the deal will sink."

Last year, Tel Aviv and Riyadh had been deeply involved in talks to normalize relations, in a process backed by Washington and hailed as a potential massive shift in the region.

Following numerous delays and disagree-

ments, however, the talks finally fell through after the Zionist regime launched a renewed campaign of bombardment on Gaza and a military invasion of the besieged Strip, which has been described as a genocide by Amnesty International.

Smotrich told Bloomberg that he believes the incoming Trump administration "understands the obligation to ensure the future existence of Israel" by rejecting the so-called two-state solution.

Smotrich and prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu oppose strengthening the PA, equating it to

Hamas. Instead, Netanyahu has suggested that Arab countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE could help administer Gaza post-war. However, regional nations have consistently refused to participate in Gaza's reconstruction or governance without the PA's involvement.

Smotrich also urged the regime to take "control" of the Gaza Strip and adopt an "offensive" approach in the occupied West Bank to expand illegal settlements and block the creation of a Palestinian state.

Smotrich in his latest remarks during a meeting of the extremist Religious Zionist Party (RZP) on Monday said that following the recent collapse of the Syrian government, the Zionist regime is looking forward to achieving its goal of destroying Hamas and occupying Gaza.

Pointing to the recent developments in Syria, he claimed that the Israeli regime has made significant progress and is close to achieving its primary objective, calling for a push towards a definitive victory.

Smotrich also expressed his opposition to any ceasefire agreement with Palestinian resistance group Hamas, even if such a deal could result in the release of some captives currently held in Gaza.

"Instead of discussing partial deals that leave many captives behind, compromise the war's achievements, and diminish the chance of victory, we must press forward. We must stop fearing our own shadows and do what is necessary," he said.

Palestinian Inmates at Israeli Etzion Prison Fall Ill After Food Poisoning



Palestinian prisoners at an Israeli prison in the Israeli-occupied territories

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – A Palestinian prisoners' rights group says a large number of Palestinian detainees at the Zionist regime's Etzion Prison in the southern occupied West Bank are suffering from severe food poisoning after consuming spoiled food provided by the detention center's administration.

The Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, citing its lawyer who faced challenges visiting the detainees, reported that the prisoners experienced severe abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting, weakness, fatigue, facial yellowing, significant fluid loss and an inability to stand after consuming the meals. Many even fainted.

The commission accused the prison administration of "deliberately subjecting detainees to harsh punishment since the start of the [Israeli] onslaught on Gaza. This includes prolonged hunger, providing poor-quality meals in both quantity and quality, and subjecting those who protest to severe beatings and solitary confinement."

It called on all international organizations to "intervene urgently to alleviate their suffering and ensure their protection in Israeli prisons."

For its part, the Palestinian Prisoners Society said this is not the first instance of food poisoning at Etzion Prison, as similar cases have been recorded multiple times over the past few years.

Amani Sarahna, the media coordinator for Palestinian prisoners' right group, said Etzion serves as a temporary detention and investi-

gation center, where prisoners are later transferred to other facilities. It currently holds 111 detainees.

She noted that the poisoned prisoners did not receive any medical treatment.

Back in late July, the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs said Palestinian detainees imprisoned in the Israeli prison of Etzion are enduring severe and inhumane conditions.

It urgently called on all relevant authorities, particularly international institutions and human rights organizations, to intervene and save the detainees from this brutal treatment, which violates basic human rights guaranteed by international laws and regulations.

The Zionist regime keeps Palestinian inmates under deplorable conditions without proper hygienic standards. Palestinian inmates have also been subject to systematic torture, harassment, and repression.

Human rights organizations say the regime continues to violate all rights and freedoms granted to prisoners by the Fourth Geneva Convention and international laws.

According to the Palestine Detainees Studies Center, around 60 percent of the Palestinian prisoners detained in Israeli jails suffer from chronic diseases, a number of whom died in detention or after being released due to the severity of their cases.

Palestinian detainees have continuously resorted to open-ended hunger strikes in an attempt to express outrage at their illegal detention.

Zionist Regime Razes Bedouin Palestinian Village for 233rd Time

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime occupation authorities on Tuesday demolished all the tents and structures in the Palestinian Bedouin village of Araqueeb in the Negev desert for the 233rd time, displacing its residents, the Palestinian Information Center reported.

According to local sources, the regime's police forces and

employees from the Authority for Development and Settlement of the Bedouin in the Negev — which is responsible for such demolitions — stormed the village and leveled everything.

The occupying regime's police also kidnapped Sheikh Sayyah at-Tawri, chief of the village, and his son Aziz.

As a result of the occupation's actions, dozens of Bedouin, including children, have become homeless once again during the harsh winter months.

An estimated 80,000 Bedouin Palestinians live in several Negev communities, which are often denied vital services, including water, electricity

and educational facilities.

The demolition of Al-Araqueeb and other villages in the Negev is believed to be a systematic Israeli policy aimed at expelling the native population and transferring them to regime-zoned areas to pave the way for the expansion of Jewish-only communities.

Netanyahu Assails Media as He Testifies in Corruption Trial

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, took the witness stand for the first time on Tuesday in his long-running corruption trial, saying he was being hounded for his hawkish security policies, Reuters reports.

Netanyahu, 75, is the Zionist regime's first sitting prime minister to be charged with a crime. He is testifying at the same time the regime is engaged in a genocidal campaign in Gaza and facing possible new threats posed by regional turmoil, including in Syria.

Last week judges ruled that Netanyahu, indicted in 2019, must testify three times a week, forcing the long time Israeli officials to

juggle between the courtroom and the war room at the regime's war ministry, minutes away from the courthouse.

The leader of the right-wing Likud party, Netanyahu assailed the Israeli media for what he called its leftist stance and accused journalists of having hounded him for years.

Prosecutors accuse Netanyahu of granting regulatory favors worth around 1.8 billion shekels (about \$500 million) to Bezeq Telecom Israel in return for positive coverage of himself and his wife, Sara, on a news website controlled by the company's former chairman.

He is also accused of negotiating a deal with the owner of Israel's

Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper for better coverage in return for legislation to slow the growth of a rival paper.

Netanyahu denies the allegations against him and has pleaded not guilty. He stood rather than sat in the witness box throughout his morning testimony.

"Had I wanted good coverage all I would have had to have done would be to signal toward a two-state solution. [...] Had I moved two steps to the left I would have been hailed," he said.

In lengthy replies, he portrayed himself as a staunch defender of the regime, withstanding pressures from international powers and a hostile domestic media.

UN Envoy Warns Against Sending Refugees Back to Syria Too Soon

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) – European nations should not rush to repatriate refugees to the country following the fall of Bashar Al-Assad's government, the UN special envoy for Syria said on Tuesday, urging foreign players, including the Zionist regime, not to intervene militarily, Reuters reports.

Syria remained in disorder three days after Al-Assad's overthrow, with conflict continuing in the northeast and the Zionist regime bombing targets and expanding its "buffer zone" in the country.

"The situation in Syria is still fluid," Geir Pedersen told a news conference at the United Nations' Geneva headquarters.

While many Syrians were eager to return home, "there are

livelihood challenges still. The humanitarian situation is disastrous. The economy has collapsed."

News of Al-Assad's fall prompted politicians in several European countries to call for a pause to the processing of asylum applications or even for the repatriation of refugees from 13 years of conflict.

"[Going back] is something many, many Syrians are hoping for, but let's make sure the international community is helping them in this process," he said.

The Zionist regime's campaign of bombarding military installations in Syria "needs to stop", Pedersen said.

"It is extremely important that we don't see any action from any international actor that de-

stroys the possibility for this transformation in Syria to take place," he told reporters.

Syria's transitional arrangements also needed to be as inclusive as possible, involving the broadest possible spectrum of Syrian society, or risk further conflict erupting, he added.

To that end, the international community should be "realistic" about the terrorist designation of the HTS group that toppled Assad.

"It is now nine years since that resolution [declaring HTS's predecessor a terrorist group] was adopted," he said. "The reality is so far that HTS and also the other armed groups have been sending good messages to the Syrian people ... of unity, of inclusiveness," Pedersen said.