

Yemeni government calls for global efforts to stop Houthi assaults in Taiz

Sun, 2021-01-10 23:37

AL-MUKALLA: Yemen's internationally recognized government has called for pressure to stop the Houthi offensive and siege on several villages in the southern province of Taiz, the official Saba news agency reported.

Prime Minister Maeen Abdul Malik Saeed said during a phone call with the Taiz governor, Nabil Shamsan, that Houthi crimes against civilians would be "expired by the statute of limitations." He vowed to bring the Houthis to justice.

Malik urged the international community to condemn the attacks against civilians in Taiz and other areas across Yemen. His remarks came as local government officials and activists said on Sunday that civilian deaths from the continuing assault on Haima village in Taiz had risen to 12.

Col. Abdul Basit Al-Baher, a Yemeni army spokesperson in the city of Taiz, said the Houthis had moved on their Haima offensive for the fifth day, killing 12, wounding 30 and raiding 63 houses.

"The Houthis have launched a hysterical attack on Haima," he told Arab News. "They have stormed more than 20 houses, taken 50 civilians as hostage and shelled the villages with heavy weapons. They are committing a cleansing against residents." Farmers and other laborers had stayed indoors to avoid Houthi shells and checkpoints, he added.

Houthi media and affiliate accounts on social media said Sunday that the military assault on Haima came to an end after clearing the villages of "criminals and terrorists."

SPEEDREAD

Iranian-backed militias attacked the Haima village to suppress a rebellion by residents who refused to pay taxes and allow the group to establish military bases on their agricultural land.

But Yemeni army officials said that, in addition to capturing military officers loyal to the government, the Houthis had attacked Haima to suppress a rebellion by residents who refused to pay taxes and allow the group to establish military bases on their agricultural land.

"The Houthis cruelly assaulted the villages to be a lesson to other Yemeni areas that might think of challenging their rule," Al-Baher said.

Yemen's Information, Culture and Tourism Minister Muammar Al-Aryani accused the Houthis of launching a "barbaric bombardment" on residential areas in Haima, executing civilians and abusing their bodies.

"The Houthi militia is committing these crimes and violations that are more horrific than those committed by terrorist groups under the nose of deafeningly silent international community and human rights organizations," he tweeted on Sunday.

Yemeni military experts called for intensifying army operations against the Houthis in Taiz and other areas under their control.

Military analyst Brig. Yahyia Abu Hatem said on Sunday that the Yemeni army and allied forces must march toward areas under Houthi control in Taiz to shore up residents who revolted against the militia.

"The (army) troops must move in Taiz to completely liberate the province, rescuing Haima and weaken (military) capabilities of the Houthi militia," he tweeted.

During its second meeting in Aden, the country's interim capital, Yemen's new government on Sunday reiterated commitments to end the Houthi coup, restore state bodies and apply reforms to boost the economy and fight corruption, Saba reported.



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Yemen calls on UN to take stand on Houthi war crimes in Taiz
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[Renaissance Dam talks resume after Sudanese blockage](#)

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Sun, 2021-01-10 23:06

CAIRO: Negotiations between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) resumed on Sunday to discuss disagreements regarding the rules for filling and operating the dam.

The six-day meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Irrigation of the three countries will follow up on the outcomes of the last meeting headed by South Africa – current president of the African Union (AU) – with observers and experts in the AU Commission.

The Sudanese delegation said it demanded a comprehensive agreement that addresses all issues related to the dam.

It also said that the AU should play a more effective leadership role in the negotiation.

Sudan's statement raised concerns about the recurrence of defects of single fillings in many sectors that have been directly affected, such as the breakdown of drinking water stations in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum.

Ministers from Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan discussed the GERD on a Jan. 3 meeting headed by South Africa. They agreed to extend the negotiations for one week, provided that another six-party ministerial meeting will be held. Ethiopia sent an invitation to hold a meeting on Jan. 4, in which the ministers, technical and legal delegations from Egypt and Ethiopia, and observers and experts appointed by the AU Commission took part.

Sudan did not participate in the meeting and accordingly it was terminated. Future steps were set to be discussed during the six-party meeting on Sunday to consider the outcomes of the tripartite negotiation round.

Egyptian Minister of Irrigation Mohamed Abdel Aty met with the US Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin last week to review negotiations on the GERD and Egypt's desire to complete the negotiations.

They also discussed Egypt's wish to preserve its water rights and to reach a fair and binding legal agreement that meets the aspirations of all three countries.





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Sudan says Nile dam talks to resume Sunday
Egypt summons Ethiopian diplomat over dam comments

[Palestinians say vaccines could come in March, accuse Israel of shirking duty to supply them](#)

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Sun, 2021-01-10 17:14

GAZA: The Palestinian Authority said on Sunday it expects to receive its first COVID-19 vaccine doses in March under a deal with drugmaker AstraZeneca, and accused Israel of shirking a duty to ensure vaccines are available in occupied territory.

While Israel has already become the world leader in vaccinations per capita, Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip have yet to secure their first supplies.

Yasser Bozyeh, the Palestinian general director of public health, told Reuters that in addition to reaching an agreement in principle with AstraZeneca, the Palestinians had also sought supplies from Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and Russia, which has developed the Sputnik V vaccine.

Supplies would also come through a World Health Organization vaccine program for poor and middle income countries.

There was no immediate response from AstraZeneca to an emailed request from Reuters for comment.

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry said in a statement Israel had been "ignoring its duties as an occupation power and committing racial discrimination against the Palestinian people, depriving them of their right to health care."

"The search by the Palestinian leadership to secure the vaccines from various sources doesn't exempt Israel from its responsibilities toward the Palestinian people in providing the vaccines," it said.

Under interim peace accords with Israel, the Palestinian Authority exercises limited self-rule in the West Bank. Hamas Islamists run the Gaza Strip. Israel's vaccination program covers the country's Arab citizens and Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem.

On the West Bank, it has given vaccines to Israeli settlers, but not to Palestinian residents, who receive health services from the Palestinian Authority.

Human rights groups including Amnesty International say Israel has a legal obligation to provide vaccines for Palestinians under occupation. Israeli officials say they could share vaccines with the Palestinians once Israel's own needs are met.

A WHO official said on Sunday the organization had held "informal discussions" with Israel over allocating some supplies to the Palestinians to inoculate health workers. The official, Gerald Rockenschaub, head of the WHO office in the Palestinian territories, said Israel indicated it would explore the option.



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[1 policeman killed, dozens injured in southern Iraq clashes](#)

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Sun, 2021-01-10 18:49

BAGHDAD: A policeman was killed and dozens of people injured Sunday in clashes between security forces and anti-government protesters in southern Iraq, multiple security officials said.

They said the clashes erupted in Haboubi square in the town of Nasiriyah in violence that began over the arrest of activists in the province. Security forces used tear gas and batons in effort to disperse the protesters who threw stones and rocks at security forces. Occasional gunfire could be heard. It was not immediately clear how the policeman was killed amid conflicting reports. The officials said at least 18 protesters were injured and more than 40 among the security forces. They spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Iraq's military said in a statement that one policeman was killed and 33 others were injured in the violence. It did not provide further details. Anti-government protests in Iraq's Shiite-dominated south have continued sporadically even as protests in Baghdad petered out with the spread of the coronavirus and after a deadly government crackdown on protesters. More than 500 protesters were killed in the crackdown on mass protests that began in October 2019, when thousands rallied against corruption, unemployment, poor public services and other grievances.



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Iraq issues arrest warrant for Trump over Soleimani killing Home-turned-museum retains 'soul' of southern Iraq

Germany accuses Turkish think tank of pushing government propaganda in Europe

Sun, 2021-01-10 21:06

ANKARA: Germany has accused a Turkish think tank of being a front for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's party and spreading government propaganda in Europe.

The Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) has had an office in Berlin since 2017.

SETA is known to be financed by the family of Erdogan's son-in-law and former finance and treasury minister, Berat Albayrak, and it has representative offices in Brussels and Washington D.C.

Germany's parliament accused SETA of collecting intelligence and spreading the views of the Turkish government using scientific research activities as a cover.

The federal government said that SETA's aim was to garner influence in German public opinion and frame the political debates about Turkey with various instruments, including nominating candidates in local elections. It was acting in response to a parliamentary inquiry from the Free Democratic Party (FDP).

Stephan Thomae, from the FDP, said the government had lost its patience and abandoned its cautious approach toward Turkey's efforts to establish diplomatic leverage in Germany, Deutsche Welle reported.

"It has been clear for some time that SETA is part of the government of Turkey 's information game," tweeted Steven A. Cook, a senior fellow at the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations. "Too few in Washington understand that it is not actually a research organization."

SETA previously came under fire from the international community in 2019, when it published two reports.

It catalogued the correspondents of international news outlets in Turkey, while another report on the structure of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Europe claimed that the group collaborated with racist white supremacists on the continent.

HIGHLIGHT

Germany's parliament accused SETA of collecting intelligence and spreading the views of the Turkish government using scientific research activities as a cover.

Press freedom groups condemned the SETA media report as a dangerous escalation in the treatment of journalists, and a criminal complaint against the SETA report was filed on a series of charges including "inciting the public to hatred and enmity."

The report profiled social media sharing and the personal backgrounds of Turkish journalists who worked for international media, including Arab News, effectively making them a government target.

Germany's internal intelligence service, BfV, has been investigating SETA's activities in Germany for a while. Last month it published a report accusing SETA of pursuing the Turkish government's agenda in Germany.

"US authorities should follow suit with SETA's Washington counterpart. This propaganda shop has long been the main beacon of Erdoganism in the United States," Sinan Ciddi, associate professor of national security studies at the Marine Corps University in the US, tweeted.

Turkish opposition parties' requests for a parliamentary inquiry about SETA's financial resources and activities were rejected by Ankara in 2019.

SETA has been exempt from tax since 2013, unlike other think tanks in Turkey.

The Turkish presidency's communication director Fahrettin Altun and the presidency's lead spokesman Ibrahim Kalin used to work at SETA.

SETA has not yet released an official statement about the German government's claims.



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Turkey criticized for indictment of 108 people over 2014 protests EU hits Turkey with steel sanctions amid dumping probe