

Hamas claims deadly attack that killed Israeli guard

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JERUSALEM: The Palestinian militant group Hamas claimed responsibility Monday for a deadly shooting that left an Israeli security guard dead at the entrance of a Jewish settlement in the West Bank last week.

It was the first time Hamas has claimed such an attack targeting Israelis in the occupied West Bank since 2018. Friday evening's attack was the latest in a long string of incidents in recent weeks. Tensions have mounted after deadly attacks on Israelis by Palestinian assailants, an Israeli military crackdown in the West Bank, and clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police at a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site.

The site contains the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest place in Islam. It is also the holiest site for Jews, who call it the Temple Mount because it is the location of the biblical Temples destroyed in antiquity. The site is a frequent flashpoint for tensions, and violence there last year helped spark an 11-day war between Israel and Gaza militants.

"This is an episode in a series of responses by Al-Qassam Brigades to the aggression on Al-Aqsa Mosque," Hamas's armed wing said in a short statement. The claim of responsibility came a day after the Israeli army spokesperson told Kann public radio that two Palestinian suspects apprehended by the military did not belong to any militant group.

Israel said Saturday that it had arrested two Palestinians suspected of carrying out the shooting that killed 23-year-old Vyacheslav Golev.

On Sunday, Hamas's leader in the Gaza Strip called for more attacks against Israelis in the West Bank, saying the "real battle arena is there." In a speech, Yehiyeh Sinwar saluted the attackers who killed the guard.



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Ramadan ends for Palestinians with more arrests by Israel

[Grand Mufti motivates Sunni votes in Lebanon during Eid sermon](#)

Mon, 2022-05-02 22:14

BEIRUT: Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdel Latif Derian has used his Eid Al-Fitr sermon to warn Sunnis against the danger of abstaining from participating in the upcoming parliamentary elections in Lebanon on May 15.

In an address held at Al-Amin Mosque in the heart of Beirut, he told a crowd that included several Sunni candidates that "abstaining is the magic formula for corrupt people to come to power."

His warning comes after international observers said that Sunnis abstaining from the vote will allow the “growing influence of Hezbollah and its allies from the Sunni sect, through the winning of the party’s loyalists or its allies. The lower the turnout to the elections, the easier it becomes for Hezbollah to win in the Sunni areas.”

Derian’s remarks came as Eid Al-Fitr was celebrated amid a crippling financial hardship that has plagued the whole country.

President Michel Aoun tweeted his greetings on the Islamic holiday: “May those with good converge toward the supreme interest of the nation to reach safety.”

He added: “Let this feast be an invitation to all to rise above immediate interests and realize national hopes and ambitions for the advancement and recovery of our homeland.”

Prime Minister Najib Mikati wished for “Lebanon to recover as fast as possible through everyone’s efforts and positive cooperation, as this is the only choice.”

He added: “The repetition of mistakes is a crime, and the worst crimes are the ones committed against the homeland, under the pretext of defending it.”

Derian, the highest authority in Sunni Islam in the country, spoke on Monday on the grounds that “the enthusiasm of Sunnis in voting is declining” due to “people’s disgust from the ruling class and the poverty it led to,” an official in Dar Al-Fatwa told Arab News.

They added: “The ‘Future Movement’ and its loyalists are some of the people abstaining from voting, despite former Prime Minister Saad Hariri not demanding boycotting the elections. However, they related to his decision for the movement to abstain from participating in the elections, on the level of candidacy and endorsement of candidates. They decided to abstain from voting due to their lack of conviction in Hariri’s replacements.”

Hariri’s decision led to most of his parliamentary bloc – with 19 seats – not contesting the elections. Mikati and predecessors Fouad Siniora and Tammam Salam, as well as former Interior Minister Nohad Machnouk, also decided not to run for the elections.

The official said: “Hunger does not distinguish between sects and regions. We are united by our suffering from worsening crises and united by the national will to change our situation and overcome collapse and failure, thus achieving what we aspire to be, a state bearing a message and linked by genuine friendship with the Arab brothers who stood by Lebanon and the Lebanese people in the most difficult circumstances.”

Derian harshly criticized the authorities and described the situation as “very severe and harmful.”

He added: “They try to make the abuser a well-doer and the criminal a hero, elevating the useless to the highest levels of praise and honor. They are the

ones who transformed Lebanon into a failed state begging for water, electricity and bread.”

He added: “None of those useless ones has the courage to admit what their dirty hands committed from corruption and ill-gotten money. They classify themselves as angels and saints in order to return to the crime scene again, and they inflict corruption. Beware of their deceptive and misleading statements.”

Derian stressed that “change and choice cannot be achieved from afar, nor by wishing. Those are achieved by massive active participation and speaking the truth on the ballot. Choosing the parliament’s members is the start of the desired reform. In national action, despair is not permitted, as it is surrendering to failure and corruption, suicide and death.”

He asked: “Why do some candidates think that people are sheep threatened by force, even if they are hungry or scared? Social and humanitarian crises are only solved by the government and capable and effective state institutions.”



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Lebanon tells UNHCR that it can no longer tolerate the burden of Syrian

[Yemeni leader: We are adhering to the truce despite Houthi violations](#)

Author:

Arab News

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Mon, 2022-05-02 00:49

RIYADH: The president of Yemen's leadership council said that his government is respecting the cease-fire in the country despite the Houthi militia's disregard for it.

Rashad Al-Alimi said: "We confirm our adherence to the truce, despite all Houthi militia's violations."

He said his council will preserve the consensus and the partnership to help the country.

Al-Alimi also thanked Saudi Arabia and the UAE for their support for the Yemeni people.

The two-month truce, which began at the start of Ramadan, has been repeatedly violated by the Iran-back militia, particularly in Marib where they are using the halt in fighting to gain a strategic military advantage as they aim to take the resource-rich province from government control.



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Houthis gather more forces outside Yemen's Marib city Fighting rages outside Marib as Houthis mount new attacks

[Yemen truce could help reverse humanitarian crisis: UN](#)

Author:

Mon, 2022-05-02 00:35

SANAA: The United Nations has warned of a "worsening" humanitarian situation in Yemen but said a fragile two-month truce since early April could help reverse the situation.

"The worsening humanitarian crisis in Yemen is a reality that we need to urgently address," UN humanitarian coordinator for Yemen, David Gressly, said in a statement released late Saturday.

"Over 23 million people – or almost three-quarters of Yemen's population – now need assistance... an increase of almost three million people from 2021," he said.

Gressly urged donors to take advantage of a UN-brokered truce that has largely held since April 2.

“The UN-led truce is a vital opportunity for aid agencies to scale up life-saving assistance and to reach more people in acute need quickly, including in areas where access was limited due to armed conflict and insecurity,” he said.

“For aid agencies to immediately step up efforts, we count on sufficient donor funding. Otherwise, the aid operation will collapse despite the positive momentum we are seeing in Yemen today,” Gressly warned.

He said the UN needs around \$4.3 billion for its 2022 humanitarian response plan for Yemen “to reverse a steady deterioration of the humanitarian situation.”

The plan aims to target 17.3 million people, he said, adding that nearly 13 million people “are already facing acute levels of need.”

Eighty percent of the 30 million population is dependent on aid.

The truce, which can be renewed, has provided the impoverished country with a rare respite from violence.

It has also seen oil tankers begin arriving at the port of Hodeida, potentially easing fuel shortages in Sanaa and elsewhere.

The truce also involved a deal to resume commercial flights out of Sanaa’s airport for the first time in six years, though the inaugural flight planned for late April was postponed indefinitely, with each side blaming the other for holding it up.



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[Iraq yet again hit by dust storm](#)

Author:

Mon, 2022-05-02 00:13

BAGHDAD: Iraq on Sunday was yet again covered in a thick sheet of orange as it suffered the latest in a series of dust storms that have become increasingly common.

Dozens were hospitalized with respiratory problems in the center and the west of the country.

A thick layer of orange dust settled across streets and vehicles, seeping into people's homes in the capital Baghdad.

Flights were grounded due to poor visibility at airports serving Baghdad and the Shiite holy city of Najaf, with the phenomenon expected to continue into Monday, according to the weather service.

"Flights have been interrupted at the airports of Baghdad and Najaf due to the dust storm," the spokesman for the civil aviation authority, Jihad Al-Diwan, told AFP.

Visibility was cited at less than 500 meters (550 yards), with flights expected to resume once weather improves.

Hospitals in Najaf received 63 people suffering from respiratory problems as a result of the storm, a health official said, adding that the majority had left after receiving appropriate treatment.

Another 30 hospitalizations were reported in the mostly-desert province of Anbar in the west of the country.

Iraq was hammered by a series of such storms in April, grounding flights in Baghdad, Najaf and Irbil and leaving dozens hospitalized.

Amer Al-Jabri, of Iraq's meteorological office, previously told AFP that the weather phenomenon is expected to become increasingly frequent "due to drought, desertification and declining rainfall."

Iraq is particularly vulnerable to climate change, having already witnessed record low rainfall and high temperatures in recent years.

Experts have said these factors threaten to bring social and economic disaster in the war-scarred country.

In November, the World Bank warned that Iraq could suffer a 20-percent drop in water resources by 2050 due to climate change.

In early April, environment ministry official Issa Al-Fayad had warned that Iraq could face "272 days of dust" a year in coming decades, according to the state news agency INA.

The ministry said the weather phenomenon could be addressed by "increasing vegetation cover and creating forests that act as windbreaks."





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