

Giants Brigades discover cache of mines, explosive devices smuggled by Houthis under guise of UN aid

Tue, 2022-01-18 22:44

RIYADH: The Giant Brigades fighting the Houthis in Yemen have discovered a large quantity of mines and explosive devices hidden by the militia in aid boxes in Harib, Saudi Press Agency reported on Tuesday.

The Houthi militia left the boxes, used to smuggle weapons, behind after fleeing the district in Marib province, Yemen's information minister Moammar Al-Eryani said.

The minister said the boxes had UN logos on them and condemned the Houthi actions as "a heinous crime that reveals the ugly face of the criminal militia."

He said the crime reveals tricks used by the militia to transport weapons and ammunition and exploit humanitarian work as a cover to continue killing Yemenis and carry out criminal activities.

It also shows how the militia employs airports and ports to smuggle ballistic missiles and Iranian-made drones, he said.

"We call on the UN and international relief organizations to investigate the incident and denounce the crime of using their logos as cover to transport and store mines and explosive devices used by the Houthi militia in homes, schools, mosques, markets, roads, (targeting) innocent civilians, including women, children, and the elderly," Al-Eryani said.

He also called on the international community, and UN and US envoys for Yemen to condemn these practices and put pressure on the Houthi militia to stop its crimes against civilians.

He urged the international community to designate it as a terrorist organization and prosecute its leaders in the International Criminal Court as "war criminals."

The discovery comes a day after the Houthis carried out a drone and missile attack on the UAE that killed three people.

The attack was condemned by the UN and the international community.



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Houthis reject UN call to release hijacked UAE-flagged ship
UN Security Council demands release of UAE cargo ship seized by Houthis in Yemen

[UAE calls for UN Security Council session over Houthi attack on Abu Dhabi](#)

Author:

Tue, 2022-01-18 22:58

NEW YORK: The UAE mission at the UN in New York on Tuesday called on the Security Council to convene in response to the deadly terrorist attack on Abu Dhabi a day earlier.

In a letter addressed to the Norwegian delegation, which holds the presidency of the council this month, the UAE's permanent representative to the UN

denounced the Houthi militia in Yemen for targeting civilians “in flagrant violation of international law” and called on the council to “unequivocally” condemn the attacks “with one voice.”

“The UAE expresses its condolences to the families of the deceased and wishes those injured a speedy recovery,” Lana Nusseibeh said in the letter.

“This illegal and alarming escalation is a further step in the Houthis’ efforts to spread terrorism and chaos in our region.

“It is another attempt by the Houthis, using the capabilities they have unlawfully acquired in defiance of UN sanctions, to threaten peace and security.”

Three people were killed and six injured in a drone assault on a key oil facility in the Emirati capital, and a separate fire was sparked at Abu Dhabi’s international airport, police said. The Houthis claimed responsibility for the attack, which immediately drew condemnation worldwide.

On Friday the Security Council unanimously condemned another hostile Houthi act, the seizure on Jan. 3 of the UAE-flagged ship Rwabee in the Red Sea off the coast of Yemen and the detention of its crew.

In a statement drafted by the UK, council members demanded the immediate release of the vessel and those on board, and urged the Houthis to guarantee the safety and well-being of the crew.

They also called on all sides to resolve the issue quickly and highlighted the importance of preserving freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, in accordance with international law.

The hijacking of the Rwabee marked the latest Houthi assault in the Red Sea, a crucial route for international trade and energy shipments.



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Three killed by Houthi drone attack in Abu Dhabi Saudi Arabia leads global condemnation of Houthi attack targeting Abu Dhabi

[UN official: Libya elections could be rescheduled for June](#)

Author:

Tue, 2022-01-18 00:23

CAIRO: A senior US official said she is pushing for Libya to hold elections by June after the country missed a December deadline to elect its first

president since the 2011 ouster and killing of longtime dictator Muammar Qaddafi.

Stephanie Williams, the UN's special adviser on Libya, said that it is still "very reasonable and possible" for the country's 2.8 million voters to cast their ballots by June in line with the UN-brokered 2020 roadmap.

Libya failed to hold its first-ever presidential elections on Dec. 24 as scheduled, a major blow to international efforts to end a decade-long chaos in the oil-rich Mediterranean nation.

Williams, who led UN efforts to end the latest bout of violence in Libya in 2020, said elections are needed in the country to give credence to the country's institutions.

"All the institutions are suffering a crisis of legitimacy," she said.

"I don't see any other exit for Libya other than a peaceful political process."

The country plunged into turmoil after the NATO-backed 2011 uprising and split into rival governments – one in the east, backed by military commander Khalifa Haftar, and another UN-supported administration in the capital of Tripoli, in the west. Each side is supported by a variety of militias and foreign powers.

Mediated by the UN, an October 2020 ceasefire led to the formation of a transitional government and scheduled elections for Dec. 24. But the vote faced steep challenges that eventually forced its postponement.

Williams urged lawmakers, who are convening Monday in the eastern city of Tobruk, to agree on a "clear, time-bound process with a clear horizon and to not create an open-ended process."

"They have to shoulder a great responsibility right now to respect the will of the Libyans who registered to vote," she said.

"Libyans want an end to this long period of transition that the country has experienced since the events of 2011."

The missed election deadline came after bitter disputes over the laws governing the electoral process. Outbreaks of fighting among armed factions and the presence of thousands of foreign fighters and troops in the North African country also fed mistrust between the rival groups.

Controversial figures declaring runs for the presidency have further polarized the political scene in recent months. Among them are Hifter, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah and Seif Al-Islam Qaddafi, the ousted dictator's son and one-time heir apparent. Opponents of Hifter and Gadhafi have said they will never accept an election victory by them.

The country's election commission didn't name a final list of candidates for the presidential and parliamentary elections. Imad Al-Sayeh, head the

commission, told the parliament Monday that militias threatened to stop the electoral process if a final list was announced.

Al-Sayeh said the commission needs between six and eight months to prepare for elections, given the uphill challenges that led to the postponement of Dec. 24 vote.

Williams said lawmakers and leaders in Tripoli should work out the disputes over the elections rules. She did not see the departure of foreign mercenaries as a "prerequisite for the elections," saying that holding the cease-fire is the priority.

"There have been mercenaries in Libya since 1970s," she said, adding later, "I don't believe that that is a card that is necessary to play at this time."

Williams also said all factions should accept the results no matter who wins.

"The way to solve this is (allowing) the Libyan voters go to the ballot box and make their own choice," she said. "Results need to be respected."

The vote's delay also threatens to open a power vacuum. Lawmakers have argued that the mandate of Dbeibah's government ended on Dec. 24. Aguila Saleh, the influential speaker of parliament, said Monday that the transitional government "should be restructured."

The UN adviser called on the parliament to focus on delivering the vote rather than appointing a new transitional administration.

"What Libyans have clearly said is that they want to go to the ballot box and choose their government, a democratically government representing the entire Libya," she said.



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Libyan security forces break up protest sit-in by migrants
UN envoy says hard to hold Libya elections in December

[Palestinian shot dead by Israeli troops in occupied West Bank](#)

Author:

Tue, 2022-01-18 00:00

HEBRON: A Palestinian tried to stab an Israeli soldier in the occupied West Bank on Monday and was shot dead by him, the army said.

In a separate incident, the Palestinian Health Ministry said an elderly Palestinian died of injuries received nearly two weeks ago when he was hit by a vehicle in Israeli police service.

Violence has simmered in the West Bank, among territories Palestinians seek for a state, since US-backed peace talks with Israel stalled in 2014.

Video circulated on social media, and apparently taken by a motorist, showed a man lying on the road at the Gush Etzion junction in the West Bank, knife in hand, as three soldiers approached with rifles trained on him. A military spokesman said a man had emerged from a car and tried to stab a soldier, who shot him dead, and that the vehicle had fled the scene.

Another Israeli military official identified the dead man as a Palestinian from an outlying village.

In the nearby city of Hebron, the Health Ministry announced the death of 75-year-old Suleiman Al-Hathalin, a veteran protester against Israel's West Bank settlements.

He had been standing in front of a tow truck that had been sent to his village of Um El-Kheir to confiscate unlicensed cars on Jan 5, a relative, Hazem Al-Hathalin, said.

He said that Suleiman Al-Hathalin was struck deliberately by the truck, which "ran him over with its front and back wheels" before driving away.

Israeli police spokespersons did not immediately comment.

In a statement quoted by Israel's Haaretz newspaper on Jan. 14, police said Palestinians had thrown stones at the truck and police forces that had accompanied it, making it impossible for them to stop and help a man who had climbed on the vehicle and fallen.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh said on Facebook that he "died defending his village."

Villagers said vehicles which police had sought to tow away were bought from Israelis at low cost after they failed to pass annual roadworthiness inspections in Israel.



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Israel extends detention of ill Palestinian teen: father 80-year-old found dead after Israel West Bank raid: Palestinians

[Protest by families of Beirut blast victims brings Palace of Justice to standstill](#)

Author:

Mon, 2022-01-17 22:52

BEIRUT: Relatives of the victims of the explosion that destroyed Beirut's Port in August 2020 staged a fresh protest in the city on Monday, amid growing anger and frustration over what they see as "procrastination" that is hampering the official investigation into the blast.

They blocked roads and entrances at the Palace of Justice to express their "anger and deep sense of the injustice inflicted on them by all those who submit requests to reject the work of judicial investigator Judge Tarek Bitar."

Their demonstration caused work in the courtrooms to grind to a halt. The families accuse authorities of “negligence, ignoring and covering up the crime and the catastrophe of the biggest explosion in modern history that afflicted Lebanon and Beirut.”

They said that they will call for an international investigation “if stagnation and threats continue, and the case is diluted.”

Bitar, 48, has been unable to complete his investigation into the explosion and the part that the actions of politicians and officials might have played in the events that led up to it. The individuals under investigation include a former prime minister, four ministers and a number of deputies, senior security officials and port officials.

The work of the judge has been suspended for more than two months. He took over the case in February last year after his predecessor, Judge Fadi Sawan, who was removed from the investigation by the Court of Cassation following complaints by two ministers accused of negligence that resulted in the deaths of innocent people.

Since taking over the case, Bitar has been subjected to a smear campaign, intense political pressure and threats inside the Palace of Justice from a Hezbollah official. Suspects in the case, including ministers and representatives, who enjoy parliamentary immunity, have filed dozens of lawsuits calling for Bitar to be removed from the case.

Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah accused Bitar of “politicizing the investigation and exercising discretion.” The party’s supporters staged protests in October demanding the judge be replaced. Supporters of the Amal Movement joined the demonstrations, which escalated into violent clashes and led to deaths.

During the protests at the Palace of Justice on Monday, families of the victims of the port explosion called on officials to make the necessary judicial appointments to ensure requirements are met for the number of members of the general assembly of the Court of Cassation. The court recently lost its quorum when one of its judges retired, which has hampered efforts to resume the investigation.

A delegation representing the protesters reached the office of Judge Suhail Abboud, the president of the Supreme Judicial Council. Members of the delegation said that when asked about restoring the quorum, Abboud told them “any legal measures that can be taken to protect the investigation will be studied.”

The protesters carried banners denouncing the “corrupt political authority and state officials who dilute the investigation file, manipulate the law and want to remove Judge Bitar, who is entrusted by all the Lebanese to reveal the facts and punish the criminal perpetrators, from whichever side.”

Another banner read: “No one is immune when 220 are martyred, 6,500 wounded, half of the capital Beirut is destroyed and hundreds of thousands of citizens

are displaced.”

In a statement, the protesters said: “Enough of wasting time, sometimes by resorting to political immunity and sometimes by accusing Judge Bitar of discretion or politicization in an attempt to remove him and end the investigation.

“Today, we affirm that we are behind the judicial investigator more than ever before and we hold the accused criminals responsible for doing nothing but obstruction and evasion of justice.”

The relatives expressed anger over the failure of authorities to act on a warrant, issued by Bitar, for the arrest of MP Ali Hassan Khalil, a former finance minister who is political assistant to the head of the Amal Movement, Nabih Berri.

They questioned “how this minister was able to hold a press conference a week ago without anyone touching him.”

A judicial source told Arab News that Judge Bitar will remain unable to resume his investigation until appointments are made to the Court of Cassation so that it can make a decision to do so, and ruled out the possibility of these appointments taking place before the presidential election in May.



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Lebanon: Hezbollah trolls harass critical Black news anchor with racist tweets
Fears grow over Iran influence in Lebanon after Hezbollah, Amal Cabinet decision