

Israel says defense officials caught in major bribery case

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JERUSALEM: Israel's Justice Ministry said Tuesday it plans to prosecute suspects involved in a "serious corruption affair" in one of the country's defense bodies.

Most details of the case, including the names of the suspects, were unavailable because of a gag order.

But a statement by the ministry said public servants working in the unnamed defense body allegedly received millions in bribes from companies with the aim of promoting sales deals with Israel's defense establishment.

The suspects are to be charged with bribery, fraud, breach of trust and money laundering, among others offenses, pending a hearing.

The announcement comes after the ministry said last week it would serve indictments for corruption charges in a \$2 billion German submarine deal that roped in close associates of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as well as the country's former navy chief.

The justice ministry claims those accused in the submarine case personally benefited from the purchase.

Netanyahu was questioned, but not named as a suspect, in the submarine probe, known as "case 3000." But it sparked questions about his earnings on a related German submarine sale to Egypt.

Netanyahu has been indicted in three other graft cases for bribery, fraud and breach of trust. He has denied wrongdoing on all charges.



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Israel strikes in Gaza after rocket attack

[Sudan's deposed Bashir questioned over 1989 coup: lawyer](#)

Author:

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Tue, 2019-12-10 16:01

KHARTOUM: Sudan's former president Omar Al-Bashir appeared on Tuesday before a prosecutors' committee over the 1989 coup that brought him to power, his lawyer said.

Bashir was "brought to be investigated in the case of the alleged 1989 coup," said his lawyer, Mohamed Al-Hassan, who did not attend the hearing.

The lawyer also told reporters that in his view the hearing was “not a judicial matter, it’s a political matter.”

In 1989, Bashir, a brigadier at the time, seized power in an Islamist-backed coup that toppled the elected government of prime minister Sadiq Al-Mahdi. The former president was himself ousted by the army in April of this year after months of nationwide protests against his iron-fisted rule of three decades.

On November 12, Sudanese authorities filed charges against Bashir and some of his aides for “plotting” the 1989 coup. The prosecution established a special committee for the case.

If found guilty, he could face the death penalty or life imprisonment under Sudanese law.

Sudan is now ruled by a joint civilian and military sovereign council, which is tasked with overseeing a transition to civilian rule as demanded by the protest movement.

Bashir is being held in Kober prison in a separate case, for which he has been on trial since August, on charges of illegally acquiring and using foreign funds.

A verdict is due in that case on Saturday.

On Tuesday, Bashir was taken from Kober prison to the prosecutor’s office in a convoy under strong armed protection.

After the hearing, which lasted about an hour, a crowd gathered in front of the prosecutor’s office, chanting “Kober prison – the best place for you!” and “you killed people!”

Wearing the traditional white Sudanese jalabiya and turban, Bashir raised his hands to the crowd, before he set off back toward Kober in the convoy.

The veteran leader is also wanted by The Hague-based International Criminal Court on charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity over his role in the war in Sudan’s western Darfur region.

To date, Sudanese transitional authorities do not want to extradite the former leader to The Hague.



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[1989 coup](#)

Sudan's first female football stars push for women's rights

[Lebanon not expecting new aid pledges at Paris meeting](#)

Author:

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1575986052164420700

Tue, 2019-12-10 13:28

BEIRUT/PARIS: Lebanon does not expect new aid pledges at conference which France is hosting on Wednesday to press for the quick formation of a new government that can tackle an acute financial crisis.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian urged Lebanon to create a new

government swiftly or risk the crisis worsening and threatening the country's stability.

The economic crisis is the worst since the 1975-90 civil war: a liquidity crunch has led banks to enforce capital controls and the Lebanese pound to slump by one third.

Lebanon has also been in a political impasse since Saad Al-Hariri quit as prime minister on Oct. 29, prompted by protests against the ruling elite, with no agreement on a new government.

Nadim Munla, senior adviser to Hariri, who is running the government as caretaker, told Reuters the Paris meeting would probably signal a readiness to offer support once a government is formed that commits to reforms.

"They will recognize that there is a short-term problem and that if and when a government (is formed) that basically responds to the aspirations of people, most probably the international community will be ready to step in and provide support to Lebanon, or additional support," he said.

"It is not a pledging conference."

Lebanon won pledges of over \$11 billion at a conference last year conditional on reforms that it has failed to implement. The economic crisis is rooted in years of corruption and waste that have generated one of the world's heaviest public debt burdens.

The political impasse returned to square one on Sunday when a tentative agreement on a new prime minister unraveled.

Hariri is now seen as the only candidate for the post.

He has said he would only lead a cabinet of specialist ministers, believing this is the way to address the economic crisis, attract aid, and satisfy protesters who have been in the streets since Oct. 17 seeking the removal of a political class blamed for corruption and misrule.

But Hezbollah and its allies including President Michel Aoun say the government must include politicians.

"Let's see the coming few days and if there will be an agreement among the political parties on a formation ... otherwise we might take longer," Munla said. Hariri would be willing to have politicians in cabinet but they should not be "the regular known faces of previous governments."



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Lebanon PM appeals for foreign help to combat import crisis
Lebanon's outgoing PM backs businessman to replace him

[SALT Abu Dhabi: Where finance, technology, geopolitics meet](#)

Author:

Mon, 2019-12-09 21:32

DUBAI: The first Middle East SALT conference – the global thought leadership platform run by former White House communications director Anthony Scaramucci – kicks off in the UAE capital Abu Dhabi on Tuesday.

Some 1,000 leaders from the worlds of investment, finance and policymaking will gather at the city's financial hub, the Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), for the two-day event, billed as a "Davos style" forum intended to "foster collaboration at the intersection of finance, technology and geopolitics."

Scaramucci, who launched the event in 2009 under the auspices of his investment business Skybridge Alternatives, told Arab News that there will be a “phenomenal group of people” at the event, which combines onstage presentations, one-to-one “bilaterals” and networking for some of the leading business and technology thinkers in the world.

“It’s through conversations like these that we can create greater cross-cultural understanding and begin to solve the world’s most pressing problems,” he said.

The big annual meeting is held in Las Vegas each year, but spin-off events have been held in Tokyo and Singapore.

The event will have a strongly regional flavor, with Saudi Prince Turki Al-Faisal, chairman of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, being joined by ADGM Chairman Ahmed Al-Sayegh and Khaldoon Al-Mubarak, managing director and group CEO of the Mubadala Investment Co., both of the UAE.

Al-Sayegh said: “The UAE’s robust economic environment, comprehensive industry offerings and sound political stability continue to uphold the nation’s stature as one of the most preferred investment destinations in the world.”

He added: “The SALT Abu Dhabi conference opens up a new window for global businesses and policymakers to gain new insights of what Abu Dhabi and the UAE have to offer now and in the long term.”

Among the foreign thought leaders attending the event are Gen. John F Kelly, former White House chief of staff, and Matteo Renzi, former prime minister of Italy.

“The future of US-Arab relations” will be the topic of a panel discussion on Monday. The session, to be moderated by Arab News Editor in Chief Faisal J. Abbas, will feature Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations; Norman Roule, CEO of Pharos Strategic Consulting LLC; and Dania Koleilat Khatib, affiliated scholar at the Issam Fares Institute.

On the same day, another panel discussion – featuring Renzi and Phillip Hammond, former chancellor of the British Exchequer, and moderated by Gideon Rachman, chief foreign affairs commentator at the Financial Times – will address “the future of Europe.”

The delegates will be keen to hear Scaramucci’s latest view on the political situation in the US.

He has been one of the fiercest critics of the presidency of Donald Trump, and is leading a campaign to persuade other members of the Republican Party to choose another contender for next year’s presidential election.

“Given his rank lawlessness and criminal activity, the lack of resistance in the Republican Party to him tells you a lot about the hypocrisy in America today,” Scaramucci said.

“He has clearly broken the law, but he has a group of sycophants and acolytes who won’t condemn what he’s doing,” he added.

“I just think he’s the wrong leader for the US. Our system is supposed to ensure that everyone is subject to the law. The president is supposed to serve, not rule. I think the guy is a traitor.”





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[Middle-East](#)

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[SALT Abu Dhabi](#)

15,000 to attend World Energy Congress in UAE Abu Dhabi to host 3rd Global Energy Forum

SALT Abu Dhabi: Where finance, technology, geopolitics meet

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15,000 to attend World Energy Congress in UAE Abu Dhabi to host 3rd Global Energy Forum