

[Iran disrupts internet as tower collapse toll hits 36](#)

Tue, 2022-05-31 23:04

DUBAI: Iran disrupted internet access to the outside world as angry demonstrators rallied over the collapse of a tower in Iran that has killed at least 36 people, experts said on Tuesday as outrage and grief continued to grow in the country.

The disruption has plunged the southwestern province into digital isolation, making it difficult for journalists to authenticate events on the ground and for activists to share footage and organize protests.



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[Can a UN-coordinated Dutch-US plan defuse the ticking Safer 'time bomb'?](#)

Tue, 2022-05-31 22:55

JEDDAH: The saga of the Safer continues with an attempt by the UN to raise funds to salvage the stricken vessel that has been anchored close to Yemen's Red Sea coast since 1988.

The plan is to raise \$144 million, of which \$80 million will pay for offloading the cargo of oil on board the Safer. To this end, the governments of the US and the Netherlands, represented by Dutch Ambassador to the US Andre Haspels, jointly hosted a meeting on Friday that was attended by Tim Lenderking, the US special envoy for Yemen, and representatives from the diplomatic community in Washington.



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[Daesh plotter of 2021 Baghdad market bombing sentenced to death](#)

Mon, 2022-05-30 22:56

BAGHDAD: An Iraqi court has sentenced to death a Daesh member convicted of plotting a 2021 bomb attack that killed 32 people in a crowded Baghdad market.

It was the city's first major suicide bombing in three years that ended a period of relative calm after Iraq declared the defeat of the jihadist group in late 2017.

The man, who was not named, was found guilty of planning the January 2021 twin suicide bombing that hit the market at Baghdad's Tayaran Square and also wounded 110 people.

A Baghdad court has sentenced the attack's "primary perpetrator," the Supreme Judicial Council said in a statement. He had confessed to being part of Daesh

since 2012 and to having equipped the two suicide attackers.

BACKGROUND

Daesh has 'maintained the ability to launch attacks at a steady rate in Iraq, including hit-and-run operations, ambushes and roadside bombs,' a UN report said in January.

In the attack, one man drew a crowd by claiming to feel sick before he detonated his explosives belt, the Interior Ministry said at the time. As more people flocked to the scene to help the victims, the second suicide bomber set off his explosives.

Iraq frequently hands down death sentences, usually for terrorism or murder convictions.

London-based rights group Amnesty International recorded at least 17 executions in Iraq in 2021, down from 50 the previous year, but said death sentences "rose more than threefold from 2020."

In April, eight people were sentenced to death in two trials, four over a car bombing and four for murder.

The last major Daesh attack in the capital came in July 2021, when a bomb ripped through a crowded market in the Sadr City suburb, killing more than 30 people.

Daesh has "maintained the ability to launch attacks at a steady rate in Iraq, including hit-and-run operations, ambushes and roadside bombs," a UN report said in January.

Three teenagers and three policemen were shot dead in northern Iraq as they put out a crop fire last week, an attack that officials blamed on Daesh.



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Turkey captures the new leader of Daesh in Istanbul raid

Blinken strongly condemns Iran seizure of Greek-flagged vessels

Mon, 2022-05-30 21:49

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday condemned the “unjustified seizure” of two Greek-flagged vessels by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard last week, the State Department said.

Iranian forces seized two Greek tankers in the Gulf on Friday, shortly after Tehran warned it would take punitive action against Athens over the confiscation of Iranian oil by the United States from a tanker held off the Greek coast.

“Iran’s continued harassment of vessels and interference with navigational rights and freedoms are a threat to maritime security and the global economy,” Blinken said in the statement.

Blinken made the comments in a telephone call with Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias, the department said.

The US and Greek diplomats called on Iran to immediately release the seized vessels, their cargoes, and their crews. Blinken said the United States stands with its NATO ally “in the face of this unjustified seizure.”

Iran’s state maritime body said on Saturday the crew of the two Greek tankers had not been detained, and were in good health and being cared for onboard their vessels.

Greek authorities last month impounded the Iranian-flagged Pegas off Greece due to European Union sanctions. The United States later confiscated the Iranian oil cargo held onboard, Reuters reported on Thursday.

The Pegas and its Russian crew were later released, but the seizure inflamed tensions as Iran and world powers seek to revive a 2015 nuclear deal.



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[US Secretary of State Antony Blinken](#)

Iran says crew of two seized Greek tankers 'in good health,' not arrested
Iran's enriched uranium stockpile 18 times over 2015 deal limit: IAEA

[Houthi 'intransigence' over ending Taiz siege undermining UN-brokered truce, says Yemeni foreign minister](#)

Mon, 2022-05-30 20:37

AL-MUKALLA: The Houthis' violations of the UN-brokered truce in Yemen and their reluctance to lift their siege on Taiz city undermined efforts to end the war and extend the truce, Yemen's foreign minister said on Monday.

During a meeting with the UN Yemen envoy Hans Grundberg in Aden, Ahmed Awadh bin Mubarak said his government had offered many concessions during the talks that led to the truce, including agreeing to open Sanaa airport, lifting

restrictions on Hodeidah seaport, and halting hostilities on battlefields.

The minister said the Houthis had responded to those concessions by resisting calls to end their siege, refusing to use revenues from fuel ships that entered Hodeidah seaport during the truce to pay government employees in areas under their control, and continuing to attack government troops.

“The foundations and objectives of the truce are humanitarian in the first place, and the failure to adhere to any of its basic provisions threatens its chances of success,” the minister told the envoy, the official Saba news agency reported.

Grundberg arrived in Aden on Sunday to meet the head of the Presidential Leadership Council Rashad Al-Alimi and his government, less than a day after discussions between the government and the militia failed to reach a deal to lift the siege and open roads in other provinces.

The discussions in Amman are part of the two-month UN-brokered truce that expires this week.

The truce has led to a significant reduction in hostilities, allowed the resumption of commercial flights from Houthi-held Sanaa airport, and allowed fuel ships to enter Hodeidah port.

Yemenia, the national carrier, said its first weekly commercial flight from Sanaa to Cairo would leave on Wednesday.

The head of the government delegation for talks on Taiz in Amman, Abdul Kareem Shaiban, said the Houthis had rejected all of their proposals for opening the main roads linking Taiz with Aden, Hodeidah, and Sanaa and that a new round of talks would begin in the coming days.

“The priority is to open the main roads in accordance with the terms of the UN truce and to avoid attempts to undermine the human rights of the people of Taiz by opening roads that do not alleviate the suffering of the population,” Shaiban said.

Encouraged by the reduction in violence in Yemen, international mediators and foreign envoys are pushing for a truce extension and turning it into a peace process.

“The international community must work together to ensure the parties turn the truce into a more comprehensive peace process while helping #Yemen stabilize its economy,” US Yemen envoy Tim Lenderking tweeted.



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Yemeni minister warns against Houthis recruiting child fighters People in Taiz disappointed after talks fail to end Houthi siege