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Opinion

O' Palestinians ... whoever covers himself with the quilt of others will get cold

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

FOR 15 restless days and nights, the people of Jerusalem resisted bravely until they broke the blockade at Al-Aqsa Mosque.

While Jerusalem was begging for support of the Arab and Islamic world, her voice has gone with the wind of Arab-Arab disputes calling to mind the ancient wars (Dahes and Al-Ghabra'a). Muslims, who have been trading in the issue of Jerusalem for a long time, relaxed their bodies on the silky beds of their schizophrenia.

Those who made the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan as Jerusalem Day and established their troops that murdered Arabs in Yemen, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon remained silent when Aqsa Mosque suffered due to the Israeli blockade. It seemed that the Aqsa they were talking about is located in Mars, not some kilometers from their fellow, Hassan Nasrallah, who raised the slogan, "Marching ... marching until Al-Aqsa."

Apparently, Hassan Nasrallah lost the compass so he went to the East in order to liberate Syria instead of going to the South to liberate the first Qibla (direction of prayer) for Muslims.

For a fortnight, the Jerusalemites suffered as they removed the blockade using their bare hands, chests and continuous prayers. They found no supporter but themselves. Allah Almighty gave them the power and made them a unique example of resistance. That example has nothing to do with white collars and stylish neck ties. That unique example owns nothing but the belief in their land, right and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Jerusalemites had no consideration for 18 armed parties with their leaderships vacillating between the desires of former Egyptian president Jamal Abdul Nasser who lost Sinai within a few hours instead of throwing Israel into the sea as he used to say, and the Syrian 'resistant' regime which stood silently in front of the Golan Heights without any reaction against the Israeli practices concerning Judaization of Jerusalem.

Palestinian groups and organizations took the side of Saddam Hussein when he invaded Kuwait deceptively, covered by the big lie — the Jerusalem Army with seven million soldiers. They were too enthusiastic about the slogans of Muammar Gaddafi, to the extent that they chose to fight at the border strip Tizi Ouzo of Chad, dreaming that the African Desert could lead them to the place they should be in.

They made Jounieh City in Lebanon a compulsory way to Haifa. They thought that involvement in Yemeni-Yemeni struggles is the best way to reach Safed. They created the Black

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Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Newswatch

LONDON: Britain on Friday lifted a ban on personal electronic devices for flights from Istanbul's Sabiha Gokcen airport but will keep restrictions for Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and other Turkish hubs.

Britain's transport ministry said passengers would be allowed to carry large phones, laptops and tablets in the cabin on all UK-bound flights from the airport.

The ban "will be lifted on a case-by-case basis once the UK government has verified that airlines have put in place alternative security measures, and that it is safe and proportionate to do so," it said. (AFP)

BEIRUT: Middle Eastern countries should follow Tunisia's example and immediately repeal laws that let rapists off the hook if they marry their victims, human rights groups said on Friday.

Tunisia passed a law on Wednesday to protect women against violence, which included removing an article allowing a rapist to escape punishment if he married his victim.

"Tunisia sends a message to the rest of the region that they should follow suit," said Rothna Begum,

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U.S. SANCTIONS IRAN SAT-ROCKET LAUNCH 'Tehran rules out halt to tests'

Iran, US trade blame over new naval incident in Gulf

TEHRAN, July 29, (Agencies): A defiant Iran vowed on Saturday to press ahead with its missile programme and condemned new US sanctions, as tensions rise after the West hardened its tone against the Islamic republic.

In the latest incident on the ground, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said the US Navy had approached their patrol vessels in the Gulf and fired flares.

"At 4 pm (1130 GMT) on Friday, the supercarrier USS Nimitz and its accompanying warship, while being monitored by the Guards' frigates, flew a helicopter near the Resalat oil and gas platform and approached the force's ships," the paramilitary force said.

"The Americans in a provocative and unprofessional move, sent a warning message to the frigates and fired flares," it said. The Guards "ignored the unconventional move by the US ships and continued their mission."

Three days earlier, a US Navy patrol ship fired warning shots at a Guards boat in the Gulf as it closed in on the American vessel, according to US officials.

The Guards denied approaching the US ship in Tuesday's incident and said it was the American vessel that had been at fault.

There have been a string of close encounters between US ships and Iranian vessels in the Gulf in recent months.

On the political battlefield, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi told state

broadcaster IRIB that Tehran condemned new US sanctions against its missile programme, which President Donald Trump is set to sign into law, and vowed to press on.

"We will continue with full power our missile programme," he said. "We consider the action by the US as hostile, reprehensible and unacceptable, and it's ultimately an effort to weaken the nuclear deal."

Ghasemi was referring to a 2015 agreement between Iran and US-led world powers that lifted some sanctions on Tehran in return for curbs on the country's nuclear programme.

"The military and missile fields ... are our domestic policies and others have no right to intervene or comment on them," the spokesman said.

The sanctions bill, which also targets Russia and North Korea, was passed by the US Senate on Thursday, two days after being approved by the House of Representatives.

Separately on Friday, Washington imposed new sanctions targeting Iran's missile programme, one day after Tehran tested a satellite-launch rocket.

Iranian state television broadcast footage of the takeoff from the Imam Khomeini space centre in Semnan province in the east of the country.

The launch vehicle was capable of propelling a satellite weighing 550 pounds (250 kgs) into orbit at an altitude of 300 miles (500 kms), it said.

Develop

Western governments suspect Iran of trying to develop the technology for longer-range missiles with conventional or nuclear payloads, a charge denied by Tehran, which insists its space programme has purely peaceful aims.

In a joint statement, Britain, France, Germany and the US condemned Tehran's "destabilising" action, saying the test was in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the nuclear deal.

"We call on Iran not to conduct any further ballistic missile launches and related activities," they said.

Resolution 2231 called on Iran not to test ballistic missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and an arms embargo has remained in place.

The United States has had no diplomatic ties with Iran since 1980, and Trump has halted the direct contacts initiated by his predecessor Barack Obama.

Tensions have mounted between Washington and Tehran since Trump took office six months ago vowing to be the best friend of Israel.

At UN headquarters in New York on Friday, US envoy Nikki Haley expressed mistrust of Iran.

"Iran's widespread support for terrorists tells us we can't trust them. Iran's breaking its obligation on missile testing tells us we can't trust them. Yesterday's launch proves that yet again," she said.

Despite his electoral promise to tear apart what he once called "the worst deal ever", Trump has so far respected the nuclear agreement.

The joint US-European statement said that Iran's latest test features technology related to "ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons".

Iran insists it has "proven its compliance with the nuclear deal" as repeatedly confirmed

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Firefighters extinguishing a fire that erupted on Friday. Firefighters have brought under control the massive blaze at a paper factory and warehouse in Al-Ahmadi governorate, the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) announced.

Amir lauds efforts exerted during fire

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on lauded the Interior and Health Ministries, in addition to the Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) for their efforts that contributed in extinguishing a fire that erupted at a paper factory in Ahmadi industrial area Friday.

In a cable on Saturday, His Highness the Amir voiced appreciation for the honest patriotic spirit that prevailed during the incident, wishing for a speedy recovery to those injured.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad

Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the concerned bodies and officials, including Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi.

Firefighters have brought under control the massive blaze at a paper factory and warehouse in Al-Ahmadi governorate, the KFSD announced.

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7,000 Islamic State affiliates remain in Iraq

Senior Kurd seeks to allay independence fears

WASHINGTON, July 29, (Agencies): An Iraqi Kurdish leader sought on Friday to allay concerns an independence referendum would hurt the fight against Islamic State, after the US State Department said the planned vote would distract from "more urgent priorities" like the defeat of the militant group.

Speaking in Washington, Masrour Barzani, head of the Kurdistan government's Security Council and son of President Barzani, said the government was committed to fighting "terrorism regardless of the political relationship with Baghdad."

Barzani cited the Kurds' role in fighting Islamic State. The Kurds play a major role in the US-backed campaign to defeat the ultra-hardline Sunni Islamist group that overran about a third of Iraq three years ago and also controls parts of Syria.

The Sept 25 vote could turn into another regional flashpoint and is likely to strain Iraq's frayed federal unity. Neighbors Syria, Turkey and Iran, who also have sizable Kurdish populations, are all opposed to an independent Kurdistan in northern Iraq.

Germany, a major European ally for the Iraqi Kurds, has said it was concerned the referendum could exacerbate tensions in Iraq.

"Those opponents who say

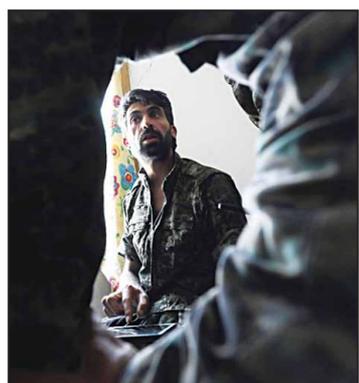
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Turks arrest Briton for Kurd militia work

ISTANBUL, July 29, (AFP): Turkish authorities have arrested a British citizen while he was holidaying on the country's western coast on charges of working with a Kurdish militia Ankara classified as a terror group, state media said.

The man, named as Joseph A.R., was detained in the Aegean holiday resort town of

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Members of The Syrian Democratic Forces talk as they move through destroyed buildings in Raqqa on July 28. Syrian government troops entered the last Islamic State group stronghold in the country's Homs province on July 28 after jihadists began withdrawing, a monitor said. (AFP) — See Page 9

Qatar seeks options at UN to overcome crisis in Gulf

UNITED NATIONS, July 29, (Agencies): Qatar's foreign minister on Thursday accused Arab states of violating international law in their boycott of the country and described the United Nations as the "right place" for Doha to seek options to overcome measures imposed against it.

Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain severed relations with Qatar on June 5, accusing the major gas-exporting Gulf state of financing terrorism and cozying up to their arch-rival Iran. Doha denies the charges.

The four states have cut air and sea links with Qatar and sanctioned dozens of groups and individuals. The United Arab Emirates said on Saturday that Doha needed to change its policies before a dialogue could take place.

"The entire campaign represents a series of violations of international law," Qatar Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani told reporters after meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

"The state of Qatar is not going to spare any effort in order to overcome those violations and try to solve it through the right channels. The United Nations is the right platform to start from," he

said without giving further details.

UAE Ambassador to the United Nations Lana Nusseibeh said the measures taken were "entirely legal, justified and proportionate" and accused Qatar of grave violations.

"We hope to see a diplomatic solution at the regional level through genuine engagement from their side," she told Reuters, adding that the United Nations has an important role to play in countering terrorism and that the countries would keep Guterres and the Security Council updated.

In June, Qatar asked the Montreal-based UN aviation agency to intervene after its Gulf neighbors closed their airspace to Qatar flights.

While Egypt last week accused Qatar of adopting a "pro-terrorist" policy that violated UN Security Council resolutions and described it as "shameful," that the 15-member body has not held Qatar accountable.

Any push to impose UN sanctions would likely be difficult as it needs either consensus approval behind closed doors by the Security Council or a vote on a resolution, which would need nine votes

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