

# Iran tried to recruit agents via Facebook, claims Israel

Author:

Mon, 2022-05-02 23:27

JERUSALEM: Israel's internal security agency on Monday accused Iran of using a fake Facebook profile to try and get Israelis to collect information and harm people in their country.

Shin Bet's allegation comes days after Israel claimed that Iran had plotted to assassinate an Israeli diplomat in Turkey, as global powers seek to revive a nuclear deal with Tehran.

According to the Shin Bet, the profile of a young Jewish-Canadian woman called Sara Puppi with ties in Israel was fake and belonged to an Iranian agent using the social network to befriend primarily Israelis.

After contact was made, Puppi would use the WhatsApp messaging app to try and persuade her new friends "to gather information on Israeli figures while gauging their willingness to harm them, using pressure and promising thousands of dollars," the Shin Bet said.

"Emotional and romantic manipulations were also used," the agency added in a statement.

It said that Shin Bet agents had posed as "friends" of Puppi – whose account had more than 2,000 friends before disappearing on Monday – and received a bitcoin payment from her.

"The Iranian operative behind the account used a business cover story to give various missions," the Shin Bet said.

Those behind the account also tried to damage Israel's ties with Russia by encouraging people to criticize Russian President Vladimir Putin over the Ukraine war, the Shin Bet said.

The Shin Bet told AFP they could link the account to Iran with intelligence they obtained.

Meanwhile, Israel claimed on the weekend it had "foiled" alleged bids by Iran "to assassinate a US general in Germany, a journalist in France and an Israeli diplomat in Turkey."



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## [Tunisia announces 'national dialogue'](#)

Author:

Mon, 2022-05-02 23:24

TUNIS: Tunisian President Kais Saied has announced the launch of "national dialogue" to help resolve a political crisis.

Saied, a former law professor elected in 2019, sacked the government on July 25 last year, later moving to rule by decree.

In a speech late on Sunday, Saied said a commission would manage "the national dialogue," a measure demanded repeatedly by the G7 nations and EU.

Saied's proposed talks will include four groups which, together as the "National Dialogue Quartet," jointly won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015 for its work in building what was, at the time, the only democracy that emerged

from the 2011 Arab Spring.

The four groups are the Tunisian General Labor Union, the Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts, the Tunisian Human Rights League and the Tunisian Order of Lawyers.

On Sunday, UGTT leader Nouredine Taboubi appealed to Saied to launch the national dialogue, saying it was “probably the last chance” to bring the country together and avoid “a dismantling of the state and a financial and economic collapse.”

But Saied ruled out participation in the talks of those “who sabotaged, starved and mistreated the people,” suggesting it would not include parties and civil society organizations which have denounced his seizure of power.

That would cover his arch rivals, the Ennahdha party.

Ennahdha, which has played a central role in Tunisian politics, is part of the National Salvation Front coalition, forged last month between five political parties and five civil society groups.

Saied also said that a committee preparing constitutional reforms for “a New Republic” will be completed soon, with a referendum on the proposals slated for July 25, followed by legislative elections on Dec. 17.

Tunisia is also gripped by a dire social and economic crisis, and has been seeking a loan package from the International Monetary Fund.

Washington, the largest stakeholder in the IMF, has said Tunis must address concerns on democracy if it wants badly needed international economic support.



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## [Hamas claims deadly attack that killed Israeli guard](#)

Author:

Associated Press

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Mon, 2022-05-02 18:46

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

Author:

Arab News

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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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