

Egypt's foreign minister meets Israeli counterpart in Brussels

Sun, 2021-07-11 19:15

LONDON: Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry met his Israeli counterpart Yair Lapid in Brussels on Sunday for the first time since Israel's new cross-party coalition took office last month.

Shoukry said "urgent action was needed to resolve the current stalemate between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, leading to just and comprehensive peace negotiations," Egypt's foreign ministry spokesperson said on Twitter. The meeting was held on the sidelines of Shoukry visit to the Belgian capital where he held talks with European counterparts on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam issue.

Both ministers are also in Brussels to attend the European Union foreign ministers' summit.

During his visit to Brussels, FM [#Sameh_Shoukry](#) meets his Israeli counterpart, Yair Lapid, and stresses the need to resolve the current stalemate between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, leading to a just and comprehensive peace negotiations. [@yairlapid](#)
pic.twitter.com/VEdDT5gcSB

– Egypt MFA Spokesperson (@MfaEgypt) [July 11, 2021](#)

On Thursday, Lapid, foreign minister in a cross-partisan coalition that ousted long-serving conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government a month ago, held his first meeting with his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Safadi.

Lapid said the countries also agreed to explore increasing Jordan's exports to the West Bank to \$700 million a year, from \$160 million now.

"The Kingdom of Jordan is an important neighbor and partner," Lapid said in a statement. "We will broaden economic cooperation for the good of the two countries."

(With Reuters)





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Israel again demolishes Palestinian village in West Bank
Ethiopian intransigence over dam project led Egypt, Sudan to approach UN: President El-Sisi

Yemeni FM condemns Houthi militia's continued rejection of proposed peace initiative for a cease-fire

Sun, 2021-07-11 16:15

RIYADH: Yemen's foreign minister condemned on Sunday the Houthi militia's continued "intransigence and rejection" of a proposed peace initiative for Yemen.

Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak warned that the continued escalation and military aggression by the Iran-backed Houthis, especially against civilians in Marib, exacerbates the country's humanitarian catastrophe and increases the suffering of the displaced.

Saudi Arabia proposed in March a peace initiative that included a comprehensive cease-fire, reopening Sanaa airport and returning to political negotiations.

However, the Houthis responded by continuing a brutal offensive on oil and gas-rich Marib province. The attack sparked international condemnation as the province had served as a safe haven for around 2.7 million displaced persons who had been fleeing the fighting since the conflict began seven years ago. Bin Mubarak's comments came during a meeting with Cathy Westley, the charge d'affaires of the US embassy to Yemen, to discuss the latest developments in the war and the political process.

The foreign minister called for the need to complete the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement for the south of the country and said Yemen's government appreciates the support and efforts made by Saudi Arabia in order to ensure the full implementation of the deal, state-run Saba news agency reported. The agreement was signed between the internationally-recognized Yemeni government and southern separatists in the Saudi capital in December 2019, and called for the formation of a new government, disarmament of militia groups, the demilitarization of the temporary capital Aden, and improving the economy.

Westley said the US calls on the Houthis to immediately accept a cease-fire and enter into negotiations.

She also reiterated the US position in support of the legitimate government and the security, unity and stability of Yemen.



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Yemen troops seize key Al-Bayda area as Houthis flee Saudi deputy defense minister discusses Yemen, Horn of Africa with US officials

[Shell lands near coalition base in eastern Syria: monitor](#)

Author:

Sun, 2021-07-11 12:42

BEIRUT: A mortar shell landed in a gas field in eastern Syria housing coalition forces, a war monitor reported on Sunday.

It fell in the Conoco gas field in Deir Ezzor province, near a base of the

US-led coalition battling Daesh group remnants, said the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The war monitor said a blast was heard in the area but there were no immediate reports of casualties.

It said pro-Iran militias were likely responsible for the incident that followed a series of recent attacks on the nearby Al-Omar oil field, which also houses coalition forces.

The state-run SANA news agency said an explosion was heard from the area of the Conoco gas field, but did not provide additional details.

The coalition was not immediately available for comment.

The latest incident came amid heightened tensions following US strikes last month against three targets Washington said were used by pro-Iran groups in eastern Syria and western Iraq.

On Wednesday, Syrian Kurdish forces said they repelled drone attacks near a major coalition base at the Al-Omar oil field.

Last Sunday, Kurdish forces said two unidentified rocket-propelled grenades landed on the western side of the Al-Omar oil field, without causing casualties.

The Observatory blames pro-Iran militias for both attacks.



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Kurdish authorities in Syria slam UN aid crossing vote as unfairUS-Russia cooperation ensured Syria border crossing kept open: Official

Iraq PM visits activist in hospital after abduction, assault

Author:

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Sun, 2021-07-11 08:56

BAGHDAD: Iraq's Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhemi early Sunday visited in hospital a pro-democracy activist who has been critical of pro-Iran armed factions, after the campaigner had been abducted and assaulted.

Ali Al-Mikdam, a young Iraqi journalist, activist and researcher, had disappeared on Friday, sparking widespread concern from his friends and supporters, before he was released late Saturday, injured, on the outskirts of Baghdad.

A tweet from Khademi's office said the premier had checked up "on the health of journalist and activist Ali Al-Mikdam in one of Baghdad's hospitals after security forces released him from his kidnappers."

Mikdam was a key figure in anti-government protests which swept Iraq for months from October 2019 calling for the removal of Iraq's political class, which activists branded as inept and corrupt.

The protesters also rallied against the influence of Iran in the war-battered country, where powerful pro-Tehran armed factions have been integrated into the national security apparatus.

Mikdam, after receiving threats, had moved to Istanbul and then Irbil in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

He had returned to Baghdad eight days ago, his mother told AFP while he was missing on Friday.

"Only two days ago he told me he had received threats and gave me the phone numbers of his friends to contact them if anything bad happens to him," his mother said then, holding back tears.

Killings, attempted murders and abductions have targeted more than 70 activists since the protest movement erupted in late 2019.

Authorities have failed to publicly identify or charge the perpetrators of the violence, for which no groups have claimed responsibility.

Pro-democracy activists are often portrayed as foreign stooges by Iraq's powerful pro-Iran factions.

Last month, Iraq freed a commander of the state-affiliated Hashed Al-Shaabi, a Shiite paramilitary coalition, two weeks after he was arrested over the murder of a pro-democracy activist.

Mikdam's most recent analysis, published with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy last month, criticized the ongoing wave of assassinations targeting journalists and scholars by armed factions.



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[Second batch of Yemenis stranded in India due to pandemic arrive in Aden](#)

Author:

Sun, 2021-07-11 09:20

DUBAI: The second batch of 153 stranded Yemenis in India landed in Aden Airport on Saturday, state news agency Saba News reported. Health specialists were present at the airport to carry out precautionary measures for those arriving.

The arrivals were then transported by health and security officials into an isolation center to provide them with the necessary health service.

A crumbling health system in war-torn Yemen led thousands of its citizens to seek treatment overseas.

Earlier last year, Yemen's internationally recognized government said it will begin the first evacuation flights for citizens who have been stranded abroad since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

The first evacuation flight was sent to Jordan after Yemen's Supreme National Emergency Committee created procedures and timetables for scheduling the

return of citizens to Yemen.



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Yemen troops seize key Al-Bayda area as Houthis flee Top Houthi commander killed in new Yemen battle