

Yemen Facing Famine as Saudi-GCC War Impacts Millions

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Imperialist-backed forces have maintained their relentless bombing of Yemen.

Warplanes deployed by the Saudi Arabian monarchy and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) along with their allies are continuing the United States supported war of regime-change into the fourth month.

Estimates from various sources reveal that since March 26 when the bombing of Yemen started some 2,600-4,000 people have died. Telecommunications infrastructure, airports, ports, residential areas, hospitals and power stations have been targeted. (New York Times, abna24.com)

On June 29 Press TV wrote that "Saudi military aircraft conducted attacks against a residential area in Sarwah district of Yemen's central province of Ma'rib, situated approximately 120 kilometers (74 miles) east of the Yemeni capital, Sanaa. Nine members of a family lost their lives and three others sustained injuries, the Arabic-language al-Masirah satellite television network reported."

Continuing the same news source says "Six civilians, among them two women and three children, were also killed as Saudi warplanes struck Shibam Kawkaban district in the western Yemeni province of al-Mahwit, situated 53 kilometers (29 miles) northwest of Sanaa. Moreover, Saudi jets carried out over twenty aerial attacks against Sahar and Majz districts of Yemen's northwestern province of Sa'ada, though there were no immediate reports of casualties and the extent of the damage inflicted."

Just one day before on June 28, at least three people, including a child, were also killed when Saudi war planes struck the Fallah district in the northwestern province of Sa'ada. During the early morning hours fighter jets pounded a neighborhood in Saqin district of the same province, destroying two schools.

U.S.-backed Forces Aim to Destroy Country and People

The Saudi-GCC backed fugitive and ousted President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's regime-in-exile announced in late June that there was no need to resume talks after the unsuccessful negotiations in Geneva. After delays in the talks due to the obstacles placed on the Ansurallah Movement (Houthis) representatives reaching Switzerland, the negotiations failed as a result of the obstructive posture of the western-allied forces.

Hadi took the position that if he was not reinstated as the leader of the underdeveloped

Middle Eastern state then there was no basis for the cessation of the bombing and ground offensives launched against the Ansurallah as well as civilians inside the country. The Ansurallah have taken large sections of Yemen since last year forcing Hadi to flee to the southern port city of Aden and later to Riyadh where he remains.

The war is being framed by the West and their surrogates as a proxy conflict between Saudi Arabia and GCC on one hand and the Islamic Republic of Iran and their allies, namely the Ansurallah, inside of Yemen. Efforts by the United Nations to reach a political settlement, as the convening of the June meeting in Geneva was designed to do, have borne no positive results.

In the aftermath of the failed talks in Geneva an Omani plane carrying Houthis delegates back to Saana from Geneva were denied the right to land since the Saudi-GCC bombers control airspace with the assistance of Washington. The plane returned to Muscat, Oman.

At present the UN while condemning periodically the airstrikes being carried out has not imposed any sanctions against the U.S. and the Saudi-GCC alliance which is attempting to bomb Yemen into submission. Despite the war being waged for months, the Ansurallah and a coalition of other forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, have largely maintained their positions on the ground.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement on June 29 decrying the attacks on one of their offices. Nonetheless, the international body acts as if it is helpless in addressing the growing humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Reuters reported that the Secretary-General strongly objected to the imperialist-backed coalition air strike which severely damaged a UN Development Program facility, injuring a guard. The UN called for a thorough investigation into the bombing carried out in the southern strategic port city of Aden.

“The Secretary-General strongly believes that this incident only underscores the imperative that all the parties to the conflict must end the fighting and return to the negotiation table as the only possible way to achieve a durable peace in Yemen,” a spokesperson for the UN told Reuters. (June 29)

Conditions of the Population Worsens

Humanitarian aid groups say that the situation is growing worse every day with shortages of food, water, medicines and other essential services. Millions of people are in need of assistance in Yemen.

First-hand accounts of civilians on the ground in Yemen have been documented by Medicine San Frontières, MSF, (Doctors Without Borders). A June 29 statement taken by the relief organization from Jasmin Mohammed Ali, 26, who is a teacher in the primary school in Qatabah and her sister Asia Mohammed Ali, 25, provides a glimpse of their daily lives in Qatabah since the Saudi-GCC bombing began.

The statement from Ali says in part that “Because of the ongoing crisis, the school I work in is closed; it has been closed for 3 months. We only finished the 1st term and had to stop during the 2nd term. I haven’t been paid for the last month. Recently, the school (which was luckily empty at the time) was affected by the airstrikes as it is close to the central security

office which was targeted; all the windows of the school were shattered into pieces.” (msf.org)

This same statement goes on noting “Water represents everything and without water there is no life. There isn’t any running water anymore in Qataba as the main water facility for the town and the surrounding villages stopped working due to a fuel shortage. We have no water in our house and cannot fill up the tanks either... Airstrikes and shelling is making us terrified and we can’t sleep well. Last night, the kids were too afraid as the shelling and fighting was very close by. We have been thinking about fleeing Qataba, but the problem is that we are 26 family members living in one house. We don’t know where to go.”

UN special envoy for Yemen issued another warning on June 24 saying that the war-ravaged nation was “one step” from widespread famine, where 31 million people are in desperate need of food, water, medicines, clothing, blankets and other basic services. The envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed of Mauritania reported to the international press in the aftermath of a briefing given to the Security Council in a closed session that the crisis would continue to worsen until a ceasefire was achieved.

The fighting is continuing to spread into Saudi Arabia where the Ansurallah and other loyalists are conducting cross-border raids that have killed and injured Riyadh’s soldiers and other security forces.

Middle East Eye stressed that “At least 44 people, civilians and troops, have now lost their lives in shelling and skirmishes along the Saudi side of the border since the campaign began. Last week, three Saudi soldiers and an Emirati were killed in the border area.” (June 28)

This war remains largely hidden from the public in the U.S. where the corporate media has deliberately ignored the massive Saudi-GCC aerial bombings and ground operations carried out by militias supported by Riyadh as well as the role of the Pentagon in engineering the crisis. The State Department claims its wants a peaceful resolution to the war but continues to rationalize Washington’s intelligence coordination and refueling of the Saudi-GCC forces.

Although many Yemeni Americans remained stranded inside the country because the administration of President Barack Obama has refused to evacuate its citizens, very little pressure has been brought to Congress or the White House by the peace, anti-war and civil rights organizations based in the U.S. Yemen represents yet another failed and deadly war initiated and expanded by successive administrations whose aim is to control the Middle East at any cost to the populations of those states.

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