

## **Britain voices 'disappointment' at Saudi Arabia mass executions**

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**London:** British Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood on Sunday expressed "disappointment" at the mass executions in Saudi Arabia, saying Britain will continue to raise these cases with the Saudi authorities.

Early on Saturday, Saudi Interior Ministry announced the execution of 47 people on terrorist charges, including the prominent Shiite Muslim cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

"I am deeply disturbed by the escalation in tensions in the last 24 hours in the Middle East," Ellwood said Sunday in a statement.

"The UK is firmly opposed to the death penalty. We have stressed this to the Saudi authorities and also expressed our disappointment at the mass executions," he noted.

"We have discussed with the authorities in Riyadh, and expect that Ali Al-Nimr and others who were convicted as juveniles will not be executed. The UK will continue to raise these cases with the Saudi authorities," the minister added.

Ellwood also expressed concern over the attack on the Saudi Embassy in Iran. Angry Iranian protesters against the execution of Nimr al-Nimr raided and set fire to the Saudi Embassy in Tehran late Saturday.

"We are deeply concerned to hear of the attack yesterday on the Saudi Embassy in Tehran. It is essential that diplomatic missions are properly protected and respected," he urged.

He continued that there are "those who will wish to exploit the situation and raise sectarian tensions higher."

"This would be against the wishes of the vast majority of those in the region. I urge all parties in the region to show restraint and responsibility," said the minister.

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