

## 'Egypt Police Gun Down 4 Terrorists'

CAIRO (Dispatches) – Egyptian security police have killed four suspected terrorists, including a commander, believed to have been preparing to launch a "major terrorist attack" in the near future, the Egyptian Interior Ministry says.

The shootout occurred in the town of Kerdasa, located in the northern province of Giza, a day earlier, when police raided the hideout of the "wanted" terrorists to arrest them but they resisted, according to a statement released by the ministry.

## Thought for Today

Importance of the deeds that you have done with fear of Allah cannot be minimized and how can the deeds which are acceptable to Allah be considered unimportant.

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# Over 1,000 Daesh Terrorists Killed, Injured in Palmyra



Syrian soldiers take positions as they advance to retake the ancient city of Palmyra from Daesh in a previous operation on March 2, 2017.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – A senior Russian military official says Syrian soldiers either killed or injured more than 1,000 members of the Daesh terrorist group during the recent victorious battle to retake Syria's central city of Palmyra from the terror outfit.

Sergei Rudskoy, the chief of the Main Operational Directorate of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, released the toll.

A day earlier, the Syrian army had said it had recaptured the city and driven the terrorists away with the help of Russian airpower for about a

month and a half.

The Syrian forces also destroyed 19 tanks, 37 armored vehicles, 98 pickup trucks with heavy weapons mounted on them, and more than 100 automobiles during the operation, Rudskoy added.

Daesh first seized the 2,000-year-old city, also known in Arabic as Tadmur, in May 2015 and began looting and demolishing the UNESCO world heritage site's monuments and temples. The Syrian army initially purged the city of the Takfiris in March 2016 but lost it back to them late that year.

In another development, Russia has accused Britain, France, and the United States of having attempted to "poison" the atmosphere of the latest round of the intra-Syrian negotiations.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Friday that the three countries, which together recently drafted and put to a vote an anti-Syria resolution at the United Nations Security Council, sought to undermine the talks by "hurriedly" submitting the draft text at the 15-member Council.

Lavrov said that the measure was

taken without any prior discussions and with the knowledge that it would be blocked.

Russia and China, two of the five permanent members of the Council, vetoed the resolution on February 28, when it was put to a vote.

Lavrov said the authors of the motion "wanted the Security Council to split up" at a critical moment when the long-stalled, UN-backed peace talks were being re-launched.

The United Nations hailed the negotiations as "substantive" and said the talks yielding a "clear agenda" for the future of the war-ravaged Arab country.

Speaking at a press conference after wrapping up the nine-day talks in Geneva, UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura said the strategy for battling terrorism would be at the core of another round of peace negotiations between representatives of the Syrian government and those of the armed opposition groups later this month.

Meanwhile, the so-called High Negotiations Committee (HNC), which serves as an umbrella group for terrorists and opponents of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the talks, announced that it had accepted the 12-point agenda given to delegates by the UN special envoy.

Nasser al-Hariri, the head of the HNC, added that this round of talks had "more positive" results than the previous diplomatic efforts, arguing that issues related to political transition had been discussed in depth.

# 14 Civilians Killed in U.S.-Led Airstrikes In Iraq's Mosul



Iraqi special forces soldiers walk on a street during a battle with Daesh terrorists in Mosul, Iraq March 3, 2017.

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – More than a dozen Iraqi civilians have lost their lives in the U.S.-led coalition airstrikes in the eastern part of Mosul, which was cleared of Daesh terrorists by Iraq's armed forces in January.

Iraq's Shafaq News website said the fatalities occurred on Saturday after U.S.-led warplanes targeted a car loaded with explosives in al-Nabi Shiet district of eastern Mosul, killing at least 14 members of three families in the area.

Iraqi officials also said the coalition strikes had also bombed a base near Mosul and killed seven senior Daesh commanders, among them four Saudi Arabian nationals.

Meanwhile, twelve people, including women and children, are being treated for possible exposure to chemical weapons agents in Mosul, where Daesh terrorist group is fighting off an offensive by U.S.-backed Iraqi forces, the United Nations said on Saturday.

The U.N.'s World Health Organization has activated with partners and local health authorities "an emergency response plan to safely treat men, women and children who may be exposed to the highly toxic chemical," the agency said in a statement.

It said all 12 patients had been received since March 1 for treatment which they are undergoing in Erbil, the capital of Iraq's Kurdish region, east of Mosul.

Four of them are showing "severe signs

associated with exposure to a blister agent". The patients were exposed to the chemical agents in the eastern side of Mosul.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said on Friday that five children and two women were receiving treatment for exposure to chemical agents.

Iraq's interior ministry said on Friday that 14,000 people fled the northern Iraqi city on Thursday alone, the largest wave of internally displaced people (IDPs) since a U.S.-backed operation in west Mosul was launched on February 19.

The total number of IDPs who fled western Mosul since the start of the military push has reached 46,000, the ministry said.

The announcement followed a previous statement by the United Nations warning that around 4,000 civilians were fleeing the city, Daesh's last major urban stronghold in Iraq, each day.

Daesh, which holds the majority of west Mosul, has periodically used rudimentary chemical weapons in the course of its more than two-year war with Iraqi forces. The push for western Mosul began after the eastern half of the city, which is separated from the Daesh-held west by the River Tigris, was declared "fully liberated" in January.

Mosul fell to Daesh in the summer of 2014, along with large expanses of northern and western Iraq.

# U.S. Continues Bombing Civilians in Yemen

SANAA (Dispatches) – The United States has carried out airstrikes against suspected al-Qaeda targets in Yemen, according to the U.S. Defense Department, leaving an unknown number of civilians injured.

The U.S. military conducted over 30 strikes against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula over the past two nights in Shabwah, Abyan and Bayda provinces, Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis said at a news briefing.

"This is part of a plan to go after this very real threat and ensure they are defeated," Davis said.

"Make no mistake, while we talk a lot about ISIS (ISIL), AQAP is

the organization that has more American blood on its hands. It is a deadly terrorist organization that has proven itself to be very effective in targeting and killing Americans," he added.

The AQAP has taken advantage of the chaos and breakdown of security in Yemen to tighten its grip on the southern and southeastern parts of the crisis-hit country.

Residents in a village in Shabwah province say the American attacks targeted civilian homes and wounded an unknown number of people, including women and children.

Yemeni sources said that eight

suspected al-Qaeda militants were also killed in the strikes.

The U.S. has carried out drone strikes against alleged AQAP terrorists for years, but civilians frequently fall victim to such attacks.

The U.S. drone strikes in Yemen are carried out alongside the Saudi military aggression against the impoverished conflict-ridden country.

Tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets in the Yemeni capital city of Sana'a to express outrage over Saudi Arabia's deadly military campaign against the impoverished Arab country.

The protesters converged on

the Old City of Sana'a following Friday prayers, carrying Yemeni flags and banners in condemnation of the Saudi aggression.

Participants in the demonstration, under the motto "Tough against Disbelievers", also held up pictures of civilians injured in the deadly Saudi airstrikes, calling on the United Nations to fulfill its responsibilities and stop the Riyadh regime's atrocious military offensive.

They also warned the Saudi leadership that the continued attacks on the people in Yemen will only strengthen the steadfastness of the nation.

# Turkish President Claims Germany Supports Terrorism

ANKARA (Press TV) – Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has accused Germany of supporting terrorism after German authorities canceled planned rallies in support of a referendum in Turkey aimed at expanding Erdogan's executive powers.

The German authorities "need to be put on trial for aiding and harboring terror," Erdogan said in Istanbul.

The Turkish president's comments come after a group of German legislators called on Chancellor Angela Merkel to ban him from entering the country

while Deniz Yucel, a Turkish-German journalist for German daily Die Welt, continues to be held in Turkish police custody since February 14.

The call was followed by the cancellation of a number of pro-Erdogan rallies in Germany, which in turn prompted Turkey to summon the German ambassador in protest.

Yucel, who is "a representative of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) [and] a German agent, was hidden for a month in the German consulate. When we told them to hand him over to be tried, they

refused," Erdogan said.

The journalist is accused of alleged links to the hacker collective RedHack, which obtained the emails of Turkey's Energy Minister Berat Albayrak, Erdogan's son-in-law, and made them available on the online leaking platform WikiLeaks.

The Turkish authorities have also accused Yucel of supporting the outlawed PKK, which Ankara deems as a terrorist organization, and thus arrested him on charges of terrorist propaganda, inciting hatred and spying activities.

Yucel's detention has caused

grave damage to bilateral relations, with Merkel criticizing Turkey's handling of the journalist's case as "bitter," "disappointing" and "disproportionate."

The Turkish leader also lambasted the German authorities for allegedly allowing PKK militants to sneak into the European country while the rallies, where Turkish ministers were to lead, were cancelled.

Ankara, which expects to gain support from 1.4 million Turks in Germany eligible to vote in the plebiscite, accuses Berlin of working for a "No" vote ahead of the April referendum.

# EU States Mull 'Unified Stance' Against Zionist Settlements

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) – European Union member states seek to discuss whether to go ahead with routine talks with the Zionist regime before the bloc adopts a "unified and clear" stance against Tel Aviv's defiant settlement construction on occupied Palestinian territories.

The EU, like much of the rest of the world, considers the Zionist regime's settlements a violation of international law and an impediment to talks with the Palestinians, whose land has been occupied by the regime.

European diplomats anonymously told The Associated Press that the foreign ministers of the EU member states were now to discuss a unanimous stance against the unlawful constructions before holding a next round of routine talks with Tel Aviv.

Such internal deliberation has effectively put a future schedule for the talks with the occupying regime in uncertainty.

One diplomat said future talks could not be "business as usual. Things have to be said very clearly to the Israelis."

"We want to have a unified and clear European Union position that

takes into account developments on the ground," the diplomat said. "Once we have a clear position, then we can look at a date" for future talks with the occupying regime.

The occupying regime has been setting up settlements across the West Bank and East al-Quds since occupying the Palestinian territories in 1967. The structures have been widely condemned as an insidious push toward facilitating the annexation of the lands.

The occupying regime's parliament on February 6 rubber-stamped the so-called "Legalization Bill," which retroactively legalized structures built on Palestinian land. The move came barely two months after the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved a resolution declaring that settlement construction "constitutes a flagrant violation under international law."

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres blasted the ratification of the bill, emphasizing that it would "have far-reaching legal consequences for Israel." A chorus of outcry also followed from elsewhere, including from the German government.