

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- At least 155 members of the terrorist Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), including a number of the group's senior leaders, have reportedly fled Iraq to Albania.

A U.S. passenger plane transferred the MKO terrorists, who had been holed up in Camp Liberty near Baghdad International Airport since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, early on Thursday, Didehban Strategic Institute reported. Several high-ranking officials of the MKO terrorist group, possibly its ringleader Masoud Rajavi, were reportedly on board the U.S. plane.

TEHRAN (Tasnim) -- Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said Saturday the Saudi regime is playing a negative role in most regional issues, Yemen in particular, stressing that Saudis have failed to reach their goals in the region.

"Saudi Arabia has been bombing Yemen for a year and a half now. However, as you can see, they (the Saudis) have had no success in this war," Larijani told Sheikh Akram al-Kaabi, head of Hezbollah al-Nujaba, here. Al-Nujaba is a major Iraqi Shia resistance movement fighting Daesh.

Shamkhani Proposes in New Delhi: Reviving Iran-Russia-India Security Work

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) -- A senior Iranian official said on Saturday extremism and Takfiri terrorism threaten security in the Middle East, urging all countries to simultaneously engage in the fight against terrorism and the states sponsoring the scourge.

In a meeting with Indian National Security Advisor Ajit here, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Shamkhani said the simultaneous campaign against terrorist groups and countries supporting them is the common duty of the international community with the purpose of protecting peace and stability.

He expressed Iran's readiness to revive trilateral cooperation with India and Russia on security issues in the region, particularly on ways to prevent the spread of terrorism and help establish stability and security in Afghanistan.

The SNSC secretary emphasized that joint efforts should be made to solve any political and historical disputes among regional countries in a bid to prepare the necessary grounds for exploiting all regional capacities to enhance economic, social and cultural development.

Shamkhani further stressed the importance of exchanging views, adopting common stances and improving close cooperation between Tehran and New Delhi on issues of common interest.

He said some regional and global powers are not happy with close and constructive relations between Iran and India and urged the two countries to step up their vigilance and counter all obstacles to the expansion of ties.

The senior Iranian official further said that the resumption of activities at Iran-India joint defensive committee within a new and extensive framework would create an opportunity for the two sides to improve close cooperation in military and defensive sectors.

"Considering the successful record of defensive cooperation between the two countries, arriving at common strategic analyses and methods will be a step in the path of increasing regional capability to establish security and stability," Shamkhani said.

The senior Iranian official arrived in New Delhi on Friday for an official two-day visit to hold talks with senior Indian authorities on leading regional and international political and security developments.

In a meeting between Shamkhani and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, the two officials discussed mutual ties in economic, political and cultural areas and regional and international developments, particularly the fight against terrorism.

Shamkhani said Iran and India have the potential to help put an end to crises in the Middle East and fight terrorism in the region.

"The constructive approaches and independent positions of Iran and India, as two regional powers, have prepared considerable grounds for cooperation in order to end regional disputes and crises and fight Takfiri terrorism."

He criticized measures by certain regional countries for nurturing Daesh terrorists by supporting Takfiri ideologies and added that cooperation between Iran and India can prevent the infiltration of Takfiri groups into India's Muslim community.

He added that relations between Tehran and New Delhi are impervious to a third party, saying, "Historic and constructive relations between the two countries have never been a threat to other countries and have never pursued an approach other than improving regional stability, security and development."

The SNSC secretary also called for the adoption of joint measures

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Iran Detects Malware in Petrochem Plants



Minister of Petroleum Bijan Zangeneh, left, visits Bu Ali Petrochemical Complex in Mahshahr, July 7, 2016.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran has detected and removed malicious software from two of its petrochemical complexes, a senior military official said on Saturday, after announcing last week it was investigating whether recent petrochemical fires were caused by cyber attacks.

The official said the malware at the two plants was inactive and had not played a role in the fires.

"In periodical inspection of petrochemical units, a type of industrial malware was detected and the necessary defensive measures were taken," Gholamreza Jalali, head of Iran's civilian defense, was quoted as saying by the state news agency IRNA.

Iran is alert to the threat of cyber attack by foreign countries. The United States and the occupying regime of Israel covertly sabotaged Iran's nuclear program in 2009 and 2010 with the Stuxnet computer virus.

The National Cyberspace Council

announced last week that it was investigating whether the recent petrochemical fires were triggered by a cyber attack.

But when asked if the fire at Iran's Bu Ali Sina refinery complex last month and other fires this month were caused by the newly-discovered malware, Jalali said: "the discovery of this industrial virus is not related to recent fires."

The oil minister said last week that most of the fires in petrochemical plants happened because the privatized petrochemical companies have cut their budgets for health and safety inspections.

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Cyberspace Council Abolhasan Firouzabadi however said a team of experts would be having a look at the possibility of cyberattacks as being a cause.

"Special teams will be sent to the afflicted sites to study the possibility

of cyber systems having a role in the recent fires," he said.

The investigation comes in the wake of at least three fires at petrochemical and oil installations and another massive blaze on a 42-inch gas pipeline in recent weeks.

Iran experienced the first cyberattack on its main oil export terminal and on the Petroleum Ministry itself in April 2012 when a virus was detected inside the control systems of Kharg Island which handles the bulk of Iranian crude oil exports.

The attack, which authorities said was traced back to the U.S., forced the ministry to disconnect computer systems controlling other oil facilities.

But the most high-profile cyberattack against Iran was discovered in 2010 after the Stuxnet virus, designed to subvert industrial systems, targeted the country's nuclear energy program.

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Iraq Mulls Selling Crude Through Iran

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) -- Iraq's government would consider selling crude through Iran should talks with the autonomous Kurdish region on an oil revenue-sharing agreement fail, a senior oil ministry official in Baghdad told Reuters.

Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization (SOMO) plans to hold talks with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), possibly next week about Iraqi oil exported through Turkey, Deputy Oil Minister Fayadh al-Nema said in an interview on Friday evening.

"If the negotiations come to a close" without an agreement "we will start to find a way in order to sell our oil because we need money, either to Iran or other countries," he said by telephone.

Iraq, OPEC's second-largest producer after Saudi Arabia, depends on oil sales for 95% of its public income. Its economy is reeling un-

der the double impact of low oil prices and the war against Daesh militants.

The Kurdistan region produces around 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) on its territory and exports those volumes via Turkey. Baghdad would not be able to reroute those volumes to Iran but could order shipments of some 150,000 bpd via Iran that are being produced in the nearby province of Kirkuk.

An agreement between Iran and Iraq could function in a similar fashion as oil-swap deals Tehran has had with Caspian Sea nations, according to an oil official who asked not to be identified.

Iraq would import Iraqi oil to its refineries and export an equivalent amount of its own crude on behalf of Baghdad from Iranian ports on the Persian Gulf. Iraq has ports on the Persian Gulf but they are

not linked to the northern Kirkuk fields by pipeline.

Iraq's state-run North Oil Company resumed pumping crude through the Kurdish-controlled pipeline to Turkey last week as "a sign of goodwill to invite them (the Kurds) to start negotiations," Nema said.

He said pumping had resumed on the instruction of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi following "some understanding" between Baghdad and Arbil. Abadi said on Tuesday the decision had been made to avoid damage to reservoirs.

The flow of crude extracted from Kirkuk by North Oil and pumped in the pipeline has been running at about 75,000 bpd since last week, or half the rate before it was halted in March, Nema said.

Should there be an agreement with the Kurds, flow through the

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Turkish Troops Clash With U.S.-Backed Forces

ANKARA (Dispatches) --The Turkish military and allied militants clashed with the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and pro-Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in northern Syria on Saturday. "Turkish tanks advanced today near Al-Amarnah in Aleppo province, south of the border, and clashes broke out between them and fighters backed by Kurdish forces," Syrian Observatory for Human Rights head Rami Abdel Rahman said.

According to the pro-SDF Manbij Military Council, Turkish forces also targeted positions of pro-SDF fighters in the village of Yusufbeg.

"The bombardment conducted by Turkish jets this morning left some Jarablus Military Council fighters injured, and these were taken under treatment in hospitals in Manbij," said the council, in a statement released on the pro-Kurdish Firat News Agency, referring to the pro-SDF military grouping aimed at capturing Jarablus.

It added that Turkey had "dangerously escalated its attacks by exploiting the silence of the world and international and regional temporary consensus for its blatant interference in Jarablus in order to obstruct the war on terror," referring to Turkey's decision to enter northern

Syria on Wednesday, ostensibly to drive Daesh militants out of the border city of Jarablus.

Fighters from the Turkish-backed militant group Faylaq al-Sham also reported that several people had been killed after they clashed with the SDF south of Jarablus on Saturday morning.

Turkish jets also carried out airstrikes on YPG/SDF positions south of Jarablus, which was captured by Turkey and its allies on Thursday from Daesh.

The clashes are likely to be a headache for the U.S., which ostensibly supports both sides involved in the fighting.

The SDF and YPG put out mixed reactions to the escalation on Saturday. A number of SDF component groups, including the Arab-majority Jaish al-Thuwwar, announced their intention to challenge the "Turkish occupation."

However, another YPG commander stated on Twitter that his group would show restraint with regards to the Turkish forces and continue to focus on fighting Daesh.

"Regarding increased Turkish military attacks on our border positions in triple cantons (northern Syria), we continue to take on the restraint approach -- refusing

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