

#### Four Dead, 2 Wounded in Turkish Oil Refinery Explosion

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Four people have lost their lives and two others sustained injuries when a powerful explosion ripped through an oil refinery in Turkey's western province of Izmir.

Bayram Yilmaz, the governor for the province's Aliaga district, said the blast at the Tüpraş Aliaga oil refinery was an "industrial accident," which took place due to the build-up of gas during the maintenance of a naphtha tank that had not been used for a long time. Yilmaz added that there was no fire after the explosion and production had resumed at the refinery.

#### Thought for Today

If I cut a faithful Muslim into pieces to make him hate me, he will not turn into my enemy and if I give all the wealth of this world to a hypocrite to make him my friend he will not befriend me.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

VOL NO: LV 10440 TEHRAN / Est.1959

Thursday, October 12, 2017, Mehr 20, 1396, Muharram 21, 1439

# U.S. Continues to Demonize Hezbollah

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Washington's move to reward tips about two Hezbollah members goes in line with U.S. efforts to demonize the Lebanese resistance movement, says a movement official.

The United States is "the last state" to designate people as terrorists, the unnamed Hezbollah official told the Associated Press in a report published on Wednesday.

The U.S. Department of State said it would pay up to \$7 million for tips about Talal Hamiyah, the head of Hezbollah's foreign operations, and \$5 million for Fu'ad Shukr, a top military officer of the movement. Nathan Sales, the State Department's coordinator for counterterrorism, told reporters that the reward, the first of its kind in a decade, was "another step to increase the pressure" on Hezbollah.

"It is part of the continuous efforts to demonize Hezbollah. They are false accusations that will not have any effect on the operational activities of Hezbollah," the unnamed He-



Hezbollah supporters fly the flags of the resistance movement and Lebanon during a speech by Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah to mark the 11th anniversary of the end of the 2006 war with the Zionist regime, in the town of Khiam, southern Lebanon, August 13, 2017.

zbollah official said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Hezbollah official accused the U.S. of supporting terrorist organizations and backing states and regimes "that have a long history in financing and supporting terrorism."

Nathan Sales, the State Department's coordinator for counterterror-

ism, told reporters that the reward, the first of its kind in a decade, was "another step to increase the pressure" on Hezbollah.

Sales denounced the resistance movement as a "global threat" and stressed that "countering Hezbollah is a top priority for the [U.S. President Donald] Trump administra-

tion."

He further signaled that Washington would press countries into designating Hezbollah as a terrorist group and into making no distinction between the group's political and military wings.

The U.S. labels the entire Hezbollah a terrorist organization. Most recently, the Congress Foreign Affairs committee voted for a network of additional sanctions against the movement.

Zionist war minister Avigdor Lieberman has also claimed that Hezbollah controls the Lebanese army.

"We are talking about Hezbollah and the Lebanese army, and to my regret this is the reality. The Lebanese army has turned into an integral part of Hezbollah's command structure," he added.

Hezbollah has played a critical role in the Syrian military's counter-terrorism operations over the past few years. The movement says the mission is aimed at preventing the spillover of the Syria crisis into Lebanon.

## PM Abadi: Daesh to Be Completely Defeated in Iraq This Year



Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi says the Daesh terrorists group will be totally defeated in the Arab country until the end of the current year.

The Iraqi prime minister made the remark in a televised speech, five days after Iraqi army forces, backed by allied fighters from the Popular Mobilization Units, liberated the strategic town of Hawijah from the grips of Daesh after more than two weeks of fierce battle.

The recapture put an end to Daesh's presence in northern Iraq and left the terror group in control of a stretch of land skirting the western border with Syria, including the town of al-Qaim. Abadi, at the time, described the latest gain as a "victory not just of Iraq but of the whole world."

Hawijah lies between the two major routes north from Baghdad, to the second city Mosul, and to Kirkuk City and the semi-autonomous Kurdish region.

The most decisive blow to Daesh,

however, came in July, when Iraqi forces liberated the northern city of Mosul, used to be Daesh's de facto capital in the Arab country, after being under the control of the terror group for the previous three years. The battle for recapturing Daesh's last urban bastion lasted for nine months.

Earlier in the day, the Iraqi army announced that the air force warplanes had conducted precision airstrikes against Daesh positions in a road linking the small town of Akashat to the terrorist-held town of al-Qaim, located nearly 400 kilometers northwest of the capital Baghdad, killing at least 17 terrorists.

The terrorists swept through parts of northern and western Iraq in June 2014. The terrorists then began a reign of terror across the captured areas, committing crimes against all ethnic and religious communities in Iraq, including Shias, Sunnis, Kurds, Christians and others.

## Hamas, Fatah Resume Reconciliation Talks



Fatah and Hamas officials hold their hands up during a meeting in Gaza City, October 2, 2017.

CAIRO (Dispatches) – Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah have kicked off unity talks in the Egyptian capital amid high hopes that the negotiations would usher in a long-awaited national reconciliation.

"We meet in Cairo full of hope to draw and lay down a roadmap" for national reconciliation, senior

Hamas delegate Izzat Reshiq said on his Twitter account of the three-day talks that began on Tuesday.

"Unity and national reconciliation among all our Palestinian people is our strategic option to move forward," he added.

The Palestinian leadership has been divided between Fatah and Hamas since 2006, when the lat-

ter scored a landslide victory in parliamentary elections in the Gaza Strip. Hamas has ever since been running the coastal enclave, while Fatah has been based in the autonomous parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Previous reconciliation attempts by the two sides have failed.

In September, however, Hamas said it had accepted key reconciliation conditions offered by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and underlined its "desire to achieve national unity."

The resistance movement also invited the Palestinian unity government formed in 2014 to return to Gaza, dissolving an administrative committee that runs the besieged territory as a step towards fresh national elections in Gaza and the West Bank.

The statement followed negotiations in Cairo between the movement's officials and a delegation sent by Abbas.

On October 2, the Authority's administration, led by Prime Minister Rami al-Hamdallah, held its meeting in Gaza for the first time since 2014.

During the talks in Cairo, the two sides are expected to examine ways to implement a 2011 agreement brokered by Egypt, under which 3,000 Fatah security officers would join a Gaza police force over the course of a year.

Under that deal, Hamas' 25,000-strong armed wing, Ezzedine al-Qassam, which has defended Gaza against three deadly wars waged by the Zionist regime over the past decade, would maintain its position. The resistance group says the force is non-negotiable.

Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has warned Palestinians against "bogus reconciliations," and reiterated Tel Aviv's demand for the disbandment of Hamas's military arm.

## Quartet to Meet in Oman to Revive Afghan Talks With Taliban

MUSCAT (Dispatches) – The four-nation Quadrilateral Coordination Group, comprising Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and the United States, are expected to hold a meeting in Oman next week to revive the stalled talks involving the Taliban militant group.

A senior Pakistani Foreign Ministry official confirmed on Wednesday that the meeting would be convened in Muscat on October 16. The official would not elaborate on whether the representatives of the Taliban would join the gathering.

An Afghan official and a senior member of the High Peace Council (HPC) said the meeting would certainly take place with the presence of the Taliban delegates.

"HPC and government representatives will participate, and it is an important one because the Taliban representatives will be there. We will go with a clear plan," said Amin Waqad, who is also a close aide to Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

Sources from the Taliban said the group had yet to receive an invitation, adding that the general plan in the leadership was to skip the meeting.

Two senior members of the Taliban later said that even an invitation at the time being would be too late and the group would certainly refrain from sending a delegation.

"Till that time, we were not invited, but even if we received any invitation, our senior mem-

bers decided not to participate in the meeting," said one of the Taliban leaders on condition of anonymity.

The QGC has been trying over the past years to facilitate direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban. Efforts stalled in 2015 when news broke out that Taliban's founder and long-time leader Mullah Omar had died in 2013.

Washington has yet to comment on the news of the Oman meeting. Many blame the White House for the recent resurgence in Taliban militancy, saying US forces have effectively failed to establish security in Afghanistan some 16 years after they led an invasion of the country to oust the Taliban from power.

## Saudi Arabia, Bahrain Start Joint Naval Drills

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Saudi Arabia and Bahrain have started joint naval exercise in the Persian Gulf waters as the Manama regime has been trying for years to draw closer to Saudi authorities and receive their assistance in the heavy-handed crackdown against pro-democracy activists and opposition figures.

Commander of the Eastern Fleet Rear Admiral Fahd al-Ghafili said the naval exercises, codenamed Bridge 18, began between the Saudi Royal Navy and the Bahraini Royal Navy, Saudi Arabia's official news agency SPA reported.

He added that the drills are aimed at consolidating Riyadh-Manama naval ties, increasing combat preparedness, supporting and reinforcing joint forces in case of naval confrontations and strengthening joint operational coordination.

Ghafili further noted that the naval drills will be staged in two phases,

stressing that Saudi and Bahraini naval forces will carry out controlling operations in their territorial waters, protect critical infrastructure and main waterways, and conduct surveillance operations during the maneuvers.

Thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the country in mid-February 2011.

They are demanding that the Al Khalifah dynasty relinquish power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established.

Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any trace of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown.

Scores of people have lost their lives and hundreds of others sustained injuries or got arrested as a result of the Al Khalifah regime's crackdown.

## Bombers Attack Damascus Police HQ

BEIRUT (Reuters) – Three attackers blew themselves up near the police headquarters in central Damascus on Wednesday, Syrian state media said, in the second such attack to hit the capital this month.

The blasts killed one person and injured six others, state television said, citing the interior ministry.

The bombers tried to storm the police command center and clashed with guards before detonating explosive belts at the entrance, it said.

The police cornered the third attacker behind the building, where he blew himself up on the street, state media added.

Earlier this month, bombers struck a police station in another part of the capital, with 17 people reported dead. Daesh claimed the attack.