

## Daesh Claims 2 Rockets Fired Into Israeli-Occupied Territories

CAIRO (Dispatches) – Daesh has claimed responsibility for two rockets fired on Sunday from Egypt's Sinai peninsula into the Israeli-occupied territories, an official statement by the group said on Monday.

"The fighters confronted Israeli jets that flew above the state and targeted the Eshkol compound with two Grad rockets," the statement said.

There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage and the group did not provide evidence for its claim.

## Thought for Today

Those are the fortunate people who adopt the Holy Qur'an and prayers as their guide and protector and like Prophet Jesus Christ (Isa) they forsake the world and its vicious pleasure.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

VOL NO: LV 10444 TEHRAN / Est.1959

Tuesday, October 17, 2017, Mehr 25, 1396, Muharram 26, 1439

# SDF Militants in Final Push Against Daesh in Raqqah

# Syria Says Air Defenses Hit Infiltrating Zionist Warplane



This photo taken on October 01, 2017 shows the damage near the central hospital of the embattled northern Syrian city of Raqqah.

RAQQAH, Syria (Dispatches) – U.S.-backed militants battled foreign terrorists defending the last pocket of Daesh's one-time Syrian capital of Raqqah on Monday, bringing their four-month campaign for the city to the brink of victory.

A Reuters correspondent saw

smoke rising above the city and heard machinegun and mortar fire.

A field commander of the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) alliance of Kurdish and Arab militants in Raqqah said he expected the operation to end on Monday. The U.S.-led coalition supporting them said it could not

put a timeline on the battle.

A convoy of Syrian Daesh terrorists left Raqqah on Saturday night with their families, leaving only 200-300 foreign terrorists to mount a last stand, according to the SDF.

The SDF is now poised to end Daesh's rule over a city where

it launched a string of lightning victories in 2014 and plotted attacks on civilian targets across the West.

Its defeat in Raqqah mirrors its collapse across Iraq and Syria, where its enemies have driven it from cities, killed its leaders in air strikes and regained the oil fields that funded its self-declared caliphate.

Daesh lost Mosul in Iraq, its largest city and most prized possession, after months of fighting in July.

The group, which at its height ruled millions of people in both countries, is now forced back in Syria into a strip of the Euphrates valley south of Dayr al-Zawr and desert on each side.

"We have conducted some (air) strikes in the last 24 hours, but I suspect that that will pick up here very soon with the SDF advancing into the final remaining areas of the city," said coalition spokesman Colonel Ryan Dillon.

The coalition has supported the SDF with air power and special forces throughout its Raqqah campaign, which began in November with an offensive to isolate the city.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Syrian army said its air defense system hit an Israeli jet that infiltrated the Syrian airspace Monday morning.

The general command of the Syrian army said in a statement that the system was triggered by the Zionist regime's warplanes that infiltrated the Syrian airspace from the Lebanese territory, adding that the air defenses confronted the jets, hitting one directly, and pushing the others to flee.

Hours later, the Zionist troops fired multiple rockets from inside the occupied-territories, targeting a Syrian military site in the countryside of Damascus, leaving only damages.

The general command warned of the "dangerous repercussions of the repetitive aggressive attempts from Israel," stressing the Syrian army's resolve to continue the fight against the terrorist groups in Syria, naming them "the hand of Israel in the region."

However, the Zionist regime's military spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Jonathan Conricus said no Zionist planes were hit. The counter-strike took place two hours later and "incapacitated" the anti-aircraft unit located 50 km (30

miles) east of Damascus, he said.

"We know according to our intelligence it was a battery controlled by the Syrian regime and we hold the Syrian regime responsible for the fire," Conricus said.

Over two hours later, the Zionist regime launched several missiles that allegedly hit a military position in the Damascus countryside and only caused material damage, the Syrian army said, warning the Zionist against the "grave consequences of repeated aggressive attempts."

Syria and the Zionist regime, while old enemies, have rarely traded blows directly since a 1974 ceasefire ended their last conventional war.

Monday's incident was additionally unusual given its publication by the Zionist regime, which rarely gives details on its air force activities over Lebanon and Syria.

Such missions in Syria have increased dramatically during the country's six-and-a-half-year-old civil war, Zionist officials say. All efforts, they say, are made to avoid accidental clashes with Russian forces helping Damascus beat back insurgents.

## Over Yemen War

# UK Labour Repeats Calls for Saudi Arms Embargo

LONDON (Dispatches) – The UK's Labour Party has renewed calls for a ban on all arms sales to Saudi Arabia, as the kingdom's brutal military aggression against poverty-stricken Yemen continues.

Fabian Hamilton, the shadow minister for peace, said Sunday that unlike the ruling Tory government, a Labour administration would only provide weapons to countries that use them for defensive purposes.

"We should not be selling weapons to any state that uses, or could potentially use, weapons we supply for internal repression or for foreign wars," Hamilton told the Middle East Eye, noting that the ban should include all the Saudi allies, who have been participating in the deadly war since it began in March 2015.

More than 12,000 people have been killed ever since, and much of the country's infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and factories, has

been ravaged.

The Saudi-led war has also triggered a deadly cholera epidemic across Yemen and has dragged the impoverished nation to the brink of a widespread famine.

When asked if Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn would push for UK arms embargoes against the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Egypt, Hamilton responded, "Absolutely."

The government of Prime Minister Theresa May has remained defiant in the face of growing pressure to stop arms exports to Saudi Arabia, defending the sales amid evidence of war crimes and civilian deaths in Yemen.

British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon went to Riyadh last month to discuss military cooperation with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who serves as the kingdom's defense minister and deputy prime minister.

May seeks to build on the



People hold banners showing victims of Saudi airstrikes during a demonstration outside the United Nations offices in the capital, Sana'a, August 29, 2017.

traditionally strong ties with the Arab states of the Persian Gulf region before the UK's planned departure from the European Union. She said last year that Britain would invest over three billion pounds in military forces of the oil rich countries over

the next decade.

The Middle East has been a key market for the UK's arms industry, which has sold more than six billion pounds of arms to Saudi Arabia since it began its bombing campaign in Yemen.

# Saudi Carpentry Workshop Fire Kills 10

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Ten people have died in Saudi Arabia as a fire engulfed a carpentry workshop in the capital Riyadh, the Persian Gulf kingdom's civil defense said.

"The Riyadh civil defense put out a fire that broke out at a carpentry workshop in the Badr district of Riyadh," the Saudi civil defense said in a post on its official Twitter account.

According to the report, the overnight fire also left three

people injured.

The civil defense added that the victims' identities are still unknown and no information was given on the cause of the fire.

It also posted photos of what appeared to be an enormous lumber yard engulfed in flames. Firefighters were shown working through the night to extinguish the fire.

The blaze comes nearly three months after 11 migrant workers suffocated as a fire engulfed a

windowless house they shared in Saudi Arabia's southern province of Najran.

The July blaze also left six workers injured. The civil defense said back then that the victims were Indian and Bangladeshi nationals.

Millions of poor Asians are working in the Persian Gulf states. Human rights groups say many of the workers suffer exploitation and abuses, including non-payment of wages.

According to latest official figures released in 2015, nine million foreigners are currently working in Saudi Arabia, many of them South Asians.

Rights groups have urged the Persian Gulf kingdom and other Arab states to end the "kafala" sponsorship system, which forces foreign workers to seek their employer's consent to change jobs or leave the country, a measure rights groups say leaves workers open to exploitation.

# Lebanon Warns Of Dangers of Syrian Displacement

BEIRUT (Xinhua) – Lebanon's President Michel Aoun on Monday warned the international community of the dangers of the Syrian displacement.

He stressed that the return of the Syrian refugees to stable and safe areas in Syria "must be done without linking the matter to a political solution in Syria."

According to a statement by the Presidential media office, Aoun's stance came during a meeting with the ambassadors of the permanent members of the UN Security Council – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States – at the Presidential Palace in Baabda.

The statement pointed that talks focused on the crisis of displaced Syrians in Lebanon.

Aoun has stressed that the "return of the displaced to stable and safe areas in Syria must be done without linking the matter to a political solution in Syria."

The president warned of the dangers of Syrian displacement.

He said "it is in the interest of the international community to address the matter in order to avoid an outburst as the result of the crisis. The risks will affect everyone."

Aoun added that he is "not asking for the return of Syrian refugees who have political problems with the Syrian regime."

# Turkey Detained Over 1,200 People Last Week

ANKARA (Reuters) – Turkish security forces detained 1,210 people over the last week for suspected links to militant groups or last year's failed coup, the interior ministry said on Monday.

A total of 947 of those were detained for suspected links to the network of U.S.-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara holds responsible for a failed coup in July last year. Gulen denies any involvement.

Another 205 were detained for suspected ties to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which

has carried out a separatist insurgency against Turkey for three decades. More than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Forty-nine people were detained over alleged links to Daesh and nine others were held for suspected ties to "leftist terrorist groups", the ministry said.

Following the July 2016 coup, Turkey has arrested more than 50,000 people and sacked or suspended more than 150,000 in the military, civil service and private sector.