

DAMASCUS (Press TV) – A group of Russian lawmakers have announced a plan to meet Syrian President Bashar al-Assad while denying claims that the Syrian leader has left the Arab country. Dmitry Sablin, a deputy in the Russian lower house of parliament, known as the State Duma, told Russia's Interfax news agency that the lawmakers would meet Assad to discuss latest developments in Syria. "We plan to meet him to discuss the situation and support the people of Syria in its fight against terrorism," said Sablin without elaborating on the specific date of the planned meeting.

When you get ill do not get nervous about it and try as much as possible to be hopeful.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Yemeni Drones Target Saudi Airport, Aramco Facility



This photo provided by the media bureau of Yemen's operations command shows Qasef-1 (Striker-1) combat drone.

SANAA (Dispatches) – Drones operated by Yemeni armed forces have targeted a Saudi airport and a facility belonging to the state-run oil giant Aramco in the kingdom's southern border regions.

Yemeni media reported that the army's remote control drones carried out a strike on the Abha International Airport in Saudi Arabia's southwestern Asir region on Wednesday.

Yemeni sources said flights at the

airport have been canceled due to the airstrikes.

Media reports also noted that Yemeni Qasef-1 drones had targeted an Aramco facility in the nearby Jizan region.

Meanwhile, Arabic-language al-Masirah television network quoted Saudi sources as saying that 33 troops have been killed and 12 others injured in Yemeni retaliatory attacks in the first 10 days of April.

A day earlier, at least four

civilians, including women and children, were killed and several others wounded when Saudi fighter jets conducted multiple airstrikes against residential areas in Yemen's Ta'izz and Sa'ada provinces as Saudi Arabia continues with its atrocious bombardment campaign against its southern neighbor.

Al-Masirah, citing its correspondence in the area, reported on Tuesday that the four lost their lives after Saudi warplanes hit a

house in Dabwan area of Khadir city in the southwestern province of Ta'izz.

The airstrike also inflicted injuries on at least three other inhabitants of the residential building, the report further said, adding that at least 15 members of a family lost their lives after a Saudi airstrike hit their house in the same area a day earlier.

Separately, Saudi artillery and rocket fire hit different localities of Shada border district in the northern province of Sa'ada, wounding at least a woman. Furthermore, multiple areas of Razeh border district in Sa'ada were pounded by Saudi artillery and rocket fire, the possible casualties of which have not been reported yet.

The Saudi campaign was launched in March 2015 in support of Yemen's former Riyadh-friendly government and against the country's Houthi Ansarullah movement, which has been running state affairs in the absence of an effective administration. The offensive has, however, achieved neither of its goals despite the spending of billions of petrodollars and the enlisting of Saudi Arabia's regional and Western allies.

The Yemeni Ministry of Human Rights announced in a statement on March 25 that the Saudi-led war had left 600,000 civilians dead and injured during the past three years.

Zionist Regime Targets Gaza



In this file picture, an Israeli Merkava tank moves towards the border between the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories.

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime's military claims an explosive device was detonated near a military vehicle at the Gaza Strip fence on Wednesday morning before the army attacked Hamas positions in Gaza.

The incident took place near the Karni Crossing, an unused cargo terminal, in the northern Gaza Strip.

A statement released by the Zionist regime's army spokesperson said the device was denoted against a military engineering vehicle which was on the Gazan side of the security fence.

"In response, the IDF (the regime's troops) struck a number of military targets belonging to Hamas," the statement read.

No group immediately assumed responsibility for the incident but the military said it holds Hamas "responsible for all occurrences in the Gaza Strip." It added that the occupying regime will not allow to "turn the area of the fence into a combat zone."

According to the statement, the explosive was implanted near the fence during rallies near the fence.

Palestinians in Gaza have been staging weekly protests over the past weeks to mark the 70th anniversary of the occupation of the Palestinians lands by the Zionist regime, known

to Palestinians as the Nakba, or "the catastrophe."

Dozens of Palestinians were killed by Zionist troops' gunfire and thousands were injured during the weekend marches towards the fence.

The Zionist regime's military frequently bombs the Gaza Strip, with civilians being the main target of such attacks.

Israel has also launched several wars on the Palestinian coastal sliver, the last of which began in early July 2014. The military aggression, which ended on August 26, 2014, killed nearly 2,200 Palestinians. Over 11,100 others were also wounded in the war.

The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli siege since June 2007. The blockade has caused a decline in the standards of living as well as unprecedented levels of unemployment and unrelenting poverty.

The regime denies about 1.8 million people in Gaza their basic rights, such as freedom of movement, jobs with proper wages as well as adequate healthcare and education.

Separately, two Palestinians were moderately injured in clashes east of Gaza City on Wednesday evening after Israeli snipers deployed at the border fence in northern Gaza opened fire at them.

Afghan Police Destroy Poppy Field in Nangarhar

KABUL (Dispatches) – Dozens of Dara-i-Noor Afghan military officers took part in destroying an illegal poppy field in Dara-i-Noor, Nangarhar Province, Wednesday.

According to the Director of Nangarhar Counter-Narcotics, Mohammed Edri Saphi, the department has "started the poppy eradication campaign in 14 districts" and 1,500 hectares of the narcotic plants have already been destroyed.

The United Nations and the Afghan government have released a new joint survey showing that opium production in the restive country has almost doubled so far in 2017 compared to last year.

According to the survey, the opium production rose by 87 percent and stands at a record level of 9,000 metric tons (9,921 US tons) so far this year,

compared to 4,800 metric tons in 2016.

The Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported an increase of 63 percent in the area under opium poppy cultivation.

The area that cultivated the poppy increased from just 201,000 hectares (496,671 acres) in 2016 to 328,000 hectares (810,488 acres) this year.

"It is high time for the international community and Afghanistan to reprioritize drug control, and to acknowledge that every nation has a shared responsibility for this global problem," the UNODC's Executive Director Yury Fedotov said in a statement.

The increase in production is mainly caused by the rise in the area under poppy cultivation.

UN: 700,000 Syrians Displaced by Fighting in 2018

NEW YORK (Dispatches) – Almost three-quarters of a million Syrians have been forced out of their homes by fighting in the first months of 2018, according to the senior UN official coordinating the crisis response.

With growing anticipation that retaliatory U.S. strikes may be launched imminently in response to the latest suspected use of chemical weapons in Douma, Panos Moutzias, regional humanitarian coordinator for the country's crisis, issued a bleak picture of continuing large-scale displacement.

"I am deeply concerned about the continuing massive displacement of close to 700,000 Syrians since the beginning of the year due to ongoing hostilities in the country," Moutzias said in a statement.

Moutzias added that the figures are in addition to the 6.5 million people already internally displaced,



Displaced Syrian families arrive at a checkpoint at Abu al-Duhur crossing to return from militant-held areas in Syria's northern province of Idlib to their villages in government-controlled territory in Idlib on April 4, 2018.

and the more than 5.6 million Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries.

Describing a humanitarian situation where more than half of Syria's population had now been forced to flee, he said: "Civilians in Syria continue to be caught up

in horrific violence. Hostilities, including attacks on residential areas, civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, markets, schools ... have resulted in scores of civilians being killed or injured on a daily basis.

An operation by the Syrian military into the terrorist-held areas in Eastern Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus, and the fierce fighting there with the militants have left around 140,000 people homeless, the UN said.

The Russian Defense Ministry announced Tuesday that some 2,000 terrorists and members of their families had left the city of Douma in Eastern Ghouta earlier in the day. The ministry said some 4,000 more terrorists and their families were ready to leave the city, which has been the scene of fierce fighting between terrorists and pro-government forces, including the Russian military.

Major-General Yuri Yevtushenko, head of the Russian peace and reconciliation center in Syria, said there had been no fighting in Douma in the past several days as a humanitarian pause was observed.

African Migrants in Limbo as Zionist Regime Seeks Uganda Deportation Deal

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime is finalizing a deal to deport thousands of African migrants to Uganda under a new scheme after agreements with Rwanda and the UN's refugee agency to find homes for those expelled fell through.

About 4,000 migrants have left the Israeli-occupied territories for Rwanda and Uganda since 2013 under a voluntary program but Zionist Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has come under pressure from his right-wing voter base to expel thousands more.

In January, the regime started handing out notices to male migrants from Eritrea and Sudan giving them three months to take the voluntary deal with a plane ticket and \$3,500 or risk being thrown in jail.

The regime said from April it would start forced deportations but rights

groups challenged the move and the Zionist regime's supreme court has issued a temporary injunction to give more time for the petitioners to argue against the plan.

Government representatives told the court that an envoy was in an African country finalizing a deportation deal after an arrangement with Rwanda to take migrants expelled under the new measures fell through.

The representatives did not name the country in court sessions open to the public though Israeli lawmakers have previously said the two countries it was planning to deport migrants to were Rwanda and Uganda.

Zionist Deputy Foreign minister Tzipi Hotovely also identified the countries it was seeking to strike new deportation deals with as Uganda and Rwanda in closed-door comments leaked to Israeli

Army Radio.

After the Rwanda deal fell through, the regime struck an agreement with the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) to relocate 16,250 migrants to Western countries but Netanyahu scrapped it after an outcry from right-wing politicians furious that thousands more would be allowed to stay in the occupied territories.

The fate of tens of thousands of

migrants who entered the territories illegally through its desert border with Egypt and were granted temporary visas has posed a moral dilemma for a state founded as a national home for Jews and a haven from persecution.

Israeli rights groups say the regime can absorb the estimated 37,000 migrants still there, or should find them safe destinations such as those agreed under the defunct UNHCR deal.