

BEIRUT (Daily Star) -- Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah said Saturday that U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was correct in his concern that Hezbollah is now "stronger than ever."

LONDON (AFP) -- Junior foreign ministers from Britain and Russia met in Germany on Saturday in the highest-level contact between the two countries since an alleged nerve agent attack in Britain last March froze diplomatic relations.

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## UAE Camps in Negev to Train Mercs for Yemen War

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) – Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu said in August that if Iran tried to block the Bab al-Mandab strait, it would find itself facing a coalition including all Israel's military branches.

Such a coalition had already been set up in 2015 by Saudi Arabia, which partnered with the United Arab Emirates, to invade Yemen. Israel is also an unofficial partner, the occupying regime's leading daily Haaretz confirmed.

"Israeli cyber companies, gun traders, terror-warfare instructors and even paid hitmen operated by an Israeli-owned company are partners to the war in Yemen," it said.

In September, London-based Al-Khaleej Online published a long article about the Zionist regime's involvement in training Colombian and Nepalese combatants, who were recruited by the UAE for the war in Yemen.

The report cites sources in a U.S. House Intelligence Committee who said the foreign fighters' recruiter was Muhammad Dahlan, who was a member of Fatah's central committee and head of intelligence in Gaza. Dahlan was ousted from Fatah in 2011 and later moved to the UAE, where he became the advisor of the crown prince and the liaison and mediator between the UAE security forces and the occupying regime of Israel.

The report also says that Israel set up special training bases in the Negev, where the mercenaries were trained by Zionist combatants. Dahlan occasionally visited those camps, in which the UAE flag was hoisted.

The mercenaries later took part in the war on the port town Hodaydah and other fighting zones in Yemen, Haaretz said.

The site's sources said the occupying regime of Israel also sold bombs and missiles to Saudi Arabia, some of which are banned. Recently it was reported that Israel also sold Saudi Arabia combat drones and intends to sell it Iron Dome systems as well.

Many reports have been written about Zionist companies like the NSO group, which is suspected of selling Saudi Arabia Pegasus spyware accused of helping trace and survey Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, or the AGT company owned by the Israeli businessman Mati Kochavi, which in 2007 won the \$6 billion bid to set up surveillance and monitoring systems in Abu Dhabi. But what remains a mystery is to what extent Zionist technology served the fighting forces in Yemen.

Another company, Spearhead Operations Group, which was set up by Israeli Avraham Golan and is registered in the United States, was responsible for assassinating Yemenite clergyman Anssaf Ali Mayo in December 2015. Mayo was one of the leaders of the Yemeni reform party, which is affiliated to the Muslim Brotherhood. The latter is classified in the UAE as a terror organization.

Golan confirmed to BuzzFeed in October that "there was a plan for targeted assassinations in Yemen. I ran it. We did it. The plan was under the UAE auspices as part of the Arab coalition."

Golan added that during the months his company was active in Yemen he was in charge of several "high profile" assassinations and that the United States needs a murder plan based on the model he set up. According to BuzzFeed, those who actually carried out the assassinations were apparently former combatants in top American commands.

The occupying regime of Israel is not the only side selling military services to the UAE and Saudi Arabia to go to the war in Yemen. Private American companies, senior officers and ex-CIA agents found their bonanza in these two states, just as private companies made a huge fortune out of "military" services they provided the Iraqi government after the occupation, Haaretz said.

These services include active warfare and intelligence gathering as well as commanding mercenary units or combatant units from Saudi Arabia and UAE. For example, the former American general Stephen Toumajan is serving as the UAE's commander of the Joint Aviation Command and was the chief of a combat helicopter unit that fought in Yemen, the paper said.

Toumajan isn't the American security agencies' subcontractor, he wears the UAE air force uniform and in interviews he speaks of himself as a general in the state's army. Toumajan represents a new stage in the privatization of the war in Yemen and in other states in which the United States is involved but isn't taking part in the battles.

A foreign partnership in the armies of Arab states isn't new. Pakistani pilots for example fly Saudi planes, the Presidential Guard commander in the UAE is Australian general Mike Hindmarsh. Companies from all over the world including Occupied Palestine run advanced intelligence systems, so the term "mercenaries" has evolved from

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## Warning Issued to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Pakistan: Iranians Bid Tearful Farewell to Martyrs



Mourners gather in Bozorgmehr Square in the central city of Isfahan on Feb. 16, 2019 for the funeral of 27 IRGC members martyred in a terrorist attack in southeast Iran.

ISFAHAN (Dispatches) -- Dozens of comrades circled caskets on the back of trucks on Saturday as thousands of mourners attended a mass funeral for 27 IRGC soldiers martyred in a terrorist car bombing this week in Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan province.

Shouts of "Death to America," and "Death to Zionism" reverberated as the crowd gathered in Bozorgmehr Square in the central city of Isfahan, where the soldiers were based.

The head of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), Maj. Gen. Muhammad Ali Jafari,

pledged to retaliate against Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates over the terrorist attack. Earlier, he said the United States and the occupying regime of Israel ordered Saudi Arabia and the Emirates to carry out the attack, which also wounded 12.

"The treacherous government of Saudi and Emirates should know that the patience of the Islamic Republic about your hidden support for criminals and Takfiri groups has come to an end and Iran will not tolerate it anymore," said General Jafari in a speech to the crowd. "We will get revenge for the

blood of our martyrs from Saudi Arabia and Emirates," he said. He asked President Hassan Rouhani to give the IRGC the freedom to retaliate.

Pegah Mohammadi, 19, a student, said she attended the funeral to say goodbye to heroes who sacrificed to provide security to the Iranian people. "They gave their blood to protect our borders, to bring us security and peace," she said.

Family members accompanied the bodies of their loved ones to Isfahan's Bagh Rezvan cemetery. Five of the martyred Guard members were buried there and

the rest were sent in nearby cities and towns in Isfahan province for burial.

Wednesday's attack, claimed by Al-Qaeda-linked Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group, martyred both seasoned officers and younger soldiers, including a 20-year-old in the Isfahan-based IRGC forces. The assault martyred members of the IRGC's Imam Hussein division, which played a significant role in various battles during the 1980s Iraqi-imposed war on Iran.

Jaish ul-Adl largely operates across the border in nuclear-armed Pakistan. Recent terrorist assaults inside Iran have sparked retaliatory ballistic missile strikes in Iraq and Syria.

Since its founding in 2012, Jaish ul-Adl has abducted or martyred border guards in hit-and-run assaults from its havens in Pakistan. It kidnapped 11 Iranian border guards in October. Five later were returned to Iran and six remained held.

"The patience that the establishment once exercised against conspiracies and reactionary regimes in the region, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE which carry out these acts on orders from the U.S. and the Zionist regime, will be different and we will definitely take reparative measures," Jafari said.

He said Iran expects Pakistan to "punish" the group, which has taken refuge in the country's southwest. "If they do not punish them, our retaliatory measures will be carried out in the near future," he said.

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## MbS Delays Pakistan Visit Amid Protests

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) -- Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman (MbS) has delayed his trip to Pakistan by a day, the foreign ministry her said on Saturday, after reports of protests held in several cities.

The ministry said bin Salman will arrive in Islamabad on Sunday, but had no further explanation over the postponement.

Bin Salman's visit to Pakistan comes amid heightened tensions with India following a suicide bombing in the disputed Kashmir region that killed at least 40 Indian troops and was blamed on a Pakistan-based separatist group. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has warned of a "crushing response" to Thursday's attack.

Pakistan is the Saudi crown prince's first stop on an Asian tour aimed at building the kingdom's business ties in the east. However, his visits to Malaysia and Indonesia have been

postponed, the two countries' foreign ministries said without giving any reasons, leaving only Pakistan, China and India on the itinerary.

While in Pakistan, bin Salman is expected to sign a number of agreements on Saudi investment in the country, including the setting up a \$10 billion oil refinery.

Protesters took to the streets after Friday prayers in Rawalpindi, northern Pakistan, calling on the government not to allow the Saudi prince into the country.

Leaders and activists of different parties and organizations as well as political and religious figures attended the rally.

Demonstrators say bin Salman has been behind the killing of thousands of people, including the people of Yemen.

India's tensions with Pakistan further threaten the visit. On Friday, hawkish U.S. national

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## U.S. Asks Allies to Send Hundreds of Troops to Syria

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- Senior United States lawmakers and military officials have urged the country's allies to send hundreds of troops into Syria, as the U.S. plans its withdrawal from the war-torn country, a top U.S. official said.

Speaking on a panel at the Munich Security Conference, Senator Lindsey Graham said the U.S. would consider keeping some troops in Syria if Washington's allies agreed to deploy their own forces to help create a buffer zone near the Turkish border with Syria.

Graham said he discussed the plan ahead of the conference with U.S. General Joseph Votel and President Donald Trump, who announced in December that the U.S. planned to pull about 2,000 American troops out of Syria.

Votel, who is the top general leading U.S. occupation in Syria, has been vocal in his opposition to the withdrawal of American forces.

"I'm hoping that President Trump will be coming to some of you and asking for your help and you will say yes. And in return, the capability that we have that is unique to the United States will still be in the fight in Syria," said Graham, before calling on international officials in the room to send their own troops.

This is the only play the United States has left to maintain some influence and presence in northeastern Syria, the Washington Post wrote.

Graham also said the U.S. would try to gain support for the plan at the conference.

Acting Pentagon chief Patrick Shanahan did not secure any solid pledges of support, however, as he met with 13 defense ministers from countries on the sidelines of the conference, AFP reported.

The U.S. claims that its forces

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