

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkish presidential candidate Muharrem Ince says President Recep Tayyip Erdogan cannot survive an economic crisis because he is picking a fight with the whole world, the T24 news website reported. "What happened to make [Erdogan] call a snap election? Why? A crisis is at the door, an economic crisis. Erdogan can't survive this economic crisis. Let me tell you why he can't. He is picking fight with the whole world," Ince said during a rally in Istanbul. He stated that Turkey needs new blood that will bring democracy back and reassure the outside world.

There are many educated people who have ruined their future on account of their ignorance of religion. Their knowledge did not prove of any avail to them.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Yemeni Forces Kill Dozens of Saudi Mercenaries

SANAA (Dispatches) – Yemeni army forces fired two domestically-manufactured ballistic missiles and killed dozens of Saudi-sponsored militiamen loyal to Yemen's resigned president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi in the country's southwestern province of Ta'izz as well as the western coastal province of Hudaydah.

A Yemeni military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Yemen's Arabic-language al-Masirah television network that Yemeni soldiers and their allies launched a short-range Zelzal-2 (Earthquake-2) missile at the Saudi mercenaries in the Maqbanah district of Ta'izz.

The source added that the attack left an unidentified number of Hadi loyalists dead and injured.

Earlier in the day, many Saudi-sponsored militiamen lost their lives and sustained injuries when Yemeni soldiers and allied fighters fired a Qaher M-2 (Subduer M-2) ballistic missile at their position in Hudaydah.

In another development, a video emerged that shows Sudanese



People carry the body of Muhammad Mansour recovered from under the rubble of a house destroyed by a Saudi airstrike in Sana'a, Yemen, on August 25, 2017.

mercenaries fighting alongside Saudi-led forces against Houthis Ansarullah forces in Yemen's eastern province of Hudaydah.

The footage shows the Sudanese forces patrolling near the city of al-Jah, 50 kilometers from the port city of Hudaydah, firing mortar shells against Ansarullah positions.

The presence of Sudanese forces

in Yemen comes despite Sudan's announcement last month about assessing whether to continue its participation in the Yemen war or downgrade its presence in the military campaign led by Saudi Arabia.

Domestic voices in the North African country have long urged a withdrawal from the Saudi-led coalition and those calls gained

momentum after three senior Sudanese officers and scores of soldiers were killed during a battle in northern Yemen on April 10.

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 since March 2015.

The United Nations says a record 22.2 million Yemenis are in need of food aid, including 8.4 million threatened by severe hunger.

A high-ranking UN aid official recently warned against the "catastrophic" living conditions in Yemen, stating that there was a growing risk of famine and cholera there.

"People's lives have continued unraveling. Conflict has escalated since November driving an estimated 100,000 people from their homes," John Ging, UN director of aid operations, told the UN Security Council on February 27.

Ging said cholera had infected 1.1 million people in Yemen since last April, and a new outbreak of diphtheria had occurred in the war-ravaged Arab country since 1982.

Afghan Forces Seize Huge Bomb-Making Cache at Pakistan Border



File photo shows, a truck enters Pakistan from Afghanistan at the border crossing in Torkham, in Nangarhar Province on June 18, 2016.

KABUL (Dispatches) – Afghan security forces on Sunday seized 156 sacks of ammonium nitrate, widely used in making explosives, from the back of a vegetable truck crossing from Pakistan, an official said, in one of the biggest such finds.

Intelligence officers found nearly eight tons of the chemical, "brought for insurgent activities", hidden under sacks of vegetables on the truck at the Torkham border crossing, at the end of the Khyber Pass, a spokesman for the governor of Nangarhar province told Reuters.

Ammonium nitrate is widely used as a fertilizer, but for security reasons, imports into Afghanistan are banned.

Afghanistan faces terrorist activities by the Taliban, Daesh and the Taliban-linked Haqqani network. Pakistan and Afghanistan frequently accuse each other of harboring terrorists planning cross-border raids.

A massive truck bomb struck the Afghan capital, Kabul, in May last year, killing more than 150 people.

Terrorist groups frequently use explosive materials for roadside bombings and car bomb attacks to target Afghan security personnel. However, most of the time ordinary civilians are targeted.

Pakistan and Afghanistan frequently accuse each other of harboring terrorists planning cross-border attacks.

The deadly assaults have been carried out in spite of the fact that Taliban have agreed to a ceasefire with the Afghan government for Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

In 2001, the United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan under the pretext of "war on terror." Some 17 years on, Taliban have only boosted their bloody campaign of violence across the country, targeting both civilians and military personnel.

More recently, the Daesh terrorist group has also taken advantage of the chaos in Afghanistan and established a foothold in the eastern and northern regions. Daesh has been defeated in Iraq and Syria.

Syrian Villages Besieged by Terrorists Come Under Attack

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Two pro-government villages in northwest Syria have come under fresh attack from terrorists which have besieged them for years, prompting retaliatory strikes, a war monitor said on Sunday.

The villages of al-Foua and Kefraya, which represent the last remaining besieged population in Syria according to the United Nations, were attacked by terrorists overnight, the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Fighting on the edge of the villages began early morning Friday, shortly after air strikes carried out by pro-government war

planes on the village of Zardana in northeast Idlib killed at least 51 people.

The overnight attack on al-Foua and Kefraya was the fiercest in three years, the head of the Britain-based Observatory Rami Abdelrahman said.

On Sunday heavy air strikes struck a number of opposition-held villages near al-Foua and Kefraya, including the town of Binnish, and further afield in Idlib province, the Observatory said.

State news agency SANA said al-Foua and Kefraya's defense forces repelled the dawn attack.

Around 10,000 people are estimated to live in Kefraya and Foua, which have been encircled by terrorists since March 2015.

Last year, the Syrian government and militants reached a deal, known as the "Four Towns Agreement," that allowed the evacuation of residents of the two towns.

In return, people in two terrorist-held towns near Damascus, Madaya and Zabadani, were given safe passage to evacuate to territories under the control of terrorists or the Syrian government.

On Saturday, Russia's Defense Ministry spokesman Major Gen-

eral Igor Konashenkov warned that the last pockets of the Daesh terrorist group in Syria wreak havoc and perpetrate acts of terror only in areas controlled by US military forces.

Terrorists have lost much of the territory they once held in Syria amid sweeping gains by government forces on the ground.

In April, Syrian forces managed to retake Eastern Ghouta and Eastern Qalamoun regions near the capital.

For years, the areas had served as a launch pad for deadly terror attacks against civilians in Damascus.

Qatar on Saudi War Threat:

World Not Living in Law of Jungle Era

DOHA (Press TV) – Qatar has hit out at Saudi threats of military action against its Persian Gulf neighbor if it acquires the Russian-made S-400 air defense system.

The reaction by Qatari Ambassador to Moscow Fahad bin Mohammed al-Attiyah came after reports that Saudi King Salman has threatened military action "to eliminate this defense system."

"We have heard about such statements in the world media, but we in Qatar reaffirm the principle of the sovereignty of states, their right to defend themselves, and to enter into legitimate deals with other countries," Attiyah told Sputnik.

The world does not live in an "era of the law of the jungle based on threats," the ambassador added.

A senior Russian lawmaker said last week that Moscow's intentions to sell Doha the air defense system would not suffer as a result of the Saudi threat.

Aleksei Kondratyev, the deputy chairman of the Russian senate's committee on defense

and security, suggested that Riyadh "might have been pressured by Washington in order to avoid losing the US share of the lucrative regional weapons market."

Riyadh itself has signed a contract with Moscow to buy the S-400 system. The two sides signed the deal during King Salman's four-day trip to the Russian capital in March 2017.

Various media reports and analyses have pointed out that the kingdom has chosen to buy the Russian weapon system after its American-made Patriot anti-aircraft system repeatedly failed in the face of retaliatory Yemeni missiles.

Qatar and the UAE have accused each other of a series of mid-air incidents since Abu Dhabi and its allies imposed travel, diplomatic and trade sanctions on Qatar in June.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt, accuse Qatar of supporting militants and other sides. Doha denies the charges and says its rivals seek to rein in its foreign policy.

French daily Le Monde reported on Friday that King Salman had written a letter to Presi-

dent Emmanuel Macron of France to express his "profound concern" over Qatar's planned purchase of the S-400 system.

"In such a situation, the Kingdom would be ready to take all the necessary measures to eliminate this defense system, including military action," King Salman was quoted as saying in the letter.

Attiyah said "even if the Saudi statement is true, we completely reject it." He said Doha has "consistently cooperated with the Russian side on all issues, including defense, and Qatar strives to strengthen this sphere."

"No one has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Russia and Qatar; this is a sovereign right...I consider this position to be a gross violation of the internal affairs of Russia and Qatar," he said.

Saudi Arabia caused a dramatic diplomatic crisis last June after it led several of its allies in cutting diplomatic ties with the emirate.

They have made a series of steep demands from Qatar in order to normalize ties and lift the blockade, which Doha has rejected.

Iraqi Ballot Box Storage Site Catches Fire in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – A Baghdad storage site housing ballot boxes from Iraq's May parliamentary election caught fire and first responders were attempting to control it, a local official and the interior ministry said on Sunday.

The ballot boxes are part of a manual recount of votes from the May election, mandated in a law passed by the Iraqi parliament on Wednesday.

"The storage spaces housing all the ballot boxes from al-Rusafa belonging to the election commission are now on fire," said Baghdad province council member Mohamed al-Rabeei.

Rusafa is a district of Baghdad on the eastern side of the river Tigris. An interior ministry spokesman said the fire had destroyed some documents and equipment but civil defense forces were trying to prevent it from spreading to ballot boxes.

The site was divided into four warehouses, said Major General Saad Maan, and only one —

housing electronic equipment and documents — had burned down. Firefighters were trying to stop the fire from spreading to the remaining three warehouses, where the ballot boxes are located, he said.

"It is possible there were also some ballot boxes in the warehouse that caught fire, but most of the important boxes are in the three warehouses where the fire has been controlled," he said in a video message from the site of the fire.

Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council, the highest judicial authority, met on Sunday and named judges tasked with taking over the country's elections commission following allegations of widespread violations in a May parliamentary election, its spokesman said.

The recount was approved by parliament a day after Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, whose bloc came third in the election, said there had been serious violations and that most of the blame lay with the elections commission.