

OCCUPIED AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – Zionist troops entered Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third-holiest shrine in Islam, Friday after a confrontation with protesters outside the compound, Muslim authorities at the site said.

At least 40 Palestinians were wounded in the clashes after Israeli troops entered the site and sealed the gates to the compound following midday prayers. In the besieged Gaza, Zionist troops shot dead a Palestinian man during Friday protests near a fence. The dead man was identified as Ghazi Abu Mustafee, 43, who was shot in the head.

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- The United States has not instituted a policy of regime change or collapse in Iran, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Friday.

Asked whether the Trump administration had created a regime change or collapse policy, Mattis said: "There's none that's been instituted." He said, "We need them to change their behavior on a number of threats that they can pose with their military, with their secret services, with their surrogates and with their proxies."

Viewpoint

Will Imran Khan Succeed in Restoring Pak-Iran Traditionally Friendly Ties?

Health Film Festival Screens Submissions



Cristiano Ronaldo Fined 3.2mn Euros in Tax Evasion Case



Iraq's Top Cleric Sistani Makes Urgent Call for New Gov't



Gen. Soleimani's Warning to Trump: 'War on Iran Will Destroy All You Possess'

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Quds force chief Major General Qasem Soleimani warned U.S. President Donald Trump against war on Thursday, saying it would "destroy all that you possess."

"You know that this war will destroy all that you possess. You will start this war but we will be the ones to impose its end. Therefore you have to be careful about insulting the Iranian people and the president of our Republic," Soleimani said in a speech.

"You know our power in the region and our capabilities in asymmetric war. We will act and we will work," he said.

General Soleimani hit out at the U.S. president for using the language of "night clubs and gambling halls".

"As a soldier, it is my duty to respond to your threats ... If you want to use the language of threat ... talk to me, not to the president (Hassan Rouhani). It is not in our president's dignity to respond to you," he said.

"We are near you, where you can't even imagine. We are ready," he added.

The senior general further reminded the United States of its failures in its invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

"What was it that you could do over the past 20 years but you didn't? You came to Afghanistan with scores of tanks and personnel carriers and hundreds of advanced helicopters and committed crimes there. What the hell could you do between 2001 and 2018 with 110,000 troops? You are today begging Taliban for talks," he said.

Chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Muhammad Ali Ja'fari said Fridays Iran does not take military threats against it seriously, because a war on the country would have huge costs for its enemies.

"Military threats raised by the enemies are not very serious and are hollow and we have the power to respond them," Ja'fari told a group of students here.

The IRGC commander said the enemies were more focused on undermining Iran through their "soft war".

"Threats and sanctions today by the enemies have reached

their heights," he said. "However, the only threat that they would not put into action is the military one because if they carry out a military aggression, it would entail huge costs for them."

General Ja'fari's remarks come in the wake of Trump's harsh rhetoric on Sunday, threatening Iran with hardship "the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered before."

The remarks also came after Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull rejected reports on Friday that his country would help U.S. attack Iran's nuclear facilities within a month, saying the entire story, published by the ABC, was pure "speculation".

"The story on the ABC, which cites senior Australian government sources, has not benefited from any consultation with me, the foreign minister, the defense minister or the chief of the defense force," Turnbull told ABC radio, adding, "So perhaps you should inquire of the authors of the article."

Gen. Ja'fari said Iran's enemies were trying to spread disappointment among the nation through a disinformation campaign, stressing that the efforts were futile because of the awareness of the people and the officials.

Saudis Halt Oil Exports, Abu Dhabi Cancels Flights:

'Capitals of Arab Coalition No Longer Safe'



An aerial view of international Abu Dhabi airport which had to cancel flights on Thursday following an airstrike by a Yemeni Sammad-3 drone.

SANAA (Dispatches) -- Yemen's Ansarullah movement which has joined hands with the army against a Saudi-led invasion says the capitals of the coalition will be "no longer safe" from retaliatory missile attacks. "The Yemeni army is not in favor of bombings, but it cannot sit back either. From now on, the capitals of the Arab coalition will no longer be safe," Muhammad Abdelsalam, a senior spokesman for the Houthis, told Al Jazeera on

Thursday. "We will not kill, we will not bombard, but we will not sit idly either," he added.

The remarks came after the Yemeni army on Thursday evening launched an airstrike against Abu Dhabi International Airport, using a domestically-built Sammad-3 (Invincible-3) drone.

The attack disrupted air traffic, even though a UAE official claimed that "operations at the airport are business as

usual."

Abu Dhabi airport tweeted earlier in the day that there had been an incident involving a supply vehicle which had not affected operations.

Abdelsalam rejected claims that Iran was providing military assistance to Yemen, saying the Yemeni army has ballistic and naval missiles, and have developed them inside the country.

Saudi Arabia said Thursday it was suspending oil shipments

through a strategic Red Sea lane after the Yemeni army and its Houthis allies attacked "two tankers" in the waterway.

Yemen lies on one side of the Bab al-Mandeb strait at the southern mouth of the sea, one of the most important trade routes for oil tankers heading from the Middle East to Europe.

The Houthis, who have previously threatened to block the strait, said Thursday that they had the naval capability to hit Saudi ports and other Red Sea targets.

Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said the Houthis attacked two Saudi oil tankers in the Red Sea Wednesday, one of which sustained minimal damage.

Saudi crude exports through Bab al-Mandeb are estimated at around 500,000-700,000 barrels per day, according to analysts and Reuters data. Most Persian Gulf oil exports that transit the Suez Canal and SUMED Pipeline pass through the strait.

The chairman of the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company said the country was studying whether to follow suit.

The powerful commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution

Syrians Celebrate Liberation of Qunaitra

QUNAITRA, Syria (Dispatches) – Syrians on Friday held celebrations in the southern town of Qunaitra adjacent to Israeli-occupied Golan Heights after tge army recaptured it from terrorist groups who controlled it for more than four years.

International reporters visited the town on a government-organized trip a day after troops captured Qunaitra in an offensive in southwestern Syria that has seen terrorist resistance fronts crumble.

The highly symbolic town has been abandoned since the occupying regime of Israel destroyed it as it withdrew in 1974 following the Mideast war.

Separately, a Syrian Kurdish delegation including U.S. allies traveled to Damascus this week for talks with the Syrian government, according to an official.

The meeting – which is the first such official summit between President Bashar al-Assad's government and the Syrian Kurds since the war erupted in

2011 – could have huge consequences for the future of northern Syria, large areas of which are held by Kurdish forces.

"A delegation from the Syrian Democratic Council is paying a first official visit to Damascus at the invitation of the government," the body's Arab co-chair Riad Darar said.

"We are working towards a settlement for northern Syria. We hope that the discussions on the situation in the north will be positive," Darar said, adding that they were being held "without pre-conditions".

The meetings are primarily thought to be aimed at discussing services in Kurdish-held areas of northern Syria, but Darar said the talks had no set agenda and could move on to security and political matters.

The U.S. has backed Kurdish group SDF with air power and advisers on the ground and Assad maintains that is an occupying force in Syria - he has repeatedly

Imran Khan Wins Election in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AFP) — Cricket hero Imran Khan has swept to an emphatic victory in a disputed Pakistan election, official figures showed Friday, but without a majority he will need to enter a coalition to take power in the nuclear-armed country.

The pivotal election has been branded "Pakistan's dirtiest," after widespread claims in the months leading up to the vote that the powerful military was trying to fix the playing field in Khan's favor.

Rival parties, including the outgoing Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), have alleged "blatant" rigging over the vote count. The PML-N, which claims it was the target of the military manipulation, has vowed to fight the results in court.

But for now Khan's victory represents an end to decades of rotating leadership between the PML-N and the

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) that was punctuated by periods of military rule.

The Election Commission (ECP) said Friday that with only a handful of seats left to count, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) enjoys a strong lead with 115 seats, and will be the biggest party in parliament.

The count indicates PTI will not achieve the 137 seats needed in the National Assembly to form a majority government in its own right.

Analysts had long predicted that if Khan took power it would have to be via coalition — but the size of his lead still took many by surprise, and helped fuel suspicion over vote rigging.

But analyst Ayesha Siddiqi said observers may have underestimated the depth of feeling among Pakistan's growing middle class. "This is a middle class revolution," Siddiqi told AFP.

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