

Iraqi PM Abadi Says Not Seeking Re-Election

BAGHDAD (Press TV) – The incumbent Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi says he is not seeking to serve a second term in office, as Iraq moves closer to forming a new government.

“We respect and obey the instructions of the religious authority Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. I did not and will not request the post of prime minister in the second term,” he said at a news conference in Baghdad.

Ayatollah Sistani, the country’s most senior cleric, said earlier in the week that Iraq needed new faces in the government as protests escalated in the southern oil-rich city of Basra and Baghdad.

“Our service for the people will continue until the new government is established,” Abadi said on Thursday, calling for peaceful ways to change the government.

Abadi has faced calls to resign after protests in Basra last Friday took an ugly turn when a group of masked assailants raided government buildings and offices of political parties and set them ablaze.

After the protests, Muqtada al-Sadr whose Sairoon (Marching Towards Reform) bloc came first in the parliamentary elections has apparently backed down on his willingness to form an alliance with Abadi.

Over the weekend, Sadr’s bloc and the faction led by Hadi al-Amiri, the head of Badr Organization which is Iraq’s biggest anti-terror paramilitary group, used an emergency meeting held at the parliament to call on Abadi to resign.

The parliament is to elect a new speaker on



Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi meets Iraqi politicians during the negotiations to form a new government after the parliamentary elections, in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 19, 2018.

Saturday, with Amiri saying he would work with Sadr to form a new government.

Protesters in Basra are angry about endemic corruption, collapsing infrastructure, poor public services, high rates of poverty, soaring unemployment, and contamination of potable water.

Abadi said on Thursday a team of advisers would “assure the immediate implementation” of new water pumping, routing, and filtration

projects there.

The prime minister paid a visit to Basra Monday at the head of a large delegation, including the ministers of information, defense, interior, health and water resources.

“We came here to cooperate with local residents and to provide them with the services they need. We will not leave Basra until several projects aimed at improving public services are launched,” he said.

U.S. Troops... (Continued From Page One)

Jaber crossing, on the Jordanian side of the border, where technical teams began talks on the practical arrangements from customs to security needed to reopen the crossing.

The crossing’s recapture by Syrian forces in July was a main goal of a military campaign launched in June to regain control of terrorist-held parts of the southwest.

IRGC... (Continued From Page One)

us in a battle and the American economy wouldn’t be able to support the war either,” Salami added.

The IRGC’s recent missile attack against Iraq-based terrorists, he said, was a clear warning to Iran’s adversaries that the Islamic Republic’s response to slightest violations of its sovereignty would be decisive.

The top commander said all U.S. plans to isolate Iran had backfired and many countries were now following Iran’s model of resistance against the U.S., the occupying regime of Israel and other “bullying powers.”

“The Iranian nation defeated the U.S. when it blocked America’s ‘New Middle East’ project,” Salami said. The Iranian nation, he added, also caused America’s plan to retake control over the Islamic world to fail.

Back in July, U.S. President Donald Trump threatened Iran with “consequences the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered before.”

Trump’s threats came after Iranian President Hassan Rouhani warned the U.S. leader not to “play with the lion’s tail” after the U.S. unveiled a series of economic and political measures which Tehran said amounted to a declaration of war.

Addressing a group of Iranian diplomats in Tehran, Rouhani said “America must understand well that peace with Iran is the mother of all peace, and war with Iran is the mother of all wars.”

Trump’s threat also drew a fiery response from Major General Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the IRGC’s Quds Force.

“Come! We are ready. We are the man of this arena. You know that this war would mean annihilation of all your means. You may begin the war, but it is us who will end it,” he said in a speech which was directed at the U.S. president.

Secret... (Continued From Page One)

an army with intelligence and aerial superiority, ground capabilities and rich operational experience that meets the test every day in every realm of war.”

Brick’s newest dossier was classified as “secret” and people who are familiar with its contents have refused to discuss it, Haaretz said.

It is known, however, that it is more than 200 pages long and includes long quotes from conversations that Brick held with officers, including noncommissioned officers, within the ground forces, who describe serious deficiencies in the level of training and the handling of military equipment.

Iran’s... (Continued From Page 2)

under their watch and expressed its determination to stop those activities.

Earlier on Thursday, IRGC commander Major General Muhammad Ali Jafari hailed the missile attack as a “meaningful” message to the enemies.

“This capability sent a very decisive message to all enemies,” he said, warning “those who have forces, bases and equipment within a 2,000-kilometer radius around Iran” against any potential attack on the country.

U.S. Senator... (Continued From Page 2)

It said the intelligence came from local residents of Jisr al-Shughur.

“All the footage of the staged provocation in Jisr al-Shughur is to be delivered to the newsrooms of TV channels, which are to broadcast it after its publication on social media,” the center said.

According to the reporter, a terrorist group had been provided with two canisters of a “chlorine-based chemical” for the false-flag operation.

Embassy... (Continued From Page 2)

She touched on the participation of Prime Minister Imran Khan along with leaders of all the major political parties including the opposition in the Defense Day ceremony in Islamabad, saying it “sent a message to all Pakistanis and to the world at large that we stand together as a nation, both military and civilians, in our commitment and goal for a united, strong and progressive Pakistan.”

Referring to the menace of extremism and terrorism, the ambassador said the anti-terrorism operation Radd ul Fassad launched by the armed forces has broken the back of terrorists and law and order situation in the country has improved.

The ambassador said Pakistan is committed to secure peace and security in the region and has contributed significantly in global campaigns against terrorism and peace-keeping missions all over the world. She mentioned that so far 136 Pakistani peacekeepers had laid down their lives in carrying out their peacekeeping mission in different countries.

Iran’s chief guest Brig. Genneral Ghadeer Nizami extended his felicitations and said Tehran and Islamabad are bonded in strong historical and cultural relations and their political and military ties are exceptional in the region.

Referring to the menace of terrorism, he said, both Iran and Pakistan are fighting terrorism and extremism and determined to secure peace in the region.

Brig. Saqib Ali Cheema, defense and military attaché of Pakistan, also shed light on strong military ties between two brotherly countries of Pakistan and Iran.

Syria, Jordan Begin Talks on Opening Vital Border Crossing



Members of the Russian military police patrol the Nassib border crossing with Jordan in the southern Syrian province of Daraa on August 14, 2018.

AMMAN (Dispatches) – Jordan and Syria have held their first technical talks on opening a major border crossing in southern Syria

that was recaptured from terrorists last July, a Jordanian official source says.

Damascus, which took back the crossing from the terrorists, hopes to reopen the Nassib route vital to its hopes of reviving Syria’s shattered economy and rebuilding in territory under its control.

Amman also hopes the opening of the border crossing will reactivate billions of dollars of annual transit trade between Europe and Persian Gulf markets across Syria.

The source told Reuters the meeting that was requested by Syria was held on Wednesday at the Jaber crossing, on the Jordanian side of the border, where technical teams began talks on

the practical arrangements from customs to security needed to reopen the crossing.

“The meetings will continue to put a complete view of all the arrangements linked to reopening the crossings in the coming period,” the source said.

The crossing’s recapture by Syrian forces in July was one main goal of a Russian-backed military campaign launched last June to regain control of terrorist-held parts of the southwest.

Western diplomatic sources say Russia had been pressing Amman to open the crossing as part of a drive to show the war was drawing to a close and to help rehabilitate President Bashar al Assad.

‘Closure of Washington PLO Office Undermines Two-State Solution’

BERLIN (Dispatches) – The United States’ decision to close the Palestine Liberation Organization’s (PLO) office in Washington will make it harder to reach a so-called two-state solution between the Zionist regime and the Palestinians, a spokeswoman for the German foreign ministry said on Friday.

“Considering the current lack of communication we are seeing between the Israelis and the Palestinians, we are worried that this renewed unilateral move by the United States will cause the fronts to harden and make it more difficult to resume talks on a two-state solution,” she said.

The U.S. administration on Monday said the PLO’s office in Washington would be closed out of concern about Palestinian attempts to prompt an International Criminal Court investigation of the Zionist regime.

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Secretary General Saeb Er-

ekat said in a statement on Monday that the recent decision by the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump to close the Palestinian mission in Washington, stating that the move amounts to collective punishment against the entire Palestinian nation.

“We have been notified by a U.S. official of their decision to close the Palestinian mission in the US. This is yet another affirmation of the Trump administration’s policy to collectively punish the Palestinian people, namely by cutting financial support for humanitarian services, health and education,” Erekat said.

He added, “This dangerous escalation shows that the United States is willing to disband the international system in order to protect Israeli crimes and attacks against the land and people of Palestine as well as against peace and security in the region.”

Tear Gas, Water Cannons Used Against Striking Workers in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (Xinhua) – Turkish gendarmerie on Friday fired tear gas and used water cannons against workers who stopped working on the new airport in Istanbul to protest against poor working conditions.

According to CNN Turk, several workers were injured as they were running away from the intervention, with some badly affected by the tear gas.

The broadcaster said hundreds of workers, who have been living in quarters at the construction site, gathered in front of the admin-

istration building demanding for improvement in working conditions.

The workers claimed that they have been working under unsafe conditions, which have caused multiple deaths and injuries, press reports said.

“We had a bus accident on Thursday and one of our friends was injured. Previously, another one fell from the roof and was wounded, while another one was trapped under debris,” the Cumhuriyet daily quoted a worker as saying, adding the actual number of the injured

has not been revealed.

According to the daily, the authorities admitted that over 30 workers had died since the construction began in May 2015, but workers argued that the number was much higher.

Workers have also complained that they have been waiting under bad weather conditions for shuttle buses and their dormitories are full of bedbugs and fleas, Cumhuriyet said.

More than 35,000 workers have been working on the construction of the airport, which is slated to be inaugurated at the end of October.