

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – Hamas resistance militant hacked into hundreds of Zionist troops' mobile phones on social media before the attempt was thwarted, the occupying regime's military says. Military spokesman Jonathan Conrucus told reporters that the phones of troops and officers were hacked by malware that extracted information from the devices and recorded conversations. The Palestinian resistance movement is based in the Gaza Strip. Egyptian and UN efforts to broker a truce between the occupying regime and Hamas have been to no avail.

When this world favors somebody, it lends him the attributes, and surpassing merits of others and when it turns its face away from him it snatches away even his own excellences and fame.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

U.S. Rejects Iraq's Demand, Offers Partial Pullout



The U.S. has offered senior Iraqi security officials plans for a partial withdrawal of troops from Iraq, reneging on an earlier promise to leave the Arab country.

BAGHDAD (Press TV) – The U.S. military has offered senior Iraqi security officials plans for a partial withdrawal of troops from Iraq, reneging on an earlier promise to leave the Arab country, online news website Middle East Eye (MEE) reports.

It cited unnamed sources as saying that a meeting was held in great secrecy between the two sides in the private residence of the Canadian ambassador to Jordan in Amman

last week.

A representative of the U.S. military told the Iraqis that Washington was prepared to leave positions in or near Shia-majority areas, such as Balad airbase which houses U.S. personnel about 80 kilometers north of Baghdad.

The Iraqis were told that Washington could even consider reducing its troops in the capital Baghdad, the report said.

However, the U.S. side categorically dismissed withdrawing from Ain al-Asad, the biggest U.S. airbase in Anbar province.

"We cannot even start talking about withdrawing [from Ain al-Asad]. Withdrawal is out of the question," the U.S. representative said.

Ain al-Asad airbase came under missile fire from Iran last month, in response to the U.S. assassina-

tion of top Iranian commander Gen. Qassem Soleimani, and the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis at Baghdad international airport on January 3.

About 5,300 American forces are deployed across Iraq. Two days after the assassination, the Iraqi parliament approved a motion, calling for the withdrawal of all American forces.

Later on January 9, former Iraqi prime minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi called on the United States to dispatch a delegation to Baghdad tasked with formulating a mechanism for the move.

According to a statement released by the Iraqi premier's office, Abdul-Mahdi "requested that delegates be sent to Iraq to set the mechanisms to implement the parliament's decision for the secure withdrawal of (foreign) forces from Iraq" in a phone call with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

He said that Iraq rejected violation of its sovereignty, particularly the US military's violation of Iraqi airspace in the assassination. The US State Department bluntly rejected the request the following day.

Angered by the Iraqi parliament's vote on January 5, U.S. President Donald Trump threatened the Iraqis with "sanctions like they've never seen before" if American troops were asked to leave.

Saudi Teen Gets 8 Years in Prison for Participating in Anti-Regime Protests



Pakistani Shia Muslims march during a protest in Quetta on January 3, 2016, against the execution of prominent Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr by Saudi Arabia.

RIYADH (Dispatches) – A Saudi teenager who had participated in anti-government rallies as a child was handed an 8-year prison sentence, a human rights group reported.

The Saudi public prosecutor's office sought a death sentence for Murtaja Qureiris, now 18, on 2018 but the threat of execution did not become public until last June, drawing international condemnation.

The charges filed against the teenager related to his participation in anti-regime protests, some that took place when he was as young as 10.

He was arrested at 13 and has been held in prison since, according to the rights group in Saudi Arabia, the Prisoners of Conscience, which has tracked the case for years.

According to the group, the judge told the teenager's lawyer that instead of the death penalty, he would receive an 8-year sentence that will be followed by another 8-year travel ban.

Amnesty International had earlier declared that the Shia teenager was being held in solitary confine-

ment and has several times been beaten and tortured.

"Murtaja Qureiris, now aged 18, was arrested in September 2014 and detained at Dar al-Mulahaza at the juvenile detention center in al-Dammam city. He was held in solitary confinement for a month and subjected to beatings and intimidation during his interrogation. His interrogators promised to release him if he confessed to the charges against him. In May 2017 he was moved to al-Mabaheth prison in al-Dammam, an adult prison, even though he was just 16 years old. Throughout his detention he was denied access to a lawyer until after his first court session in August 2018 at the Specialized Criminal Court, an anti-terror court set up in 2008, that has increasingly been used for cases involving human rights activists and protesters," it said.

The charges against him include participating in anti-government protests, attending the funeral of his brother Ali Qureiris who was killed in a protest in 2011, throwing Molotov cocktails at a police station, and firing at security forces, according to Amnesty.

U.S. Designates Panel for West Bank Annexation

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The U.S. government has appointed members of a committee tasked with mapping out areas of the occupied West Bank that the Zionist regime plans to annex as part of President Donald Trump's self-proclaimed "Deal of the Century."

A senior Trump administration official told the Israel Hayom daily that U.S. ambassador to the occupied territories David Friedman will lead the joint committee.

"Honored to serve on the Joint Committee," tweeted Friedman. "Looking forward to getting started right away," he said.

Other committee members will include Friedman's senior

adviser Aryeh Lightstone, and Scott Leith, a U.S. National Security Council expert on Israel.

Israeli members will include tourism minister Yariv Levin and Zionist ambassador to the United States Ron Dermer.

The committee was announced by Trump last month during the unveiling of his scheme, which would see the Zionist regime control swathes of the West Bank in violation of the fundamental rights of the Palestinians.

Trump said the joint committee would be formed to "convert the conceptual map into a more detailed and calibrated rendering so that recognition can be immediately achieved."

There is still no set timeline for when the committee will finish its work, but Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been pressured by right-wing lawmakers in recent weeks to announce the immediate annexation of all settlements before Israelis head to the polls.

Three weeks ago, both Netanyahu and Friedman said that the Zionist regime would be able to do so before the election, and Netanyahu planned to turn the issue into the cornerstone of his re-election campaign.

Trump's son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner, who is believed to be the architect of the so-called "Vision for Peace,"

has said the U.S. administration and the Zionist regime had decided to wait until a team was formed to examine the maps, and that he hoped Israel would wait until after the election.

On January 28, Trump unveiled his plan negotiated with Israel but without Palestinians, as one side of any agreement, being involved in the process.

Palestinian leaders immediately rejected the plan, with President Mahmoud Abbas saying it "belongs in the dustbin of history."

They view the deal as a colonial plan meant to unilaterally control Palestine in its entirety and remove Palestinians from their homeland.

Nine Homeless Drug Users Shot Dead in Kabul

KABUL (Reuters) – Gunmen shot dead nine homeless drug users in the Afghan capital, officials said on Sunday, shining a light on chronic drug abuse in the world's biggest producer of opium but a rare incident of apparently coordinated violence against addicts.

The motive for the Saturday night attack by the unidentified gunmen in Kabul was not known and police said they were investigating. The men had been sleeping in an open area and a forensic examination had shown they were drug users.

"The shooting took place at the side of the Qrough mountain," a spokesman for Kabul police, Ferdaus Faramarz, told Reuters.

There are an estimated 2.5 million drug us-

ers in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Public Health says, with most thought to be addicted to heroin made from opium poppies grown in Afghanistan.

Some 20,000 drug users are homeless, with half that number in Kabul, at times straining relations with residents of some communities.

"It's a social crisis," said Dr Shokoor Haidari, deputy of the ministry's counter drugs department.

The ministry can only treat 40,000 people a year but far more seek help, said Haidari.

Lack of social services, unemployment and easy access to drugs have fueled drug abuse in Afghanistan, Haidari said.

Harsh winter weather killed at least 50

homeless drug users in the past two months, the Ministry of Public Health said.

Afghanistan has been the world's biggest producer of opium for years despite some \$8.9 billion spent since 2002 to stop production and trafficking in narcotics.

With compelling economic incentives and politically protected networks - from cultivators to producers and distributors - deeply entrenched, officials say there is little they can do to stop it.

The Interior Ministry this month announced the arrest of five top police officials, including the head of Kabul's counter-narcotics force, for suspected involvement in drug trafficking.

Rockets Hit U.S. Base in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Rockets have hit a U.S.-led military coalition's Baghdad headquarters, a coalition spokesman says, in the latest attack to target U.S. facilities in Iraq.

The assault sent warning sirens blaring across the high-security diplomatic compound but it was unclear exactly what was hit and how many rockets made impact, the source told AFP.

Multiple strong explosions followed by aircraft circling were heard near the Green Zone, the high-security enclave where the U.S. embassy is located.

Sunday's attack, before dawn, was carried out with "small rockets" and caused no casualties, a coalition spokesman said in a statement on Twitter.

The Green Zone is home to several Western embassies and government offices including the parliament, the prime minis-

ter's office, and the presidency.

The Sunday attacks came a few weeks after the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) fired volleys of ballistic missiles at Ain al-Assad, a large airbase in Iraq's Anbar hosting about 1,500 U.S. troops, and another outpost in Erbil, the capital of the semi-autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan.

The missile operation was in response to Washington's January 3 assassination of top Iranian general Qassem Soleimani, who led the IRGC's Quds Force.

The assassination also resulted in the death of Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who was the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU).

Iraqi resistance groups have vowed to avenge the assassination of Abu Mahdi, as Iran took revenge for General Soleimani.