

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – Palestine has announced that it has decided to ban the departure of Palestinians through the main crossing point with Jordan. The Palestinian General Administration of Crossings and Borders announced in an official press statement that “al-Karama Crossing Point between the West Bank and Jordan is shut down for the departure of the Palestinians to Jordan.” “All Palestinians from all over Palestine will not be allowed to cross through the crossing point from now until further notice,” said an official statement, adding that “no changes were made for the arrivals.”

Recommended prayers cannot attain the pleasures of Allah for you when obligatory prayers are left unattended.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

# Turkey Proposes Running Syria Oilfields Jointly With Russia



A U.S. military vehicle, part of a convoy arriving from northern Iraq, drives past an oil pump jack in Syria on October 26, 2019.

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says he has proposed the “joint management” of oil fields in eastern Syria to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and has suggested that Russia and Turkey can manage the oil fields in place of the “terrorists” who control them at present.

Speaking to reporters during his flight back from Brussels on Tuesday, Erdogan said that Putin was evaluating the offer, which the Turkish president said he made during talks in Moscow last week. Erdogan added that he may make a similar proposal to U.S. President Donald Trump.

“Dayr al-Zawr is another territory with oil reserves. In that province, terrorists exploit the oil resources. America has its own plans here,” Erdogan said, recalling the conversation. “I made the offer to Mr. Putin that if he gives financial support, we can do the construction and

through the oil obtained there, we can help destroyed Syria get on its feet,” he added.

Moscow has not yet commented on the veracity of the Turkish president’s recollection of his talks with Putin.

However, on previous occasions, Russian officials have repeatedly criticized efforts by any country to violate Syria’s territorial integrity or plunder its resources. In November, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused Washington of trying to separate eastern Syria’s oil-rich territories to create an illegal quasi-state. A month before that, the Russian military released detailed intelligence implicating the U.S. in a major oil-smuggling operation involving the CIA, the U.S. military, private contractors and Kurdish militias.

Erdogan did not clarify what “terrorists” he was referring to, but Turkey is known to classify Syria’s Kurdish People’s Protection Units militias as terrorists linked to the Turkish Kurdistan Workers Party.

The Turkish president, meanwhile, pointed to the illegal U.S. presence in Syria, saying “America has its own plans here,” and said if Moscow consented to the Russo-Turkish cooperation, “I can even make the same offer to [U.S. President Donald] Trump.”

## Detained Saudi Royals Sought to Block MBS Accession: Report



Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Two senior Saudi royals arrested recently had reportedly been seeking to block the accession to the throne of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) using a procedural body.

The arrest on Friday of the pair — namely Prince Ahmed bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, the sole remaining full brother of King Salman and a potential rival to bin Salman, as well as former crown prince Mohammed bin Nayef — was ordered after details of their alleged conversations were passed to the royal court, Britain’s Guardian newspaper quoted three sources as saying on Tuesday.

The senior royals were accused of having sought to install Prince Ahmed as chairman of the Allegiance Council, a position that is currently vacant, two of the Guardian’s sources said.

The council was established in 2007 to ensure a smooth transition of power should the king or crown prince die.

The arrest of the two men was directed by bin Salman, whom they are accused of having tried to sideline through the council.

However, the alleged discussions are not believed to have developed and appear to fall short of claims that the two men were planning a coup against the crown prince.

On Saturday, Saudi Arabia detained a fourth prince in a new purge of royal family members over an alleged coup attempt to unseat King Salman and his son MBS.

Prince Nayef bin Ahmed bin Abdulaziz was the fourth prince taken

into custody after the detention of his father Ahmed bin Abdulaziz, along with Prince Mohammed bin Nayef and his half brother Nawaf on Friday.

The arrests have sparked speculation that aging King Salman is about to die or abdicate.

Mohammed bin Nayef, the monarch’s nephew, was next in line to the throne before he was suddenly replaced by bin Salman in 2017. Since being ousted, Prince Nayef has effectively been under house arrest and prevented from leaving the kingdom.

Reuters cited a regional source as saying that bin Salman “accused them of conducting contacts with foreign powers, including the Americans and others, to carry out a coup d’etat.”

The news agency further quoted sources as saying that King Salman had himself signed the arrest warrants.

Other reports have emerged suggesting that bin Salman is seeking to become king before an upcoming G20 Summit to be hosted by Riyadh.

Back in November 2017, dozens of Saudi princes, ministers and former ministers were detained and placed in a luxury hotel under tight security guard over allegations of money laundering, bribery, extorting officials, and misappropriation of public funds for personal benefits.

The detentions had been ordered by Saudi Arabia’s so-called Anti-Corruption Committee headed by Mohammed bin Salman, in a crackdown widely believed to be aimed at consolidating his power.

## U.S. Begins Military Pullout From Two Afghan Bases

KABUL (Dispatches) – American forces have started pulling out of two bases in Afghanistan, a U.S. official said Tuesday.

The United States is trying to end its longest-ever conflict, and under the terms of a deal signed in Doha last month has said all foreign troops will quit Afghanistan within 14 months -- provided the Taliban stick to their security commitments.

Under the accord, the U.S. is initially supposed to cut its troop presence from about 12,000 currently to 8,600 by mid-July, and close five of its roughly 20 bases across the country.

Troops have started leaving one base in Lashkar Gah, the

capital of Helmand province in the south, and another base in Herat in the east, a U.S. official told AFP on the condition of anonymity.

Helmand, which along with neighboring Kandahar province is considered a Taliban stronghold, is where U.S. and British forces fought some of the bloodiest campaigns of the 18-year war.

Omar Zwak, spokesman for Helmand’s governor, told AFP that “20 to 30” foreigners had left Lashkar Gah since the weekend.

The initial drawdown comes as the Taliban, which see themselves as having achieved “vic-

tory” over America, test the Pentagon’s resolve to protect local partners by conducting dozens of low-level attacks against Afghan forces. The U.S. has only responded to a few of these attacks.

Under the terms of the withdrawal deal, the Taliban are supposed to tackle terrorists such as the Daesh and al-Qaeda, as well as hold talks with the Afghan government.

Meanwhile, the Taliban have sent vehicles to be ready to collect militants expected to be released by the Afghan government in a prisoner exchange and said they will honor the deal by handing over 1,000 government

troops.

The release, expected to be announced on Tuesday, is part of a deal signed by the United States and the Taliban last month.

The Taliban have demanded the release of the prisoners as a confidence-building measure to pave the way for the opening of direct talks between the government and the militants after talks with the both sides and the United States individually.

Sediq Sediqqi, a spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani, said on Twitter that the presidential palace would issue a decree with details of the process, and the release was contingent on security and peace developments.

## Top Hashd al-Sha’abi Commander Martyred in Iraq’s Diyala

BAGHDAD (Press TV) – Daesh terrorists have killed a senior commander of the Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq’s eastern province of Diyala as government troops and allied fighters are engaged in joint counter-terrorism operations across the crisis-hit Arab country to flush out the last remnants of the extremist outfit.

A provincial security source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Arabic-language al-Maalomah news agency on Tuesday that a high-ranking commander of the forces – commonly known by the Arabic name Hashd al-Sha’abi – was killed and four of his aides sustained injuries when a group of Daesh terrorists stormed a security checkpoint in Tal Ari area on the outskirts of the northeastern Iraqi town of Khanaqin the previous night.

The source added that Hashd al-Sha’abi forces together with government troops have launched a joint security operation in the area in order

to hunt down the terrorists and destroy Daesh sleeper cells there.

The media office of Hashd al-Shaabi later identified the commander as Muhammad Ali Majeed al-Anbaki, stating that he was affiliated with Brigade 23 of the forces.

The media bureau of the Iraqi Joint Operations Command (JOC) said in a statement on Monday that nearly 25 Daesh militants had been killed in an airdrop operation on terrorist hideouts at a mountainous area in the northern part of the country’s north-central province of Salahuddin.

The statement read that an airborne force from the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS) conducted an operation on Qara-Chokh Mountain near Makhoul mountain range, and the offensive started early on Sunday and continued into Monday dawn. Iraqi forces fought fierce clashes with Daesh Takfiris.

CTS commandos could destroy nine tunnels

used as hideouts for the extremist militants and a training camp, leaving 25 Daesh terrorists killed.

On March 6, Iraqi security forces and allied Hashd al-Sha’abi fighters managed to ensure security in several rugged areas in Diyala province during an offensive to hunt down Daesh remnants in the area.

Iraq’s Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) spokesperson Sabah al-Naaman said at the time police forces and Hashd al-Sha’abi fighters had destroyed militant hideouts in the Khanaqin district as well as the Hamrin Mountains, which the extremists used as safe havens to carry out frequent attacks against security forces and civilians.

Naaman noted that security and Hashd al-Sha’abi forces had dealt heavy blows to Daesh militants during the ongoing operations, killing at least 39 of them within three days.

## Erdogan: U.S. Softening Stance on Purchase of Patriot Systems

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan says that the United States is softening its stance on a potential sale of U.S. Patriot systems, adding that Washington has asked Ankara to guarantee it will not activate Russian S-400 systems.

“We made this offer to the United States on the Patriot: If you are going to give us Patriots, then do it. We can also buy Patriots from you,” Erdogan told reporters on a return flight from Brussels. “They also softened significantly on this S-400 issue. They are now at the point of ‘promise us you won’t make the S-400s operational’,” he added.

The S-400 sale has raised the prospect of U.S. sanctions on Turkey and led the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump to exclude Ankara from its F-35 stealth fighter jet program.

Patriots are designed primarily to take out ballistic missiles, not aircraft, unlike the dual-use Russian S-400 systems.

The U.S. argues that Russian military hardware would be incompatible with NATO systems and expose F-35 jets to possible Russian subterfuge.

Turkey maintains that it needs air defense systems to meet security threats, mainly emanating from the conflict in neighboring Syria.