

MANAMA (Press TV) – Bahraini officials have summoned a Shia Muslim cleric for interrogation as the ruling Al Khalifah dynasty presses ahead with its heavy-handed crackdown and persecution of members of the religious community in the tiny Persian Gulf kingdom. The Arabic-language Lualua television network reported on Thursday that Bahraini security forces had ordered Sheikh Abdulmohsen Mulla Atiya al-Jamri to appear for questioning at Hamad Town Police Station. The reason for the summons remains unknown.

A conceited and self-admiring person is disliked by others; charity and alms are the best remedy for ailments and calamities; one has to account in the next world for the deeds that he has done in this world.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Syrian FM Vows to 'Liberate Every Inch' of Syria



Fighters with the Syrian government forces gather near a tank on a road leading to the town of Jalamah in Syria's west-central province of Hama during clashes with foreign-sponsored terrorists on June 8, 2019.

DAMASCUS (Press TV) – The Syrian foreign minister says his country is resolved to rid the entire Arab country of foreign-sponsored terrorists.

In a recent interview with Lebanon-based al-Mayadeen television news network, Walid al-Muallem said "every inch" of the Syrian territory will be liberated from terror-

ists very soon.

Al-Muallem said terrorists positioned in the country's northwestern province of Idlib had lost "numerous opportunities for the settlement of crisis" after they failed to honor a ceasefire and continued to target civilian neighborhoods.

His remarks came as Syria's army

launched ground operations inside Idlib and adjacent areas which are under the control of foreign-backed terrorists.

Syria has stepped up its bombardment of terrorist hideouts in the northwest. Idlib, along the border with Turkey, is the last remaining bastion of foreign-backed terrorists.

The so-called National Front for the Liberation of Syria is the main Turkish-backed militant alliance in the Idlib region.

Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a coalition of different terror outfits largely composed of al-Nusra Front, holds a large part of the province.

Muallem said that "despite the Syrian army's agreement to truce in Idlib and efforts exerted in this regard, Ankara has failed to fulfill its obligations."

The Syrian foreign minister also demanded an immediate withdrawal of American and Turkish forces from Syria's northeast.

US troops have long been providing Kurdish YPG militants with arms and training, calling them a key partner in the purported fight against Daesh. Many observers, however, see the support in the context of Washington's plans to carve out a foothold in the Arab country.

Such support has also angered Ankara which views YPG militants as a terrorist organization tied to Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) that has been waging a destructive war inside Turkey for decades.

Turkey seeks to establish a 32-kilometer (20-mile) safe zone in northern Syria, and has stressed that it wants the Kurdish militants cleared from the region.

Turkey:

Work on Syria 'Safe Zone' Not Yielding Results

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkey does not think its efforts with the United States to form a so-called "safe zone" in northeast Syria will yield the results it wants and is ready to take action itself, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu is quoted as saying.

Ankara and Washington have agreed to establish a zone on the Syrian border that Turkey says should stretch 30 km into Syria and be cleared of the Syrian Kurdish YPG militants, which it considers a terrorist organization.

Turkey has accused the United States, which supports the YPG-led force, of moving too slowly to set up the zone. The two countries are also at odds over how far it should extend into Syria and who should control it.

Turkey says it wants to settle up to 2 million Syrian refugees in the zone, and has repeatedly warned of unilateral military action if it is not satisfied with progress.

President Tayyip Erdogan said on Tuesday that Turkey had no choice but to act alone

given the lack of progress made with the United States, in his most direct indication yet of a military incursion.

Speaking to broadcaster A Haber on Thursday, Cavusoglu said Turkey had not seen sincerity from the United States.

"We think this ongoing process with the United States will not take us to the point we desire. The information coming from the field proves this," he was quoted as saying by A Haber.

"We must take steps to clear the terrorist organizations

from our vicinity and return refugees there," he said.

Ties between the NATO allies have been strained over a host of issues, including Syria policy and the looming threat of U.S. sanctions over Ankara's decision to buy Russian defense systems.

While diplomats, analysts and Turkey's main opposition say Ankara would be unwilling to anger Washington with a full-scale military incursion as the allies try to repair strained ties, Turkey has been pressing for efforts to be stepped up.

U.S. Afghanistan Envoy Meets Taliban in Pakistan



In this handout photograph, taken and released by the Pakistan Foreign Ministry on October 3, 2019, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi (4-R) is seen meeting with a Taliban delegation in Islamabad.

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) – A Taliban delegation has met U.S. special representative for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad for more than an hour, two sources told Reuters, the first known contact between the sides since U.S. President Donald Trump called off talks last month.

Trump halted the talks, which aimed at a plan to withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan in exchange for Taliban security guarantees, following the death of a U.S. soldier and 11 others in a Taliban bomb attack in Kabul.

The Taliban is ready to stand by a tentative agreement struck in Doha before Trump canceled the talks, according to Pakistan's foreign minister and sources from the militant group, who said the insurgents were eager to resume negotiations.

However the meeting in Pakistan's capital Islamabad did not represent a resumption of formal negotiations, official sources cautioned.

"The Taliban officials held a meeting with Zalmay Khalilzad ... all I can tell you is that Pakistan played a big role in it to convince them how important it was for the peace process," a senior Pakistan official told Reuters, but declined to be identified as he was not authorized to speak publicly.

He added that the meeting, which was confirmed by a second source, did not involve formal negotiations on the process, but aimed at building confidence. He declined to elaborate further on the discussions.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told Reuters

that the Taliban were set to meet with Khalilzad during their visits to Islamabad though he was not aware of what they discussed and exactly when a meeting was taking place.

"They were due to meet Zalmay Khalilzad. I think that might have happened. I'm hoping that they have met," he said on Friday.

He added that the Taliban considered themselves as abiding by a tentative agreement signed with Khalilzad in Qatar before Trump called a halt to talks.

"They're ready to own their commitment," he said.

Two Taliban sources confirmed they viewed themselves as committed to the agreements reached in Doha and were disappointed when Trump pulled out of talks.

The U.S. embassy in Islamabad and the State Department in Washington declined to comment on whether there had been a meeting between the Taliban and Khalilzad.

A State Department representative said Khalilzad had spent several days in Islamabad this week for consultations with authorities in Pakistan, but his meetings in Islamabad did not represent a restart of the Afghan peace process.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, would not confirm or deny that Taliban had met Khalilzad, adding that the Taliban delegation was still in Islamabad for meetings on Friday.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a Taliban leader in Afghanistan said the delegation's visit to Pakistan was intended to revive negotiations to end the 18-year war.

Hamas Official Back in Saudi Prison After Hospitalization

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Saudi authorities have transferred a high-ranking official of the Palestinian Islamic resistance movement Hamas to prison, weeks after he was taken to hospital because of health complications, reports say.

The Prisoners of Conscience, an independent non-governmental organization advocating human rights in Saudi Arabia, announced in a post on its official Twitter page that Muhammad al-Khudari, who has been in detention in the ultra-conservative kingdom for more than five months, was back in Dhahban Central Prison in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah earlier this week after hospitalization in Mecca to receive treatment for an unspecified terminal disease.

On September 14, Hamas called on Saudi authorities to immediately release Khudari, who has been living in Saudi Arabia for over 30 years, and represented Hamas between mid-1990s and 2003 in Saudi Arabia.

He has held other important positions in the Palestinian resistance movement as well.

The head of Hamas' international relations committee, said that those who work for Palestine should be honored and not put in jail.

"Over the past 30 years, the Hamas movement has gone through a lot of pain and abuse ... We kept silent not out of weakness and inability, although we could have raised our voice every time. We are keen on retaining the nation's compass towards the liberation of Palestine, and protect it against any sedition that will serve no one but our enemy," Osama Hamdan said.

"This is why we were silent about the arrest of Dr. Khudari and others. The Hamas leadership had made efforts to solve this issue peacefully, but we have reached a point where we cannot remain silent," Hamdan pointed out.

Back on June 3, Lebanese Arabic-language

daily newspaper al-Akhbar, citing informed sources who requested anonymity, reported that Saudi officials had been holding dozens of Saudi nationals and Palestinian expatriates in detention for months over affiliation to Hamas.

The report added that the most prominent figure among those arrested was Khudari.

Al-Akhbar went on to say that the campaign of arrests coincided with the closure and tight control of bank accounts, and a ban on sending any money from Saudi Arabia to the Gaza Strip.

Over the past two years, Saudi authorities have deported more than 100 Palestinians from the kingdom, mostly on charges of supporting Hamas financially, politically or through social networking sites.

The Saudi regime has imposed strict control over Palestinian funds in Saudi Arabia since the end of 2017.

Palestinian Killed in Clashes in Gaza With Zionist Troops

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – At least one Palestinian was killed and 11 injured on Friday by the Zionist troops' gunfire during clashes with dozens of Palestinian demonstrators in eastern Gaza Strip, medics said.

Ashraf al-Qedra, spokesman of the health ministry in Gaza, told reporters that Allaa Hamdan, 28, was killed east of Jabalia in northern Gaza Strip.

He added that 11 others were injured, including five by live ammunition during the clashes that broke out on Friday afternoon.

Since March 30 last year, Palestinian demonstrators have been carrying out weekly rallies and protests against the occupying regime, better known as the Great March of Return.

Earlier on Friday, the Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza said in a press statement that since the start of the marches last year, the Zionist regime's army has killed 313 Palestinians and wounded 19,000 others by live ammunition.

The marches are calling on the regime to end the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip.