

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iranian teams have cleaned up an oil slick near field in the northern region of the Persian Gulf that had extended over a six-square-km (2.3 square mile) area, an Iranian maritime official said on Saturday.

The cause of the spill, which occurred on Wednesday, was being investigated, the director general of ports and maritime in Iran's Bushehr Province, Siavash Arjomandzadeh, told the official IRNA news agency. The cleanup took place near the Abuzar field, Iran's main production area in the Persian Gulf.

BERLIN (Reuters) -- Thousands marched in Berlin on Saturday to protest against measures imposed in Germany to stem the coronavirus pandemic, saying they violated people's rights and freedoms.

The gathering, estimated by police at 17,000, included libertarians, constitutional loyalists and anti-vaccination activists. There was also a small far-right presence with some marchers carrying Germany's black, white and red imperial flag.

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Sunday, August 2, 2020, Mordad 12, 1399, Zil-Hijjah 12, 1441, Price 40,000 Rials

Viewpoint

Syrian Lives Matter Too

Popular U.S. Website Explains:

How Hezbollah Trapped Zionist Regime

BEIRUT (Dispatches) -- The occupying regime of Israel's forces this week moved specialized military units to Palestine's northern border to reinforce their increasingly tense outposts along the Lebanese and Syrian borders.

Zionist officials described it as the most significant build-up in years, prompted by fear of a major operation by Hezbollah, Lebanon's popular resistance movement.

The movement shed light on Israel's impossible situation along the Lebanese border, which bristles with as many as 150,000 rockets and missiles pointed at Zionist targets inside Occupied Palestine.

To the Zionists, the build-up is an intolerable threat — but also one it can only remove with huge loss of life and capital, which it has thus far been unprepared to commit, American financial news website Business Insider said.

The occupying regime of Israel has conducted scores of strikes against Hezbollah positions in Syria and Lebanon since the outbreak of the war on Syria eight years ago — but in historical terms the border has still been quiet. Hezbollah has been occupied helping Syria defeat foreign-backed terrorism ravaging the country.

"The Iranians and Hezbollah have laid a very dangerous trap for us in the north and I am not clear on how there can be a military solution to this crisis that would come at an acceptable cost," Business Insider cited "a former senior Israeli official who remains closely briefed on Iranian projects in the region" as saying.

"It is militarily unacceptable that Hezbollah and Iran have 150,000 missiles and rockets pointed at Israel," said the official, who asked not be named as he was criticizing the current Zionist regime on security matters.

The source is referring to Hezbollah's three-decade-long program of developing hidden and protected missile and rocket launch sites throughout southern and eastern Lebanon that are nearly impossible to interdict with airstrikes, the fast-growing website said.

Hezbollah's leadership often says the rockets and missiles are meant to deter Israeli aggression against Lebanon, it said.

The resistance movement "can pour dozens if not hundreds of rockets" into Israeli settlements throughout the northern third of the occupied territories almost

unimpeded, the website said. Larger, more advanced, systems are capable of hitting the entire territories, it added.

The former official, cited by Business Insider, said Israeli troops are "not capable of conducting an operation in Lebanon to stop the rockets and missiles fast enough to avoid enormous political and economic damage".

"To do so would require a full-scale invasion of Lebanon that would send units deep into the Hezbollah 'Nature Reserves' to chase down individual launchers while also battling the group militarily.

"This would lead to huge numbers of casualties on the ground as well and there's little reason to think the rockets could be stopped for weeks in this scenario.

"I'm not sure anyone could conduct this operation quickly enough to protect" the Zionist regime, the former official concluded.

In 2006, Israeli forces were stunned to realize that Hezbollah had turned most of southern Lebanon into hardened fortifications that could not be seen by air, Business Insider said.

Avi, a former military intelligence official who asked to be identified only by his first name, said: "In 2006 it became clear that after the Israeli army withdrawal from Lebanon, Hezbollah had fortified the entire south and it would be foolish to think these defenses have not been substantially increased in the years since that fight."

"Hezbollah has designed its military capability very carefully and with a singular focus: As long as rockets are landing on Israel and the Israeli people are living in bunkers, Hezbollah is winning," he said.

"Hezbollah's leadership believes it can take the pain of a conflict longer than Israel can and they are probably right," Avi added.

He described the Zionist regime's "counter-strategy" as having three parts:

The threat that in a true escalation, Israel would attack the entire Lebanese state — a fixed target — rather than Hezbollah forces which are hard to pin down.

High-tech solutions like the Iron Dome rocket defense system. Avi said it is not clear that the system could withstand far larger, sustained barrages that Hezbollah could produce.

Occasional airstrikes in Syria and sometimes Iraq, meant to

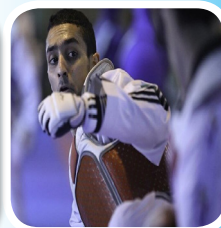
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Iranian Students Walk Away With Medals at Int'l Chemistry Olympiad



52nd IChO 2020

Iran's Hadipour Secures Position in World Taekwondo Ranking



U.S. Only Concerned About Looting Iraqi Oil: PMU



Iran's New Intelligence Feat

Ringleader of U.S.-Based Terrorists Captured



This picture released by Fars news agency purportedly shows Jamshid Sharmahd, the ringleader of the U.S.-based Tondar terrorist group, after capture by Iran's security forces.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran said Saturday it has arrested the head of a U.S.-based "terrorist group" accused of being behind a deadly 2008 bombing in the southern city of Shiraz and of other abortive attacks.

The group's Jamshid Sharmahd, who was leading armed and sabotage operations inside Iran, is now in the powerful hands of Iran's security forces, a statement from the intelligence ministry said.

The statement did not elaborate on where or when the leader of the terrorist royalist group known as the Kingdom Assembly of Iran,

or Tondar (Farsi for Thunder), was arrested.

According to the statement, he had orchestrated the April 12, 2008 bombing in a packed mosque in Shiraz that martyred 14 people and wounded 215.

Iran hanged three men convicted of the bombing in 2009, saying they had ties to the monarchist group. It said they had been taking orders from an Iranian U.S.-backed CIA agent to try to assassinate a high-ranking official in Iran.

They were Mohsen Eslamian and Ali Asghar Pashtar as well as Rouzbeh Yahyazadeh. The three

were found guilty of being "mo-hareb" (enemies of God) and "corruption on the earth" by a revolutionary court in Tehran.

Iran hanged two other convicted members of the group in 2010, who had confessed to obtaining explosives and planning to assassinate officials.

The statement issued on Saturday said that Tondar had plotted several other big operations which failed.

It said that Tondar had planned to blow up a dam in Shiraz, use "cyanide bombs" at a Tehran book fair, and plant an explosive device at the mausoleum of the Islamic

Republic's founder, the late Imam Khomeini.

It was not clear how Iran arrested the U.S.-based Sharmahd. Iran's intelligence ministry announced the arrest of a subversive element in similarly mysterious circumstances in October last year.

Ruhollah Zam was sentenced to death last month over "corruption on earth".

Zam, who reportedly lived in exile in Paris, ran a channel on the Telegram messaging application called Amadnews, using it as a platform to instigate riots, acts of arson and armed attacks on security forces during peaceful protests last year.

A statement attributed to Tondar claimed the assassination of an Iranian nuclear scientist in 2010 by a remote-control bomb. Suspicion long has fallen on the occupying regime of Israel for a string of assassinations targeting scientists.

Sharmahd's reported arrest comes as tensions remain inflamed by President Donald Trump's 2018 decision to unilaterally withdraw America from the nuclear deal. A series of incidents last year were capped by a U.S. drone strike in January assassinating a top Iranian general in Baghdad. Iran responded by launching a ballistic missile attack on U.S. soldiers in Iraq that injured more than 100 troops.

U.S., British, Saudi and Israeli intelligence services are the key sponsors of terrorist groups operating against Iran, such as the MKO, PJAK and Takfiri groups.

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Nuclear Negotiator Wendy Sherman:

U.S. Policy on Iran a 'Costly' Failure

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- Wendy Sherman, the lead U.S. negotiator in nuclear talks with Iran, has characterized President Donald Trump's approach to Iran as "another painful and costly example".

As the under secretary of state for political affairs, Sherman led the U.S. delegation to the marathon talks which led to the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran, but Trump described it as "the worst deal of all time" and left it in 2018.

In an opinion piece in Foreign Policy magazine, Sherman lamented in a headline "the Total Destruction of U.S. Foreign Policy Under Trump".

"Over three years after the Trump administration withdrew from the nuclear deal, Iran has more highly enriched uranium ..., more operating nuclear facilities, more sophisticated technol-

ogy," she wrote.

"U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Iran envoy Brian Hook advertise this as a campaign of 'maximum pressure,' but their ultimate objective—which they insist is not regime change—remains a mystery," she added.

The U.S. unleashed the so-called maximum pressure campaign against Iran in 2018, when it unilaterally scrapped the nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Following its withdrawal, Washington targeted the Iranian nation with the "toughest ever" economic sanctions.

It is currently dialing up efforts to kill the JCPOA completely through pushing the remaining parties to the multilateral agreement to extend a UN arms embargo on Tehran.

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Trump Wants Agents to Stay Despite Outcry

WASHINGTON (AFP) -- U.S. federal officers will stay in the protest-wracked city of Portland until local law enforcement officials finish a "cleanup of anarchists and agitators," President Donald Trump said.

The forces -- whose deployment was seen by many as part of the president's law-and-order strategy for re-election and exacerbated tensions between authorities and anti-racism protesters -- had been scheduled to begin their phased pullout from Portland on Thursday.

Trump tweeted late Friday: "Homeland Security is not leaving Portland until local police complete cleanup of Anarchists and Agitators!"

Hundreds of demonstrators were still on the streets of downtown Portland on Saturday morning, without any federal law enforcement in sight.

Earlier this month the Trump administration sent federal tactical

teams, many wearing combat-like gear, to intervene in the city after weeks of protests against racism and police brutality saw windows broken and graffiti scrawled on the federal courthouse and other buildings.

But their deployment inflamed the situation, especially following footage of protesters being snatched off the street by federal agents and put into unmarked cars.

Democrats said the intervention reeked of a "police state" and that it was a political move to show Trump -- who is struggling in the polls ahead of November's presidential election -- to voters as a strict law-and-order president.

Attorney General Bill Barr has defended the use of federal officers, and rejected any suggestion of the political motivation.

"In the wake of George Floyd's death, violent rioters and anarchists

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