

Thousands of Lebanese Protest Against Gov't Policies
BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Thousands of Lebanese flocked on Saturday to capital Beirut's streets to protest against the government policies, al-Jadeed local TV channel reported. Protesters held Lebanese national flags and chanted slogans against the government, according to the demonstrators, adopted policies that led to the economic collapse and an alarming public debt of over 90 billion U.S. dollars. Lebanon is going through its worst economic and financial crisis in its history. Moreover, COVID-19 outbreak exacerbated the economic situation, driving thousands of companies out of business while leaving thousands of people unemployed.

Kayhan International

Thought for Today

Many persons get nothing out of their fasts but hunger and thirst, many more get nothing out of their night prayers but exertions and sleepless nights. Wise and sagacious persons are praiseworthy even if they do not fast and sleep during the nights.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

VOL NO: LV 11279 TEHRAN / Est.1959

Sunday, October 18, 2020, Mehr 27, 1399, Rabi al-Awwal 1, 1442

Iraq Resistance Groups' Truce With U.S. Temporary, Conditional: MP



Members of the Liwa al-Tasuf 13th Brigade of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units, better known as Hashd al-Sha'abi, take part in a graduation ceremony in the holy shrine city of Karbala.

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – A proposed truce by anti-terror resistance groups, which are part of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), better known by the Arabic name Hashd al-Sha'abi, to suspend attacks on U.S. troops is temporary and depends on the complete withdrawal of American troops by year-end, a senior Iraqi lawmaker says.

"The truce isn't open-ended," Ahmad al-Assadi, spokesman of the Fatah Alliance and a former official spokesman for Hashd al-Sha'abi, told AFP news agency.

"In my estimation, at its earliest it could end around the U.S. elections," slated for November 3, "or it could last until the end of the year," he added.

"A truce lasting longer than the end of the year doesn't make much sense. We're only giving the government more time to negotiate the withdrawal," Assadi pointed out.

In early January, Iraq's parliament voted to expel American troops from its soil two days after a U.S. drone strike assassinated top Iranian anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Solei-

mani, the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, and his Iraqi trench mate Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy head of the Popular Mobilization Units. Anti-U.S. sentiments have been running high since then.

Iraqi resistance groups, in a joint statement released on October 10, agreed on a conditional ceasefire to American forces present in Iraq, saying they would halt their military operations against the U.S. troops, including rocket attacks, provided that Washington does not persist in maintaining its presence

in the Arab country.

The Hashd al-Sha'abi movement was established in 2014 from volunteers to fight Daesh and other terrorist groups.

Hashd al-Sha'abi fighters have played a major role in the liberation of Daesh-held areas to the south, northeast and north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, ever since the terrorists launched an offensive in the country in June 2014.

Back in November 2016, the Iraqi parliament approved a law giving full legal status to the fighters. It recognized the PMU as part of the national armed forces, placed the forces under the command of the prime minister, and granted them the right to receive salaries and pensions like the regular army and police forces.

Meanwhile, a high-ranking Iraqi military official said Hashd al-Sha'abi fighters, alongside national security forces are effectively thwarting infiltration attempts of the Daesh terrorists on the western border with Syria.

Brigadier General Yahya Rasoul, a military spokesman for Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, said qualitative and pre-emptive operations by both Hashd al-Sha'abi and security forces are underway along the frontier to prevent possible infiltrations in various spots.

"The forces continue to set up several ambushes along the border. Our units have been able in the past to arrest a number of smugglers and terrorists," he added.

Yemen's Warring Sides Complete Largest Prisoner Swap in 5 Years



The Houthis said 671 prisoners arrived in Sana'a during the process.

SANA'A (Dispatches) – Yemen's warring parties have completed the largest prisoner-swap since the Saudi regime and its allies launched a devastating war on the country, with Houthi Ansarullah movement releasing militants affiliated with the former regime.

More than 1,000 people were released and transported to their homes over the two-day exchange – completed on Friday.

The Ansarullah movement said 671 prisoners arrived in the capital Sana'a during the process.

The swap has been two years in the making, with rival sides initially agreeing to it in December 2018 as part of the UN-sponsored Stockholm Agreement, many parts of which have not seen any progress.

Delegates representing the former regime and Ansarullah movement finalized the details for this agreement last month after UN-brokered talks in Switzerland.

Ansarullah official Abdel-Qader al-Mortada said that the two sides

had already agreed on another swap and are currently waiting for the UN to decide where they can meet to finalize the details.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the exchange of detainees, calling it an "important step" in the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement.

Guterres also urged the parties "to finalize the joint declaration, consisting of a nationwide ceasefire, economic and humanitarian measures, as well as the resumption of a comprehensive, inclusive political process to end the war", according to a statement by his spokesperson.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which facilitated the transfer and release of detainees, said 11 flights took off or landed at five different cities: Yemen's Sana'a, Seiyun and Aden; and Saudi Arabia's Riyadh and Abha.

ICRC synchronized the planes as they left from their respective cities to ensure both rivals it would be a fair exchange.

Hamas Dismisses U.S. Offer on 'Deal of Century': Official

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – Palestinian Hamas movement has turned down an offer by the United States to coax the resistance movement into negotiations over President Donald Trump's highly controversial "deal of the century" on the decades-old Zionist-Palestinian conflict, a senior official with the movement says.

"Hamas refused to negotiate with the U.S. government over the deal of the century because Washington was trying to exploit the talks in order to threaten the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership by provoking divisions among Palestinian factions," Deputy head of Hamas political bureau, Saleh al-Arouri, said on Saturday.

The U.S.-proposed deal, which is completely in favor of the Zionist regime, enshrines al-Quds as "Israel's undivided capital" and allows the regime to annex settlements in the occupied West Bank and the strategic Jordan Valley. The plan also denies the right of return to Palestinian refugees into their homeland, among other controversial terms.

All Palestinian groups have unanimously rejected the so-called deal of century that serves the occupying regime's interests in the decades-old conflict while creating a Palestinian state with limited control over its own security and borders.

"National participation is the only response that can be given to the conspiracy of the deal of the century and [bids aimed at] elimination of the Palestinian

Transactions Benefiting Zionist Regime Not Permissible: Ayatollah Sistani

BAGHDAD (Press TV) – Iraq's prominent Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani has advised against trading goods that bring about benefits to the Zionist regime.

The top Iraqi cleric was asked whether it is allowed to sell goods to or buy them from the companies that allocate part of their income to

supporting the occupying regime of Israel.

"It is not permissible to trade Israeli products and [engage with] the companies that we are sure to be effectively backing Israel," Ayatollah Sistani's office said on its website.

In recent years, a campaign boycotting the Zionist regime's products

has been growing rapidly worldwide, causing heavy losses to the regime's firms.

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement was initiated in 2005 by over 170 Palestinian organizations and later turned international. The movement is meant to initiate "various forms of boycott

against Israel until it meets its obligations under international law" and end its decades-long occupation of Palestinian lands.

The BDS, which was inspired by the South African anti-apartheid movement, has claimed several successes in isolating the Zionist regime and promoting the Palestinian cause.

Turkey Tests Russian-Made S-400 Defense System: Report

ANKARA (Dispatches) – A missile has been fired into the sky on Turkey's Black Sea coast where the military was expected to test its Russian-made S-400 defense systems, according to a video seen by Reuters.

The video, taken in the coastal city of Sinop on Friday, showed a narrow column of smoke headed high into the blue sky.

Turkey was widely expected to test the system this week, after issuing notices warning vessels and aircraft to avoid the area in the Black Sea.

A Haber television, an outlet close to the Turkish government, also reported the test on its website. Other Turkish media carried similar reports.

Turkey's defense ministry said it would neither deny nor confirm missile tests.

Defense analyst Turan Oguz told Reuters that a preliminary assessment of the color, intensity, angle and route of the smoke in the video coincided with S-400 missiles. The angle of the col-

umn suggested the target "must not be too high," he added.

The United States condemned Turkey after reports emerged that Ankara had tested the air defense system despite opposition from Washington.

Washington said the U.S. State Department had previously told Turkish officials at the highest levels that it was "unacceptable" for a NATO ally to buy the Russian defense system.

"If confirmed, we would condemn in the strongest terms the S-400 test missile as incompatible with Turkey's responsibilities as a NATO ally and strategic partner to the United States," said State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus.

The U.S. had threatened to impose sanctions on Turkey if it activated the S-400 missile system.

However, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has remained defiant that the S-400 would

be deployed.

Erdogan said Turkey had no choice but to buy the S-400 missile system after the U.S. refused to sell Ankara U.S. Patriot missiles, an assertion officials in Washington deny.

Turkey signed the S-400 deal with Russia in 2017. Deliveries of the first four missile batteries, worth \$2.5bn, began in July last year.

Following the delivery of the first battery of missiles last year, Turkey was excluded from an F-35 fighter jet training program by the Trump administration due to fears the Russian S-400 missile system would compromise U.S. intelligence.

Ankara described the purchase of the missiles as a matter of national sovereignty.

The U.S. government says it is concerned that the S-400 could be used to gather data on the capabilities of the F-35, and that the information could end up in Russian hands.

cause," Arouri noted.

"It is the occupying Israeli regime that has drawn up the roadmap for the elimination of the Palestinian cause, and the scheme is being implemented by the U.S. government and its allies in the region," Arouri said.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian official denounced the normalization agreements signed by the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to establish full diplomatic ties with the Zionist regime.

Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu signed U.S.-brokered normalization deals with the Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani during an official ceremony hosted by President Donald Trump at the White House on September 15.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al-Saud also announced on Thursday that his country believes in "eventual normalization" of ties with the regime, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy reported.

In a virtual meeting with the prince, he conveyed: "I believe that the focus now needs to be on getting the Palestinians and the Israelis back to the negotiating table. In the end, the only thing that can deliver a lasting peace and lasting stability is an agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis."

Palestinians, who seek an independent state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, with East al-Quds as its capital, view the deals as betrayal of their cause.