

Iraqi Forces Kill Over Dozen Daesh Terrorists

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Iraqi forces launched an operation against Daesh in Iraq's northern province of Kirkuk, killing 16 members of the terrorist group, the Iraqi military said on Friday.

The forces attacked the terrorists' hideouts in the rugged areas of Wadi-Zghaiton and Wadi al-Khanajir in the southwest of the namesake provincial capital Kirkuk, some 250 km north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, Yahia Rasoul spokesman of the Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi forces said in a statement.

Thought for Today

If a man sees even a tiny gleam of success, then greed forces him to humiliate himself. If he gives way to avarice, then inordinate desires ruin him, if he is disappointed, then despondency almost kills him. If he is excited, then he loses temper and gets angry. If he is pleased, then he gives up precaution.

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Resistance Forces Won't Lay Down Weapons Amid Threat: Iraqi Leader

BAGHDAD (Press TV) – A senior Iraqi leader says the Islamic resistance forces will not lay down their arms as long as Iraq is under threat.

Qais al-Khazali, leader of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq movement, says the Iraqi government is entitled to having a monopoly on carrying and using weapons in order to restore stability to the country.

However, he noted that the Iraqi resistance forces will continue carrying arms as long as the country is in danger.

Speaking in an interview with the Al-Iraqiya TV, which was aired on Thursday, Khazali said resistance forces carry weapons for a specific goal and reason.

"Once that goal is achieved, they will lay down their weapons," he noted.

He said he is opposed to rocket attacks against the U.S. embassy, and so are many other groups, as it is a diplomatic site.

"Resistance groups are opposed to [the U.S.] occupation; we do not approve of rocket attacks against diplomatic centers," he added.

The heavily fortified Green Zone in Baghdad, which hosts foreign diplomatic sites and government



Qais al-Khazali, leader of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq movement, speaks in an interview with the Al-Iraqiya TV

buildings including the US embassy, has been frequently targeted by rockets and explosives in the past few years.

Washington, each time, has been quick to point the finger at popular anti-terror groups, which are now integrated into Iraq's armed forces.

The U.S. has time and again targeted positions of Iraq's anti-terror Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), also known as Hashd al-Sha'abi, after blaming the major anti-terror force for the rocket attacks.

The popular group and other resistance forces have strongly de-

nied any involvement in the strikes. They even agreed last month to stop military operations against US and foreign forces in Iraq to allow them to leave the Arab country.

Khazali, however, says the ceasefire announced by Islamic resistance groups has come to an end as two conditions for the truce have not been met.

"The two conditions included Iraq's control over its airspace and setting up a timetable for the withdrawal of American occupying forces from Iraq," he said in the Thursday interview.

"We will establish the principle of our full right to confront alien forces militarily," he added.

Anti-American sentiments have been running high in Iraq since the U.S. assassinated Iran's anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, and deputy head of Iraq's anti-terror Popular Mobilization Units, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, in Baghdad on January 3.

Just days later, Iraqi lawmakers unanimously passed a bill mandating the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Iraq.

The U.S. has refused to withdraw its troops, with U.S. President Donald Trump balking at the idea with the threat to seize Iraq's oil money held in bank accounts in the United States.

Iraqi resistance groups have pledged to take up arms against US forces if Washington fails to comply with the parliamentary order.

The U.S. announced on Tuesday that it would slash troop levels in Afghanistan and Iraq to 2,500 in each country, their lowest levels in nearly 20 years of invasion.

Washington still has some 3,000 troops stationed across Iraq.

Syria Condemns Pompeo's Visit to Occupied Golan Heights



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (C) and Zionist foreign minister Gabi Ashkenazi (R) arrive on Mount Bental in the occupied Golan Heights on November 19, 2020.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Syria has condemned U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to the occupied Golan Heights on Thursday in the strongest language and said it was a provocative act before U.S. President Donald Trump leaves his post, state media said.

Pompeo became the first U.S. secretary of state to visit an illegal Israeli West Bank settlement and the Golan Heights. Palestinians and Arab states said the move would help cement the Zionist regime's control over occupied territory.

Syria called on the international community and the UN to condemn the "provocative" visit that violated international resolutions, a government source was quoted on state media as saying.

"The visit is a provocative move before the end of Trump's administration and a flagrant violation of our sovereignty," the statement said. Trump angered the international community in 2019 by recognizing the occupying regime's claim to "sovereignty" over the Golan Heights.

The Heights were part of Syria until 1967, when the Zionist regime occupied most of the area in the Six Day War and annexing it in 1981. That unilateral annexation was not recognized internationally, and Syria demands the return of the territory.

Meanwhile, the Arab League condemned Pompeo's visit to the occupied territories of Palestine in West Bank and the occupied portion of Syria's Golan Heights, describing it as a clear violation of international law.

The Arab League issued a statement saying his trip to the occupied

West Bank and the Golan Heights is against the norms of international law.

Meanwhile, Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi said Pompeo's visit is aimed at setting another illegal precedent.

She also said Pompeo is "trespassing on Palestinian land stolen by Israel" and "has done enough damage".

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh and the resistance movement of Hamas had already decried the planned visit by Pompeo in the occupied West Bank.

In another development, the UN General Assembly's Second Committee has overwhelmingly approved a draft resolution that called on nations to ensure that they do not treat settlements in the occupied West Bank and East al-Quds as a part of the Israeli entity.

The resolution was passed on Wednesday by 156 votes in favor and 6 votes against by Israel, the United States, Canada, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru.

Countries which abstained from the anti-Israel resolution included Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Ivory Coast, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Kiribati, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Togo, Tonga and Tuvalu.

The document highlighted UN Security Council Resolution 2334, endorsed in December 2016, which pronounced Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East al-Quds "a flagrant violation under international law," calling on its member States to ensure that they do not participate in actions of de facto annexation of the occupied lands.

Australia Admits Troops Killed Civilians in Afghanistan

SYDNEY (Dispatches) – Australian military personnel who spoke out against war crimes in Afghanistan said on Friday they felt vindicated by an inquiry which called for possible prosecution of troops, as the country reacted with shame and anger at the findings' severity.

A report published on Thursday found Australian special forces killed 39 unarmed prisoners and civilians in Afghanistan, with senior commandos forcing junior soldiers to kill defenseless captives in order to "blood" them for combat.

The report recommended referring 19 current and former soldiers for potential prosecution, in a development that prompted anguish in Australia.

David McBride, a former military lawyer facing charges of

leaking information about special forces actions in Afghanistan, felt "buoyed" by the report after years of being treated like a "traitor to the diggers", his lawyer Mark Davis told Reuters, using the Australian slang for soldiers.

"If the accusations that he's previously made are proven right, he will feel vindicated whatever the penalty," Davis said by telephone. "His reputation will be intact and his sense of honor will be intact."

McBride has confirmed giving classified documents to the Australian Broadcasting Corp, triggering charges against him and an investigation into the public broadcaster which sensationally led to a raid on its Sydney headquarters last year.

Angus Campbell, Australia's chief of the Defense Force, said

during a press conference in Canberra on Thursday that a "destructive" culture of impunity among the elite troops had led to a string of murders and cover-ups by 25 Special Forces personnel in 23 separate incidents.

"Some patrols took the law into their own hands, rules were broken, stories concocted, lies told, and prisoners killed," Campbell said.

"This shameful record includes alleged instances in which new patrol members were coerced to shoot a prisoner in order to achieve that soldier's first kill, in an appalling practice known as 'bleeding,'" the top Australian military official said.

The heavily-redacted 465-page report explained that once a person had been killed, those responsible would stage a fight

scene by placing weapons next to the bodies of the deceased to give the impression that they had posed a military threat.

Campbell said the killings took place "outside the heat of battle" and recommended that the culprits be referred to Australian Federal Police and compensation be paid to the victims' families.

The Australian government had previously spent years trying to gag whistle-blowers or dismiss reports of wrongdoings by the country's military personnel.

Australia, which is not a member of NATO, has had an active role in Afghanistan since the U.S., along with a number of its allies, invaded the country in 2001. That war and the subsequent occupation continue to this day, even as Australian combat troops have reportedly been pulled out.

Zionist Regime Detained 400 Palestinian Minors Since Jan.: Rights Group

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist troops have arrested more than 400 Palestinians under the age of 18 since the start of the current year, as the regime continues to target young Palestinians across the occupied territories, a Palestinian human rights group says.

The Palestinian Prisoners' Society (PPS), in a statement released on the occasion of World Children's Day, which is celebrated on November 20 each year, announced that approximately 170 Palestinian children are currently languishing behind bars in the three Israeli-run detention centers of Megiddo, Ofer and Damon.

It added that Zionist troops relentlessly continue their arrest campaign against Palestinian children despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Palestinian minors held in Israeli prisons are denied access to lawyers and family visits as well.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Ministry of Infor-

mation pointed to the deliberate targeting of Palestinian children by Zionist troops, stating that more than 3,000 minors have lost their lives at the hands of the occupying regime's troops since the Second Intifada (uprising).

The ministry said in a statement on Thursday that at least 3,097 Palestinian children have been killed, while tens of thousands of others sustained injuries between the Second Intifada, which broke out on September 28, 2000 against the Zionist regime's occupation of Palestinian territory, until the end of October 2019.

The statement added that 123 Palestinian minors have been killed and many more injured ever since U.S. President Donald Trump sparked controversy by officially recognizing al-Quds as the regime's 'capital' in December 2017. More than 17,000 Palestinian children were rounded up and detained during the mentioned period as well.

The Palestinian Ministry of Information highlighted that seven children have been killed in the occupied West Bank and besieged Gaza Strip since the beginning of the current year as a result of the Israeli military assaults.

More than 7,000 Palestinian children have been detained by the Zionist regime since 2015, and some have been sentenced to ten years in prison or life imprisonment, the Palestinian Prisoners' Society (PPS) said in a statement.

The society highlighted that most of the child detainees are from occupied al-Quds.

The PPS then called on international human rights institutions, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in particular, to make serious efforts to protect Palestinian children, and to oblige the occupying regime to abide by a series of agreements concerning protection of child detainees.

Third of Jordanian Children Suffer From Anaemia: Report

AMMAN (Middle East Eye) – One out of every three children in Jordan suffers from anaemia according to a senior health official, reported The New Arab newspaper.

The secretary-general of the Higher Population Council in Jordan, Abla Amawi, said that children in the country were facing serious health hazards, adding that 32 percent suffered from the blood cell condition.

Amawi also revealed that children constitute a quarter of the victims of fatal traffic accidents and that 79 percent of children with disabilities are not enrolled in schools.

The results of the Jordan Population and Family Health Sur-

vey (JPFHS) showed that 3 percent of Jordan's children under the age of 18 and 5 percent of Syrian children living in Jordan were orphans.

The council also found that "the coronavirus pandemic has aggravated the social and economic challenges facing the most vulnerable children and youth, as the number of families with a monthly income less than 100 Jordanian dinars (\$140) has doubled since the outbreak of the pandemic".

It added that 28 percent of families have funds and resources for only two weeks, and 60 percent of families' livelihoods have been disrupted by the pandemic.