

Report:

ISIL Receiving \$1 Billion From Drug Trafficking

MOSCOW (Press TV) – The ISIL terrorist group is profiting up to USD 1 billion annually for deliveries of Afghan heroin to Europe, the head of Russia’s Federal Drug Control Service (FSKN) reveals.

Viktor Ivanov made the disclosure on Friday saying large quantities of poppy, which is used to produce heroin, are being transported through ISIL-controlled areas in Iraq to Europe.

Ivanov added that over half of Europe’s heroin supplies come from the terrorist group through the Iraqi territory, parts of which is under ISIL control.

The FSKN head urged the United Nations (UN) to discuss the issue, saying “this is a threat not only to our country, but also European security.”

According to Ivanov, the money from drug trafficking is likely becoming a “huge financial sponsor-

ship” for the ISIL.

In addition to drug trafficking, the sale of oil and antiquities as well as ransom from abductions are three other sources of revenue for the ISIL.

Furthermore, reports indicate that wealthy individuals in the Persian Gulf region have raised a major amount of fund for terrorists.

The report comes as the UN adopted a Russian-drafted resolution aimed at cutting funding to the ISIL, the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Nusra Front and other al-Qaeda-linked groups last month.

The resolution urges countries not to buy oil or antiquities from the terrorists and refrain from paying them ransoms and if any individual or state is involved in such activities with the terrorists, they must be charged as accomplices of terrorists.

Experts have estimated the terrorists’ daily income from illegal sales



The ISIL terrorist group is profiting up to USD 1 billion a year on Afghan heroin trafficking, a Russian watchdog says.

at 2-3 million dollars. In addition, a UN report published last November stated that the ISIL makes approximately USD 96,000 to USD 123,000 per day from ransom payments.

The ISIL terrorists have seized

swathes of land in Iraq and Syria. They have also extended their terror activities to the Libyan soil in recent weeks.

They are engaged in crimes against humanity in the areas under their control.

Veteran US Journalist Slams Zionist Propaganda

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – Veteran US journalist and former CNN anchor Jim Clancy has spoken out against the Zionist media less than two months after stepping down from the news network following his anti-Israeli tweets.

Clancy told Lebanese journalists in Beirut on Friday that the Israeli media is particularly well-funded and is acting in an organized manner in their propaganda campaign, according to The Daily Star.

The veteran journalist noted,

however, that the Israeli lobby’s propaganda efforts have failed because an increasing number of young people on university campuses across the US now support the Palestinian cause.

“Hasbara [propaganda] funding has increased for the Israeli lobby, but its propaganda efforts have failed. I mean the number of young people on campuses who now support the Palestinian cause has risen,” he told the audience.

Clancy resigned in January fol-

lowing angry exchanges on Twitter with pro-Zionist commentators.

He quit his job after he appeared to suggest that the Charlie Hebdo terror attacks in Paris were provoked by the magazine’s pro-Israel stance.

The former anchor noted that he did not regret making the anti-Zionist comments because he “had enough.”

“I don’t have to put up with this... and I’m not going to. I’d had

enough,” he said.

“In my case I’d rather be Twitter-fried for telling the truth than held out for lying, saying I was somewhere I wasn’t or claiming I saw people murdered who weren’t,” Clancy told The Daily Star.

Some who argued with him on Twitter have worked for the Israeli regime and pro-Israel lobby groups like AIPAC.

Clancy has been critical of the Israeli occupation and its treatment of Palestinians.

Bahraini Regime Forces Clamp down on Anti-Regime Demos



A Bahraini man tries to save a baby girl trapped in a car after regime forces fire tear gas at protesters in the village of Sanabis, west of the capital, Manama.

MANAMA (FNA) – Bahrain’s Al Khalifa regime continued to clamp down on pro-democracy protesters ahead of the anniversary of a Saudi incursion into the Persian Gulf country.

On Friday, the regime forces

launched another heavy-handed crackdown on demonstrators who had taken to the streets to voice their outrage against the invasion, press tv reported.

The angry demonstrators chanted slogans against the Saudi monar-

chy and demanded the immediate withdrawal of all Saudi Arabian forces from the country.

Several people were injured after the Al Khalifa forces fired teargas and birdshots to disperse the protesters in the Northeastern village of Samaheej. Similar protests were also held elsewhere across Bahrain.

The nation-wide protests came a week before the fourth anniversary of the Saudi incursion into the neighboring country.

On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates invaded the country to assist the Bahraini government in its crackdown on peaceful protesters.

Bahrain’s opposition has frequently said it considered any foreign military intervention to be an occupation. It has also called on the international community to act to ensure the protection of the people of Bahrain from the danger of

foreign military intervention.

Since mid-February 2011, thousands of anti-regime protesters have held numerous demonstrations on the streets of Bahrain, calling for the Al Khalifa family to relinquish power.

Scores of Bahrainis have been killed and hundreds of others injured and arrested in the ongoing crackdown on peaceful demonstrations.

The regime’s crackdown on peaceful protests has been intensified over the past months since the arrest of top opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman last December. The demonstrators want authorities to release him and end years of repression in the country.

Amnesty International and several other human rights organizations have repeatedly called on Bahraini officials to observe the citizens’ rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

Pakistan Customs Seizes About 2 Tons of Smuggled Turtle Meat

ISLAMABAD (AFP) – Pakistani authorities have conducted an investigation after nearly two tons of freshwater turtle meat from smugglers was confiscated at Karachi port.

“This is the biggest ever consignment of turtles seized in the history of the (Pakistani) customs,” Pakistan’s senior customs official, Irfan Javed, was quoted by the AFP as saying on Friday.

Last week, customs officers managed to foil the smugglers’ attempt to illegally transport 1,900 Kilograms of turtle meat, falsely labeled as fish meat, to Hong Kong after a customs official on duty ordered a search of a suspicious container at the port in the capital of Pakistan’s Sindh Province.

Javed said the consignment of dried meat and other body parts gathered from 4,200 turtles was worth more than USD 6 million on the international market. A Pakistani firm registered in the city’s upmarket Defense area had arranged the consignment for a Chinese importer in Hong Kong.

Customs officials along with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) have registered the case under the criminal and wildlife laws, Javed added.

Samples have been sent for further investigations to determine the exact species of the turtles before they were sealed at the customs confiscation facility, and efforts to make arrests are under way.

In June 2014, approximately 200 of black-spotted turtles (shown below), which are listed as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)’s “red list” of endangered species, were smuggled from Pakistan to Chinese Nature Reserve, Taxkorgan, in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Officials could take the turtles back and return them to their niche in the Indus River.

The protected black-spotted turtles, which inhabit the longest Asian river, Indus, have been threatened by smugglers who have hunted and smuggled them to clients in China and Thailand in an alarmingly rising rate over the past years.

Salehi: Technical...

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talks since an interim deal reached on November 2013, but stressed “differences still remain” which had to be “overcome” and “there is still work to do”.

Kerry said he had “the same assessment” as Fabius. “We have made progress, but there remain gaps, divergences as he (Fabius) said, and we need to close those gaps,” Kerry insisted.

Having flown in from London on the last stop of a week-long trip, Kerry was also set to brief German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and their British counterpart Philip Hammond on the state of the negotiations.

Kerry spent three days in Switzerland earlier this week huddled with Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif in the latest round of talks.

Fabius had expressed his concerns over the deal on Friday, saying “as regards the numbers, controls and the length of the agreement, the situation is still not sufficient”.

Key issues in the talks which began in late 2013 include the level of uranium enrichment that Iran should be allowed, the degree of international oversight of its program and how long an accord should last.

“It is frankly up to Iran that wants this program... that asserts that they have a peaceful program to show the world that it is indeed exactly what they say,” said Kerry.

Iran has long denied seeking to arm itself with an atomic bomb, insisting its nuclear program is for peaceful civilian purposes.

U.S.-Iran bilateral talks are due to resume on March 15, most likely in Geneva.

Further talks between the group known as the P5+1 and Tehran are also expected.

Tikrit...

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Hatra lies about 110 km (70 miles) south of Mosul, the largest city under ISIL control. A week ago the militants released a video showing them smashing statues and carvings in the city’s museum, home to priceless Assyrian and Hellenistic artifacts dating back 3,000 years.

On Thursday they attacked the remains of the Assyrian city of Nimrud, south of Mosul, with bulldozers. The United Nations cultural agency UNESCO condemned the actions as “cultural cleansing” and said they amounted to war crimes.

Hatra dates back 2,000 years to the Seleucid empire which controlled a large part of the ancient world conquered by Alexander the Great. It is famous for its striking pillared temple at the center of a sprawling archaeological site.

Saeed Mamuzini, spokesman for the Mosul branch of the Kurdish Democratic Party, said the militants had used explosives to blow up buildings at Hatra and were also bulldozing it.

The antiquities ministry said the lack of tough international response to earlier ISIL attacks on Iraq’s historic sites had encouraged the group to continue its campaign.

“The delay in international support for Iraq has encouraged terrorists to commit another crime of stealing and demolishing the remains of the city of Hatra,” it said in a statement.

Archaeologists have compared the assault on Iraq’s cultural history to the Taliban’s destruction

of the Bamyan Buddhas in 2001. But the damage wreaked by ISIL, not just on ancient monuments but also on rival Muslim places of worship, has been swift, relentless and more wide-ranging.

Last week’s video showed them toppling statues and carvings from plinths in the Mosul museum and smashing them with sledge hammers and drills. It also showed damage to a huge statue of a bull at the Nergal Gate into the city of Nineveh.

Last July ISIL destroyed the tomb of the prophet Jonah in Mosul. It has also attacked Shia places of worship and last year gave Mosul’s Christians an ultimatum to convert to Islam, pay a religious levy or face death by the sword. It has also targeted the Izadi minority in the Sinjar mountains west of Mosul.

Foreign...

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“Business has been booming in the past two years,” said Karan Jami, marketing executive at Pasargad, saying trips were overbooked for 2015 and 2016.

German airline Germania now offers twice-weekly flights to Tehran from Duesseldorf and Berlin. Late last month, it launched a route from Hamburg to Mashhad, Iran’s second largest city and home to a beautiful shrine complex.

“There some green shoots going on in Iran, so it seems to make sense to fly there,” Germania CEO Karsten Balke said, adding he was also banking on demand from Iranians traveling to Germany to visit relatives.

The organizers of the ITB trade fair, which has more than 10,000 exhibitors from 186 countries, also said they were interested in having Iran as its official partner country.

Ettemadi, now with a firm of 10 people, organized trips for about 600 guests last year. “I think this year it will be more than 1,000. But that is still a long way from 10,000.”

Iran...

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Jvessels for defense against anti-ship missiles.

“Research has now started on the Phalanx system to build an Iranian model,” Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said.

“The Western version of the Phalanx system is the most advanced which the Islamic Republic of Iran will definitely produce,” the commander noted.

Consisting of a radar-guided Gatling gun mounted on a swiveling base, the Phalanx has been used by multiple navies around the world, notably by the U.S. navy on every class of surface combat ship.

Iranian experts have already produced a powerful Gatling gun, dubbed “Moharram”.

The six-barrel weapon is a 50-caliber firearm with the high rate of fire of 2,000-2,500 rounds per minute.

The machine gun can also be mounted abroad a range of military vehicles, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), warships and destroyers.

In recent years, Iran has made great headways in manufacturing a broad range of military equipment, including air defense systems that use cutting edge technologies.

Tehran has repeatedly stressed that its military might is defensive in nature and poses no threat to other countries.