

BAGHDAD (Xinhua) – The Iraqi military says its forces killed three Daesh terrorists in the northern part of the country. The three Daesh terrorists were killed in Wadi al-Shay, a rugged area southwest of the northern city of Kirkuk, the media office of the Joint Operations Command (JOC) said in a statement. It added that the operation was based on intelligence reports and the three militants had been tracked for more than three days before the operation. Meanwhile, a statement issued by the Iraqi intelligence service said that “intelligence personnel tracked down some leading Daesh figures in more than one country and were able to arrest them in a non-neighboring country and transfer them to Iraq.”

One who has atoned for his sins will not be debarred from salvation and one who thanks Allah for the blessings and bounties will not be denied the increase in them.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Palestinian Prisoners Begin Mass Disobedience in Zionist Jails

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – Palestinian political prisoners in jails across the Israeli-occupied territories have begun a series of mass civil disobedience actions to protest against punitive measures imposed by the occupying regime’s new far-right cabinet.

On Tuesday, prisoners launched a campaign in the infamous Nafha prison, in Naqab (Negev) desert in the southeast.

On Wednesday they were joined by Palestinian political prisoners in the jails of Rimon, Ofer, Megiddo, Gilboa and Negev.

The disobedience will culminate in a hunger strike at the start of Ramadan in late March, prisoners say.

“Our only demand is freedom,” the Supreme Emergency Committee for Prisoners said in a statement. “Everyone must get our message and hear our voice, for we can no longer tolerate the violations being committed against us day and night.

“This strike, bearing the banner of freedom or martyrdom, is a strike that will be undergone by every capable prisoner regardless



A rally in support of Palestinian prisoners in the Zionist regime’s jails, outside the International Committee of the Red Cross building in Gaza City on 14 February 2022

of what faction they belong to,” the committee added.

“The amount of aggression we have been facing since the start of the year requires all of our people to support us with all means possible.”

Zionist far-right minister Itamar Ben-Gvir wasted no time delivering on his plans to create harsher conditions for Palestinian prisoners in the regime’s jails.

On 6 January, one week after assuming the role, he visited Nafha prison, considered one of the regime’s most severe for Palestinians.

Since then, the regime’s prison service (IPS) has begun moving inmates and transferring them between the 20 prisons used exclusively for Palestinian political prisoners.

Approximately 140 Palestinian

prisoners were transferred to Nafha in January. The prison is notorious for terrible living conditions, which some prisoners describe as “inhumane”.

“The situation in prison over the last couple of weeks has been terrible. The transfer of these prisoners is an attack on their lives,” the commissioner of Palestinian prisoner affairs, Hassan Abid Rabbah, told Middle East Eye in January.

“Israeli media is talking about transferring 2,000 prisoners between jails. It is a strategy to weaken and destabilize Palestinian resistance within the prisons.”

Prisoners are planning to start a “hunger strike for freedom” beginning on the first day of Ramadan, 22nd March.

Human rights organizations have long condemned the Zionist regime’s prisons holding security prisoners for their inhuman treatment of Palestinians.

Palestinians have been resorting to hunger strikes since 1968 to fight issues such as solitary confinement, denial of family visits, inadequate medical treatment, and other degrading conditions.

Amid Flurry of Diplomatic Meetings Syrian President Vows to Deliver Aid to Quake-Hit Areas



Syrian President Bashar al-Assad (R) meets with Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates and Deputy Prime Minister, Ayman Safadi, at the Presidential Palace, Damascus, Syria, on February 15, 2023.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Syrian President Bashar al-Assad reaffirmed his commitment to providing humanitarian aid to the millions of people impacted by the devastating earthquake and aftershock in northwestern Syria last week.

Speaking to the visiting President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mirjana Spoljaric Egger, and her accompanying delegation in Damascus, Assad emphasized the need for reconstruction of critical infrastructure such as health and communications, which directly impact the living conditions of ordinary people.

He highlighted the need for the reconstruction of vital infrastructure and sectors, such as health and communications, when dealing with the current disaster in Syria, saying they directly affect the humanitarian and living conditions of ordinary people.

Egger, for her part, said the ICRC is seeking to provide Syrians with basic commodities and necessary services so that quake victims could surmount the difficulties.

The death toll from the 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria on February 6 has crossed 41,000. The Syrian government and the UN have reported more than 5,800 deaths in Syria, while Turkish authorities say 35,418 people have been killed in the country.

China called for the immediate lifting of unilateral sanctions on Syria in the wake of the devastating earthquake.

Speaking at a meeting on children and armed conflict at the UN Security Council on Monday, Zhang Jun, China’s permanent representative to the United Nations said it was a “harsh reality” that unilateral sanctions were seriously damaging the economic foundation and development of affected countries and depriving many children of their fundamental rights.

The envoy said “illegal unilateral sanctions” on Syria caused a serious shortage of rescue equipment, and expressed concern that children trapped under the rubble might not be rescued in time.

Meanwhile, Jordan’s foreign minister met with Syrian President Bashar Assad in Damascus, vowing to continue delivering earthquake aid and work to find a political solution to the 12-year foreign-backed conflict in Syria, Syrian state media reported.

Ayman Safadi’s visit to the earthquake-hit country makes him the first Jordanian official to do so since the onset of the war in 2011. It marks a new thaw in relations between the two countries.

Jordan’s King Abdullah II had called Assad last week to express Amman’s willingness to send humanitarian aid.

On Wednesday, the United Arab Emirates pledged an additional \$50 million in assistance to quake-hit Syria, the official WAM news agency said, bringing the total value of pledges to more than \$100 million.

Guardian: Zionist Contractors ‘Manipulating Elections’ Around World

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist contractors claim to have manipulated more than 30 elections around the world, according to an in-depth investigation revealed in the Guardian on Wednesday.

Tal Hanan, a former Zionist special forces agent, led a team of operatives that sought to meddle in election outcomes using misinformation, hacking and sabotage.

The undercover investigation was carried out by a consortium of journalists from 30 media organizations including Haaretz, Le Monde and Der Spiegel.

Three of the undercover reporters obtained footage and leaked documents after posing as consultants working for an African country that wanted to delay an election.

Hanan’s unit, which is based in the occupied territories and calls itself Team Jorge, says its

services are available to political and private clients, as well as spy agencies. It claims to have been used in Africa, South and Central America, the U.S. and Europe.

One of the methods Team Jorge used was fake social media profiles, the investigation revealed.

It used Advanced Impact Media Solutions (AIMS) software to control over 30,000 fake accounts, which would go on to spread disinformation online. The accounts were each given years-long digital backstories to lend legitimacy.

Hanan told the reporters that the fake profiles would use his “blogger machine” - an automated system that creates websites for spreading fake news.

Team Jorge said it planted material in genuine news outlets too, which were then amplified by the fake blogs and accounts.

“After you’ve created credibility, what do you do? Then you can manipulate,” Hanan told the undercover reporters.

Hanan also talked about directly hacking prominent figures on behalf of his clients, mainly through Gmail and Telegram.

He claimed to have penetrated two figures close to Kenyan President William Ruto, in the run-up to last year’s general election.

One of the methods cited for such hacking was exploiting vulnerabilities in SS7, the global signaling telecoms systems.

Elsewhere, the group was involved in direct sabotage.

When asked about Team Jorge’s activities and methods, Hanan claimed that he would need “approval” from an unspecified authority to comment, according to the Guardian.

According to the report, some

of the disinformation operations were run through Demoman International, a Zionist firm for which Hanan serves as chief executive.

The firm is listed on a Zionist war ministry-run website as an official strategic espionage company, according to the investigation.

The occupying regime has faced repeated criticism and diplomatic pressure over spyware and other cyber weapons being developed in the country undermining democracy and human rights around the world.

Pegasus, military-grade spyware made by the Zionist NSO Group, has faced legal action after its tools were misused by governments and other agencies to hack the mobile phones of activists and senior politicians in several countries.

Former Egyptian Anti-Corruption Chief Released From Prison, Then Charged Again

CAIRO (AFP) – Egypt’s former anti-corruption chief has been released from jail but new charges have been brought against him in a new case, a government official and activists have said.

Hisham Geneina, charged in 2018 after exposing government corruption, was released Tuesday after serving his five-year prison sentence.

Tarek al-Awady, a member of the presidential pardon committee, said Monday that Geneina would be released upon completion of his sentence, and his release was confirmed by activists and lawyers.

However, human rights defender Hossam Bahgat said prior to his release Geneina was charged with “joining a terrorist group and spreading false news” by the civilian state prosecution. He was freed without bail but on the

guarantee that he remains at his place of residence, Bahgat told AFP.

“It is typical of the practice of rotation,” Bahgat said, referring to a system where prisoners are detained on new charges instead of being released.

Geneina, who oversaw the Central Auditing Organization, the country’s anti-corruption agency, was found guilty by a military court in 2018 for “spreading information to harm the military” after saying a presidential candidate had secret documents allegedly damaging to the army.

The former judge was a top aide to General Sami Anan, a former armed forces chief of staff who was detained after announcing he would challenge President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in the

2018 presidential election.

In 2016, Geneina served a one-year jail term after being found guilty of “spreading false news to disturb public order”. He was sacked by Sisi from the Central Auditing Organization the same year, after he said corruption had cost the country a staggering \$76bn over four years.

Authorities ruled that Geneina had allegedly grossly exaggerated the claims by using data from before 2012. But he insisted that his report only focused on the years after. He denied any wrongdoing and insisted his calculations were accurate.

In 2021, Egyptian jails held an estimated 65,000 political prisoners, who were arrested for their opposition to the Sisi government. Sisi denies holding any political prisoners.

Report: Saudi Binladin Group Fined Over 2015 Crane Collapse

DUBAI (AP) – A criminal court has imposed a \$5.3 million fine on the Saudi Binladin Group and sentenced seven people to prison over the deadly collapse of a crane ahead of the 2015 hajj pilgrimage, a leading Saudi daily reported.

More than 100 people were killed in the incident. Buffeted by strong winds, the 1,350-ton crane collapsed onto the Grand Mosque that houses Islam’s holiest site, the cube-shaped Kaaba, bringing down slabs of concrete on worshippers below. Less than two weeks after the Sept. 11 crane collapse, a stampede and crush of pilgrims killed more than 2,400 people, according to an Associated Press count.

The Okaz daily reported that the company was fined 20 million Saudi riyals, or about \$5.3 million, for negligence and violation of safety regulations. Three defendants were sentenced to six months in jail and fined 30,000 riyals (\$8,000) and another four were sentenced to three months and fined 15,000 riyals (about \$4,000). Okaz did not report their names or nationalities.

The court ruled that the company is

not required to pay blood money to the families of those killed, a traditional form of restitution in the conservative kingdom.

The Saudi Binladin Group did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Binladin family has been close to Saudi Arabia’s ruling family for decades and runs major building projects. Al-Qaeda’s late leader Osama bin Laden was a renegade son disowned by the family in the 1990s.

The verdict comes as Saudi Arabia prepares to host the first hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina following the lifting of pandemic restrictions. Millions of Muslims are expected to make the pilgrimage in late June, which in normal years is among the largest gatherings of people on earth.

The twin disasters in 2015 were a source of embarrassment for the Saudi royal family, whose legitimacy partly derives from their role as the custodians of Islam’s holiest sites.

At the time, King Salman partly blamed the crane’s collapse on the construction giant, saying its arm should not have been left up when it was not in use.