

ISTANBUL (Xinhua) – Turkish police launched a counter-terror operation against alleged members of the Daesh terror group and detained more than two dozen suspects, the local NTV broadcaster reported on Friday. The police raided 15 hideouts of the suspects in the districts of Basaksehir, Esenyurt, and Beylikduzu in Istanbul, and detained 28 foreign suspects, without revealing specific countries of origin. Turkey declared Daesh a terror group in 2013 following a string of deadly bombing attacks from the group in the country, killing and injuring scores of people.

Take warning! He has not exposed so many of your sinful activities that it appears as if He has forgiven you (it may be that He has given you time to repent).

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

## Thousands Protest in Tel Aviv Against Netanyahu

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – Thousands of protesters gathered outside the main U.S. diplomatic office in Tel Aviv Thursday night, calling upon the U.S. to condemn prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s plan to overhaul the regime’s judiciary.

The gathering came days after President Joe Biden called members of Netanyahu’s far-right regime “extreme” and said that supporters of the occupying regime’s West Bank settlements were “part of the problem.”

Netanyahu’s allies, who comprise the most far-right cabinet ever, have proposed a series of changes to the regime’s legal system aimed at weakening what they say are the excessive powers of unelected judges.

The proposed changes include giving Netanyahu’s allies control over the appointment of judges and the power to overturn court decisions they do not support. Protesters say the plan will destroy the re-



Zionist forces clash with protesters during a demonstration in Tel Aviv.

gime’s fragile system of checks and balances and concentrate power in the hands of Netanyahu and his allies.

Protesters, who are now in their seventh month of demonstrations, fear that Netanyahu’s plans will ruin the regime’s future.

On Sunday, Biden told CNN that

the Zionist regime’s current cabinet has some “of the most extreme members” he has ever seen and criticized their support for West Bank settlements, built on occupied lands sought by the Palestinians for a future state. He also urged Netanyahu to show “moderation” with the judicial overhaul.

Zionist hardliners rejected Biden’s criticism. Far-right minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, a firebrand settler ring-leader, said that the Zionist regime is “no longer another star in the American flag.”

Biden has so far declined to invite Netanyahu to the White House, normally a standard courtesy extended to occupying regime leaders.

Thursday’s protest in Tel Aviv was joined by others across the occupied territories, including at Netanyahu’s home in Al-Quds and his seaside villa in the town of Caesarea.

The regime’s parliament’s vote on Tuesday to move forward with a bill that would limit the supreme court’s oversight powers has given new momentum to the protests, which have swept the occupied territories since January. Protesters this week blocked major highways and disrupted operations at the regime’s main airport, and more protests are planned this weekend.

## Watchdog: Zionist Regime Advances Peak Number of Illegal Settlement Plans



A view of the West Bank settlement of Eli

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s radical cabinet has promoted a record number of housing units in illegal settlements in the Occupied West Bank in its first six months, Israeli anti-settlement watchdog, Peace Now, says, Reuters reports.

The international community deems settlements built on land the regime occupied in a 1967 Middle East war as illegal, and their continued expansion has, for decades, been among the most contentious issues between the occupying regime, the Palestinians and the international community.

Since January, the Zionist regime has advanced 12,855 settler housing units across the West Bank, said Peace Now – the highest number the group has recorded since it started tracking such activity in 2012.

“In the past six months, the only sector that Israel has vigorously promoted is the settlement enterprise,” it said in a statement.

The statement came on the same day that four Palestinians sustained injuries tonight, two of them seriously, in an attack by extremist settlers near the town of Kafr Thulth, located 28 kilometers (17 miles) south of Tulkarm.

The official Palestinian news agency WAFA reported that a group

of settlers from the illegal settlement of Karnie Shomron attacked the Palestinian Bedouin community of Arab al-Kholi, and pelted residents with stones, injuring four Palestinians. The settlers also set a stall on fire in the community.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health said the wounded Palestinians were admitted to the Qalqilya Public Hospital as a result of the assault.

It said two Palestinians were in critical condition as they had suffered fractures in the skull and lacerations in the face.

Palestinian leaders have sought to establish an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza, with East Al-Quds as its capital. They say settlements cut Palestinian communities from each other and undermine hopes of a viable state.

The United States, the occupying regime’s key ally and a broker of negotiations that have stalled since 2014, has repeatedly expressed its objection to the ongoing settlement expansion.

According to the United Nations, some 700,000 settlers live in 279 settlements across the West Bank and East Al-Quds, up from 520,000 in 2012. More than 3 million Palestinians who live in the same area are subjected to the regime’s military rule that rights groups say amounts to apartheid.

## U.S. Transfers Military Equipment to Bases Syrian Gov’t Says UN Can Deliver Aid From Turkey for Six Months

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The Syrian government has given the United Nations approval to use a border crossing from Turkey to continue delivering aid to militant-held northwest Syria for another six months after the Security Council failed to renew its authorization for the operation.

However, the UN aid deliveries would have to be “in full cooperation and coordination with the Syrian Government”, Syria’s UN Ambassador Bassam Sabbagh wrote in a letter on Thursday to the Security Council, seen by Reuters.

On Tuesday, Russia blocked a nine-month extension of a key Syria aid route at the UN Security Council. Moscow instead suggested a six-month extension.

That, however, was also rejected

by the Security Council, with only Russia and China voting in favor, and the United States, the United Kingdom and France voting against.

The UN-brokered agreement that allows for the delivery of aid overland from Turkey into militant-held areas of Syria expired on Monday.

The Security Council has long been divided over Syria. Most members support cross-border operations, including the U.S. and UK, which have called for a full-year extension, while Russia has insisted on just six months.

The 15-member Security Council had been negotiating a text to allow the UN operation, which allows for food, water and medicine to be transported to militant-controlled northwest Syria without the

authorization of the Syrian government, to continue using the Bab al-Hawa crossing for 12 months.

But Russia, which backs the government and has fought in the war in Syria, put forward a rival text proposing six months on Friday.

The cross-border authorization has for years been renewed for six-month periods.

The crossing provides for more than 80 percent of the needs of people living in militant-controlled areas – everything from diapers and blankets to chickpeas. The government in Damascus regularly denounces aid deliveries as a violation of its sovereignty.

In another development, Washington has sent military and logistics equipment, including a hundred armored vehicles, to its bases

in the city of al-Hasakah, located in the northeast of Syria.

Arab News sources reported that the American troops once again sent weapons and military equipment to their illegal bases in this region.

The Syrian government considers the presence of the United States and Turkey in its territory illegal and has repeatedly emphasized that it will end this occupying presence. The Americans loot hundreds of barrels of Syria’s oil on a daily basis and sell them in the black markets with the cooperation of terrorists.

The U.S. transferred 100 armored vehicles and several stolen oil tankers to its bases in Syria’s Tell Beydar, Ash Shaddadi, and Rmelan.

## Pakistan Army Concerned Over Afghan Militant Safe Havens, Threatens Response

ISLAMABAD (Reuters) – Pakistan’s army said on Friday it was seriously concerned that militants had found safe havens in neighboring Afghanistan and threatened to take an “effective response” two days after 12 of its soldiers died in two attacks.

Nine soldiers died after militants stormed an army base in Pakistan’s southern Balochistan province, which borders Afghanistan and Iran, and three more were killed in an exchange of fire in the area on Wednesday, the military said.

The army has “serious concerns on the safe havens and liberty of action available to TTP in Afghanistan,” it said, referring to the Tehreek-e-

Taliban Pakistan militant umbrella group.

“Such attacks are intolerable and would elicit effective response from the security forces of Pakistan,” it said, without spelling out who it might target with its response.

“The involvement of Afghan nationals in acts of terrorism in Pakistan is another important concern that needs to be addressed,” it added.

The foreign ministry of Afghanistan’s Taliban administration did not immediately respond to a request for a comment.

Kabul has denied past accusations that it allows militant groups

to launch attacks on Pakistan from its territory.

Balochistan is a mineral-rich region that has been troubled by a decades-old ethnic Baloch insurgency.

Militants, who aim to overthrow the Pakistani government and install their own brand of strict law in the predominantly Muslim country of 220 million people, have also been active in Balochistan.

They have stepped up attacks since revoking a ceasefire agreement with the government in late 2022, including the bombing of a mosque in the northwestern city of Peshawar that killed more than 100 people earlier this year.

## Iraq Water Crisis Drying Up Fish Farming in Basra

BAGHDAD (Reuters) – Iraq is in the grip of a severe water shortage which has left crop growers and food producers, such as Iraqi fish farmer, Qasem Karam, facing the loss of their livelihoods.

Walking over dusty land in the sweltering midday heat in the southern province of Basra, Karam points to his dried up carp ponds, once irrigated by the Shatt al-Arab River.

“Everything is full of salt now because of water scarcity and pollution,” he said, pointing at white patches of salt crust nearby.

“These ponds cost us a lot of time, money and effort. We had an economic plan, but it is all destroyed.”

Upstream damming in Turkey has hit water flows on the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates which form the Shatt Al-Arab river, plus dumping of waste-water and poor rainfall due to climate change have led to a drastic reduction in fish farming, experts and officials said.

Lower water levels have also increased evaporation and made the water more saline.

Karam and three other fish farmers Reuters spoke with said the loss of suitable water was driving them out of a once thriving and profitable business.

According to an official at Basra’s agriculture directorate, Abbas Dakheel, only four authorized fish farms continued to

work this year, as opposed to 15 in 2020.

“This water is green, dirty and polluted. No fish can live in this water,” said Karam, kneeling down next to a pipe irrigating his pond.

He said that his fish were now either sick, failing to grow or dead, as a result.

Jumaa Shia, head of Basra’s Directorate of Water Resources, said the city of 1.3 million needs to share its decreasing water resources among domestic users, agriculture, the oil industry and electricity generation.

To save water, authorities have taken measures, including closing down some 95 unauthorized fish farms in Basra.