

BAGHDAD (Xinhua) – Three security officers were killed and four others wounded on Tuesday in an ammunition cache explosion north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, the Iraqi military said.

Acting on intelligence, troops were inspecting a hidden cache of old ammunition in the Tarmiyah area, some 40 km north of Baghdad, according to a statement from the Security Media Cell, a media outlet affiliated with the Iraqi Joint Operations Command. A technical error during the inspection triggered the blast, the statement said. Iraqi security authorities have launched an investigation into the incident, it said, clarifying that the explosion was not the result of a terrorist act or an armed clash with terrorist groups, refuting incorrect reports suggesting otherwise.

People in this world are like travelers whose journey is going on though they are asleep. (Life's journey is going on though men may not feel it).

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Trump Lifts Sanctions on Settlers

At Least 8 Martyred, Dozens Wounded in Israel's West Bank Raid

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – At least eight Palestinians have been killed and dozens of others injured in the Zionist regime's attacks on the city of Jenin in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian Ministry of Health announced Tuesday.

The identity of those killed was not immediately clear. The health ministry added that 35 people have been injured in the regime's incursion.

The Israeli Army announced earlier on Tuesday that troops have launched an aggression, but gave no further details.

A spokesperson for the Palestinian Authority's (PA) security forces stated in a statement that the occupying regime's troops "opened fire on civilians and security forces, resulting in injuries to several civilians and a number of security personnel".

The development comes after United States President Donald Trump issued an executive order lifting sanctions against violent Zionist settlers in the occupied West Bank.

Trump issued the order, among a slew of controversial moves, as he returned to the White House on Monday. The sanctions were imposed by his predecessor, former president Joe Biden, via an execu-



A Zionist trooper aims his rifle during a raid in Tulkarm in the north of the occupied-West Bank on October 26, 2024.

tive order in February.

Biden's actions paved the way for the U.S. Departments of State and the Treasury to sanction several far-right individuals and groups accused of perpetrating violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, which the Zionist regime has occupied since 1967 despite international law, freezing their U.S. assets and barring U.S. bodies and individuals from commercial relationships with them.

As much of the world's attention has focused on the war in Gaza, growing violence by Zionist settlers against Palestinians in the West Bank and land grabs in

the occupied territory have raised concerns among some of Israel's Western allies.

On Monday and Tuesday, settlers set vehicles and properties on fire under the protection of occupying regime troops. At least 21 Palestinians were reported to have been injured.

Since the Zionist regime's war on Gaza began in October 2023, at least 860 Palestinians, including 175 children, have been killed and more than 6,700 wounded in attacks by the regime's army and settlers across the West Bank, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

"Lifting sanctions on extremist settlers encourages them to commit more crimes against our people," the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

'Not Confident Ceasefire Will Be Upheld'

Trump also said Monday that he is not confident that the Gaza ceasefire deal will be upheld, adding it is "not our war."

Asked during a signing ceremony at the Oval Office on the first day of his inauguration how confident he is that the deal will hold through all three phases, Trump responded: "I'm not confident. It's not our war. It's their war. I think they are very weakened on the other side."

"I looked at a picture of Gaza. Gaza is like a massive demolition site. That place is...It's really got to be rebuilt in a different way," he continued.

"Gaza is interesting. It's a phenomenal location on the sea, best weather, you know, everything's good. It's like some beautiful things could be done with it, but it's very interesting, but some fantastic things could be done with Gaza," Trump added.

UN Warns Long Road Ahead to Rebuild Life in Gaza



An aerial view of the destruction caused by the Israeli genocidal war in the Jabaliya region in the north of the Gaza Strip, on 19 January, 2025

GAZA (Dispatches) – The United Nations said the reconstruction of war-torn Gaza will demand "an awful lot of time", even as humanitarian aid begins to flow into the region following a truce agreement between the Zionist regime and Palestinian resistance movement Hamas.

Acting director of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) in Gaza, Sam Rose said on Tuesday underscored the urgent need to address the broader humanitarian, social, and economic challenges facing Gaza's residents.

"We're not just talking about food, healthcare, buildings, roads, and infrastructure. We've got individuals, families, communities that need to be rebuilt," Rose told the BBC.

Following a ceasefire and a prisoner release agreement between the occupying regime and Hamas that took effect on Sunday, the UN reported that over 1,545 aid trucks have entered Gaza.

Rose noted that the cessation of active conflict has allowed for smoother aid distribution, eliminating the need for coordination with the Zionist regime's authorities.

"We've not today... faced any major problems with looting and criminality," he stated.

He cautioned against viewing the

situation in Gaza solely through the lens of aid volume, noting that the scale of destruction is staggering.

According to a UN damage assessment, clearing more than 50 million tons of rubble left in the aftermath of bombardment could take 21 years and cost up to \$1.2bn.

A UN report from October had said rebuilding Gaza's shattered homes could take at least until 2040 but drag on for many decades. The debris is believed to be contaminated with asbestos because some refugee camps struck during the war are known to have been built with the material.

Data from the United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) revealed that two-thirds of Gaza's pre-war structures—over 170,000 buildings—have been damaged or destroyed, representing about 69% of all structures in the territory. Currently, over 1.8 million people are in urgent need of emergency shelter.

In terms of infrastructure damage, a UN/World Bank report estimated that as of end-January 2024, the total cost of destruction across residential, commercial, and essential service sectors had reached \$18.5 billion, with damage continuing to escalate since that time.

Taliban Announce Prisoner Swap With U.S.

KABUL (AFP) – The Taliban government said Tuesday it had released two American citizens from prison in return for an Afghan fighter held in the United States, in a deal brokered by Qatar.

Discussions about the prisoner exchange were confirmed last year, but the swap was announced after outgoing U.S. president Joe Biden handed over to Donald Trump, who was inaugurated on Monday.

"An Afghan fighter Khan Mohammed imprisoned in America has been released in exchange for American citizens and returned to the country," the Afghan foreign ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said Mohammed had been serving a life sentence in California after being arrested "almost two decades ago" in the eastern Afghan province of Nangarhar.

Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP two U.S. nationals had been released, declining to provide any further details on the exchange.

The family of U.S. citizen Ryan Corbett, who was detained by the Taliban in 2022, confirmed he was released and expressed "overwhelming gratitude" that he was coming home.

"Today, our hearts are filled with overwhelming gratitude and praise

to God for sustaining Ryan's life and bringing him back home after what has been the most challenging and uncertain 894 days of our lives," the family said on their website.

They thanked both the Biden and Trump administrations, as well as Qatar, for Corbett's freedom, and called for two other Americans still held in Afghanistan to be released.

U.S. media named William McKenty as the second released American detainee, noting little was known about what he was doing in Afghanistan and that his family had asked the U.S. government for privacy in his case.

The New York Times said two

other Americans remain in detention in Afghanistan, former airline mechanic George Glezzmann and naturalized American Mahmood Habibi.

In August 2024, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation said it was seeking information about the disappearance of Afghan-American businessman Habibi two years previously.

Biden came under heavy criticism for the chaotic withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan in 2021, more than a year after Trump presided over a deal with the Taliban insurgents to end U.S. and NATO involvement in the two-decade war.

Guterres: West Asia Being Reshaped, Unclear What Will Emerge

NEW YORK CITY (Dispatches) – West Asia is undergoing a "profound transformation" marked by both uncertainty and potential, the UN secretary-general told a high-level meeting of the Security Council.

Antonio Guterres praised the mediators for their efforts to secure a ceasefire and an agreement between Hamas and the Zionist regime. The deal reached last week came into effect on Sunday, when the first phase of captives releases by both sides took place and the number of trucks entering Gaza to deliver humanitarian aid to the starving population began to ramp up.

Guterres urged all parties to honor their commitments, fully implement the agreement, and ensure it leads to the release of all captives and a permanent ceasefire in the territory.

He called for the wider effects of the deal to include an assurance that all UN agencies are able to perform their duties "without hindrance," including the Relief and Works Agency, the largest aid agency for Palestinians,

which is under threat from an imminent Knesset ban on operating in the occupied territories.

"The UN must have rapid, safe and unimpeded access through all available channels and crossings to deliver food, water, medicine, fuel, shelter, and materials to repair infrastructure across Gaza, including the north," said Guterres.

The UN's humanitarian chief, Tom Fletcher, said that after 15 months of "relentless war, the humanitarian needs in Gaza are staggering and there is no time to lose."

UN spokesperson Farhan Haq said on Monday that the entire population of Gaza, more than 2 million people, depends on aid basics to survive.

"Children account for about half of the Strip's population, with many surviving on just one meal a day," he added. "Our partners working on children's welfare say the provision of food, water and medical supplies are being prioritized."

The World Health Organization has a 60-day

plan to increase bed capacity at some hospitals in northern and southern Gaza, Haq said, and to send in additional health workers from abroad to staff them. He noted that about 30,000 people in the territory sustained life-changing injuries during the conflict and need specialized care.

Enabling a surge in the amount of desperately needed relief supplies entering the territory requires that visas and permits for humanitarian workers be granted quickly, and that steps are taken to ensure safe conditions and conducive operating environments are in place, Guterres told members of the Security Council.

This includes the provision of necessary technical and protective gear, coordination between all parties and UN operatives on the ground, and the restoration of public order and safety to prevent the looting of humanitarian aid, he added. Commercial supplies must also be allowed to enter Gaza to help meet the "overwhelming needs of the population."

Iraq, Kuwait Announce 'Significant' Oil Discovery

BAGHDAD (Xinhua/Anadolu) – The state-owned Iraqi Midland Oil Company says it has discovered huge oil reserves in the East Baghdad oil field.

Mohammed Yassin Hassan, director general of the company, said the new discovery is expected to add more than 2 billion barrels to Iraq's oil reserves, according to a statement by the company.

Initial tests of the well showed a daily production rate of up to 5,000 barrels of crude oil, he said, adding that this discovery has strategic importance as it adds to Iraq's oil reserves and enhances Iraq's production capabilities, it said.

Iraq, a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, holds more than 145 billion barrels of proven oil reserves.

The country's economy heavily relies on crude oil exports, which account for more than 90 percent of its revenues.

The Kuwait Oil Company also announced the discovery of a new oil reserve in the al-Julaiah

offshore field within its territorial waters.

The company said in a statement, the discovery, estimated at around 950 million barrels of oil equivalent, is set to strengthen the nation's standing as a global leader in crude oil production and exportation.

According to the statement, tests conducted on the Zubair geological reservoir in the Julaiah 2 exploratory well yielded promising production results. The field spans an area of 74 square kilometers, with reserves estimated at around 800 million barrels of medium-density oil, free of hydrogen sulphide and containing a low percentage of carbon dioxide.

Additionally, the field holds 600 billion standard cubic feet of associated gas, equivalent to 950 million barrels of oil equivalent.

The Julaiah field marks the second marine field discovered under the current exploration plan, following the discovery of the al-Nukhadha marine field in July 2024.