

Erdogan: Turkey to rid Syria's Tal Rifaat, Manbij of terrorists

REUTERS — ANKARA

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday Turkey will rid northern Syria's Tal Rifaat and Manbij areas of terrorists, confirming the targets of the new incursion for the first time and saying it will continue into other regions.

His comments, in a speech to lawmakers from his ruling AK Party, came a week after he pledged a new military incursion on Turkey's southern border against the US-backed Syrian Kurdish militia YPG, which Ankara views as a terrorist group.

"We are going into the new phase of our determination to form a 30-km (20-mile) deep safe zone along our southern border. We will clear Tal Rifaat and Manbij of terrorists, and we will do the same to other regions step-by-step," he said.

"Let's see who supports these legitimate steps by Turkey and who hinders them," Erdogan added.

Ankara has carried out four operations in northern Syria

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Turkish President**

since 2016, seizing hundreds of kilometres of land and pushing some 30 km deep into the country, mainly targeting the YPG.

While backing opposing sides in Syria's war, Turkey has coordinated with Russia on its military operations.

Turkey's cross-border operations have been criticised by its NATO allies, notably the United States and some have imposed a series of arms embargoes on Ankara. Washington expressed concern at

any new offensive in northern Syria, saying it would put US troops at risk and undermine regional stability.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday repeated the Biden administration's opposition to the move.

"Any escalation there in northern Syria is something that we would oppose, and we support the maintenance of the current ceasefire lines," Blinken told a news conference.

"We continue effectively to take the fight through partners to ISIS, within Syria, and we don't want to see anything that jeopardizes the efforts that are made to continue to keep ISIS in the box that we put it in," he added.

Ankara's announcement of a new offensive in Syria coincides with its objections to Finland and Sweden's NATO bids on the grounds that they back Kurdish militants and groups Turkey deems terrorists, and because of arms embargoes imposed over a 2019 Turkish offensive into northern Syria.



Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Ministers, including Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani (third left) with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov during the 5th GCC-Russia Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, yesterday.

Saudi, Russian FMs discuss ties, Ukraine

QNA — RIVADH

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah discussed yesterday with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov, who is currently visiting Saudi Arabia, bilateral relations between the two countries and

ways to strengthen them, in addition to the exchange of views on the latest developments in the region and the world as well as efforts made towards them.

Regarding the crisis in Ukraine, the Saudi Foreign Minister asserted to his Russian counterpart the Saudi

position which is based on the international law and its support for efforts aimed at reaching a political solution to end the crisis and achieve security and stability, and its willingness to make the necessary efforts to contribute to reaching a political solution to the crisis.

'Major confrontation' with Hezbollah ahead: Lebanon Christian politician

REUTERS — MAARAB

The Christian Lebanese Forces party will reject any aligned with the armed Shia movement Hezbollah as prime minister and stick to its boycott of government if a new consensus cabinet is formed, the party's leader said yesterday.

Lebanon is in the throes of one of the world's worst economic meltdowns, according to the World Bank, with the local lira losing 90% of its value since 2019.

Analysts have warned that the divisions in parliament will likely delay consensus on reform laws needed to drag Lebanon out of crisis. They

could also create a vacuum in top leadership positions.

While the LF and independent newcomers gained more seats in last month's elections, they still failed to prevent Hezbollah ally Nabih Berri from securing a seventh term as speaker in parliament's first session on Tuesday.

"If it's a government that includes everyone as usual, of course we won't approve and we won't take part," LF party chief Samir Geagea told Reuters.

"...They (Hezbollah) shouldn't celebrate too much," he said, adding that the splits in parliament would lead to a "major confrontation" between

Iran-backed Hezbollah and its allies on one side and the LF on the other.

Tuesday's session was the first since the new parliament was elected on May 15, in the first vote since Lebanon's economic collapse and the Beirut port explosion of 2020 that killed more than 215 people.

The LF was founded as an armed movement during Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war but officially laid down its arms after the conflict.

It has taken part in both parliament and cabinet but has opted out of the latter since 2019, when widespread anti-government protests broke out in Beirut.

Independent lawmakers have balked at the LF's roles in the war and in the political establishment more recently, but Geagea said newcomer MPs would have little influence if they did not align with his party.

"We all need one another to be able to go through the process of change and recovery that is required," he said.

Lebanon's system of government now requires President Michel Aoun, an ally of Hezbollah and rival of the LF, to consult with lawmakers on their choice for prime minister.

Geagea declined to say whether the LF would support

a fresh term for current premier and frontrunner Najib Mikati or if his party would back a different name.

The new cabinet will only last a few months, as parliament is set to elect a successor to Aoun, whose presidential term ends on October 31.

The next president would then name a new premier. Aoun came to power as president in 2016 with the LF's backing after decades of intense rivalry between the two.

But Geagea said his party would also veto any presidential nominee backed by Hezbollah this time.

Palestinian woman martyred by Israeli troops

QNA — HEBRON

A young Palestinian woman was martyred yesterday as a result of severe wounds after being shot by the Israeli occupation forces near Al Arroub refugee camp, north of Hebron in the West Bank.

In a statement, the Palestinian Ministry of Health explained that 31-year-old Ghofran Haroun Warasnah died after she was shot in the chest.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) said the Israeli occupation forces has impeded the medics from reaching the injured young woman at the entrance of Al-Arroub camp, adding that she was handed over to the medics 20 minutes or so after being shot.

Her death was announced shortly after being taken to Al Ahli hospital.

Local sources said earlier that the young woman was a freed prisoner, noting that she was passing through one of the checkpoints when the occupation forces shot her at the entrance of the camp.

In the past few days, the Israeli occupation forces escalated their raids and incursions into Palestinian villages and towns in the West Bank and Occupied Jerusalem, and increased the pace of arrests and shootings of the Palestinian youth.

Maritime Solutions

Maritime activity and navigation have always been at the heart of grand human civilizations. The sea allowed for international trade and travel from as far back as these two activities go. Ancient sailors used analogue technologies such as astrolabes, combining their expertise of the instrument with their knowledge of astronomy to guide them along their journey.

Fortunately for the modern-day mariners, very advanced technologies have been developed that allow for easier, faster and much more accurate navigation. Namely the GPS, which relies on satellite transmissions to give the way for the vessels and pinpoint their location remotely.

It is also a priority that the cargo and the passengers of these ships be transported in all safety. In the olden times this was a tricky bet, as the vessel architecture of the time was not very durable against the forces of nature acting on the high seas. Nowadays, not only are the ships built from different, much more reliable materials, but they are also equipped with and supported by instruments that could prevent shipwrecks and other adverse occurrences. What are these technologies? Let's explore!

Smart shipping and data buoys

The technology used in maritime vessels is so advanced that nowadays we see a system called Smart shipping installed in many cargo ships. This innovation is completely groundbreaking as - just like in the now existing case of the cars and the aircrafts - it allows for unmanned navigation. This trend is much more common than you may imagine, as almost 10% of the newest cargo vessels are smart ships. In addition to their autonomous nature, they also boast cutting-edge meteorological sensors that ultimately contribute to safer navigation.

Onboard, one can find the latest software used in navigation: this is essential for the maritime commerce, allowing for quicker and more secure delivery. Other digital monitoring and data analyses are constantly being developed to render the marine trade all the more efficient and profitable.



To aid the ships from without, external sensors are being put in place. Buoys, the floating masses that often finds near the beach, are no longer used exclusively for marking the distance swam. The ones used by vessels are equipped with data sensors that helping them navigate the international waters. These data buoys measure sea levels at a very high precision (1mm), obtain meteorological updates, such as the wind strength and direction, and ascertain the temperature of the water, a piece of information required for fishing. Moving or drifting data buoys are also able to avert the ships of hurricanes and cyclone activities in the vicinity.

They also make great helpers in rescue operations. They are able to send information about the target to the vessels with which they are in communication, making the search much more efficient and less-time consuming - something that could prove critical in cases of serious disasters.

Communication

When it comes to other maritime vessels in the vicinity, fast and efficient communication is a must. Ships transfer data between themselves, a practice that helps both parties safely navigate the waters and exchange about important matters pertaining to their transportation. To do this, they utilize very-high frequency (VHF) radio waves, satellites and WiFi.

The field of maritime communication is a constantly developing one, with newer and newer solutions constantly arriving on the market.

For more information about maritime solutions, but also those relating to the military, aeronautics, and oil and gas industry, visit bayanatengineering.qa. Bayanat is a commercial engineering company, based in Doha. They are experts of cutting-edge solutions in the given fields and will be sure to guide you in your search for the best technologies for your vessel.



Bandits shoot tens of vigilantes in Nigeria's Zamfara state

REUTERS — MAIDUGURI

Bandits killed tens of local vigilantes in Nigeria's northwestern Zamfara state on Monday evening after stealing cattle, two security sources and a local official said on Tuesday.

Armed gangs, known as bandits, are rife across Nigeria's northwest where they rob or kidnap for ransom, including from schools. Thousands of people have been killed in bandit attacks in recent years.

Nigeria's military has tried to stamp out the gangs and launched air strikes on bandits

groups in January.

The sources said bandits rustled some cattle in the community of Gidan Dan Inna and villages around the town of Auki in the Bungundu local government area before being pursued by local vigilantes.

"The vigilantes didn't know that the bandits had laid an ambush for them... they opened fire on the vigilantes while riding into the bush on motorbikes, killing about 30 of the vigilantes," one of the sources said. A local government official confirmed the incident on condition of anonymity.

Deaths in Iran building collapse rise to 37

AP — DUBAI

The death toll in a catastrophic collapse of a tower in southwestern Iran rose to 37 yesterday, officials said, as emergency workers pulled another body from the rubble over a week after the disaster that has prompted an outpouring of outrage and grief in the country.

Rescuers continued sifting through the ruins of the Metropal Building in Abadan, some 660 kilometres (410 miles) southwest of the capital, Tehran. The governor of the Khuzestan province, Sadeq Khalilian, told state TV that he expects rescuers to find more bodies, based on the number of families still waiting in limbo for word from their loved ones. It's unclear how many people remain unaccounted for.

The structural building failure in the oil-rich but impoverished Khuzestan province has focused public attention on shoddy construction practices and prompted allegations of government corruption and negligence.

Officials plan to demolish the half of the Metropal Building that has remained standing, Khalilian added, and already



A general view at the site of a ten-storey building collapse in Abadan, Iran, on May 23, 2022.

have evacuated and rehoused nearby residents. He said he expects the search effort to finish by late Thursday.

Footage widely circulating online in recent days has shown angry crowds gathering in mourning and protest at the collapse site, chanting slogans against top officials. Reporting on events in Abadan remains extremely difficult as authorities have disrupted Internet access, according to experts, restricting people's ability to share videos and information.

Foreign-based Farsi-language television channels have described tear gas and other

shots being fired as security forces dispersed demonstrations. The number of casualties and arrests remains unclear.

The disaster has provoked sympathy across the country, with scores of Iranians still tweeting the Farsi-language hashtag "#Abadan is not alone" 10 days after the collapse. Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard last week seized two Greek oil tankers at sea. Satellite images analysed by AP yesterday confirmed that one of the two Greek oil tankers seized by the Revolutionary Guard remains off the coast of the port city of Bandar Abbas.