

Release of Syrians from Al-Hol camp sparks concern for regional security

Author:

Mon, 2020-10-05 22:59

ANKARA: The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Council administration of Raqqa announced on Monday its decision to release all Syrians from the northeastern Al-Hol detention camp, where thousands of Daesh families, including wives and children of Daesh fighters, are being kept.

The move is likely to further undermine the regional security, with rising fears that a significant number of Daesh-affiliated detainees may infiltrate the borders of neighboring countries.

The looming specter of Daesh has emerged in Turkey recently, and the country began the week with a massive anti-terror operation in capital Ankara.

Twenty-four Iraqi nationals and one Finnish suspect were arrested over supposed links to Daesh members in conflict zones.

Since August, dozens of Daesh suspects have been arrested in different cities across Turkey, showing that the group is still active in the country, with reported plans to attack on tourists, politicians and prominent figures.

Dareen Khalifa, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group, said that a blanket amnesty for all Syrian residents of Al-Hol could be detrimental to the security of the area.

"Their release will require the kind of support the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) simply cannot and should not bear on its own. The SDF's capacity to detain or manage the reintegration of thousands of detainees is waning," she told Arab News.

"Both the ideologues and the victims require currently unavailable social or mental health support, and labour market integration," Khalifa added.

Two weeks ago, Turkish police detained 16 foreign nationals in Ankara and five others in the southern province of Adana, some of them Iraqi nationals, under another counter-terrorism operation against Daesh.

These operations followed others during previous weeks in several other cities.

According to the testimony of those arrested in Adana, they were planning to kidnap prosecutors, judges and tourist groups to trade in return for Daesh captives in Iraq and Syria.

Turkey also captured the group's "Turkish emir," Mahmut Ozden, in August before he could carry out attacks on Hagia Sophia, in Istanbul, and prominent figures in Turkey, including politicians and civil society activists. Daesh's

head in Turkey's southeastern Diyarbakir province was also caught in early September.

Turkey foiled 152 Daesh terror attacks in 2020, according to Interior Ministry data.

Mehmet Emin Cengiz, a research assistant at Al-Sharq Strategic Research, said Al-Hol served as a radicalization school for many families of Daesh members, where women in particular play a role in indoctrinating other inmates.

These fanatical women, known as "Daesh enforcers," have killed and wounded others in the camp by throwing rocks or setting their tents on fire for turning their backs on Daesh. The climate of fear is believed to have resulted in psychological trauma among the many children of Daesh members being kept there.

"Around 70,000 people are believed to live in this camp. The administration of the Syrian Democratic Council might have taken this decision to broker a deal with the Arab tribes in the region because the tribes were asking for the release of some captives, and such a move could earn the support of the tribes for the Syrian Kurds in the region," Cengiz told Arab News.

He also noted that Daesh had been trying to re-establish itself in Syria and Iraq ever since the loss of its territorial gains.

Vyacheslav Gladkikh, a Russian major general, was killed, reportedly by Daesh, in late August in a roadside bomb in the Syrian city of Deir Ez-Zor.

"It is also likely that they (Daesh) are planning to act within Turkey's territories to show that they are still alive and robust," he said.

Research published in July by Kings College London's Defence Studies Department cautioned that Daesh fighters, once freed, were regrouping in other parts of the world, posing a major security risk.



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[Arab coalition in Yemen foils Houthi attack in Red Sea](#)

Mon, 2020-10-05 21:35

CAIRO: The Arab coalition fighting in Yemen foiled an "imminent terrorist attack" by Iran-aligned Houthis in the south of the Red Sea, Al Arabiya TV said on Monday.

The coalition discovered and destroyed a remotely-controlled explosive-laden Houthi boat near Yemen's port district As-Salif, Al-Arabiya TV added.



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1601922905844839900

Mon, 2020-10-05 18:30

JERUSALEM: Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip fired a rocket into southern Israel on Monday, the Israeli army announced, breaking a weekslong lull in the area.

Israeli media said the rocket landed in an open area and did not cause any damage or injuries.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the rocket fire. But Israel holds Gaza's Hamas rulers responsible for all fire out of the territory and usually responds to rocket attacks with airstrikes on Hamas targets.



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[Morocco says arrests four Daesh-linked militant suspects](#)

Author:

Mon, 2020-10-05 21:10

RABAT: Morocco on Monday arrested four suspects allegedly linked to Daesh who were plotting "dangerous and imminent terrorist" attacks, the judicial police

said.

The four Moroccan men, all in their 20s, were detained in the northern city of Tangiers during a raid in which police fired warning shots, the Central Bureau of Judicial Investigations (BCIJ) said in a statement.

They were planning to “destabilize security in the kingdom... through terrorist methods inspired by operations” carried out by Daesh militants in Syria and Iraq, the statement added.

Bladed weapons and electronic equipment were also seized, it said.

Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs praised the ability of the security authorities in Morocco to thwart dangerous and imminent terrorist plots and to dismantle the terrorist cell aimed at destabilizing the security and stability of Morocco.

The Ministry affirmed the Kingdom’s support for the measures taken by Morocco to achieve security and stability and to combat extremism and terrorism in all their forms, Saudi Press Agency reported.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) also praised the vigilance of the security authorities and said it stands with Morocco in all measures it takes to combat extremism and terrorism to preserve its security, stability and territorial integrity.

In September, authorities said they had dismantled a Daesh-linked cell and arrested five men accused of preparing suicide attacks against prominent figures and a security headquarters in Morocco.

At the time, BCIJ head Abdelhak Khiame told AFP in an interview that Daesh has “developed” in the Sahel-Sahara region due to conflict in Libya and in countries like Mali, which he said were unable to “control their security” situations.

“Terrorist cells and terrorism are growing in the region, but also organized crime networks, drug trafficking, (and of) weapons and human beings,” he said.

“All of this... makes the Sahel region, in my opinion, a time bomb.”

The Sahel covers western and north-central Africa.

(With AFP)



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Morocco warns of Sahel 'time bomb' after Daesh-linked cell bustedUK government exploring Morocco asylum center: Report

[Germany voices 'cautious optimism'](#) [Libya conflict can be resolved](#)

Mon, 2020-10-05 19:29

Germany on Monday voiced "cautious optimism" that the conflict in Libya could be resolved, after international talks aimed at seeking long elusive peace for the wartorn country.

"We believe that there is now a window in which much has become possible that was not possible before. I think we must seize that," said Foreign Minister Heiko Maas after co-chairing with the United Nations talks that involved the

warring Libyan sides.

“There is reason for cautious optimism – we see increasingly signs of a switch from a militaristic to a political logic,” the minister said.



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Egypt hosts talks over Libyan reconciliation process