

# Kosovan women returned from Syria face house arrest

Author:

Wed, 2019-04-24 22:05

PRISTINA: Kosovo prosecutors have requested the house arrest of 16 women repatriated from Syria, saying they are suspected of joining or taking part as foreign fighters there.

The women appeared on Wednesday in court in Pristina, a day after 10 other women were put under house arrest. None have been charged with a crime.

Four alleged militants, all men, were arrested the moment they were brought to the country.

The women and children were sent to the Foreign Detention Centre in the outskirts of Pristina but were freed to go home after 72 hours.

Ten women were seen entering Pristina Basic Court in a police escort on Tuesday. The court said in a statement later that they had been placed under house arrest on charges of joining foreign armed groups and terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq from 2014 to 2019.

The state prosecution said all 32 repatriated women are under investigation and more of them are expected to appear in front of judges on Wednesday. The prosecution has yet to file charges.

After the collapse of Islamic State's self-declared caliphate in Syria and Iraq, countries around the world are wrestling with how to handle militants and their families seeking to return to their home countries.

Kosovo's population is nominally 90 percent Muslim, but the country is largely secular in outlook. More than 300 of its citizens travelled to Syria since 2012 and 70 men who fought alongside militant groups were killed.

Police said 30 Kosovan fighters, 49 women and eight children remain in the conflict zones. The government said it plans to bring back those who are still there.

International and local security agencies have previously warned of the risk posed by returning fighters. In 2015, Kosovo adopted a law making fighting in foreign conflicts punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

On Saturday, 110 Kosovar citizens – the four alleged foreign fighters, 32 women and 74 children – were returned to Kosovo with assistance from the United States, the first such move for a European country.

Authorities say there are still 87 Kosovar citizens in Syria.



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## [US targets two individuals, three entities in Hezbollah-related sanctions program](#)

Wed, 2019-04-24 19:47

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Treasury, moving to boost pressure on Hezbollah, imposed sanctions on Wednesday against two people and three firms that Washington accuses of being involved in schemes to help the armed Shi'ite group backed by Iran evade American sanctions.

The Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) said it was targeting Belgium-based Wael Bazzi because he acted on behalf of his father Mohammad Bazzi, a Hezbollah financier.

OFAC also took action against two Belgian companies and a British-based firm controlled by Bazzi.

In addition, the US Treasury designated Lebanon-based Hassan Tabaja, who it said had acted on behalf of his brother Adham Tabajha, also a Hezbollah financier. The U.S. action freezes their assets and property and prevents U.S. citizens and businesses from dealing with them.

The two men and three businesses were targeted for sanctions under US regulations aimed at suspected terrorists or those who support them, the Treasury said in a statement. Hezbollah is considered a foreign terrorist organization by the United States.

“Treasury is relentlessly pursuing Hezbollah’s financial facilitators by dismantling two of Hezbollah’s most important financial networks,” Treasury Undersecretary Sigal Mandelker said in a statement.

“By targeting Hassan Tabaja and Wael Bazzi and their European-based companies, this administration is continuing to disrupt all avenues of financial support relied upon by Hezbollah,” he said.

The US State Department earlier this week offered a reward of up to \$10 million for information that could help disrupt Hezbollah’s financing.

The move to boost pressure on the group comes at a time of growing US concern about its role in the Lebanese government. Hezbollah’s regional clout has expanded as it has sent fighters to Middle East conflicts, including the war in Syria, where it supported President Bashar al-Assad.



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US puts up \$10m reward for Hezbollah information  
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## [Italy urges EU to ready plan for Libya refugee flight, work on joint initiative](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1556117344542865800

Wed, 2019-04-24 14:42

ROME: Italy's government has written to the European Union asking it to ready a plan of action to deal with a possible flight of refugees from the armed conflict in Libya, Italian Foreign Minister Enzo Moavero said on Wednesday.

Moavero was speaking at a joint news conference in Rome after talks with the UN envoy on Libya, Ghassan Salame.

He also said that the European Union was working on developing a Europe-wide initiative for the country, as the bloc fears the emergence of fresh terrorist activities.

Moavero said the situation in Libya required a lot of "time and support."

Salame said that contacts had been established and he hoped to see results before the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan begins in early May.

"I hope that the contacts we have established or re-established among the two belligerents can bear fruit before the holy month of Ramadan," Salame told a news conference.

Salame, visiting Rome to enlist support from Libya's former colonial power for a possible ceasefire, did not elaborate on the nature of the contacts with the two warring groups.

Italy, whose southern islands lie very close to the North African country's coast, fears a mass exodus of refugees from Libya which is already a jumping-off point for boatloads of African migrants seeking to a new life in Europe.

Libya has been in a state of chaos since dictator Muammar Gaddafi was toppled in 2011 with Western intervention and the latest flare-up threatens to disrupt oil flows and leave a power vacuum that militants could exploit.



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Life must go on for Libyans despite war on their doorstep

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## [Yemeni officials say 5,000 migrants detained in Aden](#)

Wed, 2019-04-24 16:09

SANAA: Yemeni security officials say police have detained at least 5,000 migrants over the last 10 days who were attempting to cross the Saudi Arabian border.

The officials said Wednesday that the migrants, most of them from African countries, are being held in police stations across the southern city of Aden.

Aden's security chief, Shalal Shaye, says the migrants have launched a hunger strike. He says authorities are seeking assistance from the UN migration agency and aid groups.

The other officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief media.

Migrants from the Horn of Africa continue to travel to Yemen en route to jobs in Gulf countries despite the four-year war between the Arab coalition and Iranian-backed Houthi militia.



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## [Sudan protest leaders threaten strike unless demands met](#)

Author:

AFP

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1556108965512026000

Wed, 2019-04-24 12:10

KHARTOUM: Protest leaders in Sudan threatened Wednesday to launch a "general

strike” unless the country’s military rulers meet their demand to hand power to a civilian administration.

Responding to a journalist’s question on what steps demonstrators would take if the ruling military council fails to cede power, protest leader Siddiq Farouk threatened “escalatory measures.”

“We will launch a million-strong march, and we are preparing for a general strike,” he said.



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