

1 policeman killed, dozens injured in southern Iraq clashes

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Sun, 2021-01-10 18:49

BAGHDAD: A policeman was killed and dozens of people injured Sunday in clashes between security forces and anti-government protesters in southern Iraq, multiple security officials said.

They said the clashes erupted in Haboubi square in the town of Nasiriyah in violence that began over the arrest of activists in the province. Security forces used tear gas and batons in effort to disperse the protesters who threw stones and rocks at security forces. Occasional gunfire could be heard. It was not immediately clear how the policeman was killed amid conflicting reports. The officials said at least 18 protesters were injured and more than 40 among the security forces. They spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Iraq's military said in a statement that one policeman was killed and 33 others were injured in the violence. It did not provide further details. Anti-government protests in Iraq's Shiite-dominated south have continued sporadically even as protests in Baghdad petered out with the spread of the coronavirus and after a deadly government crackdown on protesters.

More than 500 protesters were killed in the crackdown on mass protests that began in October 2019, when thousands rallied against corruption, unemployment, poor public services and other grievances.



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Iraq issues arrest warrant for Trump over Soleimani killing
Home-turned-museum retains 'soul' of southern Iraq

[Germany accuses Turkish think tank of pushing government propaganda in Europe](#)

Sun, 2021-01-10 21:06

ANKARA: Germany has accused a Turkish think tank of being a front for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's party and spreading government propaganda in Europe.

The Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) has had an

office in Berlin since 2017.

SETA is known to be financed by the family of Erdogan's son-in-law and former finance and treasury minister, Berat Albayrak, and it has representative offices in Brussels and Washington D.C.

Germany's parliament accused SETA of collecting intelligence and spreading the views of the Turkish government using scientific research activities as a cover.

The federal government said that SETA's aim was to garner influence in German public opinion and frame the political debates about Turkey with various instruments, including nominating candidates in local elections. It was acting in response to a parliamentary inquiry from the Free Democratic Party (FDP).

Stephan Thomae, from the FDP, said the government had lost its patience and abandoned its cautious approach toward Turkey's efforts to establish diplomatic leverage in Germany, Deutsche Welle reported.

"It has been clear for some time that SETA is part of the government of Turkey 's information game," tweeted Steven A. Cook, a senior fellow at the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations. "Too few in Washington understand that it is not actually a research organization."

SETA previously came under fire from the international community in 2019, when it published two reports.

It catalogued the correspondents of international news outlets in Turkey, while another report on the structure of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Europe claimed that the group collaborated with racist white supremacists on the continent.

HIGHLIGHT

Germany's parliament accused SETA of collecting intelligence and spreading the views of the Turkish government using scientific research activities as a cover.

Press freedom groups condemned the SETA media report as a dangerous escalation in the treatment of journalists, and a criminal complaint against the SETA report was filed on a series of charges including "inciting the public to hatred and enmity."

The report profiled social media sharing and the personal backgrounds of Turkish journalists who worked for international media, including Arab News, effectively making them a government target.

Germany's internal intelligence service, BfV, has been investigating SETA's activities in Germany for a while. Last month it published a report accusing

SETA of pursuing the Turkish government's agenda in Germany.

"US authorities should follow suit with SETA's Washington counterpart. This propaganda shop has long been the main beacon of Erdoganism in the United States," Sinan Ciddi, associate professor of national security studies at the Marine Corps University in the US, tweeted.

Turkish opposition parties' requests for a parliamentary inquiry about SETA's financial resources and activities were rejected by Ankara in 2019.

SETA has been exempt from tax since 2013, unlike other think tanks in Turkey.

The Turkish presidency's communication director Fahrettin Altun and the presidency's lead spokesman Ibrahim Kalin used to work at SETA.

SETA has not yet released an official statement about the German government's claims.





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Turkey criticized for indictment of 108 people over 2014 protests
EU hits Turkey with steel sanctions amid dumping probe

[Yemen calls on UN to take stand on Houthi war crimes in Taiz](#)

Author:

Sun, 2021-01-10 00:59

LONDON: Yemen called Saturday for the United Nations, the international community and human rights organizations to “take a clear position on the war crimes and brutal violations committed by the Houthi militia” in Yemen. The head of the Yemeni government, Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed, said they must take a stand on the violations that the Iran-backed militia have committed against the population in the Al-Hima area of northern Taiz, in southwestern Yemen.

The Houthi militia besieged the villages of Al-Hima and Al-Haq in Taiz on Friday, killing four people, including a child, wounding seven others and extensively damaging and destroying several homes.

The premier said that “the international community and its organizations are not content with standing idly by to the crimes of the Iranian-backed

militia,” adding that “this position” encourages the Houthis to continue their crimes against unarmed civilians.

Abdulmalik made the comments during a phone call with Taiz Governor Nabil Shamsan, in which the prime minister stressed that “the killing of children, women and civilians, random arrests, bombing of homes and forced displacement of residents will not be subjected to statute of limitations and the perpetrators will pay for their crimes,” reported the official Yemeni News Agency.

The governor briefed the prime minister on reports about the crimes committed by the Houthi militia, their siege and the bombing of residents’ homes and farms with rockets and artillery, killing of women and children, and kidnapping dozens of innocent people.



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Houthi shelling kills 6 in Taiz as UN Yemen envoy visits Aden
Saudi humanitarian center KSrelief distributes aid to families caring for Yemeni orphans

Israelis protest Netanyahu amid 3rd virus lockdown

Author:

Sat, 2021-01-09 23:49

JERUSALEM: Thousands of Israelis on Saturday renewed weekly demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, calling for the long-serving leader to resign over corruption charges against him and his alleged mishandling of the coronavirus crisis.

Protesters held signs reading "Go," and "Bibi, let my people go," referring to Netanyahu by his nickname.

The protest in a Jerusalem square near Netanyahu's official residence comes as Israel is the midst of its third national lockdown, which was recently tightened to shutter schools, and as the country presses forward with a world-leading vaccination drive. Netanyahu's trial was set to resume this week, but was postponed indefinitely amid the tighter restrictions.

Netanyahu has been indicted on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust connected to three long-running investigations. He has denied any wrongdoing and says he is the victim of a "witch hunt" by hostile media, law enforcement and judicial officials. Protesters argue that Netanyahu cannot properly lead the country while under indictment.

Israel has seen a recent surge in cases despite unleashing one of the world's fastest vaccination campaigns. The country has given the first of two vaccine doses to nearly 20% of its population, and Netanyahu said Thursday that Israel has secured enough vaccines to inoculate the whole adult population by the end of March.

Netanyahu has placed the vaccination drive at the center of his campaign for reelection that same month. On March 23, Israel will hold its fourth nationwide vote in less than two years. In the meantime, he has called on Israelis to make "one last big effort" to halt transmission by adhering to the tightened restrictions.



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Benjamin Netanyahu hinges on Israel's coronavirus vaccination for re-election
Israeli prosecutors spell out allegations against Netanyahu

[Home-turned-museum retains 'soul' of southern Iraq](#)

Author:

Sat, 2021-01-09 23:33

SAMAWAH, Iraq: An imposing house stands out among other buildings in Iraq's Samawah city – once a multi-generational family home, it's now a museum of a bygone age in the country's tribal south.

Abdellatif Al-Jablawi, the property's owner and family patriarch, led a tour of the traditional house where he was born 80 years ago.

At the time, three generations, from grandparents to grandchildren, lived in the house, with its intricate "shanasheel" bay windows, wooden balconies and

tall doors topped by elaborate lintels.

“Over the generations, everyone preferred to rent elsewhere and the house emptied out,” said Al-Jablawi, now the oldest member of his family.

The house comprises 13 rooms splashed with sunlight colored by stained glass windows, including a grand ceremonial salon and kitchen, which Al-Jablawi still calls “the fireplace,” as it was known when he was young.

SPEEDREAD

The house comprises 13 rooms splashed with sunlight colored by stained glass windows, including a grand ceremonial salon and kitchen, which Al-Jablawi still calls ‘the fireplace.’

The rooms are connected by steep, narrow stairs and walls of yellow brick, a historic building material still produced in southern Iraq.

Al-Jablawi said the structure had been at risk of “falling into ruin” when he decided to act.

“I decided to buy back all the shares of the house ... and, in 2015, I found an architect specialized in renovating heritage buildings,” he said.



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Grievances, reborn as Daesh accusations, tie Iraqis to campsIraq issues
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