

Iranians guiding Houthi missiles, says captured spy

Author:

Tue, 2020-12-08 01:08

AL-MUKALLA: A Houthi spy who was captured in the Yemeni city of Marib said he received training on intelligence information gathering and location sharing from Iranian and Iraqi missile experts in Sanaa.

Yemen's Defense Ministry recently announced capturing a Houthi cell of two spies who passed locations of military sites to the group.

State media aired a video showing their confessions. According to the video, they provided the militia with sensitive military information and locations of senior army commanders who were hit by Houthi missiles and drones.

Basim Ali Al-Samet, identified by the ministry as the most dangerous member of the cell, described receiving military training and lessons on gathering information and sending locations of military sites and movements of army commanders from Iranians and Iraqis in the capital.

Houthis recruited Al-Samet in early 2019 and installed him in the Ministry of Defense in Marib with the help of his military officer uncle, who also said he had colluded with the Houthis.

Al-Samet spent months in Marib, collecting information about military camps and meetings of ministry officers before traveling to Sanaa to pass the information to his recruiter Zayed Al-Mouyed, a Houthi military commander.

At a meeting with senior Houthi intelligence officers, Al-Samet saw three masked men along with Gen. Abdul Hakim Al-Khewani, the commander of Houthi intelligence, Al-Mouyed and two Houthi figures who listened to the information he had gathered from Marib.

"He (Al-Khewani) told me that you would be meeting with the missile force (team) who would take the information about locations," he said, adding that the three masked men were from Iran and Iraq and were responsible for launching Houthi missiles. "On their tablet, they showed me a new program with Farsi letters showing locations."

Al-Samet returned to Marib, where he helped the Houthis launch missile attacks that killed soldiers and civilians.

The ministry said that intelligence information from Al-Samet guided two Houthi missile strikes that targeted the Yemeni Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Mohammad Ali Al-Maqdishi and the army's chief of staff Lt. Gen. Sagheer bin Aziz in May.

Al-Samet also said he sent the location of lawmaker Moused Al-Sawadi's house, which the Houthis bombed in January.

Yemeni military experts and officials said the spy's words were consistent with what the internationally recognized Yemeni government had been saying about the role of Iranian and Hezbollah military experts in supplying the Houthis with military know-how and missiles.

"We are not surprised at all," Col. Abdul Basit Al-Baher, a Yemeni army spokesman in the southern city of Taiz, told Arab News. "This confirms what we already know about the Iran Revolutionary Guard's control over Houthi missiles. This shows that people who run the Houthi missile forces from identifying targets to launching missiles are foreign figures from Iran, Iraq and Lebanon. They wear masks during meetings as the Houthis do not trust even their spies."



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Houthis militia](#)

[Yemen](#)

[Iran](#)

Saudi project clears 1,385 more mines in Yemen
Yemen journalist captives tell of five-year torture ordeal in Houthi prisons

Israeli guards shoot unarmed Palestinian man at crossing

Author:

Associated Press

ID:

1607375041378946600

Mon, 2020-12-07 19:27

JERUSALEM: Israeli police said Monday that private security guards shot and wounded an unarmed Palestinian man at a checkpoint in the West Bank. In a statement, police said the guards at the Qalandia crossing ordered the man to stop. But when he continued to approach them, they fired warning shots in the air and then shot at his legs.

Amateur video captured by a passerby and shown on Israel's Channel 13 TV showed the man falling down after being shot, then hopping toward the security men and being shot again. Details on his identity were not immediately released.

Police later said the man was found to have been unarmed. He was taken to Jerusalem's Hadassah Medical Center, where he was said to be in moderate to serious condition.

Qalandia is a main crossing point for Palestinians entering Jerusalem from the West Bank. Israel often uses private security companies as contractors at checkpoints.

Palestinians and human rights groups accuse Israeli security forces of often using excessive force against Palestinian suspects. Channel 13 said police were investigating the incident.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Israel](#)

[Palestinians](#)

[CROSSING](#)

[Shooting](#)

Israeli police cleared in shooting of maimed Palestinian boy
UAE activates tourist visas for Israelis

[31 new assembly members as Kuwaitis vote for reform](#)

Author:

Mon, 2020-12-07 01:34

JEDDAH: Kuwait's national assembly will have 31 new members after the first election since new emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah took office in September.

Results announced on Sunday showed that opposition candidates won 24 of the

assembly's 50 seats, up from 16 in the previous parliament.

None of the 29 female candidates won and the only female assembly member lost her seat, but the election of 30 candidates under the age of 45 sent out a promising signal to young Kuwaitis hoping for change and reform.

"There is a big change in the composition of the new national assembly," Kuwaiti analyst Ayed Al-Manaa said.

"This is an indication of the voters' anger over the performance of the previous parliament and of their desire for change in economics, health, education and public services."

Lulwa Saleh Al-Mulla, head of the Kuwaiti Women's Cultural and Social Society, welcomed the new younger members in the assembly but was disappointed by the lack of women's representation.

Prime Minister Sabah Al-Sabah's Cabinet resigned in a routine procedure after the election.

Sheikh Nawaf will appoint a prime minister to select a new Cabinet and the assembly will meet on Dec. 15.

Kuwait's economy, which is worth nearly \$140 billion, is facing a deficit of \$46 billion this year.

A government priority is to pass deadlocked legislation that would allow Kuwait to tap international debt markets.





Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Kuwaiti Elections 2020](#)

Kuwait emir accepts post-election government resignationKuwaitis vote in first parliamentary election since accession of new emir

[US Navy official says 'uneasy deterrence' reached with Iran](#)

Author:

Mon, 2020-12-07 01:42

DUBAI: The top US Navy official in the Mideast said on Sunday America has reached an “uneasy deterrence” with Iran after months of regional attacks and seizures at sea, even as tensions remain high between Washington and Tehran over the Islamic Republic’s nuclear program.

Vice Adm. Sam Paparo, who oversees the Navy’s 5th Fleet based in Bahrain, struck an academic tone in comments to the annual Manama Dialogue hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. He described having a “healthy respect” for both Iran’s regular navy and the naval forces of its

paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

"We have achieved an uneasy deterrence. That uneasy deterrence is exacerbated by world events and by events along the way," the vice admiral said. "But I have found Iranian activity at sea to be cautious and circumspect and respectful, to not risk unnecessary miscalculation or escalation at sea." Iran's mission to the UN did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

While Iran has not directly seized or targeted a tanker in recent months, a mine recently struck an oil tanker off Saudi Arabia and a cargo ship near Yemen came under assault. Suspicion immediately fell on Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels for being behind both attacks. The Houthis have not commented on either attack.

Paparo, a former Navy fighter pilot who most recently served as director of operations at the US military's Central Command, offered a different stance than his immediate predecessor, Vice Adm. James Malloy. In one of his last comments to journalists in August, Malloy referred to Iran as "reckless and provocative" and always trying in dramatic naval drills to "lower the denominator until they're sure that they can look like they've won something."

HIGHLIGHT

While Iran has not directly seized or targeted a tanker in recent months, a mine recently struck an oil tanker off Saudi Arabia and a cargo ship near Yemen came under assault. Suspicion immediately fell on Iranian-backed Houthi rebels for being behind both attacks.

Malloy's tenure saw oil tankers seized by Iran and a series of limpet mine explosions targeting tankers that the Navy blamed on Iran. Tehran denied being involved, though Revolutionary Guard members were filmed taking an unexploded mine away from one tanker.

By contrast, the several months that Paparo's been in charge have not seen any major crises.

The US Navy routinely has tense encounters with the Revolutionary Guard, whose speed boats race alongside American warships in the Arabian Gulf and sometimes conduct live-fire drills with machine guns and missile launches in their presence.

The Guard typically patrols the shallower waters of the Arabian Gulf and its narrow mouth, the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's regular navy largely operates in the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. While previous commanders have made a point to differentiate between the professionalism of the two, Paparo dismissed it as an "old idea" that included a lingering belief that the service was still loyal to Iran's former shah, who was toppled in the 1979 Islamic revolution.

"Forty-one years into the revolution, I think we can dispense with that notion," the vice admiral said. "I sincerely doubt there's a difference among them."

Paparo also said he did not believe the 5th Fleet's mission would be affected by the Navy potentially reconstituting a 1st Fleet responsible for the Indian

Ocean.

Still, Paparo's remarks carried a clear warning, quoting former US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis at one point.

"Be polite, be professional and have a plan to kill everyone in the room," he said. "That's how we conduct ourselves at sea."



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[US navy](#)

GCC: Iran nuclear deal must take account of regional countries' interests

[Israeli police cleared in shooting of maimed Palestinian boy](#)

Author:

Mon, 2020-12-07 01:27

JERUSALEM: Israeli authorities have cleared police of any wrongdoing in the case of a nine-year-old boy who lost an eye after apparently being shot in the face by an Israeli officer earlier this year.

Malik Eissa was struck by what appeared to be a sponge-tipped munition last February and lost vision in his left eye. Residents said he had just gotten off a school bus in the Palestinian neighborhood of Issawiya in East Jerusalem when police opened fire. Police said at the time they had responded

to riots in the tense neighborhood and used what they call nonlethal weapons. In a statement sent to The Associated Press on Saturday, the Israeli Justice Ministry said its unit for internal police investigations concluded that while the incident was "sad," there were insufficient grounds for prosecution after interviewing witnesses and reviewing video footage and other evidence. It said police were conducting an arrest operation at the time and were attacked by a group of stone throwers. It also said that medical experts could not determine whether the boy had been struck by a bullet or a stone. It said, however, that the investigations unit ordered a review of operational conduct, including its use of sponge-tipped bullets in civilian areas.

HIGHLIGHT

Residents say Malik Eissa had just gotten off a school bus in the Palestinian neighborhood of Issawiya in East Jerusalem when police opened fire.

Malik's father, Wael Issa, told AP that his family had been the victim of injustice twice – first when the boy was shot and now with the investigation being closed.

"When my son was shot, the members of the investigative unit came to the hospital. They were about to cry. They told me, 'Don't worry, those responsible for shooting him will be held accountable,'" he said on Sunday. "But 10 months after investigating, they decided to close the file."

He said the boy suffers from constant headaches and psychological problems and has not returned to school because of repeated surgeries and embarrassment about his appearance.

He said his son finally agreed to return to school two weeks ago after receiving a glass eye but stopped going after a couple of days because of an embarrassing incident.

"The eye fell out in front of the students. He feels terrible," he said.

"Frankly speaking I don't believe I will ever get justice in this system."

Palestinians and Israeli human rights groups have long accused Israel of whitewashing wrongdoing by its security forces.

B'tselem, Israel's leading human rights group, said the case "exemplifies whitewashing at work."

"Every individual case is isolated to a series of technical details, as though this was a singular incident, rather than an open fire policy," it said. It accused police of operating within "an oppressed civilian population to enforce an occupation and annexation," leading to civilian casualties and impunity for those who harm them.

Issawiya is part of East Jerusalem, which Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war along with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, territories the Palestinians want for a future state.

Israel later annexed East Jerusalem in a step that is not internationally recognized and views all of the city as its capital. The Palestinians claim East Jerusalem as their future capital.

Issawiya has been the site of frequent police raids that often ignite demonstrations or clashes. Police blame the violence on local youths, whom

they accuse of throwing stones and firebombs at patrol vehicles.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Palestine](#)

[Israel](#)

UAE target of cyberattacks after Israel deal, official says
Top diplomats from Jordan and Israel hold rare meeting on Palestine issue