

Car bomb blast kills 2 in Iraq's Mosul

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MOSUL: A car bomb blast in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Friday killed at least two people – a child and a member of the security forces – and wounded 10 others, a local medical official said.

Security sources reported earlier that the blast in Mosul's Muthanna district wounded at least five security personnel, but the number of wounded was set to rise.

It was the second explosion in just over a week to hit the city which was Daesh's de facto capital from 2014 to 2017. Such incidents are usually blamed on Daesh militants still at large in parts of northern Iraq. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Mosul has been the site of several bomb blasts in recent months. In last week's attack a car packed with explosives blew up killing two people and wounding another 24 near Mosul University.

Militants have adapted their tactics to insurgent-style attacks since Daesh was defeated in Iraq in 2017 and driven out of areas it had controlled for years. Daesh militants are currently facing an assault by US-backed forces in Syria in some of the last areas they hold.



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Photographers in Iraq's Mosul snap dark days, bright futures
In Mosul exhibition, Iraqi artists process brutal rule of Daesh

[Istanbul police fire tear gas at banned women's day rally](#)

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Fri, 2019-03-08 17:57

ISTANBUL: Istanbul police fired tear gas at thousands of women who took to the city's central avenue on International Women's Day on Friday in defiance of a protest ban to demand greater rights and denounce violence.

Security forces in riot gear pushed the crowds of women – some wearing colourful wigs and masks – at the entrance to the city's main pedestrianised shopping street of Istiklal Avenue, an AFP correspondent reported.

Police then used tear gas on the marchers and menaced them with dogs, causing many protesters to flee onto side streets.

The Women's Day event took place peacefully last year but just before this year's march, authorities issued a statement banning any demonstration on the city's central avenue.

Ahead of the protest the area was flooded with police who set up cordons around the central Taksim Square, while many local shops were closed.

One woman, called Ulker, speaking to AFP from behind a barrier, said: "Here is the bitter truth: There is a system, there is a state that is scared of us. I condemn this."

Thousands of demonstrators were eventually allowed into a small part of the avenue to stage the protest.

They unfurled banners that read "Feminist revolt against male violence, and poverty", and "I was born free and I will live free."

The demonstrators also chanted slogans including "We are not silent, we are not scared, we are not obeying."

The crowds then became trapped between two security cordons and were subsequently dispersed by the police using tear gas.

Women's activists have long accused President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Islamic-rooted government of not doing enough to stop violence against women.

In 2018, 440 women were killed in murders linked to their gender, according to the women's rights group "We Will Stop Femicide", compared with 210 in

2012.

The issue came to public attention when Turkish pop singer Sila appeared before court on complaints of having been beaten by her partner Ahmet Kural, a famous actor.

The landmark trial opened in Istanbul Thursday a day before International Women's Day.

"As you know in Turkey violence against women is very high. The government is doing nothing to stop it. That's all we can do: to come here and speak up," protester at Istiklal Avenue Gulsah said.

Women's rallies were also held in the capital Ankara, where a few hundred women protested, with small police presence.

Some chanted: "Men are killing and the state is protecting killers".

Large scale protests are rare events in Turkey since mass 2013 anti-government rallies, which were seen as a major challenge to Erdogan's government.



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Saudi Arabia women's team out to use bowling championship debut as springboard to success
Turkish court accepts indictment against 16 over Gezi protests -lawyer

Houthis committed 18 cease-fire violations in the last 24 hours: Arab coalition

Fri, 2019-03-08 19:17

JEDDAH: The Iranian-backed Houthi militia committed 18 violations against the Swedish cease-fire agreement in Hodeidah during the last 24 hours, the Arab coalition said on Friday.

The Stockholm Agreement was signed by the Yemeni government and Houthi representatives in December last year.

The main points of the agreement were a prisoner exchange, steps toward a cease-fire in the city of Taiz, and a cease-fire agreement in the city of Hodeidah and its port, as well as ports in Salif and Ras Issa.

The coalition said the Houthis targeted several neighborhoods in Hodeidah using various weaponry.

“The violations included shooting with various light weapons and mortars on the areas of Hais, Al-Faza and Jabaliya,” said the coalition, adding that one citizen was killed and another was injured.

Earlier on Friday, Saudi Arabia’s Royal Air Defense Force shot down a Houthi drone that was flying toward Saudi Arabia, Saudi state TV reported.

The spokesperson of the Saudi-led Arab coalition, Col. Turki Al-Maliki, said that the drone was targeting civilians in a residential area in the city of Abha.

The Houthi militia has committed thousands of violations since the agreement came into force on Dec. 18, 2018.

Last month, state news agency SPA said the Houthi militia had committed 1,112 violations since the Hodeidah agreement was implemented, leading to 76 civilian deaths and 492 injuries.

The report said the Houthis continued to target civilian homes, public areas and army positions, using a variety of weapons.



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Saudi Royal Air Defense forces shoot down Houthi drone, 5 civilians injured
Houthis have 'killed the Stockholm Agreement': Yemeni official

[Houthis have 'killed the Stockholm Agreement': Yemeni official](#)

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Thu, 2019-03-07 20:31

LONDON: The Houthis have "killed the Stockholm Agreement" that they signed with the Yemeni government in Sweden last December, the Yemeni army's

spokesman Brig. Abdo Abdullah Majali said Wednesday.

Majali added that the Houthis have failed to uphold clauses regarding the withdrawal of troops from Hodeidah, and that anything “taken from the Yemeni government will be recovered by force.”

The army spokesman then asked how it was possible to trust the Houthis when they are “carrying out acts of aggression against the Yemeni people, and continuously targeting Yemeni army positions.”

The Yemeni army “maintains its right to respond” to violations committed by the Houthis who “do not understand the language of dialogue,” Majali told Asharq Al-Awsat.

The Stockholm Agreement was signed by the Yemeni government and the Houthis in December last year. The main components of the agreement are a prisoner exchange, steps toward a cease-fire in the city of Taiz, and a cease-fire agreement on the city of Hodeidah and the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa.

The governments of Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have accused the Houthis of breaking the cease-fire in Yemen’s key port of Hodeidah and refusing to withdraw their forces in accordance with the Stockholm Agreement.

The ambassadors from the three countries urged the UN Security Council in a letter circulated Tuesday to call on the Houthis to implement the agreement and to condemn their continuing violations of the cease-fire.

Meanwhile, the United Nations announced its Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths was holding intensive talks with the warring parties in the Yemeni conflict in an effort to implement the Stockholm Agreement, revive hope of redeployment from Hodeidah and open humanitarian corridors.

Griffiths met Yemen’s Vice President Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar and Foreign Minister Khalid Al-Yamani in Riyadh on Tuesday, and was due to meet Houthi leaders in Sanaa.



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Arab Coalition targets Houthi reinforcements in Yemen's HajarYemeni government accuses Houthis of planting mines near Hodeidah's food stores

[Ultra-conservative cleric appointed head of Iran's judiciary](#)

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Thu, 2019-03-07 18:18

TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Thursday appointed ultra-conservative cleric Ebrahim Raisi, a one-time presidential hopeful, as head of the judiciary, the leader's website said.

Former judge Raisi, who currently heads the holy shrine of Imam Reza, was the leading rival to President Hassan Rouhani at Iran's 2017 election and has close ties to the supreme leader.

Khamenei said in a statement that he appointed Raisi to bring about a "transformation (in the judiciary) in line with (its) needs, advancements and challenges" on the 40th year of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

"For carrying out this crucial act, I have chosen you who have a long track record in different levels of the judiciary and are in touch with its nuances," he said in the statement.

He called on Raisi to be "with the people, the revolution and against corruption" in his new role.

Raisi is a mainstay of the conservative establishment, having served as attorney general, supervisor of state broadcaster IRIB and prosecutor in the Special Court for Clerics.

He bears the title of Hojjat Al-Islam, which is a rank under Ayatollah in the Shiite cleric hierarchy.

Raisi became deputy prosecutor at the Revolutionary Court of Tehran during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Human rights organizations, opposition members and dissidents have accused the tribunal of overseeing the execution of political prisoners without due legal process during his tenure.

He was chosen by Khamenei in 2016 to head Iran's Imam Reza Shrine and lead its huge business conglomerate, Astan Qods Razavi, with interests in everything from IT and banking to construction and agriculture.

During his 2017 campaign, Raisi took a tough line on Rouhani's "weak efforts"

in negotiating the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers that brought the Islamic republic sanctions relief in exchange for limiting its nuclear program.

US President Donald Trump last year withdrew Washington from the pact and reimposed sanctions on Tehran.



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