

The Yemeni army and popular committees have reportedly destroyed two Saudi Arabian Apache helicopters in Yemen's east-central province of Ma'rib as part of the retaliatory measures over Riyadh's ongoing aggression against its impoverished southern neighbor.

The choppers were targeted with Tochka rockets in an operation, which also destroyed three Saudi missile launch platforms, Yemen's al-Masirah TV reported on Friday.

A large number of Saudi, Emirati, and Bahraini forces were killed and injured in the retaliatory attack, which was undertaken as part of efforts to clear the province of al-Qada militants and Saudi-backed militants.

The UAE (United Arab Emirates) later confirmed that 22 of its soldiers had been killed in Yemen without specifying the circumstances of the highest death toll of the country in its offensive against Yemen as part of the Saudi coalition.

Missiles fired from the direction of Yemen also struck the Saudi military's Hashed monitoring site and Saudi artillery positions in the Hamdan military site, both located in the Najran region of southwestern Saudi Arabia.

Saudi army gatherings in the Jizan region, similarly located in the king-

Yemeni forces destroy Saudi Apache choppers: report

22 Emirati soldiers killed in Yemen



dom's southwest, also came under Yemeni missile fire.

Also on Friday, it was reported that several people had been killed in five Saudi airstrikes on a hospital in the

Razih district of Sa'ada Province in northwestern Yemen.

Saudi fighter jets, meanwhile, launched more than 15 airstrikes on the Harad district in the south-

western Yemeni province of Hajjah, while at least eight air raids were carried out against the Yemeni capital, Sana'a.

22 Emirati soldiers killed in Yemen

Elsewhere, twenty-two soldiers from the UAE military have been killed while taking part in a Saudi-led military campaign against Yemen's revolutionaries, according to the country's state news agency WAM.

At least five other Emirati soldiers have been killed in Yemen since the offensive began.

However, there were conflicting reports of the cause of the 22 soldiers' deaths.

On March 26, Saudi Arabia began its aggression against Yemen – with a UN mandate – in a bid to restore power to Yemen's fugitive former president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, a staunch ally of Riyadh, and to undermine the Ansarullah (Houthi) movement.

The conflict has so far left about 4,500 people dead and thousands of others wounded, the UN says. Local Yemeni sources, however, say the fatality figure is much higher.

The United Nations has repeatedly voiced concern over the rising number of civilian casualties in the Saudi military aggression against the impoverished Arab state. (Source: agencies)

'If these images don't change Europe, what will?'

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The image has stirred public outrage and embarrassed political leaders as far away as Canada, where authorities had rejected an asylum application from the boy's relatives, the Wall Street Journal reported.

His final journey was supposed to end in sanctuary in Europe; instead it claimed his life and highlighted the plight of desperate people caught in the gravest refugee crisis since World War II.

The child was identified as Aylan Kurdi, a Syrian Kurd from Kobani, a town near the Turkish border that has witnessed months of heavy fighting between Daesh and Syrian Kurdish forces.

He drowned after the 15-foot boat ferrying him from the Turkish beach resort of Bodrum to the Greek island of Kos capsized shortly before dawn on Wednesday, killing 12 passengers. Aylan's 5-year-old brother, Galip, and his mother, Rehan, were also among the dead. His father, Abdullah, was the only family member to survive.

According to CNN, Nadim Houry, Human Rights Watch deputy director for the Middle East and North Africa, described the pictures as "haunting."



Aylan Kurdi (L) and his brother Galip who were drowned.

"Biggest indictment of collective failure," he wrote.

On its website, the India TV said the image of the

little boy may haunt us for the rest of our life as a reminder of the world's dead apathy towards the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

Abdullah brought his family to Turkey three years ago after fleeing fighting first in Damascus, where he worked as a barber, then in Aleppo, then Kobani. His Facebook page shows pictures of the family in Istanbul crossing the Bosphorus and feeding pigeons next to the famous Yeni Cami, or new mosque.

From his hospital bed on Wednesday, Abdullah told a Syrian radio station that he had worked on construction sites for 50 Turkish lira (roughly \$17) a day, but it wasn't enough to live on. He said they depended on his sister, Tima Kurdi, who lived in Canada, for help paying the rent.

This is not the first case of a migrant drowning while on way to European shores, as according to International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than 2,600 migrants have died trying to cross the Mediterranean since January this year.

However, this particular picture of the three-year-old Syrian kid, has captured the worldwide attention in a way that will not be easy to forget.

Bomb attacks leave 11 dead in, around Iraqi capital

Iraq's top cleric demands real steps in fighting corruption

Iraqi security and medical officials say at least 11 people have lost their lives and more than two dozen sustained injuries after a series of bomb explosions ripped through commercial districts in and around the capital, Baghdad.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Thursday's deadliest attack took place in the town of Tarmiyah, situated 50 kilometers (30 miles) north of Baghdad, where three shoppers were killed and 10 others wounded in a bomb explosion.

Separately, eight civilians were killed when four other bombings rocked different neighborhoods of the capital. The blasts also left 18 people wounded.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks. However, Iraqi officials usually blame such assaults on the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist group.

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq says a total of 1,325 Iraqis were killed and another 1,811 wounded in acts of terrorism, violence and armed conflict in August.

According to the UN mission, the number



of civilian fatalities stood at 585. Violence also claimed the lives of 740 members of the Iraqi security forces. A great portion of the fatalities was recorded in Baghdad Province, where 318 civilians were killed.

The northern and western parts of Iraq have been plagued by violence ever since ISIL began their march through the Iraqi territory in June 2014.

Army soldiers and volunteer fighters are seeking

to take back ISIL-held regions in joint operations.

Iraq's top cleric demands real steps in fighting corruption

Elsewhere, Iraq's top Shia cleric said the government must start hunting the "big heads" in an anti-corruption drive as the only way to achieve genuine reforms.

In a message delivered by a representative in a Friday sermon, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, called for "convincing and assuring steps" as a proof of government seriousness in implementing its reform plan, which was announced and approved by parliament last month.

Sistani's remarks came hours before weekly Friday rallies, which began last month, to protest shabby services, endemic corruption and sectarian politics. The graft is widely believed to be rampant, involving hundreds of millions of dollars in the 12 years since Saddam Hussein's regime was toppled.

Ahead of the protests, authorities closed all roads leading to Baghdad's Tahrir Square and deployed security forces. (Source: agencies)

Mother believed to be bound for Syria arrested in Britain

A mother thought to have been planning to travel to Syria with her four children has been arrested after returning to Britain.

Zahera Tariq, 33, was detained in Turkey on Tuesday along with her sons Muhammad, 12, Amaar, 11, Aaadid, four and daughter Safiyyah, nine.

The Metropolitan police's counter-terrorism command placed her under arrest on suspicion of child abduction after she arrived to Luton airport on a flight from Istanbul on Thursday night.

Tariq and her family were reported missing from their home in Walthamstow, east London, last week. Her children were reported to be safe and well earlier this week, and have been taken into police protection following their arrival to Britain.

They were found to have flown to Amsterdam on 25 August after CCTV



footage showed captured being passing through London City airport.

A Metropolitan police spokesman said their inquiries into the case continued. Scotland Yard said recently it believed that more than 40 women and girls had travelled from Britain to Syria in the past year. (Source: The Guardian?)

Turkey votes to extend mandate for military action in Syria, Iraq

Turkey's parliament on Thursday voted to extend for another year a mandate that allows the military to combat extremists and Kurdish militants in neighboring Syria and Iraq, as the country battles its biggest ever security crisis.

The parliament convened for an extraordinary session, during which the new members of the power-sharing government also took their oaths, to discuss the current mandate which expires on October 2.

The mandate allows the use of the armed forces in neighboring Syria and Iraq as well as for foreign forces to transit Turkish territory in operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist group.

The terms of the mandate also permit U.S. air forces to use Turkey's Incirlik air base to make lethal strikes against ISIL in Syria, which have now



commenced after months of negotiations.

The motion had been submitted to parliament last week by the Ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) which cited "increased risks and threats against Turkey's national security along the southern borders." (Source: AFP)

JUMP

No, ISIS doesn't represent Islam

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And it is this deliberate muddying of reality that lies at the heart of the struggle of ideas within the Muslim world today.

Groups like ISIS try to exploit misunderstandings of doctrine to further their own agendas. Yet while some Muslim scholars have spoken out against ISIS's false claims, others are either silent on the issue of abolishing such outrageous practices, or worse, they suggest that Muslims are committing a sin by demanding we abandon practices that should be consigned to history.

Clearly, ISIS is too often leading the conversation, leaving American Muslims facing a two-fold challenge.

For a start, American Muslims must consistently do more to define Islam to the broader public, rather than simply responding to each outrage by an extremist group. ISIS should be treated with no more credibility than any other group of fanatics.

Second, Muslim scholars need to connect with communities in order to produce scholarship that reflects the realities of today, separating tribal customs of the past that Islam phased out, such as slavery, from the real essence of Islam, which is based on the principles of justice, liberation and compassion.

Contrary to what many believe, Islamic jurisprudence is not a rigid and immutable law based on unchanging rules written centuries ago. Instead, it is a flexible, dynamic jurisprudence that is fully compatible with the modern human rights framework.

Essence of Islam

Indeed, Islam as a religion developed for reforming society and to elevate its norms and cultural practices closer to the Quranic ideals of freedom and equality. So to go back to the original essence of Islam is to bring dignity to humanity, to bring mercy to the world, and to establish justice in the lands within which we reside. Anything violating those tenets should be met with stiff opposition by Muslims.

With that in mind, Muslims must do everything they can to break away from misogynist, maniacal and maddening practices that are dressed up as Islamic by pointing to a tribal custom of the past.

Islam is about free thinking, and anything that runs counter to such freedom of thought runs counter to the will of God. As the Quran states, "God commands justice and goodness and generosity, and he forbids all that is shameful and what runs counter to reason."

Islam should be seen as a breath of fresh air, a refuge from war and persecution, whether at the hands of religious or secular rulers. Unless pundits and politicians stop giving ISIS so much attention, then efforts to share this message will be undermined.

Mainstream understandings of Islam must be seen as the standard-bearer of the faith, and on the side of anyone who is oppressed and suffering. Extremists, along with their distorted view of the faith, should be shunned into irrelevancy. (Source: The CNN)

Up to 27 civilians possibly killed in Iraq by Canadian air strike: Pentagon papers

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These records were obtained from the Pentagon through a freedom-of-information request made by the military blogging website War is Boring. The documents track allegations of civilian deaths resulting from air strikes by the U.S.-led coalition, which is bombing Islamic State targets in Iraq and Syria.

The Canadian Armed Forces is refusing to discuss the details of the alleged civilian casualties and is playing down the matter, saying that "the source of this allegation had himself heard of these potential casualties through a second-hand account" and that nobody could corroborate it.

The Globe has learned that Canada's military is unhappy that the Pentagon has released information that recounts what it told its American ally in confidence.

The precise allegation in the documents is that a Jan. 21, 2015, air strike killed between "six and 27" civilians in Kisik Junction northwest of Mosul, Iraq, according to the U.S. military documents. "A Canadian strike struck an ISIL sniper/heavy machine gun position on the roof of a building within an ISIL-occupied compound, which correlates" with the allegation, the documents say.

Canada has been bombing ISIL terrorists, since last November as part of a Conservative government effort to help fight the terrorist group. The U.S.-led air bombing campaign is being waged to help Iraqi ground forces recapture their country from extremists who have seized large swaths of territory.

The Canadian Armed Forces have advertised since the beginning of the aerial combat mission that they have a no-civilian-casualty policy when selecting targets – and that this approach had limited their choice of sorties.

Canada also began air strikes in Syria last April, after the Conservative-dominated House of Commons voted to expand the bombing campaign.

While the Canadian military will not discuss the details of the alleged civilian deaths, it is defending its decision to tell American allies that it felt no obligation to investigate the alleged incident. The responsibility to probe the matter was left to the U.S.-led coalition headquarters.

"The Law of Armed Conflict, as embodied in the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, does not create a positive duty to investigate," Forces spokesman Ashley Lemire said in a statement provided to The Globe. (Source: The Globe and Mail)