

Husband says Zaghari-Ratcliffe ends hunger strike in Iran

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ID:

1561819638623760400

Sat, 2019-06-29 14:40

LONDON: A British-Iranian woman imprisoned in Iran has ended her hunger strike after 15 days.

The husband of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe told the BBC that his wife had eaten some porridge with apple and banana.

Richard Ratcliffe said Saturday he is "relieved because I wouldn't have wanted her to push it much longer."

He has ended his own hunger strike outside the Iranian Embassy in London.

Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who works for the charitable Thomson Reuters Foundation, was arrested in April 2016 on charges of trying to topple the government while traveling with her toddler daughter in Iran.

The family has denied all the allegations.

Ratcliffe is leading a campaign to try to win his wife's release from prison.

British officials are also calling for her release.



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[Middle-East](#)

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[Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe](#)
[Iran](#)

Iran dismisses British call for release of aid worker Zaghari-Ratcliffe
Britain slams Iran's 'vile ploy' over Zaghari-Ratcliffe prisoner swap offer

[Iran to soon exceed enriched uranium limit under nuclear pact](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1561822067724110900

Sat, 2019-06-29 15:17

DUBAI: Iran will soon exceed an enriched uranium limit under its nuclear deal, after remaining signatories to the pact fell short of Tehran's demands to be shielded from US sanctions, the semi-official Fars news agency cited an "informed source" as saying.

"As the commission meeting in Vienna could not satisfy Iran's just demands ... Iran is determined to cut its commitments to the deal and the 300 kg enriched uranium limit will be soon breached," the unnamed source said, according to Fars.

The countries that are still parties to the 2015 nuclear accord – European powers Britain, Germany and France plus Russia and China – held urgent talks with Iranian officials on Friday in Vienna in hopes of persuading Tehran to hold off.

Iran's envoy to a meeting of the remaining signatories to the agreement said on Friday that European countries had offered too little at last-ditch talks to persuade Tehran to back off from its plans to breach limits imposed by the deal.

The Europeans say breach of the agreement by Iran would escalate confrontation at a time when Tehran and Washington are at risk of a miscalculation that could trigger a war.



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[Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(JCPOA\)](#)

US will sanction any countries that import Iranian oilIran, European partners meet with nuclear accord threatened

[Libya's Haftar orders forces to attack Turkish ships and interests: spokesman](#)

Author:

Sat, 2019-06-29 01:55

BENGAZI, Libya: Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar has ordered his forces to attack Turkish ships and interests in the country, his spokesman said on Friday, accusing Turkey of backing his rivals in Libya's conflict. "Orders have been given to the air force to target Turkish ships and boats in Libyan territorial waters," said General Ahmad Al-Mesmari, adding that "Turkish strategic sites, companies and projects belonging to the Turkish state (in Libya) are considered legitimate targets by the armed forces." Haftar's self-styled Libyan National Army, which holds eastern Libya and much

of the country's south, launched an offensive to take the capital in early April.



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Libyan officials say Haftar's forces fighting Daesh in southLibya's Haftar says to fight until Tripoli 'militias' defeated

[Radio and television festival kicks off in Tunis](#)

Author:

Sat, 2019-06-29 00:19

TUNIS: More than 270 programs will compete for awards at the 20th Arab Festival for Radio and Television in Tunis.

The festival, which runs from June 27 to 30, is organized by the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) in cooperation with the Tunisian Radio and Tunisian Television Establishment and the Arab Satellite Communications Organization.

The festival welcomes representatives of ASBU member nations, including Saudi Arabia.

The ceremony honored figures who had impacted radio and television throughout the Arab world. The inauguration ceremony was preceded by seminars focusing on audiovisual archives, digital audio broadcasting, the launch of broadcasting in Tunisia and technology developments in the audiovisual field.



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Tunisia rallies after a “black day,” president’s health improves
Tunisian president hospitalised ‘in severe health crisis’

Turkey vows fatal attack on Idlib military post will be 'punished in strongest way'

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1561749381345843400

Fri, 2019-06-28 22:36

ANKARA: Turkey has warned that the latest shelling and mortar attack on one of its observation posts in Syria's Idlib region, which left one soldier dead and three others injured, would be "punished in the strongest way."

According to the Turkish Defense Ministry, the military post came under fire on Thursday night from territory controlled by Syrian government forces.

The fatal attack, the sixth on a Turkish observation post since April 29, has put further pressure on the fragile dynamics of the region covered by a de-escalation zone deal between Turkey and Russia.

Following the incident, Turkish officials summoned Russia's Ankara attaché to Turkish military headquarters in the capital to signal that the attacks would not go unpunished.

UN chief Antonio Guterres recently urged Russia and Turkey to stabilize Idlib, the last stronghold of opposition in Syria, "without delay."

Ankara has 12 observation posts in the Idlib region, but it is the first time one of its soldiers has been killed in a strike on them. It responded by immediately reinforcing the area.

Ammar Hamou, a Jordan-based Syrian journalist, said the signs were that Russia and Turkey remain committed to their Idlib agreement, but Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime was not complying.

"There is an attempt to break the agreement from the Syrian side and the Iranian militias, and this may be useful to Russia, which is playing on both sides, as it adheres to its ambitions in Syria and its interests with Turkey," he told Arab News.

Under the terms of the Sochi agreement inked between Turkey and Russia in September 2018, Moscow is a guarantor state for Damascus and is responsible for preventing regime attacks and any other violation by Iran-backed militia.

Hamou said that any limited Turkish military action against the Assad regime could help to bring Russia and Syria back to the negotiating table.

"Today the Turkish-Russian agreement is in danger not because they do not want to continue, but the regime is provoking local and regional foes to target civilians and kill them. If not, civilians will stand in the face of the Turkish-backed factions that have adhered to the cease-fire agreement," he added.

Some experts see the Moscow-backed regime attack on the Turkish observation post as a challenge ahead of the Turkish and American presidents' meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Osaka, Japan.

Emre Ersen, an expert on Russia-Turkey relations from Marmara University in Istanbul, said the latest attack had once again revealed the fragility of the Turkish-Russian consensus in Syria despite their intense military coordination on the ground.

"It also proves that it will not be easy to reach a lasting settlement on the Idlib issue," he told Arab News.

In late May, the Kremlin, one of the Syrian government's staunchest allies, said it was Turkey's responsibility to prevent rebels in Idlib from firing on civilian and other facilities where Russian troops were located.

But experts have suggested that the Sochi deal is no longer working as the balances in Idlib have been fundamentally distorted especially over the last few months.

Ersen said that Moscow was closely watching the diplomatic contacts going on between Ankara and Washington with regard to the east of the Euphrates river.

"Therefore, this latest attack might also be taken as a signal of Russian discontent with Turkey's search for a balance between Washington and Moscow in Syria," he added.

Russia recently announced that it would complete the delivery, and training, of the S-400 missile defense system to Turkey by the end of the year.

However, Ankara could be prevented from acquiring the US-made F-35 fighter planes and may face economic sanctions if it receives the Russian weaponry.

"Although it currently seems quite unlikely, if Turkey somehow decides to withdraw from the S-400 deal as a result of US pressure, Russia might use the Idlib issue against Turkey with the goal of undermining a possible Turkish-US rapprochement. The timing of these attacks is quite interesting in this regard," Ersen said.

The escalation of tensions in Idlib and northern Hama in the past month have resulted in 160 civilian deaths and the displacement of more than 200,000 people.



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Attacks on Turkish observation post in Syria's Idlib kill soldier UN chief asks Russia, Turkey to 'stabilize' Syria's embattled Idlib