

Three killed in Morocco mine collapse

Author:

AFP

ID:

1542133190997498100

Tue, 2018-11-13 16:30

RABAT: Three people were killed Tuesday and three others injured when a zinc and lead mine collapsed in northeastern Morocco, authorities said, in a region shaken by protests over similar accidents.

The accident occurred near the impoverished former mining town of Jerada a week after two people, including a teenager, died in another collapse of abandoned mines.

Hundreds of illegal miners in the town risk their lives in abandoned mine shafts to extract mainly coal, the sale of which is legal thanks to operating permits issued by Moroccan authorities.

Jerada has been hit by social unrest and peaceful protests following the deaths last December of two brothers trapped in a mine shaft followed by two other deaths under similar circumstances.

Tuesday's accidental deaths took place in the small community of Ras Asfour in a mine that was operating with an official permit, state MAP news agency quoted local officials as saying, unlike previous ones.

Moroccan authorities pledged a series of measures to revive the economy in Jerada, one of the poorest regions of Morocco according to official statistic, and vowed to close all abandoned mines.

In April the government launched a plan aimed at providing alternative means of livelihood for the population amid demands by protesters for "economic alternatives" to "death mines".

Authorities have arrested 95 people in connection with the protests and 25 of them were put on trial, according to a lawyer who has defended some of them. Last week nine protesters were sentenced to jail terms ranging from three to five years on charges including the destruction of public property, incitement to carry out criminal acts and taking part in unauthorised protests.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Morocco](#)

[mines](#)

[collapse](#)

[Daesh militants attempting to cross into Iraq from Syria: Iraqi PM](#)

Author:

Reuters

ID:

1542132842627471300

Tue, 2018-11-13 17:59

BAGHDAD: Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi said on Tuesday that hundreds of Iraqi Daesh militants at Deir Ezzor in eastern Syria were trying to cross into Iraq.

The militants have launched attacks in recent weeks against US-backed Kurdish forces on the Syrian side of the border, prompting Iraqi militias that operate alongside the army to reinforce in the area.

Abdul Mahdi said the militants were seeking to recapture territory they had once controlled on the Iraqi side, during Daesh's control of territory that

extended from eastern Syria to northern Iraq from 2014 to 2017.

“But Iraqi forces are carrying out their duties to pre-empt any attempts by Daesh to infiltrate the border and cross into Iraq,” he told reporters at a news conference.

Daesh militants have since their military defeat in Iraq in 2017 reverted to insurgency tactics such as bombings and attacks on security forces, especially in northern Nineveh and northeastern Diyala provinces.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Middle East](#)

[Iraq](#)

[Syria](#)

[Daesh](#)

US-backed Syrian force resumes ground assault on DaeshIraq rail service back on track after war with Daesh

[Lebanon to form body to probe civil](#)

war disappearances

Author:

Associated Press

ID:

1542053355750573000

Mon, 2018-11-12 (All day)

BEIRUT: Lebanon's parliament on Monday approved the formation of an independent commission to help determine the fate of thousands of people who went missing during the country's civil war, which ended nearly three decades ago.

The long-awaited law would empower an independent national commission to gather information about the missing, collect DNA samples and exhume mass graves from the 1975-1990 conflict.

Families and rights groups have been campaigning for the law since 2012, when it first went to parliament.

"This is the first step toward giving closure to families of the missing hopefully," said Rona Halabi, spokeswoman for the International Committee for the Red Cross. "This represents a milestone for the families who have waited for years to have answers."

The Hague-based International Commission on Missing Persons says more than 17,000 people are estimated to have gone missing during the Lebanese civil war.

Lebanon's National News Agency said lawmakers approved the law after voting on each of its 38 articles.

LBC TV said lawmakers initially protested, saying calls for accountability may affect current officials. The broadcaster said they were reassured the 1991 amnesty for abuses committed by militias during the war remains in place.

Many of Lebanon's political parties are led by former warlords implicated in some of the civil war's worst fighting.

"For the first time after the war, Lebanon enters a genuine reconciliation phase, to heal the wounds and give families the right to know," Gebran Bassil, the country's foreign minister tweeted.

The ICRC began compiling DNA samples from relatives of the disappeared in 2016 and has interviewed more than 2,000 families to help a future national commission.

DNA samples have been stored with the Lebanese Internal Security Forces and the ICRC. The law would allow Lebanese security forces to take part in the sample collection.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Lebanon](#)

[Civil war](#)

Lebanon's Hezbollah insists on government demand, warns Israel

[US security chief Bolton in UAE for 'regional' talks](#)

Author:

AFP

ID:

1542052772560545500

Mon, 2018-11-12 17:46

ABU DHABI: US National Security Adviser John Bolton held talks on Monday with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed on regional issues and the fight against "terrorism," state media said.

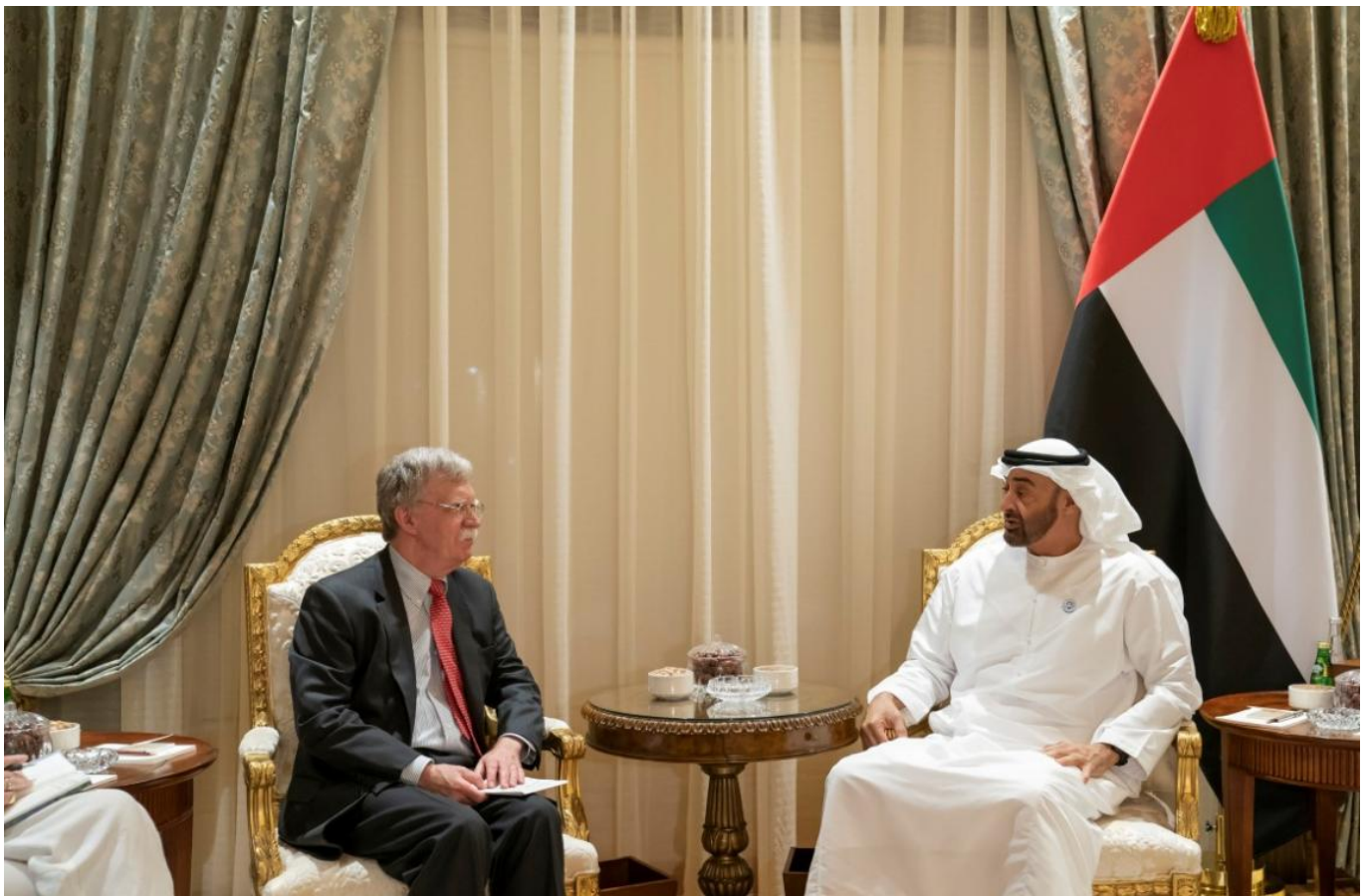
Bolton's visit comes as international pressure mounts to end the war in Yemen, where government loyalists backed by an Arab-led coalition, including

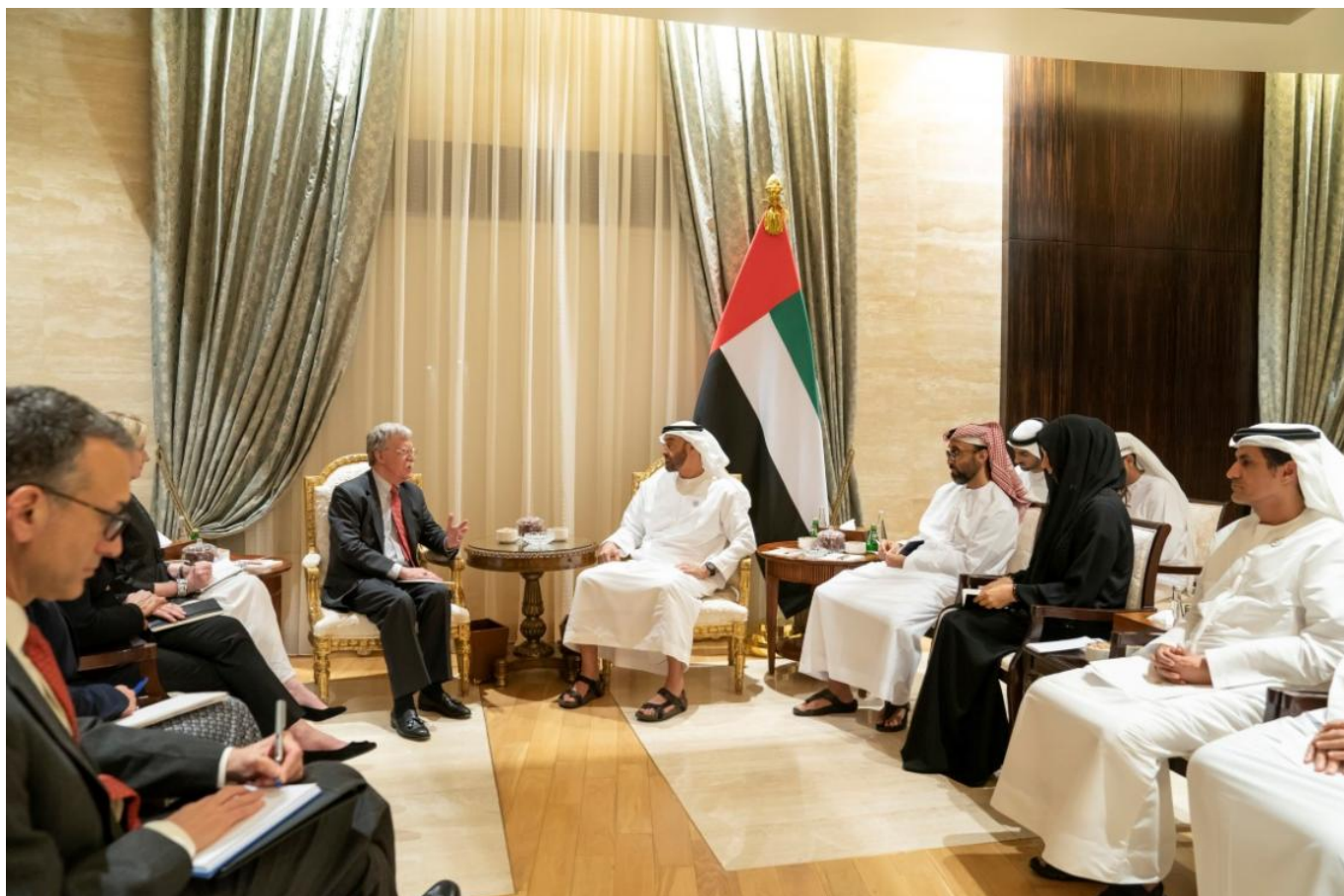
Emirati forces, are battling Iran-aligned Houthi rebels.

Serious & substantive meetings today in UAE w/ Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan & National Security Advisor Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. We discussed Iran, Yemen, Afghanistan, counterterrorism & a range of other issues. Looking forward to joining [@VP](#) in Singapore.

– John Bolton (@AmbJohnBolton) [November 12, 2018](#)

Government forces, led on the ground by Emirati-backed troops, have made their way into Hodeidah after 11 days of clashes. Ahead of the trip to the UAE, Bolton said in a tweet he was “looking forward to meeting with our friends in the UAE to discuss important regional issues.” WAM state news agency said the talks focused on “cooperation between the two countries in several fields, as well as issues of concern to both countries.” Bolton and Sheikh Mohammed, who is also deputy supreme commander of the UAE armed forces, “exchanged views on several regional and international issues” and also discussed “international efforts and cooperation to confront terrorism and terrorist groups,” the agency reported.





Main category:
[Middle-East](#)

King Salman meets British Foreign Minister Jeremy Hunt
The fifth annual Abu Dhabi Strategic Debate kicks off in UAE capital

[Lebanese MP: Sweida hostages were freed by Russia](#)

Author:
Mon, 2018-11-12 22:30

BEIRUT: Lebanese MP and member of the Democratic Gathering party Wael Abou Faour told Arab News that “the liberation of the women abducted by Daesh on Nov. 8 was accomplished by Russian special forces. They were responsible for the monitoring, reconnaissance, timing and execution of the operation. The Syrian army was not the one to do so as the regime had claimed. However, some Syrian elements that directly follow the Russian leadership took part in the operation.”

“What happened was a military liberation operation. No deal was made with the Syrian regime or the abductors,” he added.
Faour had accompanied the head of the Democratic Gathering party, Taymour

Jumblatt, on a trip to Moscow where they met with the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov, in the presence of the official in charge of the issues of Lebanon, Syria and Palestine Andrei Banov. "The Russians informed us that the hostages will be released very soon at 10 a.m. Moscow time, while the Syrian announcement of their liberation came at 3 in the afternoon," he noted.

Daesh had kidnapped 36 women and children from the Syrian southern province of Sweida during an attack that killed more than 250 people, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

"The Syrian regime was responsible for the kidnapping in the first place, so it is not normal for it to be behind the liberation. The regime wanted to use what happened to blackmail Syrian Druze into returning to the military service. There are hundred of thousands of Druze in Syria and 53,000 of them refused to join the military."

"Since the beginning of the kidnapping crisis, the Russian leadership informed us that it is working directly on the ground and running the negotiations. Through announcing its responsibility for the liberation of the hostages, the Syrian regime is trying to look as if it is protecting the Druze and acquit itself from letting Daesh into the Druze areas," Faour pointed out.

"The situation in Sweida is relatively acceptable. Some arrangements are being made under the direct guidance of the Russian leadership. Taymour Jumblatt is taking part in this matter in a way that preserves the security of Sweida residents and their relations with the rest of the Syrian people and prevents their usage in any future conspiracies carried out by the regime.

"These recent events showed that Taymour Jumblatt's confidence in the Russians was in place especially after the liberation operation. Further discussions about future arrangements related to the Druze's situation in Syria are under way. A suggestion proposed that the Druze wanted for military service would join the fifth legion led directly by Russia, which is receiving positive feedback among Druze," he said.

"The relation between the Progressive Socialist Party led by Walid Jumblatt and the Russian Federation is historic. Russians preserve their relations with their historic allies and remember the great role of Kamal Jumblatt, who was awarded with the Order of Lenin among very few figures in the world. They also cherish the common friendship and struggle they share with Walid Jumblatt and want to consolidate the relation with his son Taymour.

"The relation with Russia does not lead to a relation with President Bashar Assad. That relation will only come back to life when there is a democratic regime in Syria," Faour stressed.

"Russia is working on a gradual political solution in Syria. There is no turning away from the constitutional committee. There are discussions related to the representatives of the civil society that constitute a third of the committee, which balances it in some way.

"The meeting held with Russian officials also discussed Lebanese issues. Moscow showed a great interest in the internal situation and it fears that the current developments, international disputes in particular, may destabilize its stability.

"They are very concerned with the forming of the Lebanese government headed by Saad Hariri, and Bogdanov expressed Russia's readiness to take any

initiative to help Lebanon overcome the government crisis,” he added.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Syria](#)

[Sweida hostages](#)

2 killed children among liberated Syrian hostages held by Daesh
Syria army frees 19 Druze hostages from Daesh