

[Vaccinated tourists need no boosters to enter Abu Dhabi: Authorities](#)

Wed, 2022-01-26 23:41

DUBAI: Authorities in the UAE have published new information about the capital's entry requirements, saying that unlike residents and citizens, vaccinated tourists do not need to show proof of a booster shot to cross into Abu Dhabi.

The tourism-specific change comes as confusion swirls around entry rules for Abu Dhabi, which has taken a more stringent approach to containing the coronavirus than its freewheeling neighbor, Dubai.

The pandemic has prompted Abu Dhabi to erect a hard border with Dubai, forcing all drivers to come to a halt for vaccination and virus checks on what once had been a wide, empty highway before the pandemic struck.

The emirate has clarified that all citizens and residents seeking entry must now show proof of a booster shot to be considered fully vaccinated and maintain a "green status" on the government health app.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[UAE](#)

[COVID-19](#)

UAE resumes entry for travellers from 12 African countries UAE records marks

2,369 new coronavirus cases over past 24 hours

[Iraq's top court upholds reelection of parliament speaker](#)

Author:

Wed, 2022-01-26 23:33

BAGHDAD: Iraq's top court has confirmed the reelection of Mohammed Al-Halbussi as parliament speaker, following appeals against its conduct, paving the way toward the formation of a new government.

Hours later, rockets fell some 500 meters from Al-Halbussi's home in the Gurma district of Anbar province, in what a security source told AFP was an attack that sought to target him.

Two lawmakers had appealed Al-Halbussi's reelection as speaker, a position historically reserved for Iraq's Sunni Arab minority, during parliament's opening session earlier in January which was overshadowed by disputes between rival blocs from the Shiite majority.

"The Federal Supreme Court rejected the appeal of two MPs who demanded the annulment of the inaugural session of parliament on Jan. 9," in which Al-Halbussi was reelected, said presiding judge Jassim Mohammed Aboud.

The ruling will allow the resumption of parliament sessions, and along with them deliberations over the selection of a new president, who will in turn choose the next prime minister, to be approved by the legislature.

Lawmakers have until Feb. 8 to elect a president – a post historically allocated to a Kurd.

But negotiations between parties and coalitions seeking to form a parliamentary majority have been marked by tensions, particularly between key Shiite currents seeking to exert their influence.

Both the Coordination Framework and another bloc formed by firebrand Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr claim to have the majority needed to elect a president.

The legislature opened earlier this month to furious arguments between the rival factions.

Amid the debate, Mahmud Al-Mashhadani – the oldest member of parliament who was therefore chairing the opening session – was taken ill and rushed to hospital.

When the session resumed an hour later, lawmakers reelected Al-Halbussi of the Sunni Taqadom party as speaker.

Appeals against the speaker's reelection were filed by Mashhadani and another MP, Bassem Khachan.

After Wednesday's rocket attack, two wounded children were "taken to hospital in Gurma," Iraqi police said in a statement.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

Several grenade attacks have in recent days targeted political figures from parties that could team up with Shiite leader Moqtada Sadr to form a parliamentary coalition in the wake of Iraq's October legislative elections.

Sadr, whose bloc took the largest share of seats, is seeking to build a coalition bringing together Taqadom – Al-Halbussi's party – a second Sunni party and a Kurdish grouping.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Iraq](#)

Iraqi parliament holds first session, elects speaker
Iraq's Shiite divide makes forging government tough task

Qatar emir to meet with Biden in Washington Jan 31: White House

Author:

Wed, 2022-01-26 01:30

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden will receive Qatar's emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad at the White House on Jan. 31, his spokeswoman said Tuesday. Biden and the Gulf state leader will discuss security in the Middle East and "ensuring the stability of global energy supplies," Press Secretary Jen Psaki said in a statement.

The meeting comes as Washington and its European allies are seeking to shore up energy contingency plans should Russia squeeze supplies due to tensions with the West over Ukraine.

The US and its EU allies accuse Russia of seeking to upend European stability by threatening invasion of neighboring Ukraine, a former Soviet republic striving to join NATO and other Western institutions.

The European Union sources about 40 percent of its supply from Russia, and Washington and its European allies have been scouring global markets for alternative energy sources.

Qatar, a close US ally, has huge gas reserves and is the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas.

Psaki said Biden will also thank the emir for Qatar's support to the United States in safely transporting US citizens, permanent residents and Afghan partners out of Afghanistan in the wake of the US withdrawal last year.

Qatar has played a significant role both in diplomacy and evacuations at the end of nearly 20 years of war in Afghanistan.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Qatar](#)

[United States](#)

[Joe Biden](#)

[Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani](#)

[Russia](#)

US, Qatar discuss gas supplies amid Ukraine invasion fears
Turkey, Qatar reached preliminary deal on Kabul airport security – Turkish sources

[UN Security Council condemns Iraq terror attack, urges all nations to help seek justice](#)

Author:

Ephrem Kossaify

ID:

1643140566853720600

Tue, 2022-01-25 22:55

NEW YORK: The UN Security Council has unanimously condemned “in the strongest terms” a recent terrorist attack in Iraq’s Diyala Province, and called for all “perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism” to be brought to justice.

At dawn on Friday, Jan. 21, at least 11 Iraqi soldiers were shot dead in their sleep during an attack on their barracks by suspected Daesh gunmen, according to reports citing Iraqi security officials. It happened in the Al-Azim district, a mountainous area more than 70 miles north of the capital, Baghdad.

The Security Council urged all states to actively cooperate with the Iraqi Government in seeking to hold the perpetrators to account, in line with their obligations under international law and the council’s resolutions. It reiterated that terrorism is one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

In a joint statement, council members reaffirmed that “any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed.”

They highlighted the need for all states “to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.”

Council members also shared “their deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims and to the government of Iraq, and they wished a speedy and full recovery to those who were injured.”



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Iraq](#)

[UN Security Council \(UNSC\)](#)

Iraq: Daesh gunmen shoot dead 11 soldiers in 'brazen attack' What prevents Iraq from meeting the youth employment challenge

[Refusal of nations to repatriate children from Syria 'beggars belief,' says UN rights expert](#)

Author:

Ephrem Kossaify

ID:

1643139103603621300

Tue, 2022-01-25 22:31

NEW YORK: A UN human rights expert on Tuesday voiced serious concern for the well-being of more than 700 children incarcerated at Al-Ghuwayran prison, in Al-Hasakeh in northeast Syria, and called on all countries to repatriate their young citizens held in the country.

The prison was the scene of a deadly attempted jailbreak by hundreds of Daesh insurgents last week.

"Boys as young as 12 are living in fear for their lives amid the chaos and carnage in the jail," said Fionnuala Ni Aolain, the UN's special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism. "They are tragically being neglected by their own countries through no fault of their own except they were born to individuals allegedly linked or associated with designated terrorist groups.

"The treatment of hundreds of boys who have been detained in grotesque prison conditions is an affront to the dignity of the child and the right of every child to be treated with dignity."

Almost 300 detainees have been killed during days of fighting at Al-Ghuwayran, which began last Thursday with the detonation of two car bombs. Clashes are continuing at the prison, which holds more than 5,000 alleged Daesh militants from almost 60 countries. The insurgents had seized control of the children's section of the facility.

Fighters from the opposition Syrian Democratic Forces are said to be closing in on the final section of prison still held by Daesh attackers, as the situation becomes increasingly worrying for inmates.

Humanitarian groups have renewed calls for all governments to repatriate their citizens from Syria.

"The abject refusal of states to repatriate their children is a contributory factor in the security and human rights morass that has ignited in Al-Hasakeh in recent days," said Ni Aolain, who last year sent official letters to 57

governments of countries believed to have citizens in Syrian camps. They include France, Germany, the UK, Finland and the US.

The failure of governments to repatriate detained children, who are victims of terrorism and in need of protection under international law, “beggars belief,” Ni Aolain said.

“Many of these boys, forcibly separated from their mothers and family members in recent years, have been denied their most fundamental human rights their entire lives,” she added.

“They have been held arbitrarily and never participated in any legal process that would justify depriving them of their liberty, and in conditions that constitute torture, cruel and degrading treatment under international law. “Treating boys as a distinct class, refusing to recognize in practice their rights as children, is a form of gender discrimination that has had horrific consequences for these children now caught up in the violent confrontation at Al-Hasakeh prison.”

Ni Aolain called on all states and other entities active in northeastern Syria to ensure that civilians are protected, and for those involved in regaining control of the prison to protect the children held there and prevent further harm coming to them.

Special rapporteurs are independent experts who serve in individual capacities, and on a voluntary basis, on the UN’s Human Rights Council. They are not members of UN staff and are not paid for their work.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Syria](#)

‘Horror scenes’ in Syrian refugee camps amid ‘extremely cold winter’: UN official
Syria Kurdish forces close in on Daesh-controlled prison wing