

# Morocco halts France flights amid coronavirus spike

Thu, 2021-11-25 23:58

RABAT: Morocco has decided to suspend flights to and from France, where daily coronavirus infections are rising, the foreign ministry said on Thursday.

“This decision will go into effect on November 26 at 23:59 p.m. local time and until further notice,” the ministry said in a statement carried by the official MAP news agency.

The number of daily new cases in France has skyrocketed in recent days, hitting a seven-month high of 32,591 on Wednesday.

French Health Minister Olivier Veran said Thursday that COVID-19 booster shots would be made available to all adults from this weekend to counter a fifth wave of infections.

France has the world’s largest Moroccan expatriate community, with more than one million Moroccans living in the EU member.

In October, Morocco said it was suspending flights to and from Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and Russia due to concerns about coronavirus trends in those countries.

And earlier this month, the North African country decided to tighten controls at its borders due to a spike in COVID-19 cases in Europe.

Morocco has officially recorded around 950,000 COVID-19 cases and more than 14,500 deaths.



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Scientists raise alarm over COVID-19 variant with 'horrific' number of mutations  
France extends COVID-19 booster shots to all adults

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## [Bahrain's King Hamad invites Pope Francis to visit Manama](#)

Thu, 2021-11-25 23:15

LONDON: Bahrain's King Hamad on Thursday sent a message to Pope Francis that included an official invitation to visit the kingdom. The message was delivered by Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed, the king's adviser for diplomatic affairs, during a meeting with the pope at the Vatican.

Sheikh Khalid expressed King Hamad's appreciation for the pontiff's "pivotal and prominent role in establishing and strengthening interfaith dialogue and understanding between different cultures and civilizations, and spreading the values of human brotherhood and coexistence among all," Bahrain News Agency reported.

He reiterated the king's support for the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, also known as the Abu Dhabi declaration, and the importance of building on it to ensure a more prosperous future for all of humanity.

Pope Francis thanked King Hamad for the invitation to visit Bahrain.

He said the invitation embodies the kingdom's "character as a role model for openness and coexistence among all components of society," praising King Hamad's constant keenness to promote a culture of dialogue and tolerance, and his initiatives to spread the principles of coexistence and brotherhood among all countries and peoples.

The Abu Dhabi agreement was signed by Pope Francis on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, and the grand imam of Egypt's Al-Azhar in 2019 in the UAE, during the pope's historic visit to the Arabian Peninsula.







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[King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa](#)

Kings of Bahrain, Jordan agree to continue cooperating on Arab causes and regional security

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## [Palestinian seriously hurt after settlers hurl stones at car](#)

Author:

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1637800768501626800

Wed, 2021-11-24 19:04

RAMALLAH, West Bank: A Palestinian man was critically wounded after Jewish settlers pelted his car with stones as he drove through the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, causing him to veer off the road and crash, Palestinian

officials said.

Raid Kharaz lost control of his vehicle when rocks hurled by settlers smashed through the windshield near the West Bank village of Al-Mughayir, according to Ghassan Daghlis, a Palestinian Authority official who monitors settler violence.

Kharaz was flown to a nearby hospital, while his son, who was also in the vehicle, sustained lighter injuries, the official Palestinian Wafa news agency reported.

The Israeli army referred questions to the police, who did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The autumn has seen a sharp uptick in settler violence. In mid-November, dozens of settlers attacked a group of Palestinians and Israeli activists with stones and clubs, hospitalizing a woman and wounding several others. In the same week, Jewish settlers attacked a group of Palestinian farmers with pepper spray and clubs near an evacuated settlement outpost, wounding four people.

Recent months have also seen a steep rise in settler vandalism of Palestinian property known as "price tag" attacks, a term coined by far-right settlers in response to perceived efforts by Israel to restrict settlement expansion. Israeli officials have spoken out against the violence, especially after dozens of settlers attacked a Palestinian village in September, wounding a toddler. But the Palestinians and rights groups say Israeli soldiers rarely intervene and often side with the settlers.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, territories Palestinians seek for a future state. Most of the international community views settlements as illegal and a barrier to peace. Israel views the West Bank as the biblical and historical heartland of the Jewish people, and says its status should be decided in negotiations.

Nearly 500,000 Jewish settlers live in over 130 settlements across the West Bank. Many are highly built up and resemble urban suburbs, while more radical settlers have established dozens of rural outposts without Israeli authorization.



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Jordan's king calls for stepping up efforts on Palestinian two-state solution in UAE during Gulf tour  
Two Israeli police officers stabbed, Palestinian assailant killed – police

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## [Iran accused of stalling redress for downed Ukraine flight](#)

Author:

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Wed, 2021-11-24 22:55

OTTAWA: Britain, Sweden and Ukraine on Wednesday accused Iran of stalling redress for the families of victims of a downed Ukraine flight, saying Tehran has yet to agree to talks.

The Islamic republic shot down Ukraine International Airlines flight PS752 shortly after take-off from its capital Tehran on January 8, 2020, killing all 176 people aboard, including 85 Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Three days later, it admitted that its forces had mistakenly targeted the Kiev-bound Boeing 737-800 plane.

"We, ministers representing Canada, Sweden, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom, express our deep disappointment that the Islamic Republic of Iran has not accepted our multiple requests to meet on November 22, 2021 to negotiate on the matter of reparations for the downing of Flight PS752," the four nations said in a joint statement.

On Friday, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly spoke with her British counterpart Elizabeth Truss, and committed jointly "to seeking justice by holding Iran accountable."

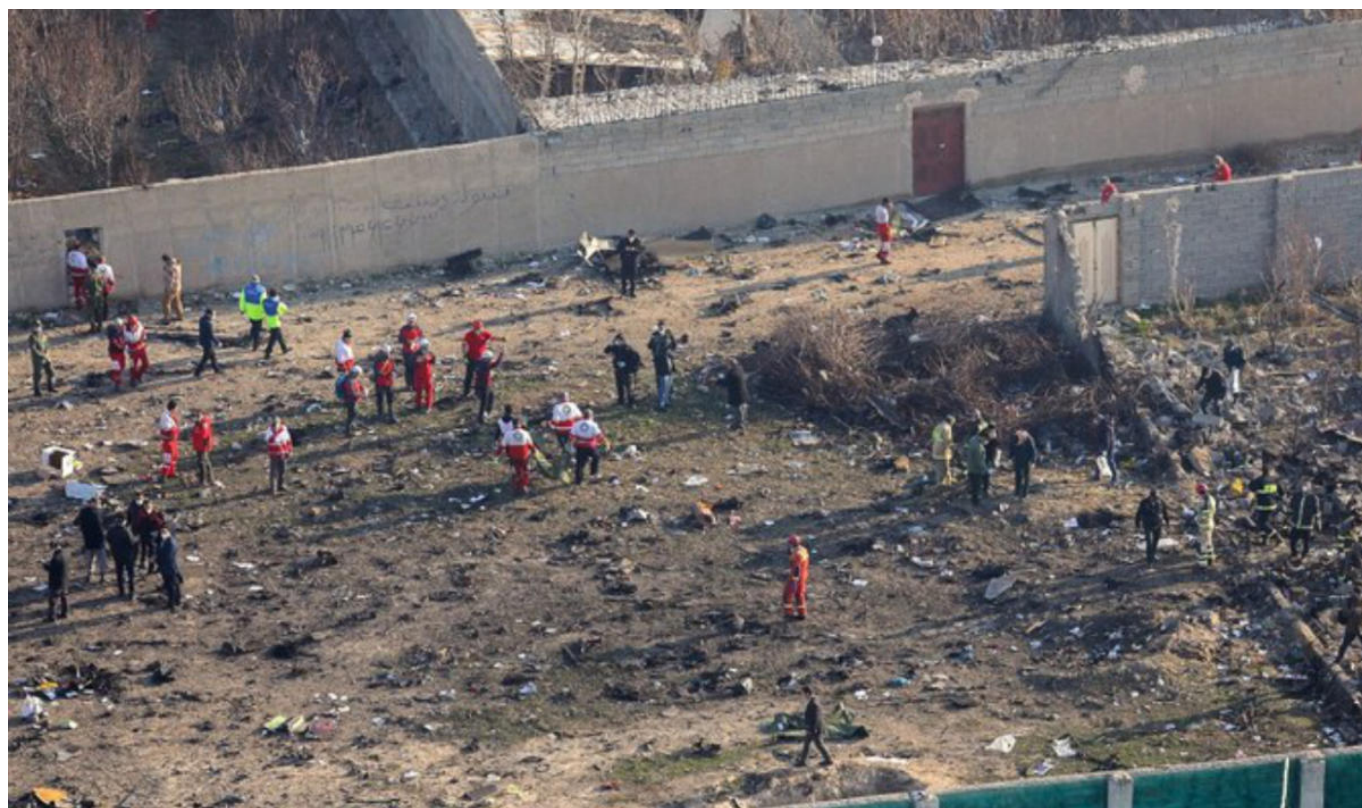
The four nations seeking redress said Wednesday that if Iran continues "to avoid negotiating with the group, (they) will have no choice but to seriously consider other actions and measures to resolve this matter within the framework of international law."

On Sunday, the trial of 10 soldiers in connection to the jetliner's downing opened in Tehran.

In a final report in March, the Iranian Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) pointed to the missile strikes and the "alertness" of its troops on the ground amid heightened tensions between Iran and the United States at the time.

The Islamic republic had just attacked a US base in Iraq in response to the killing of General Qassem Soleimani, and were expecting a response from Washington.

Ukraine, which lost 11 citizens in the disaster, said the report was "a cynical attempt to hide (the) true causes" of the tragedy, while Canada said it contained "no hard facts or evidence" and pledged to soon release the results of its own investigation.



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## [Sudan PM calls for halt to post-coup sackings](#)

Thu, 2021-11-25 01:34

KHARTOUM: Sudan's newly reinstated Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok on Wednesday ordered a halt to sackings and a review of all appointments made after his detention in last month's military coup.

Top General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan had grabbed power and detained Hamdok on Oct. 25 but, following international condemnation and mass protests, reinstated the premier last Sunday.

After the coup Al-Burhan had dissolved major institutions and dismissed the heads of state media, public companies and banks as well as many provincial officials.

Ambassadors who had announced their defections were also relieved of their duties.

Hamdok himself was placed under house arrest after the putsch, which sparked a wave of mass street protests that triggered a deadly crackdown by the security forces.

On Wednesday, Hamdok said in a statement that he had ordered "an immediate halt to dismissals and hirings in national and local public institutions until further notice."

The prime minister, who is still without a Cabinet after returning to his post in a controversial deal with Al-Burhan, said "recent hirings and dismissals will be studied and reviewed."

Twelve out of 17 ministers from Sudan's bloc calling for a purely civilian government resigned on Monday, rejecting Hamdok's strategy of engaging with the military.

Despite the agreement that led to the release of a handful of politicians, dozens of others remain in detention.

Protest organizers have accused Hamdok of "treason" and have vowed to maintain pressure on the military-civilian authority overseeing Sudan's transition.

Activists have taken to social media to call for "Martyrs' Day"

demonstrations on Thursday in honor of the 41 protesters killed in the post-coup crackdown.

On November 11, Al-Burhan formed a new Sovereign Council in which he and other military figures stayed on but members of the main civilian bloc were replaced.

Prior to the coup, the council had been charged with overseeing Sudan's transition to civilian rule after the ouster of long-time President Omar Bashir in 2019.



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Sudan's road to civilian rule proves rockier than expected Sudan's Hamdok says investigation launched into violations against protesters