

Egyptian army official confirms readiness of forces to face regional challenges

Mon, 2021-07-05 21:23

CAIRO: A spokesman for the Egyptian Armed Forces has said that they are aware of the challenges facing the region and are prepared to deal with them.

“It is not wise, in light of our capabilities and high deterrence power, to test the reaction of the Egyptian Armed Forces,” added Gharib Abdel Hafez.

Hafez explained that the Egyptian Navy has undergone significant modernization, increasing its ability to secure the maritime domain along the coasts of the Mediterranean and Red seas.

“Over the past few years, we have established multiple military bases, including the Mohammed Naguib Military Base in July 2017 – which is the largest military base in the Middle East – and the Sidi Barani Military Base,” he said.

A third base, the Berenice Military Base, includes an air and naval base, which secures both the coast of the Red Sea and the strategic south to confront any threats that might affect Egypt’s national security.

On Saturday, the July 3 Naval Base was opened, also an extension of the modernization efforts of the armed forces, which include supplying them with the latest weapons and equipment.

“We had about 47 naval vessels at the opening of the July 3 Naval Base, which included frigates and launchers,” Hafez said.

The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, authorized the flag to be raised, indicating permission for the base to begin operations.

The base, strategically located in the Gargoub area on Egypt’s northwest coast near Libya, is an integrated facility, bringing together training and high combat ability.

The military spokesman indicated that the location of the base allows the naval forces to carry out their tasks in all strategic directions, whether north or west, to serve the current and future goals of the armed forces, also maximizing their ability to prevent smuggling across the Egyptian coasts.

In addition to securing the vital goals of the Egyptian state and its economic gains, the base is also involved in research work, rescue operations and the prevention of illegal immigration.

The Qader 2021 Maneuver, one of Egypt's largest military exercises, coincided with the opening of the base.

Hafez said that the maneuver reflects the readiness of the Egyptian forces to carry out all combat missions.

"Keeping up with rapid developments in methods of combat and diversifying sources of armament is crucial," he added.



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Egypt to begin initial handover of New Administrative Capital towers at year-end
Saudi Arabia allocates \$17.25m to support Egyptian SMEs

[Egypt to begin initial handover of New Administrative Capital towers at year-end](#)

Mon, 2021-07-05 21:17

CAIRO: Glass facades featured on a number of towers in the central business district of Egypt's New Administrative Capital will soon be completed,

Housing Minister Assem El-Gazzar has said.

The construction will be completed in parallel with the implementation of internal finishing works, he added.

El-Gazzar also said that the initial delivery of some towers will start at the end of 2021. The deliveries of the rest of the towers will follow soon after.

He said the central business district of the New Administrative Capital will consist of 20 towers with various uses, including the Iconic Tower, which is the highest tower in Africa with a height of about 400 meters.

The total investment in the area will be about \$3 billion, he said.

Projects are being implemented in cooperation between the Ministry of Housing, represented by the New Urban Communities Authority, and the China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC), El-Gazzar added.

CSCEC one of the largest contracting companies in the world.

The minister said that 53 percent of the work had been implemented in one of the three sectors in the central parks project within the New Administrative Capital.

He added that the central park in the New Administrative Capital will be the largest in the Middle East and second largest in the world, with a length of more than 10 kilometers.

It will contain recreational areas according to international standards. They will be easily accessible through an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle paths.

The project includes green spaces, lakes, playgrounds, bike lanes, restaurant complexes, recreational areas and an area designated for setting up future investment projects, said El-Gazzar.

He added that the project includes a reading and science lake, an educational park for children, a ceremonial arena, an arts lake, a heritage garden, a country club, a sports club, a central square, a restaurants complex, an open cinema, an interactive garden, an artwork park, a boating lake, a luxury oasis and an Islamic-themed garden.

The area of the third residential neighborhood, the Capital Residence, in the New Administrative Capital, falls on an area of 1,016 feddans.

It has eight neighborhoods, and 24,130 housing units are being constructed. They are distributed among 697 residential buildings, covering 19,944 housing units and 328 villas.

The area will include 157 townhouse buildings, with 624 housing units; 64 mixed residential buildings, with 2,560 housing units covering 151,360 square meters, both commercial and administrative; and nine mixed-use buildings,

with 674 housing units.

The area of the fifth residential neighborhood – New Garden City – falls on an area of 885 feddans. It includes 295 residential buildings, 105 villas, 175 townhouses and twin houses, 11 mixed housing towers and 96 mixed housing buildings.



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Egypt improves transparency to attract private investments, says minister
Egyptian painter Riham El-Adl wins prestigious Italian art award

[Yemen government seizes control of new areas in Al-Bayda province](#)

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Sun, 2021-07-04 19:36

ALEXANDRIA: Government troops and local tribesmen on Sunday liberated several villages and hilly locations in the central province of Al-Bayda during the

second day of a military offensive to push Iran-backed Houthis from the area, government and military officials said.

Yemen's Information Minister Mu'amar Al-Eryani said that government troops scored "major victories" in Al-Bayda after liberating mountains, villages and other military locations, mainly in the Humaiqan area in Al-Zaher district, west of Al-Bayda, adding that loyalists cut off supply lines to pockets of Houthis in Al-Zaher, Al-Jamajem and Al-Nasefa and government forces were still fighting their way into new areas.

"We commend the great role of the tribal leaders and tribesmen and all the honorable people who supported the heroes of the national army and the popular resistance in the major military operation (in the province)," the Yemeni minister said, noting that dozens of rebel fighters were killed or captured and loyalists seized armed vehicles, trucks and ammunition abandoned by the fleeing Houthis.

On Saturday, Yemen's army started a new offensive to liberate Al-Bayda from the Houthis and relieve pressure on the government forces battling the Houthis in the neighboring Marib province.

State and local media broadcast videos showing what appeared to be government troops on armed vehicles rolling into liberated areas for the first time since 2015 when the Houthis seized control of most of the province districts.

If advances continued on the same scale, local army commanders and analysts said, government troops might be able to liberate Al-Bayda city, the province's capital, and push further into opening new fronts in the neighboring Tamar and Ibb provinces.



For six years, Yemen government troops have been trying to seize control of new areas in Al-Bayda province, but failed to make advances due to stiff resistance from the Houthis.

For the Yemeni forces to keep up the momentum of the offensive, the Yemeni army should mount similar assaults on the Houthis in Hodeidah, Taiz and Abyan to distract their forces, Yasser Al-Yafae, an Aden-based political analyst, told Arab News.

“There are great military successes for the first time since 2015. For this military offensive to succeed, the legitimate government should simultaneously activate other fronts in Taiz, the Western Coast and other area areas,” he said, warning that if the Houthis were allowed to recapture the liberated areas in Al-Bayda they would kill, displace and blow up houses

of tribal leaders who aided government troops.

Meanwhile, at least two soldiers were killed and more than 20 more wounded when an explosion ripped through a mosque at a military base during the afternoon prayer in the southern province of Abyan, a local journalist told Arab News on Sunday.

Dozens of soldiers from the 5th Infantry Brigade were inside the base's mosque when a large explosion, apparently caused by a ballistic missile or explosive-rigged drone fired by the Houthis, killed soldiers and partially destroyed the building.

"Four soldiers were critically wounded. All of the targeted soldiers are from Abyan," said the journalist, who preferred not to be identified.





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Yemenis express hope that new UN envoy will help to end war

Lebanon medicine importers warn foreign drugs running out

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Sun, 2021-07-04 11:32

BEIRUT: Lebanon's medicine importers Sunday said they had run out of hundreds of essential drugs and warned of further shortages if the cash-strapped central bank did not unblock funds.

Lebanese are grappling with a raft of shortages, from petrol to medication, as the caretaker government discusses lifting subsidies it can no longer afford amid what the World Bank says is one of the world's worst financial crises since the 1850s.

The local currency has lost more than 90 percent of its value on the black market, but the central bank had been providing importers with dollars at the much more favorable official rate to cover a large part of the cost of imported drugs.

Medicine "imports have almost completely ground to a halt over the past month," the association of pharmaceuticals importers said in a statement. The syndicate said the central bank has not released the promised dollars to pay suppliers abroad, who are owed more than \$600 million in accumulated dues since December, and importers cannot obtain new lines of credit.

"Importing companies' stocks of hundreds of medicines to treat chronic and incurable diseases have run out," it warned.

"And hundreds more will run out through July if we cannot resume imports as soon as possible."

Syndicate head Karim Gebara told AFP some drugs to treat cardiac diseases, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and multiple sclerosis were already out of stock.

If nothing is done, "the situation will be catastrophic by the end of July," depriving "hundreds of thousands of patients" of their medication, he warned.

On Thursday, President Michel Aoun said he, outgoing ministers and the central bank chief had agreed to "continue subsidising medication and medical supplies" selected by the health ministry according to priority.

The government resigned after a deadly port explosion on August 4 last year, but a deeply divided political class has failed since to agree on a new cabinet to lift the nation out of crisis.



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[Suez Canal says deal reached to free seized vessel](#)

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Sun, 2021-07-04 11:12

CAIRO: The Suez Canal Authority on Sunday said it has reached an agreement to settle a financial dispute with the owners of a hulking container ship that blocked the crucial waterway for nearly a week earlier this year.

The authority did not reveal details on the settlement deal with the Shoeni Kisen Kaisha Ltd., the Japanese owner of the Ever Given. It said the deal

will be singed in a ceremony in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia on Wednesday. The vessel would be also freed Wednesday, it said.

The head of Egypt's Suez Canal Authority, Lt. Gen. Osama Rabie, said last month the parties had agreed on a compensation amount. But he said it would not be made public as they had signed a non-disclosure agreement until the signing of the final contract.

The vessel had run aground in the single-lane stretch of the canal on March 23 before it was extracted six days later after a massive salvage effort by a flotilla of tugboats.

Since it was freed, the Panama-flagged, Japanese-owned vessel, which carries cargo between Asia and Europe, has been ordered by authorities to remain in a holding lake mid-canal, along with most of its crew, as the two sides negotiated a settlement.

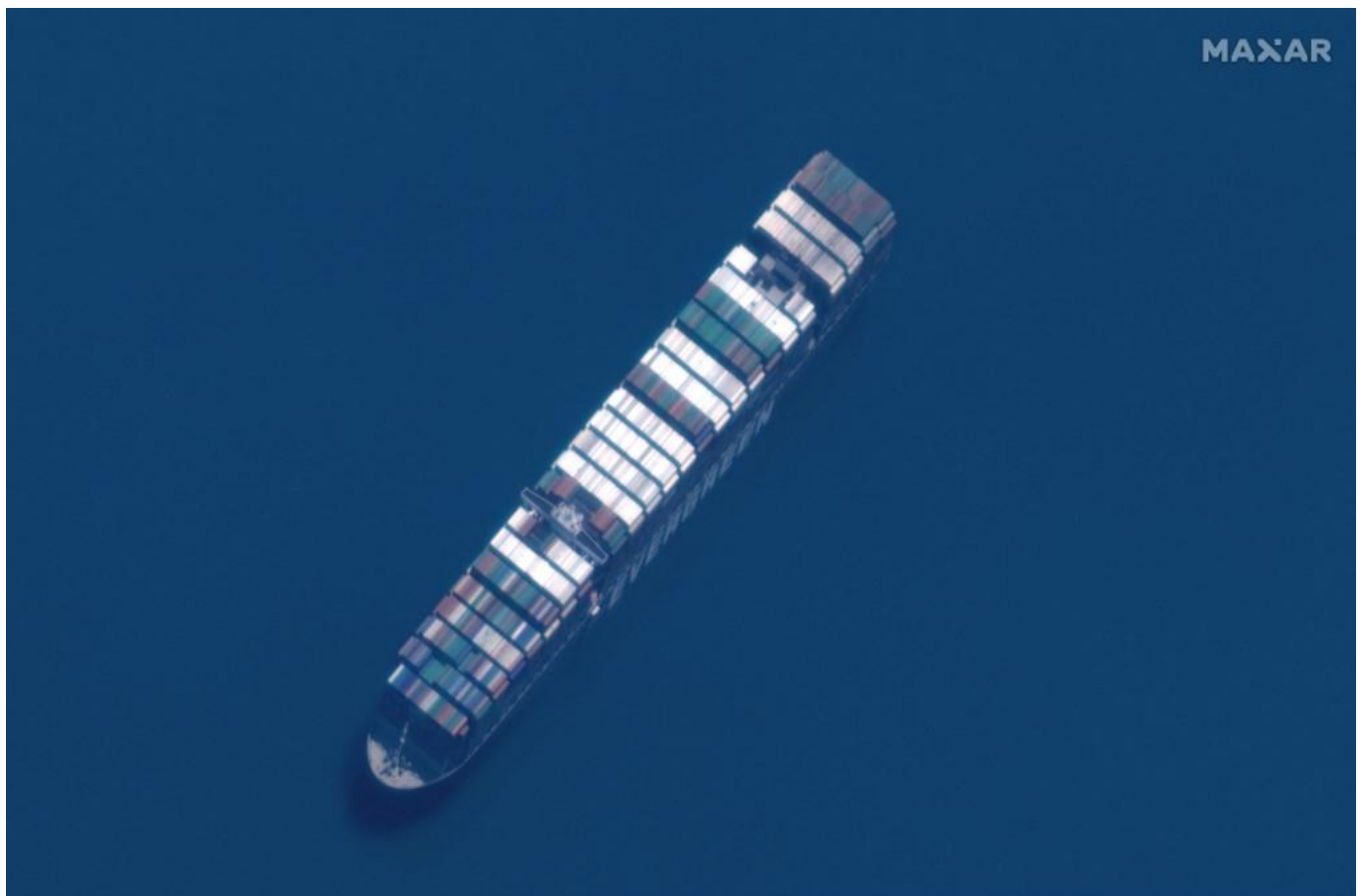
The disagreement had centered on the compensation amount the Suez Canal Authority is claiming for the salvage of the vessel.

The money would cover the salvage operation, costs of stalled canal traffic, and lost transit fees for the week the Ever Given blocked the canal.

At first, the Suez Canal Authority demanded \$916 million in compensation, which was later lowered to \$550 million.

The two sides have traded blame for the vessel's grounding, with bad weather, poor decisions on the part of canal authorities, and human and technical error all being thrown out as possible factors.

The six-day blockage disrupted global shipping. Hundreds of ships waited in place for the canal to be unblocked, while some ships were forced to take the much longer route around the Cape of Good Hope at Africa's southern tip, requiring additional fuel and other costs.



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Suez Canal Authority showing 'full flexibility' in Ever Given compensation talks
Egypt plans rethink on claim against Ever Given