

[UAE approves Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use](#)

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Sun, 2021-07-04 09:49

DUBAI: The UAE's Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHAP) on Sunday announced the approval of the emergency registration of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine.

The health ministry said in a statement on state news agency WAM on Sunday that the UAE has reported the spread of the Beta, Delta and Alpha variants in the country of some 9.2 million people.

The ministry also announced on Sunday that it recorded 1,599 new coronavirus cases, bringing the total number of recorded cases in the UAE to 639,476. Three new deaths have been reported due to COVID-19 complications, bringing the total number of deaths in the country to 1,834.

Around 73.8 percent of the UAE's population has received one vaccine dose while 63.7 percent are fully vaccinated, the health ministry said in a Twitter post on Saturday.



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UAE reports 1,632 new COVID-19 cases, six deaths overnight Emiratis barred from traveling to 14 countries included in UAE's no-entry list

[Four dead as Cyprus forest fire rages](#)

Author:

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1625383809972293000

Sun, 2021-07-04 07:24

NICOSIA: Four people were found dead as a huge fire raged for a second day in Cyprus, razing tracts of forest in a blaze one official called the worst on record.

The blaze, fanned by strong winds, affected at least 10 communities over an area of 50 square kilometers (19 square miles) in the foothills of the Troodos mountain range, an area of pine forest and densely vegetated shrubland.

The victims, thought to be Egyptian nationals, were found dead close to the community of Odou, a mountainous community north of the cities of Limassol and Larnaca.

"All indications point to it being the four persons who were missing since yesterday," Interior Minister Nicos Nouris said.

The EU's executive, the European Commission, said fire-fighting planes had departed from Greece to battle the fire and Italy was also planning to deploy aerial firefighters.

The EU's emergency Copernicus satellite was also activated to provide damage assessment maps of the affected areas, the Commission said in a statement.

"It is the worst forest fire in the history of Cyprus," Forestries Department Director Charalambos Alexandrou told Cyprus's Omega TV.

Attempts were being made to prevent the blaze from crossing the mountains and stop it before reaching Machairas, a pine forestland and one of the highest peaks in Cyprus.

The cause of the fire, which started around midday on Saturday, was unclear. Cyprus experiences high temperatures in the summer months, with temperatures in recent days exceeding 40 Celsius (104 Fahrenheit). Police said they were questioning a 67-year old person in connection with the blaze.



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Cyprus to open up doors to vaccinated tourists from 65 countries
Turkey insists on 'two-state solution' in Cyprus

[Palestinians: Israeli forces kill man in West Bank clashes](#)

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Sat, 2021-07-03 19:01

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian Health Ministry says Israeli forces killed a Palestinian man Saturday evening during clashes in the occupied West Bank. The ministry identified the slain man as Mohammad Fareed Hassan, 20, from

Qusra village near Nablus city.

The official Palestinian news agency, Wafa, reported that Hassan was shot in the chest as residents confronted settlers who stormed the village from a nearby settlement. It said Israeli troops accompanied the settlers.

Palestinians have been holding weekly protests against the expansion of Israeli settlements at several locations of the West Bank.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, and the Palestinians want it to form the main part of their future state.

Nearly 500,000 Israelis live in more than 130 authorized settlements and dozens of outposts across the occupied West Bank.

The Palestinians and much of the international community view all settlements as a violation of international law and an obstacle to peace.



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Israeli officials say cargo ship possibly attacked en route to UAE
Israel strikes Gaza after Hamas launches incendiary balloons

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

Author:

Sat, 2021-07-03 21:36

ALEXANDRIA: Yemenis have expressed hope for a deal to end the war, amid reports that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will name a new envoy to the country.

Politicians, rights activists and experts want the new envoy, tipped to be EU Ambassador to Yemen Hans Grundberg, to apply an inclusive approach for mediation between the warring parties.

Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, Yemen's former foreign minister, hailed the Swedish national as an experienced envoy with knowledge about the complications of the crisis as he had been working as a diplomat in the country for years.

A good knowledge of the region and its conflicts, a deep understanding of the Yemeni issue as ambassador to the country, and being aware of the obstacles and mistakes of previous envoys may help Grundberg get out of obstacles and failures, Al-Qirbi tweeted. He said the new envoy had to cooperate with regional forces to succeed in reaching an agreement that would end the war.

Activists said the envoy should focus on ending Houthi rights abuses and secure the release of hundreds of war prisoners.

"We strongly demand he personally pay attention to the issue of abducted and detained women in Houthi prisons and to provide them with psychological and legal support," Amat Al-Salam Al-Hajj, chair of the Mothers of Abductees Association, an umbrella organization for thousands of female relatives of war prisoners, told Arab News.

The outgoing envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths was appointed in Feb. 2018 but he, like previous envoys before him, failed to convince the Yemeni parties to strike a deal to end the war.

However his biggest achievement might be brokering the Stockholm Agreement, which defused a major offensive by government forces on the western city of Hodeidah through which most of the country's humanitarian and food supplies enter.

He also sponsored an inmate swap between the government and Houthis that led to the freedom of more than 1,000 war prisoners.

Yassin Saeed Noaman, Yemen's ambassador to the UK, said Grundberg would succeed in brokering a peace deal in Yemen if the EU used its relationship with Iran to pressure the Houthis to accept peace initiatives.

"Some hope can be expected that this huge European bloc will play a positive role in its relationship with Iran, which alone has the power to put pressure

on the Houthis," Noaman added.

In Riyadh, the Yemeni government had not been officially informed about the name of the new UN envoy, a senior government official told Arab News on Saturday.

Yemen experts argued that the new envoy would inherit a difficult situation as his predecessor had exhausted all options to convince factions to accept peace ideas.

"The world awaits the announcement of a new envoy whose mandate will be to find a swift path to peace where no obvious one exists," Elana DeLozier, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said on Friday. "The path is more likely to be a long, hard slog that requires a renewed focus on laying the groundwork for sustainable peace."

Others advised the UN to expand talks to end the war beyond the government and Houthis and to include other parties such as women and leaders of military units and politicians.

"The Crisis Group has long advocated for the UN to expand the talks beyond the two-party framework," Peter Salisbury, a senior Yemen analyst at the International Crisis Group, said last month. "It should include militia leaders and politicians who can make a ceasefire stick, as well as organizations, particularly women-led groups."

Salisbury advised the new envoy to spend more time shuttling between Yemeni cities, mediating between different factions and groups instead of traveling between regional and international capitals.

"UN member states should press the new envoy to spend as much time in Yemen as possible, consulting widely among, and even mediating between, a range of groups," he added.



Main category:

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Yemeni parties support Saudi call for adherence to Riyadh Agreement
Saudi Arabia calls on Yemen, Southern Transitional Council 'to respond urgently' to Riyadh Initiative

[Egyptian minister accuses Ethiopia of intransigence over GERD](#)

Sat, 2021-07-03 21:24

CAIRO: Egypt's minister of water resources and irrigation accused Ethiopia of intransigence over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on Saturday.

Mohamed Abdel-Aty was representing his ministry while addressing a conference organized by the German government.

He said Egypt is one of the driest countries in the world and suffers from water scarcity; Egypt's water resources are estimated at 60 billion cubic meters annually, most of which comes from the waters of the River Nile, in addition to very limited amounts of rainwater, estimated at 1 billion cubic meters, and deep, non-renewable groundwater in the deserts.

The project on the River Nile has been a source of diplomatic tension between Cairo and Addis Ababa since its construction began in Ethiopia in 2011. The Ethiopian government sees the hydroelectricity project as crucial for the economy and a vital source of energy. But Egypt and Sudan, which are downstream, fear the \$4 billion GERD will greatly reduce their access to water.

Ethiopia began the second phase of filling the reservoir behind the GERD in early May.

Abdel-Aty added that total water needs in Egypt amount to about 114 billion cubic meters annually, and the gap is compensated by reusing agricultural drainage water and surface groundwater.

He said Egypt and other countries were witnessing increasing climatic changes, pointing to the resulting threats to sustainable development and the human right to water.

"In addition to the risks that the most fertile lands are facing as a result of the expected rise in sea levels, the intrusion of saline water, which affects the quality of groundwater, will lead to the displacement of millions of Egyptians residing in the north of the delta," he said.

In his speech, Abdel-Aty stressed Egypt's desire for negotiations to reach an agreement that met the aspirations of all parties over the GERD.

He added that Egypt would not accept unilateral action to fill and operate the dam; Cairo, he continued, did not object to a dam in Ethiopia and supports its development, but wanted a fair settlement for both itself and Sudan.

Abdel-Aty said any shortage of water resources would cause severe damage, as the lack of 1 billion cubic meters of water could cost 200,000 families their main source of livelihood in agriculture.

"This means that 1 million citizens will be affected," he said.

The agricultural sector in Egypt employs at least 40 million people, and any shortage of water resources will have huge repercussions on a large percentage of the Egyptian population, the minister said.

This could lead to societal instability, and possibly a wave of emigration to Europe and other countries, or a rise in young, disillusioned people turning to extremist groups.



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Egyptian president inaugurates July 3 naval base Ethiopia denies blocking humanitarian aid to Tigray