

# Chlorine gas leak at plant sickens 70 in southeast Iran

Author:

Associated Press

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Sat, 2020-07-04 18:02

TEHRAN, Iran: A chlorine gas leak at a petrochemical center in southeast Iran sickened 70 workers, state-run IRNA news agency reported Saturday.

Most of the workers at the Karun petrochemical center in the city of Mahshahr in southeast Khuzestan province were released after undergoing medical treatment.

Meanwhile, in the city of Ahvaz, also in Khuzestan, a fire at the Zergan power plant was ignited when a transformer exploded, IRNA reported Saturday. The blaze was contained by firefighters after two hours of battling the blaze.

Mohammad Hafezi, the power plant's health and safety manager, told IRNA the cause of the fire was under investigation.

The two incidents in Iran's oil-rich Khuzestan come after a fire and explosion at a centrifuge production plant above Iran's underground Natanz nuclear enrichment facility early Thursday.

Officials said the cause of the fire at Natanz is known to officials, but won't be immediately released for "security reasons."

On Tuesday, an explosion from a gas leak in a medical clinic in northern Tehran killed 19 people.



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[Karun](#)

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## [UAE adopts new government structure, full announcement to come on Sunday](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1593885769378041000

Sat, 2020-07-04 17:55

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates has adopted a new government structure, involving the merger of ministries and agencies, the country's vice president and ruler of Dubai said on Saturday, adding that the full announcement would be made on Sunday at noon (0800 GMT).

The decision aims "to produce a government that is more flexible and fast and keeping pace with change," Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum said on Twitter.

In May, he said the country would review the structure and size of its government as part of its strategy for dealing with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

الإخوة والأخوات .. أعلننا في 13 مايو 2020 عن نيتنا مراجعة هيكل حكومة الإمارات.. ووعدنا بإجراء تغييرات .. ودمج وزارات وهيئات .. للخروج بحكومة أكثر مرونة وسرعة ومواكبة للمتغيرات .. اعتمدت قبل قليل الهيكل الجديد .. ونعلنه غداً في الثانية عشر ظهراً بإذن الله..

– HH Sheikh Mohammed (@HHShkMohd) [July 4, 2020](#)



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## [Jordan slaps wristbands on arrivals to monitor virus quarantine](#)

Author:

AFP

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Sat, 2020-07-04 15:58

AMMAN: Jordan began putting electronic bracelets Saturday on travelers who have recently arrived in the country to ensure that they observe home-quarantine against the spread of coronavirus, an official said.

People arriving in Jordan must isolate for 14 days at hotels designated by the authorities on the shores of the Dead Sea, west of the capital Amman. After that period, they must self-isolate for an additional 14 days at home, according to Nizar Obeidat, spokesman for Jordan's virus task force. He told state-run Al-Mamlaka television that "the use of the electronic bracelet began on Saturday for those self-isolating at home" in order to ensure quarantine rules are respected.

Jordan imposed tough measures, including curfews and the deployment of drones, to curb the spread of COVID-19, before easing policies in early June. The kingdom has so far registered 1,147 coronavirus infections, including only 10 deaths.

But health authorities have almost daily been reporting new cases among Jordanians and foreigners entering the country.

They have also maintained measures such as social distancing and the compulsory use of face masks in most public places, with those breaking the rules fined.

Several countries around the world have turned to electronic tracking devices including bracelets and smart watches connected to special apps to contain the spread of coronavirus.

In March, Hong Kong began ordering all arrivals from overseas to wear electronic bracelets to monitor observance of quarantine.

South Korea, China, Taiwan and Singapore have also employed a range of tech solutions to tackle coronavirus.



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## Wife of British-born 'aid worker' demands Syria rebels release him

Author:

AFP

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Sat, 2020-07-04 15:15

ATME: The wife of a self-described aid worker stripped of his British nationality has called for his release after he was detained by rebels in Syria's last major rebel bastion.

Tauqir Sharif, 33, was detained on June 22 by Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS), a dominant group in Syria's northwestern region of Idlib, his supporters say. "We haven't been given anything from HTS to even say what the allegations are" against him, his wife Racquell Hayden Best told AFP in the town of Atme, adding that she had been scrambling for information on his detention.

"We have heard ourselves that he is innocent. If he is an innocent man, why are you holding him in prison?" she asked.

Sharif, whose father is originally from Pakistan, hails from Chingford on the eastern outskirts of London and first arrived in Syria in 2012, according to the Live Updates From Syria organization he founded with his wife.

Britain stripped him of his British nationality in 2017, accusing him of links to an Al-Qaeda-aligned group it did not specify, the British press has said, but Sharif has denied the allegation.

HTS has not commented on Sharif's detention, which comes at a time of heightened tensions between the group and other fighters in the Idlib region. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, said Sharif was detained over his alleged ties with rival rebels.

A fragile cease-fire has since March stemmed a Russia-backed regime offensive against Idlib.

The region is home to some three million people, a large proportion of whom have been displaced from their homes by Syria's nine-year-old war and are dependent on humanitarian aid.



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## [Fire flares at Iranian power plant, latest in series of incidents](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Sat, 2020-07-04 13:47

DUBAI: A fire broke out at a power station in southwestern Iran on Saturday, Iranian media reported, the latest of several recent fires and explosions some of which have hit sensitive sites.

The blaze, which affected a transformer in the power station in the city of

Ahvaz, was put out by fire fighters and electricity was restored after partial outages, Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi, a spokesman for state-run power company TAVANIR, told the semi-official news agency Tasnim. On Thursday, a fire broke out at Iran's Natanz nuclear facility but officials said operations were not affected. A former official suggested the incident could have been an attempt to sabotage work at the plant, which have been involved in activities that breach an international nuclear deal. Nineteen people were killed on Tuesday in an explosion at a medical clinic in the north of the capital Tehran, which an official said was caused by a gas leak. On June 26, an explosion occurred east of Tehran near the Parchin military and weapons development base that the authorities said was caused by a leak in a gas storage facility in an area outside the base.



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