

Daesh prisoners riot again in northeast Syria

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BEIRUT: Militants from the Daesh group rioted in a northeast Syrian prison Sunday, a month after similar violence at the facility allowed four extremists to escape, an opposition war monitor and a Kurdish activist collective said.

Kurdish forces sent reinforcements to the prison in the eastern Hassakeh province and US military helicopters flew overhead, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, and North Press Agency, a media platform operating in the Kurdish-administered areas.

Kurdish authorities currently operate more than two dozen detention facilities scattered across northeastern Syria, holding about 10,000 Daesh fighters. Among the detainees are some 2,000 foreigners whose home countries have refused to repatriate them, including about 800 Europeans.

Further details were not immediately available on the size of the riot, and it was not clear if the unrest was triggered by concerns about the coronavirus's potential spread in the prison.

In late March, two days of riots broke out at the same facility when former Daesh members began knocking down doors and making holes in the walls between cells. Four prisoners escaped but were caught a day later.

The riots were put down by the Kurdish-led, US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces. Afterward, the SDF's top commander Mazloum Abdi urged the home countries of foreign fighters to find a solution for the prisoners. The riot was one of the most serious uprisings by the prisoners since Daesh was defeated a year ago, when the SDF seized control of the last sliver of land controlled by the extremists in eastern Syria.

A resurgence of Daesh attacks in both Syria and Iraq has raised concerns that the militant group is taking advantage of governments absorbed in tackling the coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing slide into economic chaos.

Last month, the US-led coalition said it had handed over hygiene and medical supplies to detention facilities across northeastern Syria, such as hand-washing stations, disinfectant wipes, face masks and examination gloves.

One coronavirus death was reported in Kurdish-held areas of Syria in April.

The central government in Damascus has registered 43 cases and three deaths.



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Syrian tycoon Makhoulf says security forces are arresting his employees

[**Jordan lifts all curbs on economic activity in latest easing of lockdown**](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Sun, 2020-05-03 15:33

AMMAN: Jordan said on Sunday it had lifted all restrictions on economic activity in the latest easing of coronavirus lockdown rules to help jump-start the cash-strapped economy.

Jordan has in the last two weeks been lifting restrictions to allow businesses back to work, but with lower levels of staff and strict social distancing and hygiene guidelines. Meanwhile, Jordan's cash-strapped economy is expected to contract around 3% in 2020 due to the impact of the coronavirus, the country's finance minister said on Sunday. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), which last March approved a four-year \$1.3 billion programme with the kingdom, had expected Jordan's economy to grow around 2.1% in 2020 then gradually rise in the next few years to 3.3%. "The impact of the big economic blow that hit the local economy has been deep and this will continue," Mohammad Al-Issis said in remarks on state television.



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Jordan opens private schools with restricted working hours
Jordan to deploy 16 repatriation flights for stranded citizens

Egypt reports 15 military casualties in Sinai recently

Author:

Reuters

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Sun, 2020-05-03 13:46

CAIRO: Egypt's military said on Sunday that 15 of its men had died or been wounded in operations in the Sinai Peninsula recently, and that 126 suspected militants had been killed.

The military publishes updates on its operations in Sinai every few months, without giving a specific time frame.

The statement came three days after the military said 10 personnel were killed or wounded in an attack near Bir Al-Abd in North Sinai. Daesh claimed the attack.

The Interior Ministry later said 18 suspected militants had been killed in a shootout near Bir Al-Abd.

Militants loyal to Daesh are active in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula, where Egypt has been battling an insurgency for years.

Human rights organizations accuse Egypt of carrying out extrajudicial executions, forced evictions and collective punishment as part of the crackdown.

The military has denied such accusations, saying it takes the lives of civilians into consideration during operations.



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Amnesty reports chilling details of Egypt press crackdown

[Turkey pouring Syrian militants into Libya, says human rights body](#)

Sat, 2020-05-02 21:10

LONDON: Turkey continues to send Syrian mercenaries to Libya and several have died in clashes with Khalifa Haftar's forces, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on Saturday.

The observatory said 26 militants have recently been killed in fighting, bringing the death toll of Turkish-backed Syrian mercenaries in Libya to 249.

The monitor added that there are 7,400 Turkish backed mercenaries in Libya, some of whom are not Syrian.



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Libyan central bank reserves to fall 20% as oil revenues sink: Audit bureau
Libya's unity government says rejects Haftar's truce offer

[UK urged to push for aid deliveries to northern Syria](#)

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1588432481961791400

Sat, 2020-05-02 18:30

LONDON: The UK government has been warned that “unimaginable” and “catastrophic” damage could be caused if cross-border aid is not delivered to people in northern Syria as coronavirus is set to sweep the region.

Labour's spokesperson for international development, Anna McMorrin MP, urged Downing Street to apply pressure on the UN Security Council to guarantee the delivery of aid, after the council voted in December to close half the official entry points to Syria.

In a letter to UK Secretary of State for International Development Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, McMorrin wrote: “The omission of UN Security Council support for the renewal of two crossings at Al-Yarubiyah and Al-Ramtha, bordering Iraq and Jordan respectively, in north east Syria is already significantly (hindering) the ability of the UN, partners and humanitarian agencies to continue to provide aid to populations in need.”

She added: “Currently the only way the international community can take action to prepare, prevent and respond to COVID-19 is through cross-border aid ... Global leaders cannot allow the incubation of the virus, which threatens the lives of the most vulnerable and may also jeopardize the health of citizens at home if a second wave stemming from low-income and fragile nations is the result of our inaction.”

At least 4 million people in northern Syria rely on aid brought through the country's official border crossings, according to the UN.

The World Health Organization recently said fewer than two-thirds of Syria's hospitals were operational, and around 70 percent of all Syrian medical staff had fled the country, due to the civil war that has ravaged it for the past nine years.

Social distancing for internally displaced Syrians living in camps is all but impossible, while testing for COVID-19 is a hugely challenging enterprise, according to the Red Cross.

Medical and personal protection equipment destined for the embattled north,

meanwhile, is regularly held up by the Syrian regime.



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Syrian government ends school early for over 4 million students