

Three ports in Kuwait suspend operations due to bad weather

Mon, 2022-05-16 19:27

LONDON: All maritime operations at three Kuwaiti ports have been suspended after bad weather struck the Gulf country.

Shuwaikh port, Shuaiba port, and Doha port are temporarily suspended, Kuwait News Agency reported.

Earlier, the news agency reported that navigation to and from Kuwait International Airport had been halted due to a dust storm reducing visibility across the country.

Flights later resumed operating normally at 6 p.m. after a 1.5 hour period of inactivity.

The final of the Amiri Cup has also been rescheduled due to the adverse weather conditions.

Kazma and Salmiya football clubs were due to play on Monday but will play on May 23 instead.





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Flights resume at Baghdad International Airport after dust storm halts flights
One dead, 5,000 others suffer from respiratory ailments as sandstorm hits Iraq

Britain's Prince William meets with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed in Abu Dhabi

Mon, 2022-05-16 18:10

ABU DHABI: Britain's Prince William met newly-appointed UAE president Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi on Monday to offer condolences on the death of Sheikh Khalifa.

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the former president and ruler of Abu Dhabi, died on Friday aged 73.

The Duke of Cambridge, who made the trip on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II, also offered congratulations to Sheikh Mohammed on his appointment as UAE president and ruler of Abu Dhabi.

The prince is the latest global figure to travel to the UAE capital to pay respects, following visits from other leaders including French president Emmanuel Macron and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

William's trip to the UAE capital followed a phone call to Sheikh Mohammed on Sunday from Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, who also offered condolences on the passing of Sheikh Khalifa and good wishes to Sheikh Mohammed on his appointment.

Queen Elizabeth also sent a message to Sheikh Mohamed, sharing her sadness over Sheikh Khalifa's death, adding: "He will be long remembered by all who work for regional stability, understanding between nations and between faiths, and for the conservation cause."





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New UAE president meets Macron as world leaders pay respects Saudi crown prince offers his condolences on the death of Sheikh Khalifa

[Palestinians commemorate 74th anniversary of Nakba amid outcry over funeral attack](#)

Sun, 2022-05-15 21:48

GAZA CITY: Palestinians rallied on Sunday to mark the Nakba 74 years after Israel's creation, with condemnation widespread over a police raid at the funeral of slain Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

Social media sites were flooded with stories from the time of the displacement in 1948 and posts commemorating the Nakba and calling for the right to return.

The annual demonstrations across all Palestinian cities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip came amid high tensions over the killing of Akleh, 51, and a series of military confrontations last month during Ramadan, which saw subsequent Israeli military incursions into Palestinian cities.

Despite the exchange of threats with Hamas, Israel reopened on Sunday its only crossing with the Gaza Strip to Palestinian workers nearly two weeks after closing it over the unrest.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas made a speech on the commemoration of the Nakba Saturday evening from the city of Ramallah.

"Staying on [the land], regardless of the difficulties, complications and brutal crimes of the occupation, is the best response to the Nakba, and to the mentality of ethnic cleansing, settlement and Judaization," he said.

Abbas added: "The great Palestinian people cannot be defeated, nor can their will be broken, simply because they have a right and a just cause that cannot be obliterated by false narratives."

The anniversary of the Nakba comes amid Palestinian condemnation of the Israeli announcement to build new units in Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Palestinian factions and the Popular Committee for Refugees in the cities of Gaza and Ramallah organized two central marches to commemorate the Nakba.

Palestinian flags were raised at the events under the slogan "Enough of 74 years of injustice and double standards."

The march in Ramallah, in which thousands of people participated, started from the tomb of former Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and proceeded toward the city center.

The march in Gaza started from Al-Katiba Square and proceeded toward the UN headquarters in Gaza City.

Hamas issued a statement to mark the anniversary.

"There is no legitimacy for the occupation over an inch of our land, our sanctuaries, and we are on the path of comprehensive resistance until liberation and return."

The statement added: "Seventy-four years after the occupation of our land and the displacement of our people, and despite all the massacres and crimes committed by the enemy throughout its dark history, in the longest continuous occupation in the world, the Palestinian people are still steadfast on their land, adhering to their rights and... [serving as] the finest examples of heroism, sacrifice, patience and jihad."

The Palestinian News Agency Wafa issued statistics showing that the number of Palestinians has reached more than 5 million in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem following the displacement of about 800,000 Palestinians in 1948, while the Israeli army has killed about 100,000 Palestinians since then.



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Palestinian gunman dies days after clash with Israeli troops
Israel reopens Gaza crossing after nearly two weeks

[Lebanon parliamentary elections: Voting marred by disputes, low turnout](#)

Sun, 2022-05-15 23:35

BEIRUT: The Lebanese public headed to polling booths on Sunday to elect a new parliament against the backdrop of an economic meltdown that is transforming the country.

The armed forces were deployed on roads leading to polling stations.

Arab and foreign observers moved between polling stations to oversee the electoral process but refused to make any declarations, noting that their

observations will be included in a report.

The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections registered dozens of violations, such as delegates being placed under “pressure and harassment,” and threats of expulsion.

The association criticized “the deputy registrars’ failure to carry out their tasks, which results in the cancellation of votes.”

The Supervisory Commission for Elections noted “hundreds of irregularities resulting from breaches of electoral silence.”

Irregularities were also noted by the Association for Democratic Elections. It accused “candidates and politicians, including President Michel Aoun,” of breaches.

Aoun and his wife cast their votes in his hometown in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

He urged voters to avoid being “impartial in a matter as important as choosing the ruling system.”

Politicians and clergymen, some accompanied by their children, cast their votes in front of the cameras in casual clothing.

Tensions reached a peak on Lebanon’s long electoral day in the final hours before polls closed, especially in areas with a strong Hezbollah presence.

The town of Fneidiq in Akkar witnessed several violent clashes and confrontations, prompting calls for the rapid intervention of the Lebanese Army and Internal Security Forces.

Despite the severe polarization that preceded the elections, the turnout was about 25.6 percent by 3 p.m. across Lebanon, according to figures from the Ministry of Interior.

The highest turnout was recorded in Jbeil–Kesserwan, where it reached 42 percent.

However, it did not exceed 22 percent in the Beirut II district, 17 percent in the Beirut I district and 12 percent in Tripoli.

Voters are electing 128 new parliamentary deputies. In some competitive regions, voters were divided due to many competing lists, particularly in Beirut and the north.

The turnout was high in places where party electoral machines were active and effective.

Parties and some electoral institutions invited a large portion of the public to cast early votes, but asked others to vote in the afternoon before the sealing of ballot boxes at 7 p.m., after studying voters’ orientations during the day.

These tactical practices also included offering money to voters.

An officer in one of the electoral machines of one of the lists of change in Beirut told Arab News that "Hezbollah, the Amal Movement and the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (Al-Ahbash) are more organized than others."

Based on Arab News' observations in Beirut, delegates of some lists were completely absent in some of the polling stations, while delegates of party lists were present.

Sunni voters in Beirut stepped back from their boycott in light of the decision by Saad Hariri – former prime minister and head of the Future Movement – to suspend his political activity.

One voter, Neamat Naoum, told Arab News: "I had to vote and not boycott. I voted for the interest of others. In previous elections, I used to vote for Saad Hariri and before him, for his father. But Saad bargained a lot and conceded, and the mafias are now controlling us."

She added: "Why did he do that? We are not against him but we are looking forward to the future. I hope those I voted for are better. I don't know."

Bilal Haykal, who was accompanied by his son Yehia to the Khalid bin Al-Walid polling station in the Beirut II district, said that at first, he decided to boycott the election entirely.

"However, when Dar Al-Fatwa called on people to cast their votes, I decided to exercise my constitutional right. I voted for the candidates calling for change after studying their resumes," he added.

"I don't want to vote for Hezbollah and its allies, so they won't control the country's decisions, knowing that in politics, there is no black and white. That's how the country is."

The number of voters in the Beirut II district reached about 370,000. They casted votes to elect 11 deputies out of 118 candidates distributed between 10 complete and incomplete competing lists.

The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections said that "pro-Hezbollah chants in front of and inside Lycee Abdel Kader polling station in Beirut affected the turnout."

In the Beirut I district, about 135,000 people voted to elect eight deputies.

Voting in the district was viewed as an avenue to retaliate against the ruling class, since the area was hardest hit by the Beirut port explosion two years ago.

Many voters publicly said that "they will not reelect their killers."

Thirty-nine candidates competed in the district, where the competition was mainly between the Free Patriotic Movement, the Lebanese Forces and the Phalanges Party.

In Tripoli, 11 lists competed for eight parliamentary seats. The number of voters reached 438,254.

In Jbeil, people showed up to polling booths to elect two Maronite deputies and a Shiite deputy among 21 candidates.

The competition mainly focused on the potential for a Hezbollah-affiliated deputy or a Shiite deputy in opposition to the party.

Dr. Mahmoud Awad, a candidate on the Lebanese Forces list, was physical assaulted, according to a statement by his party.

“Members of Hezbollah harassed the Lebanese Forces’ delegates in one of the stations, resulting in the intervention of the Army Forces and the removal of the aggressors and the delegates from the center,” the statement said.

Lebanese Forces delegates were subjected to harassment in Jezzine by members of Hezbollah and the Amal Movement, including inside a polling station.



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Lebanon holds first parliament election since financial collapse, Beirut port blast
Lebanon holds its breath as 3 million set to vote in pivotal poll

Army commander survives car bomb in Aden

Sun, 2022-05-15 23:15

AL-MUKALLA: A car bomb targeted a Yemeni army commander in the southern port city of Aden, the country's interim capital, triggering a large explosion that rocked the city, according to a local security official.

Maj. Gen. Saleh Ali Hasan, commander of the joint operations at the Aden-based 4th Military Regime, was inside his armed SUV in Mualla, a district of Aden, when a nearby car exploded.

The army commander survived the blast, which damaged his car, the official said.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attack. The local authorities have blamed the Iran-backed Houthis or Al-Qaeda and Daesh for a string of similar attacks targeting security and military officials in the city.

Gen. Shalal Ali Shaea, commander of a counterterrorism unit in Aden, accused terrorist organizations of carrying out the attack to undermine peace and security in the city.

"Terrorist bombings will not deter us from establishing security and stability," Shaea told local reporters while visiting the scene of the blast.

The blast came as the country's new Presidential Leadership Council is seeking to unify fragmented forces under its control and restore peace to the liberated provinces in Aden.

In a separate announcement, Yemeni national carrier Yemenia said early on Sunday that it would operate the first commercial flight from the Houthi-held Sanaa to Amman on Monday after the Yemeni government allowed passengers to travel with passports issued by the Houthis.

The flight had been scheduled to take place on April 24 but was cancelled after the Houthis insisted on adding dozens of passengers with passports issued in their territories.

On Saturday, Yemen's Foreign Minister Ahmed Awadh bin Mubarak said that the resumption of flights from Sanaa airport came after big efforts by his government, the Arab coalition, the UN Yemen envoy and the Jordanian authorities.

"Alleviating the suffering of our people in all Yemen would remain our top concern," the Yemeni minister said on Twitter.

Resuming flights from Sanaa is one of the terms of the two-month UN-brokered truce that came into effect on April 2.

The other terms included stopping fighting across the country, allowing fuel ships to enter Hodeidah seaport and opening roads in Taiz and the other provinces.

The Yemeni government accused the Houthis of refusing to lift their siege on Taiz and continuing to attack government troops and civilian targets, mainly in Taiz and Marib.

On Sunday, local media said that three civilians, including a child, were wounded when an explosive-laden drone fired by the Houthis hit a tribal leader's house in Raghwan, in Marib.

Also in Marib, a soldier was killed and another one wounded when the Houthis opened fire at them in a contested area in northwest Marib province, Yemen's army said on Saturday.

Last week, the Houthis killed two soldiers from the government's Joint Forces in Hays district in the western province of Hodeidah.



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