

[UAE says all diplomats, citizens have returned 'safely' from Lebanon](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-11-01 21:53

DUBAI: The UAE announced on Monday that all its diplomats, embassy staff and citizens have returned from Lebanon, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC) said.

On Sunday, the UAE called on its citizens present in Lebanon to return to the Emirates as soon as possible to ensure their safety, following a diplomatic row that was sparked in solidarity with Saudi Arabia over controversial comments made by the Lebanese information minister that were critical to the Kingdom.

"The ministry attributed the development to the UAE's decision to recall its diplomats and administration staff from Lebanon and bar Emirati citizens to travel to the country owing to the current security and political situation there," the MoFAIC statement said.

"Out of the UAE's determination on ensuring the safety of its citizens abroad, the ministry contacted UAE national in Lebanon to coordinate their return back home," said Khalid Belhoul, the ministry's undersecretary. He added that the ministry was following up on the procedures of all citizens in Lebanon until their safe return to the country.



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[Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation](#)

UAE calls on citizens in Lebanon to return as soon as possible Saudi Arabia's King Salman thanks leaders of Kuwait, Bahrain for Lebanon stance

Minister says Egypt has received 72m doses of various COVID-19 vaccines

Mon, 2021-11-01 19:00

CAIRO: Egypt's acting minister of health, Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, said in a statement that the total number of coronavirus disease vaccine doses supplied to the North African country has reached 72 million.

Abdel Ghaffar, who is also Egypt's minister of higher education and scientific research, explained that around 38 million doses have been administered so far, leaving around 34 million jobs available.

He added that during the coming period, Egypt expects around 26 million more doses, including Sinovac, Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson vaccines, bringing the total to about 98 million doses.

Egypt also expects to receive materials for the manufacture of the Sinovac vaccine in the country's Vaccera factories in due course.

The minister stated that work is underway to expand Egypt's regional vaccination center capacity, with 1,079 centers currently operational, including 180 travel centers.

He stressed that the coming period will witness an expansion in the provision of mobile outlets dedicated to vaccinating citizens in crowded places such as malls, train stations and metro stations.

Abdel Ghaffar also announced that Egypt received its first shipment of Moderna jabs, coming in at a total of 784,280 doses, on Sunday morning at Cairo International Airport, meaning the country now has access to vaccines produced by all major, reputable international manufacturers.

In a statement, he said that the shipment was provided by Canada through the COVAX initiative, in cooperation with GAVI, as part of the country's plan to diversify and expand the provision of vaccines to citizens.

Dr. Awad Taj El-Din, advisor to the president of Egypt for health and epidemiological affairs, confirmed on Sunday that Egypt spent around \$400

million to secure its vaccines, and he expressed his thanks to all the parties working in support of Egypt.

He pointed out that the country was finalizing deals with international institutions for the local manufacture of various vaccines at factories in Agouza and 6 October City, which would see it become one of Africa's largest centers of vaccine manufacturing.



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[Khaled Abdel Ghaffar](#)

Egypt COVID-19 vaccine to begin distribution in mid-August
Egypt COVID-19 cases could be '10 times higher' than reported figures

[**Demand for special UN rights council**](#)

meet after Sudan coup

Mon, 2021-11-01 18:34

GENEVA: Dozens of countries called Monday for the UN Human Rights Council to host a special session on Sudan, following a deadly crackdown on mass rallies against last week's military coup.

In a letter to the council president sent on behalf of 48 countries, British ambassador Simon Manley stressed the urgent need for the top UN rights body to discuss the situation in Sudan since the army's October 25 power grab.

"We request that the Human Rights Council hold a special session this week to address the human rights implications of the ongoing situation in the Republic of the Sudan," said the letter, seen by AFP.

"A special session is needed because of the importance and urgency of the situation."

The request came after top General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan dissolved the government, declared a state of emergency and detained Sudan's civilian leadership.

Tens of thousands of people turned out across the country for demonstrations on Saturday against the coup.

At least three people were shot dead and more than 100 wounded during Saturday's demonstrations, according to medics, who said at least 12 people had been killed since the coup.

Police forces denied the killings, or using live rounds.

In his letter Monday, Manley said the call for a special session was being led by Britain, the United States and Norway, along with Germany and the government of Sudan, ousted in the coup.

In all, 48 countries had signed on to the request, including 18 of the Human Rights Council's 47 member states.

Calling a special session outside of the thrice-yearly regular meetings requires the backing of at least a third of the membership, so at least 16 states.



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Sudanese ex-ruling party head Ghandour re-arrested Sudanese anti-coup protesters barricade streets

[Pressure mounts for removal of Lebanese information minister over Gulf row](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-11-01 01:06

BEIRUT: Pressure is mounting on Lebanese leaders to remove a Cabinet minister whose comments on the war in Yemen have triggered a diplomatic row with Saudi Arabia, even as the minister at the center of the crisis said that resigning from the government was not an option.

The Kingdom, the UAE, Kuwait and Bahrain have recalled their ambassadors from Lebanon, while also instructing Lebanon's envoys to leave. The UAE has banned its citizens from traveling to Lebanon.

The decisions follow remarks that Information Minister George Kordahi gave in an interview that was recorded before his appointment, saying the Iran-backed Houthis were defending themselves and that the war in Yemen should stop, with a video of the interview emerging last week.

In a televised speech on Sunday, amid the deepening crisis, Kordahi addressed those who had been urging him to quit. "Resigning from the government is not an option," he said.

Lebanon has been calling US and French officials, asking them to intervene and help them find a way out of the crisis caused by his comments, which go against the country's official position on the Yemen conflict.

King Salman called Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday to express his appreciation for the measures that Kuwait had taken on Kordahi's statements, reflecting the solidarity of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, according to Saudi Arabia's embassy in Lebanon.

Al-Sabah said that "the measures of his country reflect the unity of GCC countries and the depth of relations among their peoples," the embassy added.

King Salman also called King Hamad of Bahrain and "expressed his gratitude for the measures Bahrain has taken regarding the statements, reflecting Saudi-Bahraini solidarity and unity of the GCC countries."

He reiterated "the depth of relations between the two brotherly countries and the solidarity among GCC countries."

Lebanon's ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Fawzi Kabbara, announced on Sunday that he had returned to Beirut.

He said that "restoring Lebanese-Saudi ties would be possible if Lebanon agrees to the conditions."

Lebanon's Maronite Patriarch Bechara Al-Rahi in his Sunday sermon called for "decisive action," suggesting that he wanted Kordahi to resign.

He said: "We are hoping that President Michel Aoun, Prime Minister Najib Mikati and everyone else involved in the case will take decisive action to save Lebanese relations with the Gulf. The most important achievement that political forces can make is not to be dragged into the game of states, especially during this critical phase in the region."

He also said Lebanon had opted for "partnership" to establish peace, moderation and neutrality, and the state of law that was protected by a "just and fair" judiciary.

"The crisis between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia in particular, and the Gulf countries in general, has multiple and accumulating causes and harms the

interests of Lebanon and the Lebanese,” he warned.

Mikati is in Glasgow for the COP26.

According to sources, he is expected to hold “several international and Arab meetings on Monday and Tuesday to discuss the current crisis between Lebanon and Gulf countries” on the sidelines of the summit.

The Lebanese-Saudi Business Council condemned Kordahi’s statements as well as those from former Minister Charbel Wehbe and other officials they said had harmed the country’s relations with its Arab neighbors, “especially ones who have stood beside us during the difficult times – mainly Saudi Arabia.”

It urged that the necessary measures be taken to remove Kordahi who, it said, had caused “an unprecedented rift” with Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries, because of “irresponsible statements over which he did not bother to apologize or resign” to maintain Lebanon’s relations with Gulf countries and protect national interests.

“Things should go back to the way they were and Lebanon should be brought back to its Arab and Gulf environment to protect the diaspora in Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries, and the interests of farmers, industrialists, exporters, traders, contractors and those who need today, more than ever before, to protect their interests against absurdity and deterioration,” it said.

The Saudi ambassador to Lebanon, Walid Bukhari, quoted Gebran Khalil Gebran on Sunday in a tweet: “A sinner would not commit a sin without a hidden will. Gebran Khalil Gebran uttered those words, and they were heard by the whole world. He is the master of words.” He left Lebanon on Saturday.

Former MP Mustafa Alloush, who is vice president of the Future Movement, said the situation would have been different had Kordahi resigned two days after what had happened. “But today, I am certain that harming Lebanon’s relations with Saudi Arabia was intentional. Hezbollah is continuing its project by increasing hostility with Arab states,” he told Arab News.

“But the whole case has to do with a long history of anti-Saudi statements and positions by Kordahi, former minister Wehbe and MP Gebran Bassil, along with the lack of addressing the Captagon-smuggling issue from Lebanon into the Kingdom, and Hezbollah’s continuing insults to Saudi Arabia and threats to its security.

“Whether Kordahi resigns now or not, this is no longer relevant. The Lebanese government has become a hostage and the proof is that the positions of Mikati and the Lebanese Foreign Ministry were not decisive nor firm. Mikati had to be firm and order the removal of Kordahi and threaten to dissolve the government.”

The Foreign Ministry reiterated in a statement on Sunday that Lebanon’s “great concern (was) to have the best relations with its Gulf and Arab brothers.”

The ministry also referenced the position of Oman’s Foreign Ministry calling

on everyone to “show restraint, avoid escalation and address the dispute through dialogue and understanding to preserve the supreme interests of states and peoples and maintain stability, security and cooperation, on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs.”

A committee formed at Mikati’s request to resolve the Kordahi crisis has so far failed to find a solution. It recommended waiting on the results of the international calls being made.



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Saudi foreign minister: Hezbollah dominance of political system is Lebanon’s real problem
UAE calls on citizens in Lebanon to return as soon as possible

[**Coalition says 218 Houthis killed in**](#)

[airstrikes around Marib city](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-11-01 00:58

ADEN: The Arab military coalition in Yemen said on Sunday that more than 218 Houthis were killed in airstrikes around Marib city, the internationally recognized government's last northern bastion.

"Twenty-four military vehicles were destroyed" and more than 218 Houthis were killed in strikes in the past 72 hours in two districts, according to the coalition.

In recent weeks, fighting has intensified around the city of Marib in the province of the same name.

The coalition has said it has killed some 2,000 Houthis around the city in almost daily strikes since Oct. 11.

The latest bombing was carried out in Al-Jawba, about 50 km south of Marib, and Al-Kassara, 30 km to the northwest.

The Houthis began a major push to seize Marib in February and, after a lull, renewed their offensive since September.

The airstrikes took place as at least 12 civilians, including children, were killed in a car bomb blast near the airport of Aden on Saturday.

"Twelve civilians were killed in an explosion" in the vicinity of Aden airport and "there are also serious injuries," said an official.

Another security official confirmed the toll.

A spokesman from the Southern Transitional Council – part of Yemen's government – said the blast was caused by a car bomb explosion.

"A car bomb was detonated, killing a number of our peaceful citizens, including children, and wounding a number of other civilians," STC spokesman Ali Al-Kathiri said in a statement.

The explosion comes almost three weeks after six people were killed in a car-bomb attack that targeted Aden's governor, who survived.

AFP footage on Saturday showed people pulling out a body from a vehicle that had been completely destroyed, as firefighters put out flames nearby.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for Saturday's blast, which is the deadliest in the area since December last year, when an attack targeting Cabinet members ripped through Aden's airport.

At least 26 people, including three members of the International Committee of the Red Cross, were killed and scores were wounded when explosions rocked the

airport at the time, as ministers disembarked from an aircraft.

All Cabinet members were reported to be unharmed, in what some ministers charged was a Houthi attack.

Also on Saturday, three children were killed and three more were critically wounded in a neighborhood of Yemen's third city Taz, by mortar fire.

"The Houthi militia targeted the Al-Kamp neighborhood with ... shells, which led to the death of three children," the Saba new agency said.

One of the wounded children has had his legs amputated and all three "are in a critical condition," it added.

A security official said that the three children killed were brothers.

A doctor at Taz hospital confirmed the report to AFP, and said the toll could rise.

Taz is a city of 600,000 people in the southwest of Yemen.



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Arab coalition says 95 Houthis killed in strikes on Juba and Al-Kasarah
More than 85 Houthis killed near Yemen's Marib: Arab coalition