

Five dead in ambush on Hezbollah mourners south of Beirut

Sun, 2021-08-01 17:52

LONDON: At least five people including three Hezbollah members were killed in Khalde, south of Beirut on Sunday when a funeral for a party member was ambushed.

Several people were wounded in the exchange of fire in the Khalde area between members of the Lebanese Shiite group and Sunni residents, after a funeral for Ali Shibli was attacked.

Shibli was killed the night before.

Sectarian tensions have long flared in Khalde between the town's mixed Shi'ite and Sunni residents.

Footage of a video broadcast on Hezbollah's Manar TV channel showed a volley of gunfire being fired on the convoy of mourners arriving at the home of Shibli.

Iranian-backed Hezbollah urged the Lebanese authorities to pursue the culprits saying the incident reflected lawlessness and bigotry.

Prime minister-designate Najib Mikati appealed for "restraint" and warned against confessional "discord".



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Lebanon president ready to answer questions on Beirut blast
Lebanon prepares to mourn victims of Aug. 4 blast on first anniversary

[**Egyptian chief of staff calls on southern region's military unit to be**](#)

[vigilant, combat-ready](#)

Sun, 2021-08-01 16:37

CAIRO: Egyptian Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Mohammed Farid called on the personnel and officers from one of the southern region's military units to be "vigilant and combat-ready to carry out the tasks of securing the country's borders."

During a meeting with personnel from the unit, Farid conveyed the greetings and appreciation of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi for their efforts and sacrifices in the fight to maintain the security of the country's southern border against smuggling, illegal immigration and hostilities.

The chief of staff discussed the unit's various combat missions and methods of confronting emergencies, praising their combat readiness and high morale.

Farid stressed the need to develop the field skills of fighters and improve those of officers to enable them to make quick decisions under various circumstances.

He inspected the unit's procedures for raising combat efficiency, beginning with the presentation of a report that included the technical and administrative status of the unit following improvements to weapons and other areas.



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[Egyptian Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Mohammed Farid](#)

Egypt officials say Daesh militants attack kills 5 troops in SinaiEgypt, Libya pledge closer ties in terror, trafficking probes

[Rescuers pull 394 migrants from dangerously overcrowded boat off Tunisia](#)

Author:

Reuters

ID:

1627815824216814300

Sun, 2021-08-01 10:27

ABOARD SEA-WATCH 3, Mediterranean: Two humanitarian rescue ships pulled 394 migrants from a dangerously overcrowded wooden boat in the Mediterranean overnight on Sunday in an operation lasting about six hours, a Reuters witness said.

The German and French NGO ships Sea-Watch 3 and Ocean Viking rescued the migrants in Tunisian waters 68 km (42 miles) from the North African coast, near oil facilities and other ships.

Sea-Watch 3, which assumed command of the operation, took 141 of the survivors while Ocean Viking took the rest. The yacht Nadir, from the German NGO ResQ Ship, later gave support.

It was not clear if there were any deaths or injuries among the migrants who were in the wooden boat, which was crammed with migrants on deck and inside the hull.

The craft was taking in water and its engine was not working, the Reuters witness said.

Migrant boat departures from Libya and Tunisia to Italy and other parts of Europe have increased in recent months as weather conditions have improved.

According to the UN-affiliated International Organization for Migration, more than 1,100 people fleeing conflict and poverty in Africa and the Middle East have perished this year in the Mediterranean.

Many of the migrants in this latest rescue were seen jumping off the boat and trying to swim to Sea-Watch 3, the Reuters witness said.

The migrants were mainly men from Morocco, Bangladesh, Egypt and Syria.



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600 migrants reach Italian island from Tunisia in 2 days
German NGO Sea-Watch rescues nearly 100 migrants in Mediterranean

[Yemen violence increases as Houthis reject truce calls](#)

Author:

Sat, 2021-07-31 21:43

ALEXANDRIA: Violence increased in Yemen during the weekend as the Houthis rejected calls to stop hostilities and comply with peace initiatives.

Dozens of combatants, including a government commander, were killed in the past 48 hours in fighting between troops and the Houthis in the provinces of Marib, Lahj, Shabwa and Al-Bayda with the Houthis scaling up their attacks on government-controlled areas.

The heaviest fighting was reported in Marib, where forces foiled the militia's attacks in areas outside the city of Marib and claimed limited gains in Al-Rahabah district.

Yemen's army on Saturday mourned the death of Brig. Abad Ahmed Al-Hulaisi Al-Muradi, who was killed while fighting the Houthis in contested areas south of Marib city.

The Houthi military escalation came as the US rebuked the group for attacking Marib and rejecting peace efforts to end the war.

Commenting on the visit of US special envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking to Saudi Arabia, the US Department of State said on Friday: "During this trip, Lenderking called for an end to the stalemated fighting in Marib and across Yemen, which have only increased the suffering of the Yemeni people. He expressed concern that the Houthis continue to refuse to engage meaningfully on a ceasefire and political talks."

Muin Shreim, acting UN special envoy for Yemen, who also concluded a brief visit to Riyadh on Friday, urged parties to stop military operations in Yemen and Saudi Arabia and resume talks under a UN-brokered peace plan. "This is key to reduce threats to civilians, alleviate the dire humanitarian situation and pave the way for a sustainable, comprehensive and just peace and for reconciliation and recovery in Yemen," Shreim said.

One expert said the Houthis had intensified their operations to seize control of new areas and improve their bargaining position.

"The Houthis responded to the UN and international initiatives and movement by expanding (militarily) in order to get more points of strength and impose facts on the grounds," Ali Al-Fakih, editor of Al-Masdar Online, told Arab News.

Diplomatic efforts to end the war had, he said, experienced a "feeling of disappointment" because the Houthis had rejected peace initiatives from the UN and Saudi Arabia, while also snubbing the former UN Yemen envoy, Martin Griffiths, the US envoy, and Omani mediators.

Yemeni political analyst Saleh Al-Baydani said the Houthis sought to assert full control of the northern half of the country, arguing that simultaneous military and international diplomatic pressure on the Houthis would force them into accepting a peace plan and stopping hostilities.

"Forcing the Houthis to comply with the option of peace can only be achieved through two parallel tracks," he told Arab News. "The first is mounting military pressure on the ground and the second is applying real international pressures that go beyond condemnations and statements."

The Houthis have also exploited the government's focus on defending Marib city, its last major stronghold in the north, and leaving other provinces unprotected and vulnerable to the group's attacks, according to analysts.

Al-Fakih said the Houthis intensified their activity in Lahj, Shabwa and Al-Bayda after failing to make a military breakthrough during their offensive on Marib city, adding that more aggressive and unified strikes against their military targets and drying up their financial sources would help to push them into accepting peace.

Najeeb Ghallab, the undersecretary at Yemen's Information Ministry and a political analyst, said the group's ideological leaders who believed they had "a mandate from heaven to rule Yemen, and those who enriched themselves during the war" would resist any move to end the war.

"The Houthi group is convinced that any path to peace in Yemen represents a threat to it. The war extends their rule of areas under their control," Ghallab said.



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Houthi-controlled areas largest hotbeds for human trafficking, Yemeni minister says
Yemen's Houthi militia reject US call to stop Marib offensive

Deadly attack on Kurdish family sparks public anger

Sat, 2021-07-31 21:19

ANKARA: Seven people from a Kurdish family, including three women, were shot dead by armed assailants in the central Anatolian province of Konya on Friday.

The attackers also set the house alight after the daytime massacre.

"We warned the authorities several times," the family's attorney Abdurrahman Karabulut tweeted on July 30.

They had been living in Konya for 24 years and were attacked by 60 ultranationalists in May, with four family members grievously wounded by knives, stones and sticks. They were told they would no longer be allowed to live in that district.

Following the May attack, 10 people were detained and seven of them were taken into custody. But many were released.

The Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği) has been following the case for months and was informed that the family members were being harassed. IHD chair Eren Keskin tweeted: "They murdered the family they previously attacked."

Authorities knew the family were at risk and failed to protect them, Human Rights Watch Turkey director Emma Sinclair-Webb said.

Violence against Kurds has sparked public anger over the past few months. The assaults are believed to be the result of political polarization in the country, where the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) has been threatened with closure and hundreds of its politicians have been slapped with a five-year ban.

During an armed assault on the HDP's office in the western province of Izmir in June, a female party staff member was killed.

Similar attacks against Kurds have seen an uptick recently with cases in the provinces of Afyon, Konya and the Turkish capital Ankara.

Far-right and pro-government media have been fueling conspiracy theories against the HDP with an increasingly hateful and racist discourse against Kurds.

Although witnesses said the attack was racially motivated, authorities rejected this allegation and said the investigation was ongoing and so far without any connection to their Kurdish origin.

Yaşar Dedeogullari, one of the victims, said back in May that the family was

attacked because they were Kurds.

“We are nationalists, you are Kurds, we will get you out of here, this is what they have been saying for 12 years, we will not let Kurds live here,” he said.

In a joint statement, 48 bar associations across Turkey recently criticized the pro-government daily Yeni Safak for targeting the 15 bar associations that had condemned the attacks on Kurds.

A Yeni Safak headline read “Barons of Qandil” – a reference to the headquarters of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party in the northern Iraqi mountains.

“We received news of a terrible massacre from Konya. Since the subject is very sensitive, I did not want to talk before the details were clarified. Our delegation is currently in the region. Findings will be shared,” the leader of the main opposition Republican People’s Party tweeted.

“Our most valuable asset is the Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood. I know that our country faces several problems, but our hearts are together. I call out to the gangs who make the mistake of considering themselves as the deep state: We will definitely not allow your efforts to disrupt the brotherhood of our people!” he added.



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