

# Eastern Libyan forces say they killed Daesh leader

Author:

Reuters

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Wed, 2020-09-23 19:35

BENGHAZI: Eastern Libyan forces said on Wednesday they killed the leader of Daesh in North Africa during a raid in the southern desert city of Sebha earlier this month.

The Libyan National Army (LNA) spokesman Ahmed Al-Masmari said Abu Moaz Al-Iraqi was among nine militants killed during the raid but was only identified afterwards.

Daesh in Libya was formed by Al-Qaeda militants who took advantage of the chaos after the 2011 uprising against Muammar Qaddafi to seize territory and launch attacks.

The group took control of the central coastal city of Sirte in early 2015 and established a presence in the vast southern desert as well as active affiliates or cells in major cities.

However, it was driven from Sirte in late 2016 and its influence since then has been limited to occasional attacks including one on National Oil Corporation's headquarters in 2018 and another at the Foreign Ministry in 2019, both in Tripoli.

Masmari said Abu Moaz Al-Iraqi, also known as Abu Abdullah Al-Iraqi, had entered Libya in 2014 and became the group's leader in 2015 when his predecessor was killed.

Daesh's global threat has reduced in recent years after its self-proclaimed "caliphate" in Iraq and Syria was militarily defeated and much of its leadership killed. However, it remains capable of inspiring attacks around the world, security experts say.

The LNA controls eastern and much of southern Libya and has for years been in conflict with the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli.



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UK relatives of Daesh 'Beatles' victims relieved as trial nears  
New Daesh leader was informant for US, says counter terrorism report

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## [Lebanon asks world's help 'trying to rise from its rubble'](#)

Author:

Wed, 2020-09-23 22:14

BEIRUT: Facing an economic meltdown and other crises, Lebanon's president on Wednesday asked for the world's help to rebuild the capital's main port and neighborhoods that were blown away in last month's catastrophic explosion. President Michel Aoun made the plea in a prerecorded speech to the UN General Assembly's virtual summit, telling world leaders that Lebanon's many challenges are posing an unprecedented threat to its very existence. Most urgently, the country needs the international community's support to rebuild its economy and its destroyed port. Aoun suggested breaking up the damaged parts of the city into separate areas and so that countries that wish

to help can each commit to rebuilding one.

"Beirut today is trying to rise from its rubble, and it is with the solidarity of all the Lebanese and your support that it will heal its wounds and rise as it has previously risen repeatedly throughout history," Aoun said. "There is a great need for the international community to support the reconstruction of destroyed neighborhoods and facilities."

The massive Aug. 4 explosion happened when about 3,000 tons of ammonium nitrates – which had been rotting in a port warehouse for more than six years – ignited. Nearly 200 people were killed, 6,500 injured and a quarter of a million people were left with homes that were not fit to live in.

The cause of the blaze that ignited the chemicals still isn't known, but the explosion is widely seen as the culmination of decades of corruption and mismanagement by Lebanon's ruling class.

It came on top of an unprecedented economic crisis which has seen the local currency lose up to 80 percent of its value and decimated people's savings, feeding despair among a population that has long ago given up on its leaders. Poverty and unemployment are soaring, made worse by the coronavirus pandemic. A local investigation into the blast is underway, but no one has been held accountable so far.

Aoun said Lebanon had requested technical assistance from certain countries, particularly soil samples and satellite images from the moment of the explosion.

"Teams from several countries came for technical assistance and to carry out the necessary research and we are still waiting for their information... as well as the satellite images to clear the ambiguity in this part of the investigation," he added.

Earlier Wednesday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for swift formation of a government to be followed by tangible steps to implement economic, social and political reforms.

Lebanon's government resigned under pressure in the wake of the port explosion, and Prime Minister-designate Mustapha Adib has been unable to form a new government amid a political impasse over which faction gets to have the Finance Ministry, as well as other disputes.

Guterres said the disastrous port explosion "must be a wake-up call."

"Without such action, the country's ability to recover and rebuild will be jeopardized, adding to the turmoil and hardship of the Lebanese people," Guterres added.

Guterres made his remarks during a meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meetings.



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UN General Assembly: Saudi Arabia's King Salman calls for Hezbollah to be disarmed  
Lebanon 'going to hell' if fails to form government, says president

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## [Iraq's president warns fight against terrorism far from over](#)

Author:

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1600886799222627200

Wed, 2020-09-23 22:06

LONDON: The fight against terrorism is far from over in Iraq despite the country freeing its cities from Daesh, President Barham Salih said on

Wednesday.

Speaking at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Salih said that “transnational extremism continues to exist in the forms of sleeping cells scattered across Iraq including the desert regions,” and that the country cannot let its guard down now.

He added that Iraq should not underestimate the danger represented by terrorism and the possibility that it may reemerge.

The president said he hoped to receive aid from friendly countries to help stop the financing of lawless organizations and extremism.

He added that low oil prices and the economic consequences of COVID-19 have caused major challenges to Iraq but that it continues to fight the pandemic. Iraq has recently recorded several thousand new coronavirus infections each day, and the total now exceeds 300,000.

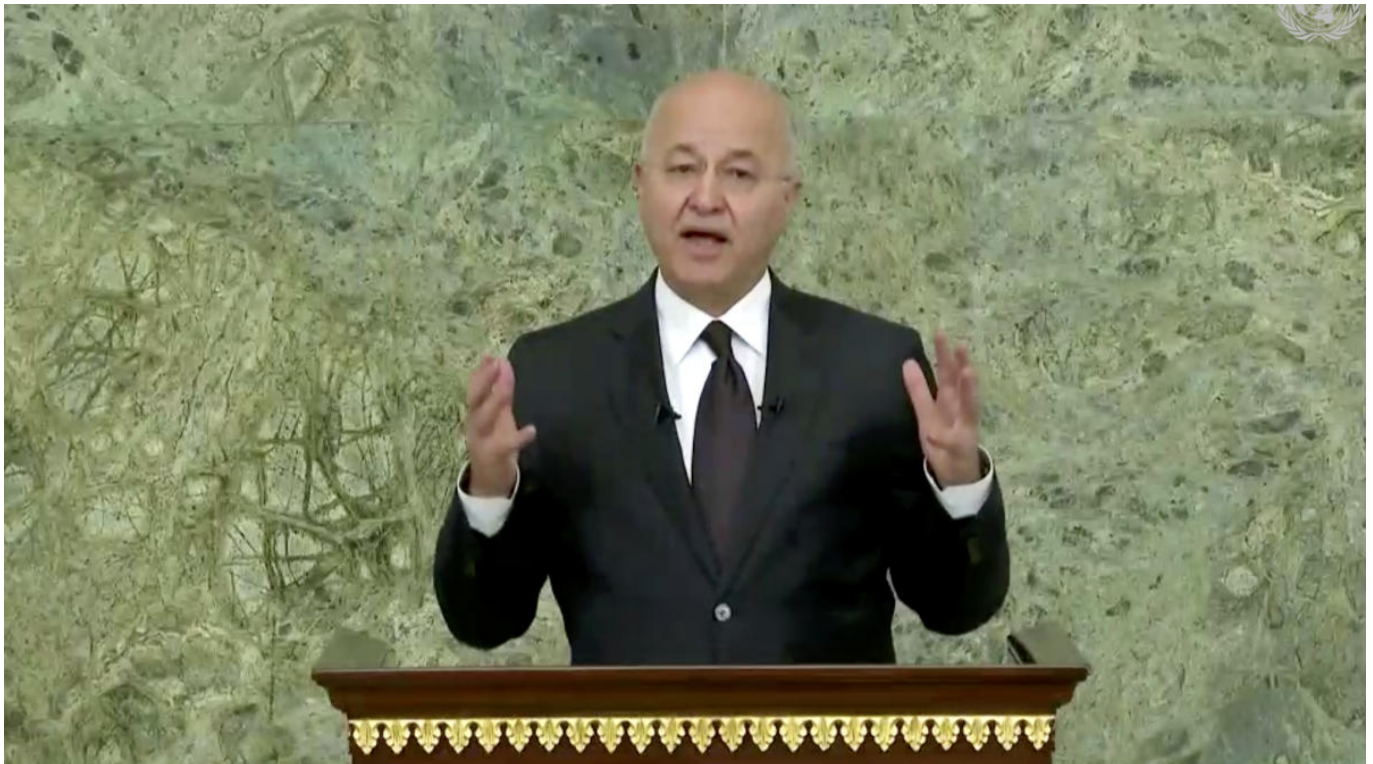
More than 8,000 people have died in the country so far and doctors are terrified of being attacked by the relatives of those who have died from the disease.

Salih also spoke about another scourge that has ravaged his country for years – endemic corruption.

He said the problem had “contributed to the destruction of Iraq for many years.”

Iraq is trying to tackle corruption and corrupt individuals and elections due to be held next year are a result of the demands of protesters for change, he said.

The elections must be free and fair, Salih said. He added that he hoped the UN would provide technical assistance to ensure transparency.



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Violence mounts against Iraqi doctors as COVID-19 cases spike  
First arrests in Iraq PM's anti-corruption drive

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## **UAE confirms 852 new COVID-19 cases, as cases almost double in Kuwait**

Author:

Tue, 2020-09-22 22:12

DUBAI: The UAE on Tuesday recorded 852 new cases of COVID-19, a jump from the previous day, bringing the total to 86,447.

The Ministry of Health and Prevention said 939 cases had recovered in the previous 24 hours, bringing the total to 76,025 since the pandemic emerged. The death toll stands at 405.

Meanwhile, Dubai Economy said it issued four fines to shops and gave warnings to 18 commercial establishments for not adhering to anti COVID-19 measures. Inspection teams have been carrying out daily tours to ensure that shopping centers, open markets and commercial businesses are complying with the government's preventative measures.

Dubai Economy also issued fresh guidelines for businesses to follow in order to further limit the spread of COVID-19.

Elsewhere, Kuwait recorded 719 new COVID-19 cases, almost double that of Monday which stood at 385. The total number of cases now stands at 100,683 and the death toll has reached 588 after three new deaths were registered.

Oman recorded 660 new COVID-19 cases and 12 deaths, bringing the total numbers to 94,711 and 865 respectively.



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UAE confirms one COVID-19 death, 679 new cases Saudi Arabia reports 30 new coronavirus deaths

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## [US calls on Houthis to halt attacks on Saudi Arabia](#)

Tue, 2020-09-22 21:36

RIYADH: The US on Tuesday called on Houthi militants in Yemen to stop launching attacks on Saudi Arabia.

The State Department said it was “deeply concerned” by the Iran-backed group’s aggression, including attacks on Marib city.

The statement comes after the militants have increased drone and missile attacks on Saudi Arabia in recent weeks and as the UN continues to push for a political settlement to the conflict.

Deputy Secretary Biegun and Under Secretary Hale joined a P5+3 meeting on Yemen. The Iranian-backed Houthis must stop their aggression and cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia. We call for the humanitarian crisis to be addressed and for the war to end.  
<https://t.co/lHeSH7q1Ue>

– Morgan Ortagus (@statedeptspox) [September 22, 2020](#)

“The United States remains deeply concerned by the Houthis’ aggression, supported by Iranian weapons shipments in violation of UN arms embargoes,” State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said.

“We call on the Houthis to immediately cease their cross-border attacks against Saudi Arabia and halt their attacks on the city of Marib, where nearly a million Yemenis have sought refuge since the beginning of the war.”

The strongly-worded warning also called on the Houthis to stop the “disgraceful treatment of journalists, opposition activists, and Yemeni Jews.”

And it contained the latest warning over a stricken oil tanker off Yemen’s coast which experts increasingly fear could explode and spark an environmental disaster.

“We call on the Houthis to cease their environmental brinkmanship and allow UN access to the Safer tanker before there is an oil spill or explosion that would bring further environmental and humanitarian calamity to Yemen, the Red Sea, and the region,” Ortagus said.

The department called on nations that had made aid pledges to Yemen to follow through and send the money across.



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