

Iraq's president warns fight against terrorism far from over

Author:

Zaynab Khojji

ID:

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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[Iraqi President Barham Salih](#)

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

[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

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/lHeSH7qlUe>

– 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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[State Department](#)

Houthi-controlled court tries more than 100 people including deputy minister
Yemen blames Houthis for polio resurgence

[Major fire breaks out at a factory near Iran's capital, no casualties – TV](#)

Tue, 2020-09-22 21:33

DUBAI: A fire broke out at an Iranian factory near Tehran on Tuesday, Iran's state TV reported, the latest in a string of fires and explosions, some of which have hit sensitive sites.

"There are no casualties ... firefighters have been dispatched to the factory in the Islamshahr county. Efforts to control and extinguish the widespread

fire continue," a fire department official told state TV, adding that the cause of the fire was under investigation. There have been several other incidents at facilities in the past months, including a fire at the underground Natanz nuclear facility in July which caused significant damage, but Iranian officials said operations were not affected.



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US announces new sanctions on Iran defense ministry, atomic energy agency 'Iran cannot be appeased': British MP urges harder line against Tehran

[Turkey, Greece agree to resume talks to resolve disputes](#)

Author:

AP

ID:

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Tue, 2020-09-22 15:47

ANKARA, Turkey: Turkey and Greece are ready to resume talks in a bid to overcome a dispute over maritime boundaries and rights to exploit oil and gas

resources, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's office said Tuesday. The statement followed his video conference meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and European Council President Charles Michel. During the meeting, Erdogan called for a regional conference that would gather all sides involved in the dispute – including Turkish Cypriots – and said the “momentum” for dialogue should be protected,” according to the statement.

The two neighboring NATO members have been locked in a tense standoff over energy exploitation rights in an area between Turkey's southern coast, several Greek islands and the war-divided island of Cyprus. Turkey sent a research vessel into the disputed waters this summer.

Following mediation efforts by Germany and others, Turkey pulled back the research vessel to port and both countries eased their naval presence and halted military exercises, paving the way for a dialogue.

It was not clear when and how the talks would begin. Erdogan told Merkel and Michel that “steps to be taken by Greece” would determine the course of the talks.

Greek-Turkish talks to resolve disputes were last held in 2016.

The Turkish leader also said he hoped that the next European Union summit would breathe new life into Turkish-EU ties, including allowing Turkish citizens visa-free travel rights to Europe and sealing a new agreement on migration.

EU members Greece and Cyprus had been pushing for EU sanctions against Turkey at the Sept. 24-25 summit meeting to due Turkey's search for energy inside Cyprus' economic zone. But the summit has been postponed for a week because Michel has gone into quarantine after a close collaborator was diagnosed with COVID-19.



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Erdogan ordered to back down in eastern Med
Turkish President Erdogan blinks first in eastern Mediterranean standoff