

[Egyptian army kills 10 militants during attack on Sinai base](#)

Sun, 2020-02-09 22:39

CAIRO: The Egyptian army said it had thwarted a terrorist attack on a security base on Sunday in the Sinai peninsula, killing 10 gunmen. Military spokesperson, Col. Tamer El-Rifai, said that the Egyptian armed forces prevented the terrorist attack on one of its security bases in North Sinai and a four-wheel drive vehicle used by the terrorists was also destroyed.

The standoff also killed two officers and left five others injured. The military spokesperson said the attack occurred at 5pm local time (3pm GMT)

“The search operations and the pursuit of terrorist elements are being conducted to eliminate them in the Al-Hadath region,” he said in a statement on his Facebook page.

The armed forces and the police also confirmed their continued efforts to eliminate and uproot terrorism.



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Egypt grapples with smuggling of artifacts
Egypt officials say 13 killed in Aswan road accident

Thousands rally in Morocco against Trump Mideast peace plan

Author:

Sun, 2020-02-09 20:35

RABAT: Thousands of demonstrators flooded the streets of the Moroccan capital Sunday to protest against a new US Middle East peace plan which the Palestinians say favors Israel.

Carrying Palestinian flags, the demonstrators, including local politicians and trade unionists, marched in Rabat chanting "Long Live Palestine."

They called for a boycott of American products, denounced the United States as "enemies of peace" and chanted "Palestine is not for sale."

Some of the demonstrators, who wore red-black-green-white scarves in the colors of the Palestinian standard, burned an Israeli flag and spoke against any attempt by Morocco "to normalize" ties with the Jewish state.

Morocco has warming but quiet relations with Israel, and no formal diplomatic ties.

Israel and Morocco opened "liaison" offices in each other's countries in the mid-1990s but Rabat closed them after an escalation of Palestinian-Israeli violence in 2000.

Elsewhere in North Africa, hundreds of Tunisians also protested Sunday against the US peace plan, in the eastern city of Sfax, an AFP journalist reported. Tunisia's powerful UGTT labor union, which organized the march, called the proposal an "accord of shame."

Last month US President Donald Trump unveiled his Middle East plan for peace between Israel and the Palestinians which the Palestinians have rejected as biased in favor of the Jewish state.

Under the plan, Israel would retain control of the disputed city of Jerusalem as its "undivided capital," and annex settlements on Palestinian lands.

Palestinians however want all of east Jerusalem to be the capital of any future state.

The plan has also been rejected by the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation – two bodies in which Morocco is a prominent member. After Trump unveiled the plan, the foreign minister of Morocco, a key US ally, said Rabat "appreciates the constructive efforts for peace deployed by the US administration for a durable solution in the Middle East."

Nasser Bourita went on to reiterate that Morocco's position is to support the creation of an independent Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital.





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Palestinian leaders hit back at Kushner claims Palestine to blame for West Bank violence

[Syrian army vows to keep up campaign against last rebel area](#)

Author:

By ALBERT AJI | AP

ID:

1581262958523551800

Sun, 2020-02-09 13:38

DAMASCUS: Syria's military vowed on Sunday to keep up its campaign to regain

control of the whole country, days after capturing large chunks of territory from the last rebel holdout in northwestern Syria.

Russia has heavily backed the Syrian government's offensive. The fighting led to the collapse of a fragile cease-fire that was negotiated with Turkey in 2018.

The advance of forces supporting Syrian President Bashar Assad into rebel-held areas of Idlib and Aleppo province has also sparked a largescale humanitarian crisis.

Nearly 600,000 people have fled the fighting since December. Most of the displaced are living in open-air shelters and temporary homes in freezing winter conditions closer to the Turkish border. Half of the displaced are believed to be children.

A main backer of the armed Syrian opposition, Turkey has sent in large military reinforcements into the rebel-held areas. But the buildup has not stopped the Syrian government advance.

Syrian military spokesman Gen. Ali Mayhoub said that government forces had gained a strategic advantage in recent days, according to a statement carried by Syria's state news agency. He said that Syrian troops advancing from around Aleppo's southern countryside had linked up with those coming from eastern Idlib.

The Syrian army had seized a geographical area of more than 600 square kilometers (230 square miles) and captured dozens of towns and villages, he added.

But the government campaign appears to be aimed at securing a strategic highway in rebel-controlled territory for now, rather than seizing the entire province and its the densely populated capital, Idlib.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said government troops were only a few kilometers (miles) from seizing full control of the strategic highway, know as M5. The highway links the national capital of Damascus with the country's north, which has for years been divided between government and opposition forces.

Turkey sent hundreds of military vehicles and troops into Idlib province in the past week. The buildup and the continued government advances sparked a rare clash on Feb. 3 between Turkish and Syrian soldiers that killed eight Turkish military personnel and 13 Syrian troops.

On Sunday, Mayhoub said the efforts to back the armed opposition "will not succeed in preventing the fast collapse" of the rebel groups. Damascus considers all armed opposition as "terrorist organizations."

Rebels, including some of the most radical militant groups, control much of Idlib province and parts of the neighboring Aleppo region. These areas are home to some 3 million people – many of them displaced from other parts of Syria.

On Friday, Turkey's Defense Ministry warned its army would respond "even more forcefully" to any attack on Turkish observation posts in northern Syria, adding: "Our observation posts will continue carrying out duties."



Main category:

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Syria army overruns key Idlib crossroads town

[Jailed brother of Algeria's ex-president launches appeal](#)

Author:

Amal BELALLOUFI, avec Aymeric VINCENOT à Paris | AFP

ID:

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Sun, 2020-02-09 13:07

BLIDA: An Algerian military court Sunday started hearing an appeal against the 15-year jail term for the brother of former president Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who was brought down amid anti-regime protests last year. Said Bouteflika, 62, had long served as a key presidential aide and was seen as the real power behind the presidency after the head of state suffered a

debilitating stroke in 2013.

Abdelaziz Bouteflika quit office in April last year following weeks of mass protests against his bid for a fifth term running the North African country. His brother Said was detained in May and sentenced in September, along with several other high-level regime officials, to 15 years in jail for “conspiring” against the state and undermining the authority of the army. The appeals hearing opened in the mid-morning under tight security and behind closed doors at the Military Court of Appeal in Blida, south of Algiers, according to local media.

Also in court to appeal their jail terms were two former intelligence chiefs and a former political party leader.

One was General Mohamed Lamine Mediene, known as “Toufik,” who had for 25 years headed the powerful Department of Intelligence and Security.

Also there were his former right-hand man, General Athmane “Bachir” Tartag, and Louisa Hanoune, who had served as secretary general of the left-wing Workers’ Party.

All four had allegedly met in March 2019 in a bid to derail plans by the army high command to force the departure of president Bouteflika.

Said Bouteflika allegedly wanted the intelligence bosses to dismiss the army chief of staff at the time, General Ahmed Gaid Salah.

Defense lawyers hope the four will be released after Algeria’s power balance shifted following the December 23 death of Gaid Salah at the age of 79.

“The person who, in our opinion, was at the origin of these proceedings has passed away,” said Mediene’s lawyer Farouk Kessentini.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

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Algerian president welcomes visiting Saudi foreign minister

[Elderly Chinese woman fully recovers from coronavirus in UAE](#)

Author:

Sun, 2020-02-09 19:14

DUBAI: An elderly Chinese woman has fully recovered in the UAE after she had coronavirus diagnosed.

Liu Yujia, 73, who was among seven people in the Emirates infected, contracted the illness in the Chinese city of Wuhan, the center of the outbreak.

On Sunday, the Ministry of Health and Prevention said she had been treated at an isolation ward since Jan. 23 and had “recovered fully and can carry on with life normally”

Liu thanked the UAE for the medical care she received and the treatment given to three of her family members who were also infected.

“I would like to thank the Consul General of China and the representative of UAE’s Ministry of Health for their visit,” she said as she met Chinese consular and Emirati health officials.

The ministry’s Assistant Under-Secretary for Health Centres and Clinics, Dr. Hussein Al-Rand, said Liu’s case raised hope that other cases in the UAE can also be fully recovered.

“Individuals diagnosed are receiving proper health care in accordance with leading World Health Organisation standards, with each individual case being monitored until full recovery is attained,” he added.

Consul General Li Xuhang said: “UAE leadership, government and people have demonstrated the true meaning of solidarity with the People’s Republic of China in confronting this latest outbreak.”

Along with Liu and her three family members, another Chinese man and two Filipinos have also had the coronavirus diagnosed.

The coronavirus emerged in central China at the end of last year and has killed at least 800 people and infected more than 37,200 have been infected.



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Philippines says coronavirus checks in place for expats in UAE, China
Two new cases of coronavirus in UAE