

Algeria independence war veteran to stay in prison: lawyers

Author:

AFP

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Thu, 2019-08-01 12:24

ALGEIRS: Algeria's judiciary has refused to provisionally release a well-known independence war veteran detained for allegedly insulting the army, his lawyers said.

Lakhdar Bouregaa, 86, was arrested at the end of June for "insulting a state body" and "taking part in a scheme to demoralize the army with the aim of harming the nation's defense."

His supporters have put his detention down to his criticism of army chief Ahmed Gaid Saleh, Algeria's de facto strongman since longtime president Abdelaziz Bouteflika's fall in early April.

"The investigating magistrate... has rejected the request for provisional release made by the Lawyers Collective for Change and Dignity on behalf of Lakhdar Bouregaa," the lawyers' group said Wednesday on Facebook.

The request to release the octogenarian was based on "health reasons, backed up by a medical file," the lawyers said.

The charges – which could carry a sentence of up to 10 years in jail – have provoked widespread indignation in Algeria.

Bouregaa was a commander of the National Liberation Army (ALN) – which fought the French colonial power – and a founder in 1963 of the Front for Socialist Forces, one of Algeria's oldest opposition parties.

Ahead of his arrest, he had taken part in the demonstrations that have rocked Algeria since February – initially against Bouteflika, and then the wider establishment, after the president was forced to resign.

Bouregaa is one of many alleged "prisoners of conscience" that the protest movement is demanding be freed.



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[UK FM to Iran: There will be no tanker swap](#)

Thu, 2019-08-01 15:42

BANGKOK: Britain on Thursday ruled out exchanging an Iranian tanker detained by Gibraltar for a British-flagged tanker seized by Iran in the Gulf, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said while on a trip to the Thai capital Bangkok.

"We are not going to barter: if people or nations have detained UK-flagged illegally then the rule of law and rule of international law must be upheld."

"We are not going to barter a ship that was detained legally with a ship that was detained illegally: that's not the way that Iran will come in from the cold," he said. "So I am afraid some kind of barter or haggle or linkage is not on the table."

Tensions have spiked between Iran and Britain since after Iranian commandos

seized a British-flagged tanker last month. That came after British forces captured an Iranian oil tanker near Gibraltar, accused of violating sanctions on Syria.

Meanwhile, Russia's foreign ministry said the US and European nations attempts to create a naval coalition to patrol the Strait of Hormuz is merely an attempt to pressurize Iran.

(With Reuters)



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[**US has intelligence that Osama bin**](#)

Laden's son is dead

Author:

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Wed, 2019-07-31 19:39

WASHINGTON: US intelligence has received information that Al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden's son Hamza has died, NBC News reported Wednesday. NBC said three US officials had confirmed they had information of Hamza bin Laden's death, but gave no details of the date or place, and did not indicate if they had confirmed the information.

Questioned by reporters in the Oval Office, President Donald Trump did not confirm or deny the report.

"I don't want to comment on it," he said.

In February the US government put a \$1 million bounty on Bin Laden's head, saying the man sometimes dubbed the "crown prince of jihad" was "emerging as a leader in the Al-Qaeda franchise."

He had put out audio and video messages calling for attacks on the United States and other countries, especially to avenge his father's killing by US forces in Pakistan in May 2011.

Documents seized in the raid on his father's house in Abbottabad suggested Hamza was being groomed as heir to the Al-Qaeda leadership, according to the US State Department.

US forces also found a video of the wedding of Hamza, who was thought to have been 30, to the daughter of another senior Al-Qaeda official that is believed to have taken place in Iran.

Hamza bin Laden's whereabouts have never been pinpointed. He was believed to have been under house arrest in Iran but reports suggest he also may have resided in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria.

The group behind the deadly September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, Al-Qaeda's prominence as a radical Islamist group has faded over the past decade in the shadow of the Daesh group.

But branches and associated jihadist groups in Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria and elsewhere have underscored its continuing potency.



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Author:

Wed, 2019-07-31 23:20

US Treasury department imposes sanctions on Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.



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Lebanon launches major campaign to slash alarming rise in obesity

Author:

Wed, 2019-07-31 23:03

BEIRUT: Lebanon on Wednesday launched a major campaign aimed at cutting rising levels of obesity in the country.

The health risks associated with being overweight will be highlighted as part of the awareness drive announced by Lebanese Health Minister Jamil Jabak.

The initiative comes in the wake of a World Health Organization (WHO) report which ranked Lebanon sixth among nine Middle Eastern and North African countries on a list of the world's most overweight countries. Lebanon was preceded by Kuwait, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Libya.

Children and young people will be among the groups specifically targeted in the campaign running under the title, "Your health cannot bear it; lose some weight."

Lebanese officials aim to shed light on the health dangers associated with obesity and how to prevent them, focusing on chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Campaign coordinator, Dr. Akram Shatti, from the Lebanese Society of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Lipids, told Arab News that obesity in Lebanon had worsened due a growth in the number of fast-food restaurants, and increased consumption of fatty and processed foods.

Lifestyle changes were also a factor, he said, with many Lebanese spending long hours sat watching television or playing video games. He pointed out that the rate of obesity in people aged 20 and above ranged between 20 and 28 percent.

"Endocrinologists in Lebanon are beginning to notice a rise in diabetes rates in young people, and this is caused by obesity. It is true that there are hormonal and genetic causes, but we have also seen a change in the daily lifestyle in the Middle East and GCC countries resulting specifically from a lack of activity," Shatti added.

"Lebanon does not have accurate statistics on the impact of previous awareness campaigns, but we have begun to witness a greater awareness of obesity, and patients now visit doctors on their own to seek help in fear of complications caused by obesity."

Jabak said parents and carers were partly to blame for the country's obesity problems. "Three percent of the children in Lebanon suffer from obesity,

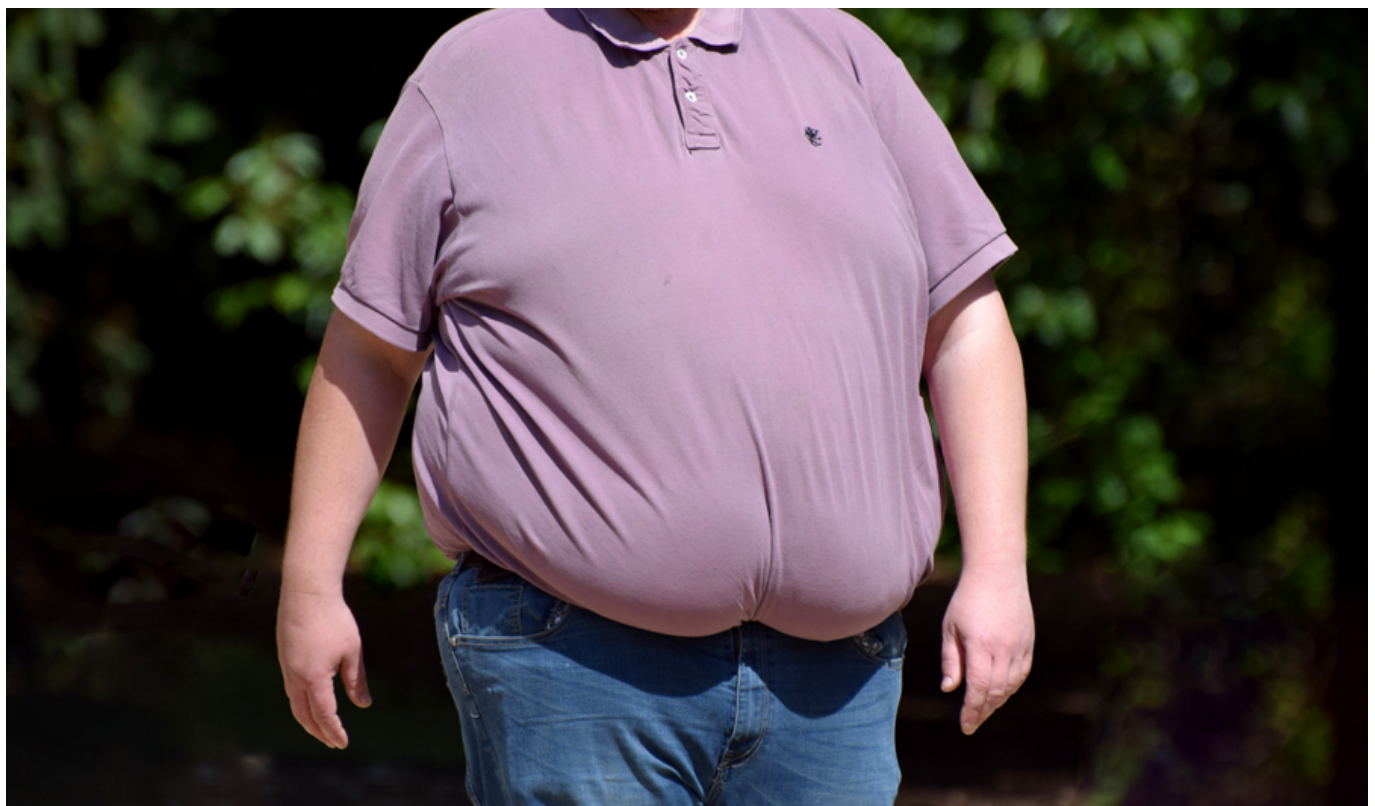
which may be mostly caused by genetics, but all other children are born with a normal weight that gradually changes due to a lifestyle that leads them to gain weight and become obese when they grow up.

“It is sad that raising children depends on rewarding them with candies and fast foods, which are filled with fat and grease. This leads to the development of habits they cannot break when they are older because they grow to prefer unhealthy food to home-cooked food, and this puts them on the road to obesity,” added Jabak.

The minister stressed that working out was the primary mechanism for fighting obesity and boosting immunity and he urged parents to encourage their children to do more exercise instead of spending hours on electronic devices.

Last year, the Lebanese Ministry of Health organized a national day to combat obesity in children after the country’s former health minister, Ghassan Hasbani, revealed figures showing obesity rates among Lebanon’s youngsters rose to 13 percent between 1990 and 2014, one of the highest levels in the Middle East.

The 2018 campaign gave children 10 tips to apply on a daily basis, including sleeping for at least 10 hours, laughing heartily nine times, hugging lovingly, drinking seven glasses of water, eating fruit, grains and protein, working out for one hour, and spending no more than 60 minutes playing video games and watching television.



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Gulf countries warned on obesity's cancer risks Obesity, bad nutrition, climate change pose triple danger, commission says