

Sudanese women protesters sentenced to 20 lashes, month in jail

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Sat, 2019-03-09 18:40

CAIRO: Nine female Sudanese protesters were sentenced on Saturday to 20 lashes and one month in prison for rioting, the Democratic Alliance of Lawyers said, a day after President Omar Al-Bashir ordered the release of all women detained in anti-government demonstrations.

Bashir declared a state of emergency last month that produced a raft of measures including the establishment of emergency courts across the country such as the one in Khartoum that convicted the nine women.

The Democratic Alliance of Lawyers, part of the Sudanese Professionals' Association, the main organizer of the protests, has said more than 800 people have been tried in the emergency courts.

Protests against Bashir and his National Congress Party have taken place almost daily since Dec. 19 in towns and cities all over Sudan, in what has become the most sustained popular challenge to him since he took power in a coup 30 years ago.

On Friday, International Women's Day, Bashir ordered the release of all women arrested in connection with the demonstrations.

Hundreds turned out for protests in Khartoum and Omdurman that day, undeterred by the emergency measures.

Bashir has also dissolved the central government, replaced state governors with security officials, expanded the powers of security forces and banned unlicensed public gatherings.

The Sudanese Professionals' Association called for fresh demonstrations in Omdurman on Sunday.



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Hundreds protest against Sudan government after Friday prayers
Bashir names new Sudan central bank chief amid economic woes

[Libya's Tripoli airport closed due to unidentified drone](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Sat, 2019-03-09 18:30

TRIPOLI: The airport in the Libyan capital Tripoli was closed on Saturday due to an unidentified drone flying in the area, the airport's director said. Residents have repeatedly spotted drones flying over Tripoli in the past few days but the reason is not clear.

Flights from Tripoli's Matiga airport have been halted until further notice, said its director Lutfi Al-Tayeb.

People in the capital have been on edge due to rumors that the eastern-based Libya National Army (LNA) loyal to Khalifa Haftar might seek to take it after gaining control of much of the south.

Haftar has not said he wants to march on Tripoli but a LNA website carried an unsourced report this week saying it could happen, adding that the LNA was working with people inside the city.

The United Nations, alarmed about the possibility of a military escalation, is mediating between Haftar, who is allied to a parallel government in the east, and Tripoli premier Fayez Al-Serraj who heads the UN-backed administration.

The UN has been trying for years to pull the oil producer out of conflict but made little progress.



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[matiga airport](#)

Libya's national oil company to reopen major oil field

Low visibility, rough seas warning for UAE residents due to high winds

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Sat, 2019-03-09 22:01

ABU DHABI: UAE's National Centre of Meteorology (NCM) issued a statement on Saturday warning seafarers to exercise caution in the Arabian Gulf and drivers to take extra precautions due to poor visibility caused by sandstorms and high winds.

According to the NCM, winds with speeds reaching 55kph per hour will cause rough seas and wave heights could reach up eight feet by 10am on Sunday. In the statement, the center expected visibility to drop to less than 2,000 meters, urging drivers to properly follow the traffic rules.



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UAE ministry sends out weather warning ahead of papal visitSevere weather

[Daesh attack on US-led coalition wounds Syria fighters](#)

Author:

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1552147350262317400

Sat, 2019-03-09 15:52

BEIRUT: A suicide car bomb targeting US forces in northern Syria wounded at least two allied fighters Saturday, a monitor said, with Daesh claiming the attack.

A terrorist "driving a car bomb" hit a convoy that included a US armored vehicle from the international anti-Daesh coalition and Kurdish fighters in the city of Manbij, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The two wounded fighters were from the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the Britain-based monitor said.

"No US soldiers were injured or killed today," coalition spokesman Sean Ryan told AFP.

Daesh claimed the attack by an "explosive-laden vehicle" via its Amaq propaganda arm.

The attack is the third in the past two months targeting the US-led coalition and its allies in northern Syria.

On January 16, four Americans were among 19 people killed in a suicide attack in the city claimed by Daesh.

Manbij is a former Daesh stronghold that is now held by a military council affiliated to the SDF.

The city constitutes a major point of contention between Syria's Kurdish minority, which maintains de facto autonomy in parts of northern and northeastern Syria, and neighboring Turkey.

The extremist attacks followed US President Donald Trump's announcement in December that he would withdraw American troops from Syria, as he declared Daesh had been defeated.

The White House later said around 200 American "peacekeeping" soldiers would remain in northern Syria.

The SDF is currently battling to wipe out the final scrap of Daesh territory close to Syria's border with Iraq.

After a lightning offensive that saw it seize large swathes of Iraq and Syria in 2014, Daesh's self-declared "caliphate" has crumbled under pressure from multiple offensives, but the terrorists remain able to launch deadly attacks. Syria's multi-fronted war has killed more than 360,000 people since it began in 2011 with President Bashar Assad's regime bloodily suppressing protests.



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Citizenship stripping of Daesh teenager 'stain' on UK government conscience:
Labour MP Official: Baby of British Daesh bride dies in Syria

[Algeria orders early university holiday as students spur protests](#)

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Sat, 2019-03-09 13:07

ALGIERS: Algerian authorities on Saturday ordered an early start to the spring university holiday, an apparent attempt to weaken two weeks of student-led protests against President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. The Higher Education Ministry's decision came a day after tens of thousands

of demonstrators packed central Algiers to challenge the veteran leader's 20-year-old rule in the biggest protests in the capital in 28 years.

Without giving a reason for the move, the Ministry said in a decree that the spring break would be brought forward by 10 days, starting on Sunday instead of March 20.

Algerians desperate for jobs and angry at unemployment, corruption and an elderly elite seen as out of touch with the young have taken to the streets since Feb. 22 to protest the 82-year-old's plans to seek a fifth term in an April 18 election.

Many of the demonstrations – the largest since 1991 when the army canceled elections Islamists were poised to win – started at university premises before spilling out onto the streets.

The ailing Bouteflika is in hospital in Geneva and has rarely been seen in public since suffering a stroke in 2013.

On Thursday he issued his first warning to protesters, saying the unrest, now entering its third week, could create chaos in the oil- and natural gas-producing North African country.

Bouteflika has offered to limit his term after the election and has vowed to change the "system" that runs the country, but the protest movement has galvanized discontent among different sectors, particularly students and young families.

Some long-time allies of Bouteflika, including members of the ruling party, have expressed support for the protesters, revealing cracks within a ruling elite long seen as invincible.

Friday's protests were largely peaceful but some clashes between youths and police broke out in the evening and state media said 110 protesters and 112 policemen had been hurt in the unrest.



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Algeria's Bouteflika warns against infiltration of protests
Social media breaks 'wall of fear' for Algeria protesters