

Jordanian army kills four smugglers crossing border from Syria

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Sun, 2018-11-25 17:40

AMMAN: Jordanian border guards killed four people and detained two others attempting to sneak into the Kingdom Sunday, the army said, adding that it had also foiled two bids to smuggle drugs.

"An infiltration operation was foiled after watching six people attempt to cross the Jordanian (border)," an unnamed military official said in a statement.

"The rules of engagement were implemented leading to the death of four and the wounding of two others who were transported to the relevant authorities." Separately, the army said "two bids to smuggle a large quantity of drugs" had been thwarted.

In the first operation, border guards confiscated 362,000 tablets of Captagon, a popular amphetamine, and 50,000 tablets of Tramadol, a powerful opiate-based painkiller.

In the second, they seized 28 bricks of hashish and 72,000 Captagon tablets. The statement did not specify which neighboring country the smugglers or the infiltrators were coming from.

Jordan's army regularly announces that it has foiled attempts to infiltrate or smuggle drugs into the Kingdom from neighboring Syria.

Some 650,000 Syrian refugees have registered with the United Nations in Jordan since fleeing their country's seven-year war, which started with anti-government protests in 2011.

Amman estimates the true number of refugees is closer to 1.3 million.

Jordanian authorities have arrested and imprisoned dozens of jihadists trying to sneak across the border to fight in Syria.

Captagon is one of the most commonly used drugs among fighters in the Syrian war.

But dozens of drug traffickers have also been detained by Jordanian authorities.

Jordan's interior ministry estimates 85 percent of the drugs it seizes have been earmarked for smuggling outside the Kingdom.



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Syria regime and rebels swap prisoners, Turkey says Jordan, Iraq move forward with border industrial zone

[Iranian earthquake leaves 200 injured, tremors felt in Baghdad and other Iraqi provinces](#)

Sun, 2018-11-25 19:52

BAGHDAD: A magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck western Iran near its border with Iraq on Sunday night, with Baghdad and other Iraqi provinces feeling the tremors. It struck in the same area where another quake last year killed over 600 people.

Iran said on Sunday that no fatalities had been reported but that about 200 people were injured after an earthquake of magnitude 6.3 struck near its western border with Iraq, Iranian state TV reported.

Sunday night's earthquake struck near Sarpol-e Zahab in Iran's Kermanshah province, which suffered half of the casualties from last year's quake and

where some still remain homeless.

State television in Iran reported the quake. Authorities said six rescue teams were immediately deployed after the quake stopped.

Morteza Salimi of Iran's Red Crescent told state TV that since the area was reconstructed after the last year's quake, officials hope there won't be casualties.

The earthquake had a depth of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles), making it very shallow. Shallow earthquakes have broader damage.

The earthquake was felt in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, and various provinces in Iraq, according to reports.

Iran is located on major seismic faults and experiences an earthquake per day on average. In 2003, a magnitude 6.6 earthquake flattened the historic city of Bam in southern Iran, killing 26,000 people.

Last year's earthquake near Sarpol-e Zahab, a predominantly Kurdish town, had a magnitude of 7.3.



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Indonesia receives foreign aid a week after powerful earthquake4.0 magnitude earthquake hits southeastern Saudi cities

Morocco navy finds 15 migrants dead in stranded boat

Author:

AFP

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1543159482680768800

Sat, 2018-11-24 18:56

RABAT: Morocco's navy on Saturday found the bodies of 15 migrants from sub-Saharan Africa on board a boat stranded at sea for days and rescued 53 survivors, a military source said.

Coast Guards recovered "15 lifeless corpses" from the vessel in the Mediterranean Sea after it was left drifting for four days following engine failure on its way to Spain, the source said.

The 53 other survivors on board, including eight women, were taken to the port of Nador.

Increasing numbers of Moroccans and sub-Saharan migrants are seeking to enter Spain, either by sea or by smuggling themselves into the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, which are in Morocco and are the only European territories in Africa.

The International Organization for Migration says that some 51,000 migrants have arrived in Spain by sea this year, and that over 630 have died or gone missing trying.

On Friday the Moroccan navy said it rescued 289 migrants, mostly from sub-Saharan African off Nador.

Moroccan authorities say that between January and the end of September they stopped some 68,000 illegal attempts to cross into Europe and took down 122 people smuggling gangs.



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[Iraq floods leave 21 dead in two days: health ministry](#)

Author:

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1543154143920307200

Sun, 2018-11-25 13:45

BAGHDAD: At least 21 people have died and tens of thousands displaced by heavy rains that have battered Iraq over two days, the health ministry and United Nations said on Sunday.

Women and children were among the dead, health ministry spokesman Seif Al-Badr told AFP. Some had drowned, but others had died in car accidents, were electrocuted, or were trapped when their houses collapsed.

At least 180 more were injured, he added.

Iraq and neighboring countries have been hit by heavier-than-average rainfall

in recent weeks, resulting in deaths and widespread damage. The country's north has borne the brunt of it, and the UN's Iraq office said the downpour had forced tens of thousands of people out of their homes. An estimated 10,000 people in Salahaddin province and 15,000 people in Nineveh are in desperate need of help, including families living in displacement camps, the UN said.

In the Al-Sharqat district in Salahaddin, about 250 kilometers (150 miles) north of Baghdad, thousands of homes were left totally underwater by the rains.

And in Mosul, the Daesh group's onetime bastion in Iraq, the heavy storms submerged two floating bridges along the Tigris river, which bisects the city.

They were the only way to move between Mosul's eastern and western halves, after its bridges were all bombed by the anti-IS fight.

Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi announced Friday he was establishing a "crisis cell" of security forces and local authorities to coordinate a response.

The ministries of electricity, oil, and trade had also indicated their willingness to help.

Iraq is one of the hottest countries on earth but when heavy rains do hit, they can result in casualties because of deteriorating public infrastructure. In 2015, 58 Iraqis were killed in floods and cases of electrocution due to intense downpours.



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To reclaim Baghdad, Iraqi artists grapple with its ghosts

[2 detained after shooting near Austrian Embassy in Turkey](#)

Author:

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1543149244919943900

Sun, 2018-11-25 (All day)

ISTANBUL: Turkish authorities detained two people following a drive-by shooting near the Austrian Embassy in capital Ankara early Sunday. The governor's office said in a statement the two suspects were detained and their weapon confiscated. It said the suspects were thought to be under the influence of alcohol after having drunk late into the night.

The governor's office said the suspects shot into the air from a moving car near the Austrian Embassy at 0400 am (0100 GMT). There were no reports of damage or injuries.

Official Anadolu news agency said they were in a white car and security forces briefly closed down roads near the embassy in Ankara. According to the agency, crime scene investigators found many shell casings overnight.

Video from the night showed police at the scene and numerous police cars. It is unclear if the embassy was the target. All was normal in the area Sunday morning.

In August, three bullets hit the gate and reinforced window outside the US Embassy in Ankara in a drive-by shooting. No one was injured. The US embassy is located on the same boulevard as the Austrian one, about 130 meters (427 feet) away.



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Syria regime and rebels swap prisoners, Turkey says Turkey uneasy about US plan for observation posts on Syria border