

Heavy rains create disruption, spark flood warnings in Egypt

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Sat, 2018-11-24 18:12

CAIRO: Egypt's Meteorological Authority warned on Friday that several areas in south and north Sinai are expecting floods this week while heavy rainfall created disruption in several governorates in Egypt over the weekend.

November and December often sees streets of Egypt witnessing disruption due to the weak infrastructure and unreadiness for heavy rainfall.

On Friday, a similar situation occurred on the main Ninetieth Road with huge amounts of water filling and blocking the way affecting traffic and raising concerns, reminiscent of April's major disruption that damaged houses, shopping malls and cars.

"We have a new director for the city and he was appointed to solve these issues after the former one was sacked, yet we are in the exact same position now," a New Cairo resident told Arab news on anonymity.

"Roads and houses are threatened by heavy rainfall and this is a new city. It's disappointing to see low attention from the administration of the city toward a critical issue like this. I see it coming, we will witness another catastrophe here," they added.

New Cairo is considered one of the most affected city affected amid heavy rainfalls. Videos and photos were posted on social media showing drowning and blocked streets.

"New Cairo is drowning again ... If you have cars in your garages remove it just in case", posted Amira Mousa, a New Cairo resident.

The Traffic Police department has beefed up the presence of relief vehicles along the roads across Cairo to get prepared for unlikely incidents, while they installed radars on highways to avoid rain-related accidents.

The department has intensified coordination with different security directorates to observe roads, and report regularly on its status.

In a statement on Saturday, Egypt's Meteorological Authority said more clouds will prevail in most areas accompanied by rainfall on the northern coast, seashores and Sinai, in addition to a significant drop in temperature.

Winds will get stronger on the Mediterranean and Red Sea, disrupting sea navigation on Saturday, the statement said.

The Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation warned citizens of the coastal areas and Sinai of the risks of rainfall and floods, stressing the need to exercise caution and take the necessary measures to avoid damage caused by rain in these areas.

A periodic update of Egypt's rainfall maps is carried out with a map every 6 hours, the ministry added.

The ministry raised a state of high alert, forming emergency rooms in the governorates and linking them with a central operations room in the ministry, to deal with bottlenecks and curb any risks of floods and their consequences.

Our pre-emptive work has been completed to clear the canal networks to cope with any possible floods. All the official entities have been informed of the forecast to take the necessary measures”, said Eng. Abdullatif Khalid, head of the irrigation sector.





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Thunderstorms and rains expected across Saudi Arabia starting Thursday Flights departing from Kuwait International Airport suspended due to bad weather

[Daesh attacks kills 47 US-backed fighters in east Syria: monitor](#)

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1543069739741915700

Sat, 2018-11-24 14:10

LONDON: Daesh has killed 47 US-backed fighters in two days in an attack launched from its embattled holdout in eastern Syria, a war monitor said Saturday.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) Kurdish-led alliance backed by the US-led

coalition is battling to expel the militants from a pocket in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor on the Iraqi border.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said the jihadists broke out of that pocket on Friday to attack a nearby village where SDF fighters and coalition advisers are based.

"IS launched a broad attack on the village of Al-Bahra next to its holdout, taking advantage of the fog," Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said using a name for Daesh.

Abdel Rahman said 47 SDF fighters were killed in the attack, and violent clashes continued to rage on Saturday as coalition air planes carried out air strikes in the area.

Twenty-seven Daesh militants were killed in clashes and air strikes in the same period, according to the Observatory, which says it relies on sources inside Syria for its information.

The monitor said coalition raids has also killed 17 civilians, including five children, in the Daesh-held pocket since Friday.

Coalition spokesman Sean Ryan said he had not received any reports of civilian casualties, and insisted its air strikes had been "very limited due to the weather."

The anti-Daesh alliance has repeatedly denied previous reports of civilians killed in its air strikes, and said it does its utmost to avoid targeting non-combatants.

Deir Ezzor activist Omar Abu Leila said the attack on Al-Bahra was "very scary" and that Daesh fighters were able to move quickly "taking advantage of the fog."

Daesh overran large swathes of Syria and neighboring Iraq in 2014, proclaiming a "caliphate" in land it controlled but has lost most of it to offensives by multiple forces in both countries.

In Syria, the militants are largely confined to the pocket in Deir Ezzor, but they also have a presence in vast Badia desert that stretches across the country to the Iraqi border.

Since 2014, the US-led coalition has acknowledged direct responsibility for over 1,100 civilian deaths in Syria and Iraq, but rights groups put the number much higher.

Syria's war has killed more than 360,000 people and displaced millions since its started in 2011 with the brutal repression of anti-government protests.



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Suspected Daesh gunmen kill nine in southern Libya
Daesh claims attacks in West Africa caused 118 casualties

[Turkey uneasy about US plan for observation posts on Syria border](#)

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Sat, 2018-11-24 11:21

ISTANBUL: Turkey is uneasy about US plans to set up “observation posts” in Syria along parts of its border with Turkey, Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar said on Saturday.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said on Wednesday the United States was setting up the posts to help keep the focus on clearing the final Daesh militant strongholds in Syria.

The United States has long complained that tension between Turkey and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) – which includes the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia – has at times slowed progress on the fight against Islamic State. Akar said he told US Chief of Staff Joseph Dunford and other US officials during a recent visit to Canada that setting up the posts would have a very negative impact on perceptions of the United States in Turkey.

“During our talks with both political and civilian interlocutors we repeatedly expressed our unease in various ways,” he said. “I think actions like this will make the complicated situation in the region even more complicated.”

Turkey is angry at US support for the YPG, which it views as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) waging a decades-long insurgency on Turkish soil. The PKK is designated a terrorist group by Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

“Nobody should doubt that the Turkish Armed forces and the Republic of Turkey will take the necessary steps against all kinds of risks and threats from across its borders,” he said.

“We expect our US allies to immediately cut their ties with the terrorist YPG, who are not in the slightest bit different from the PKK,” Akar added. Daesh is still present in eastern Syria in a pocket east of the Euphrates River near the border with Iraq.

President Donald Trump’s administration hopes that the US-backed fight against Daesh in its last foothold in northeastern Syria will end within months. But a top US diplomat recently said American forces will remain to ensure the “enduring defeat” of the militant group.



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Turkey indicts Gulen for 2016 assassination of Russian envoy
Erdogan’s AKP gets local election boost from nationalists

Erdogan's AKP gets local election boost from nationalists

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Sat, 2018-11-24 10:54

ISTANBUL: Turkey's nationalist MHP will support President Tayyip Erdogan's AK Party candidates in local elections in three key cities next year, the MHP leader said on Saturday, in a boost to the AKP's election prospects.

The AK Party and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) formed an alliance before presidential elections last June, but were subsequently at loggerheads over a disagreement about the MHP's call for an amnesty for some jailed criminals.

A month ago MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli said his party would not seek an alliance with the AK Party in the March 2019 municipal elections which are being held across Turkey.

At the time his comments triggered a weakening of the lira over concerns that it would lead to political instability.

However, Bahçeli announced a change of position on Saturday saying the MHP would not put forward city mayoral candidates for Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, Turkey's three biggest cities.

"Whoever the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) candidates are in these three big cities our support will be total," Bahçeli told officials from his party in a speech in Antalya.

The MHP's candidates in other municipalities across Turkey would continue to stand, he said, adding there was no "secret agreement" behind his party's decision.

It was not clear what prompted the change in Bahçeli's position.

Bahçeli and his MHP party had been staunch critics of Erdogan's AK Party before they reached agreement on their election alliance this year. Their alliance had been expected to continue despite last month's decision not to cooperate in the local elections.

The local elections themselves will have little impact on the balance of power in Turkey generally.

Under the presidential system ushered in by the June elections, Erdogan already wields extensive power. However his AK Party requires the support of MHP lawmakers to achieve a majority and push through legislation in parliament.



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Turkey indicts Gulen for 2016 assassination of Russian envoyEU overstepped brief by calling for Kurdish leader's release, says Turkey

[Suspected Daesh gunmen kill nine in southern Libya](#)

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1543046175640396300

Sat, 2018-11-24 07:47

BENGAZI, Libya: Gunmen on Friday raided a town deep in Libya's southern desert, killing nine people and kidnapping several others, a resident said, with officials blaming the attack on the militant group Daesh.

A military source said the attackers had occupied a police station in the oasis town of Tazerbo, north of Kufra, until residents expelled them. The

source also said the attackers were believed to belong to Daesh. The town – which was a resting point for tourists going on Sahara camping tours before Libya plunged into chaos in 2011 – listed six residents on its website as having been killed. A resident said nine people had been killed and 10 wounded, adding that the attackers had kidnapped several policemen and civilians. Daesh has staged several attacks on southern towns since withdrawing into the desert after losing its main stronghold, the coastal city of Sirte, late in 2016.



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Libyan wealth fund to hire auditors in push to unfreeze assets