

# El-Alamein International Airport prepares to receive more international flights

Author:

Mon, 2021-07-26 01:21

CAIRO: Days after Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's inspection tour in New Alamein, a city in the northwest of the country, Minister of Civil Aviation Mohamed Manar has spoken of the need to prepare El-Alamein International Airport to receive more flights.

This came during his tour of the airport, which serves the North Coast region and New Alamein, and is considered one of the important regional airports.

During the tour, Manar inspected the travel and arrival halls, passport counters, baggage belts, the control tower and the airstrip, and was told of the readiness of the equipment for ground services.

He was also briefed about the application of security measures, as well as the implementation of preventive measures to ensure the safety of passengers and airport workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The minister said that Egypt's political leadership attached great importance to the New Alamein (project), which will provide many investment opportunities.

The North Coast project contains a large number of tourist resorts with distinctive coastal villages and charming Egyptian beaches.

The Egyptian president has spoken of the need to prepare to receive more trips to activate internal and external tourist numbers.

New Alamein is the second major project implemented by the Egypt's Ministry of Housing after the New Administrative Capital project, with the target population for 2030 being about 4 million people.

New Alamein has witnessed the implementation of a number of residential and service projects, including the beach towers project: 15 towers are to be finished in the first phase, and eight towers in the second.



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## [Air traffic between Russia, Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh to resume in August](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-07-26 00:07

CAIRO: The Russian Embassy in Egypt has announced the resumption of Russian air traffic to the cities of Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh in August, after a hiatus of nearly six years.

The embassy said in a statement on its official Facebook page that on July 23 representatives of the Russian government's Anti-Coronavirus Operations Center met to consider the resumption of flights between Russia and the Egyptian cities of Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh, and decided to restart air traffic on Aug. 9.

The embassy said that the return of travel would be at a rate of five flights a week from Moscow to Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh.

The embassy also confirmed that the decision to increase the number of flights to Egyptian resorts would depend on the outcome of the Russian delegation's visit to Egypt to assess the latest situation. Air traffic between Egypt and Russia was suspended in 2015 after a Russian passenger plane crashed in Sinai following a terrorist act. Air traffic between Russia and Cairo Airport resumed in 2018, while charter flights from Russia to Egyptian tourist resorts continued to be suspended until a set of safety requirements requested by Russia were implemented. "In general, we are ready to receive Russian tourists in Egypt, with any numbers and trips, whether in Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada or the rest of the Egyptian tourist resorts. Stakeholders from tour operators and owners of private airlines should try to free themselves from bureaucratic restrictions and the lobby that works against their interests," a source at the Egyptian Ministry of Civil Aviation said.



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# Tunisia's president sacks prime minister, freezes parliament

Sun, 2021-07-25 23:41

TUNIS: Tunisia's president said on Sunday he was dismissing the prime minister and freezing parliament in a major escalation of political feuding in the democratic country following protests in several cities.

President Kais Saied said he would assume executive authority with the assistance of a new prime minister, prompting the biggest challenge yet to a 2014 constitution that split powers between president, prime minister and parliament.

"Many people were deceived by hypocrisy, treachery and robbery of the rights of the people," he said in a statement carried on state media.

"I warn any who think of resorting to weapons... and whoever shoots a bullet, the armed forces will respond with bullets," he added.

Saied has been enmeshed in political disputes with Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi for over a year, as the country grapples with an economic crisis, a looming fiscal crunch and a flailing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said in his statement that his actions were in line with the constitution, and also suspended the immunity of members of parliament.

Saied and the parliament were both elected in separate popular votes in 2019, while Mechichi took office last summer, replacing another short-lived government.



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## [Frankly Speaking: ‘More Western military support needed to head off terror groups’ in Iraq, says Peshmerga Gen. Sirwan Barzani](#)

Sun, 2021-07-25 22:38

DUBAI: The US and other Western coalition members should increase their ground forces in Iraqi Kurdistan in order to head off the threat of a resurgent terror campaign in the region, one of the main fighters against Daesh and Iran-backed militias told Arab News.

General Sirwan Barzani, who commands a key unit of the Kurdish Peshmerga armed forces in northern Iraq, said: “The troops on the ground have been fighting against Daesh, but it was not easy and not so possible to defeat this terrorist group without the support of the coalition, especially the leader of the coalition, the US, and also the rest of the countries, the European countries.

“I think the administration of President Biden has to send more forces to Iraq.”

Barzani, who commanded Kurdish troops in the bitter battles of 2015 and 2016 to regain territory lost to Daesh, made his plea for more Western military assistance on “Frankly Speaking,” the series of video interviews with leading policymakers in the region.

In the course of a wide-ranging conversation, Barzani – a member of one of the leading families of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and a prominent businessman through his ownership of Korek Telecom – also spoke of Kurdish independence aspirations, the incursions of Turkey’s Kurdish militant group PKK in Iraqi Kurdistan, the humanitarian assistance his people receive from Saudi Arabia and the challenges of diversifying Kurdistan’s oil-dependent

economy.

But Barzani's appeal for more US and other Western troops – in the face of President Biden's apparent determination to end America's "forever wars" in the region – was a key feature, underlining Kurdish concerns that the threat from Daesh was still the "biggest threat" to the whole of Iraq.

"Daesh is starting to reorganize themselves again; the militants are very active and almost every day they launch terror attacks against civilian targets, military or security services. There is an attack from Daesh there almost every day.



General Sirwan Barzani

"I'm responsible for Sector Six south and southwest of (Iraqi Kurdistan's capital) Irbil. We have a permanent Daesh presence in those mountains. We are facing this problem every day and we have a permanent Daesh presence there.

"Even with all these operations, cooperating with the coalition, also with the Iraqi army, the fighters are still there. Daesh is not defeated like Al-Qaeda. Daesh is there still and without the support of the coalition, the group will become stronger and stronger," he said.

Barzani called for renewed Western military support for the Peshmerga, which he said was not receiving any budgetary assistance from Baghdad to counter Daesh or Iranian-backed militias in Iraq.

Recent drone attacks on Irbil International Airport were claimed by Iran-

backed militias against forces deemed to be pro-US in the region, he said, underlining the need for more defense assistance.

“The most important thing they have to do is to just give us as Peshmerga some new technology. For example, we don’t have any drones. Even technologies like night-vision or thermal cameras and defensive weapons – we still don’t have them. All the end users (for such equipment) are meant to be from Baghdad and, unfortunately, not from here (Irbil),” Barzani said.

He believes the Biden administration’s decision to end military operations in Afghanistan would have only limited repercussions for Iraq.

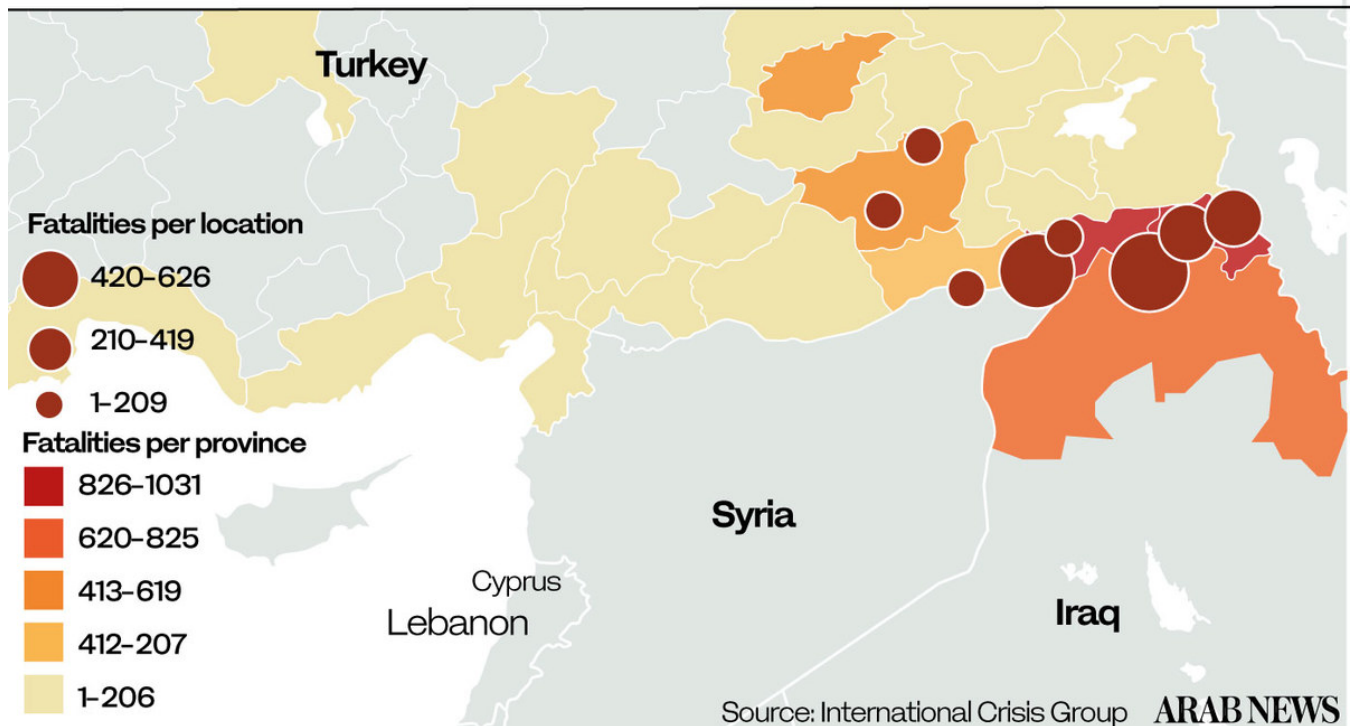
“I think it is different. You cannot compare Afghanistan and Iraq. The stability of Iraq is the stability of the Middle East and, of course, everybody knows that all of the world is looking for stability in the Middle East for many reasons, especially economic reasons,” he said.

Instability is also being fostered by the presence of large numbers of members of the PKK, the militant political organization that has been fighting for equal rights and autonomy for Turkey’s Kurdish population since 1984.

“The problem here is they are inside our region in Kurdistan. They’re making it an unstable area. They didn’t go back to the border because of this fight between the PKK and the Turkish military. Unfortunately, they provide an excuse for the Turkish army to come in. Almost every month they have a new position inside our region. It’s not acceptable and what the PKK is doing now is not good for the region,” Bargain said.

# THE TURKISH-KURDISH CONFLICT

Districts and towns where Turkish security personnel and PKK members have died



The KRG organized a referendum in 2017 that showed an overwhelming majority of Iraqi Kurdistan's population was in favor of independence from Baghdad, but the result was not recognized by the Iraqi government and moves towards full independence had to be shelved.

"Unfortunately, what happened in Iraq was that nobody heeded the constitution and everybody started with sanctions. Even when we were fighting against Daesh, we were under sanctions from the federal government.

"Those reasons pushed us to go in for the referendum and to have our own state and independence. It was our right, of course, and it was legal, but because of the situation we postponed it," he said, but added: "It (independence) is the dream of any Kurd."

The Kurdish economy is heavily dependent on oil from the northern regions of Iraq, but this too has faced challenges because of squabbles over revenue with Baghdad. Barzani said that it was important for any economy to reduce reliance on oil products, and the KRG has put in place a strategy to do so.

"It's a risky thing to depend on oil only because nobody, no country can depend only on one resource or one revenue stream. So, especially in Kurdistan, even the KRG is launching reforms so as to not depend on oil, to diversify the economy. It is most important," he said.

Barzani cited some alternative revenue streams for the region, notably agriculture, solar power and other technologies, but he singled out the

potential of tourism.

“For Kurdistan we have many things, but the tourism side is very important. We have a very nice region geographically and weather-wise. What’s more, there is security for the economy and businesses. Thanks to the Peshmerga and our people, we have very good security in this region,” he said.

Barzani founded Korek Telecom in 2000, which has grown to become one of the leading corporate groups in Iraq despite the destruction inflicted by the Daesh occupation on large parts of the region.

Kurdistan also faces other challenges in terms of investment required in power supplies and telecoms infrastructure, he said.

Barzani added that he had been watching developments in Saudi Arabia and its Vision 2030 strategy to reduce reliance on oil revenues, which he said was a “great move.”

He also highlighted the strength of relations between the Kurdish region and Saudi Arabia. “There is a good relation with Saudi Arabia for sure. They are supporting many of our internally displaced persons and refugees here,” he said.

“There is a historical relationship with Saudi Arabia, and we continue to have very good relations with them.”

Barzani maintained that for Kurdistan, economic development and the opportunity to create a “peaceful oasis” would continue to depend on maintaining regional security in the face of multiple threats.

“Security is more important than anything else,” he said.

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• **Twitter:** @frankkanedubai



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## [Egyptian president directs the restoration of Al-Bayt shrines](#)

Mon, 2021-07-26 00:18

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has directed the restoration of the shrines of the Al-Bayt family, especially the tombs of Sayyida Nafisa, Sayyida Zainab and Imam Hussein bin Ali.

The Egyptian presidency said that El-Sisi met with the head of the Armed Forces Engineering Authority, Ihab El-Far, and discussed the restoration of the interior halls of mosques and their sophisticated architectural decorations.

The restorations will be in keeping with the historical pedigree of the sites. The development of the surrounding roads, squares and other facilities will also match the heritage of the shrines.

The Al-Ashraf Syndicate – descendants of the Prophet Muhammad and his immediate family – thanked El-Sisi for his directives to develop the shrines of the Al-Bayt mosques.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **The restorations will be in keeping with the historical pedigree of the sites.**
- **The development of the surrounding roads, squares and other facilities will also match the heritage of the shrines.**

“President El-Sisi’s interest in developing the shrines and mosques of Al-Bayt confirms his constant keenness to develop Egypt’s civilized Islamic front ... and we will see valuable architectural masterpieces after completing their restoration and development,” the statement said.

El-Sisi also directed the establishment of a new central headquarters of international organizations in the diplomatic district. In a meeting to discuss the new location, participants covered the development of the diplomatic quarter in accordance with the UN, and how it would adhere to international architectural standards.

Elsewhere, Jehan Abd El-Moneim, deputy governor of Cairo for the southern region, confirmed that the development of the Sayyida Ruqayya shrine has been completed.



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