

INTERNATIONAL

YEMEN PROVINCE

Seven killed as Saudi coalition strikes UAE-backed forces

AFP, Mukalla

Airstrikes killed seven people in Yemen yesterday as a Saudi-led coalition attacked UAE-backed separatists who have seized huge swathes of territory, an official for the group.

More than 20 people were also wounded as seven airstrikes hit a camp in Al-Khasah, said Mohammed Abdulmalik, head of the separatist Southern Transitional Council in Wadi Hadramaut and Hadramaut Desert.

Saudi-backed forces in Yemen's Hadramawt province launched the operation to "peacefully" take back military sites yesterday after a sweeping advance by UAE-supported separatists raised fears of a major confrontation.

The weeks-long separatist offensive has already prompted airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and escalated tensions between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, its fellow Gulf oil producer.



Hadramawt governor Salem Al-Khanbashi announced the operation shortly after he was also appointed to lead the Saudi-backed National Shield forces in the resource-rich province bordering Saudi Arabia.

"This operation is not a declaration of war, nor an attempt to escalate tensions," Khanbashi was cited as saying in a statement by the official Saba Net news agency.

"This operation does not target any political or social group, nor does it target civilians," he said, adding that it "aims to peacefully and systematically hand over military sites".

A source close to the Saudi military warned: "It will not stop until the Southern Transitional Council withdraws from the two governorates."

The STC seized much of Hadramawt, bordering Saudi, and neighbouring Mahra last month.

The wealthy Gulf powers formed the backbone of the military coalition aimed at dislodging the Iran-backed Houthis, who forced the government from the capital Sanaa in 2014 and seized Yemen's most populated areas.

Labour shortages

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priced at Tk 80-100 yesterday. Eggplants rose to Tk 70-80 from Tk 60-70. Ridge gourd, bottle gourd and long beans were selling at Tk 80-100, while papaya climbed to Tk 35-40 from Tk 30.

Prices of fish and meat remained largely unchanged, vendors said. Eggs also stayed stable at Tk 115-130 per dozen.

Dense fog disrupts flights

FROM PAGE 12
country, people will not feel much difference from the temperature rise due to the lack of sunlight," he said.

"January is the coldest month in the country, so people will feel cold throughout this month," he added.

Meteorologist Bazlur Rashid said heavy fog during winter may be linked to the absence of western low pressure systems, which usually bring rain and stronger winds and help reduce fog.

He also said air pollution is a major factor, as tiny dust particles in the air keep fog dense.

Dhaka's air quality remained unhealthy yesterday morning, with the Air Quality Index standing at 155. Earlier on Thursday night, it rose sharply to 277. The main pollutant was fine particulate matter known as PM2.5.

Dense fog caused severe disruption to flight schedules at Hazrat Shahjal International Airport, with nine flights diverted yesterday due to low visibility – four to Chittagong, four to Kolkata in India and one to Bangkok in Thailand.

Airport authorities said normal flight operations resumed once weather conditions improved later in the day.

Aviation experts said frequent flight diversions during winter are caused by low visibility and the lack of a Category 2 Instrument Landing System (ILS) at the Dhaka airport.

Currently, the airport operates with a Category 1 ILS, which requires at least 800 metres of visibility for landing.

Experts said upgrading to Category

130-150 in mid-December. Ginger was Tk 100 per kg, compared to Tk 150 two weeks ago. Imported garlic dropped by Tk 10-20, selling at Tk 150 per kg.

Visits to several markets in the capital, including Kazipara, Shewrapara, Ibrahimpur and Karwan Bazar, showed fish supplies were normal and prices largely unchanged from last week.

'We will govern expansively'

FROM PAGE 12
Mamdani, New York's first Muslim mayor, emphasised the cost of living issues that were central to his mayoral campaign, pledging to help those "betrayed by the established order."

Left-wing allies Senator Bernie Sanders and Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez also spoke in front of some 4,000 ticketed guests.

"Thank you for giving us, from coast to coast, the hope and the vision that we can create government that works for all, not just the wealthy and the few," said Sanders, a former presidential hopeful.

At one point during his speech, the crowd broke into chants of "tax the rich." Mamdani wants to raise taxes on New York's wealthiest residents.

Thousands of people also thronged downtown Manhattan, many wearing yellow and blue beanies emblazoned with "Zohran," to watch the ceremony on large screens.

This is the first time that either of us in our entire lives has felt some kind of political hope at all," 31-year-old Jacob Byerly, a scientist, told AFP alongside his wife Auburn.

Mamdani, a self-described democratic socialist, comes to power at a time when Trump has pushed a hard right agenda.

Later, around 11am, a collision occurred near the Chhanbari area involving two trucks and a bus, leaving at least 10 people injured.

Traffic on the expressway was temporarily halted and later restored using alternative routes.



US actress Angelina Jolie speaks with aid agency staff at the Egyptian Rafah border crossing during her visit to North Sinai to inspect aid entering the Gaza Strip. Israel on Thursday said 37 humanitarian agencies supplying aid in Gaza had not met a deadline to meet "security and transparency standards", and would be banned from the territory.

PHOTO: AFP

Gaza survivors face harsh weather in tents

Israeli bulldozers destroy farmland near Ramallah

AGENCIES

The Palestinian Meteorological Department yesterday warned of very cold and unsettled weather across Palestine, with a risk of flash flooding in some areas.

Hundreds of thousands across Gaza are trying to survive in makeshift tents with no electricity or heating. It came a day after another Palestinian child died in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, due to the extremely cold weather.

Displaced from northern Gaza to the centre of the territory, Ahmad is now living in a tent with his daughter after losing their two homes. "I no longer remember how many times I have been forced to flee," he said, in a post on X by UNRWA.

As winter conditions worsen, he described a daily struggle to keep his child safe. "I am trapped between two fears: The cold that seeps into my daughter's small body at night, and the fear for my own life when the rain comes and the tent can no longer protect us."

In the occupied West Bank, Israeli forces bulldozed agricultural land and uprooted olive trees in the town of Turmus Aya, north of



A group of Israeli settlers yesterday surrounded Palestinian homes in the Khala'il area, near Bethlehem in the West Bank, and hurled stones at them.

According to local sources quoted by the agency, the settlers were shielded by Israeli forces who fired sound bombs and tear gas in the area.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said yesterday it intercepted what it described as a "false target" in the northern town of Bar'am after sirens were triggered by a suspected drone.

It claimed several of those arrested were "Hamas members plotting attacks against Israeli forces". During a raid in Hebron, the military said its forces seized weapons and more than 1 million shekels (\$310,000) in what it called "terror funds".

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