

BIG STORY

big story

Gulf leaders to meet in Mecca for urgent talks

Bahrain welcomes Saudi Arabia's calls for urgent Gulf, Arab League meetings

Bahrain said it "highly values this call from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud" to hold two emergency summits in Mecca on May 30" to discuss recent "aggressions and their consequences" in the region



The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln and its carrier group transit the Suez Canal.

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Bahrain yesterday welcomed Saudi Arabia's call to hold urgent meetings of the regional Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League to discuss escalating tensions in the region.

The Kingdom "highly values this call from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud" to hold two emergency summits in Mecca on May 30, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement to the state news agency said.

The statement affirms Bahrain's full support for all the steps taken by Saudi Arabia and appreciates "Riyadh's steadfast solidarity and its strenuous efforts to preserve the security and stability of the region and to promote Arab interests."

The wise call by the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques "affirms the leading Saudi role in cementing joint Arab action," the Ministry statement said.

Bahrain added: "It valued the Saudi keenness on enhancing collective action to overcome the delicate conditions that the GCC region is going through consultation and coordination between the GCC and Arab countries."

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has called for holding two emergency summits, one for the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the other for the Arab leaders, in Makkah on May 30.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said King Salman had invited Gulf leaders and Arab states to discuss recent "aggressions and

their consequences" in the region.

Tensions have soared in the Gulf, with the United States deploying an aircraft carrier and bombers there over alleged threats from Iran.

Saudi foreign affairs minister Adel al-Jubeir said his country does not want to go to war with Iran, but was ready to defend its interests.

Riyadh "does not want a war, is not looking for it and will do everything to prevent it".

The United Arab Emirates "welcomed" Saudi Arabia's invitation.

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in a statement published on state news agency WAM said, "the call for high-level meetings is reflective of the Saudi leadership's continued determination

to establish peace and security in the region."

The statement said that "critical circumstances" in the region require "a united Gulf Arab and Arab stand toward the besetting challenges and risks."

UAE described King Salman's call as a "significant opportunity for the countries of the region to achieve their aspirations for establishing peace and stability."

Four ships, including two Saudi oil tankers, were damaged in mysterious sabotage attacks last Sunday off the UAE's Fujairah, located at the crucial entrance to the Gulf.

That incident was followed by drone strikes Tuesday by Yemen's Huthis on a major Saudi oil pipeline, which provided an alternative export route if the Strait of Hormuz closed.

Iran has repeatedly threatened



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BAHRAIN'S MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

to prevent shipping in Hormuz in case of a military confrontation with the United States, which has imposed sanctions on Tehran in recent months.

Jubeir said the UAE was leading the probe into the damaged oil tankers but added that "we have some indications and we will make the announcements once the investigations are completed".

SPA yesterday said the Saudi crown prince spoke on the phone with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo about efforts to enhance security in the region.

Reports also said that a number of Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, have approved Washington's request to redeploy US forces in Arabian Gulf waters and territories to thwart possible Iranian attacks in the region.

Washington has sent its aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln to the Arabian Gulf. The development comes as four commercial vessels, including two Saudi oil tankers, were sabotaged near the UAE's emirate of Fujairah.

Northern Governorate gets two more 24-hour health centres

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

Two additional health centres were assigned to operate on a 24-hour basis in the Northern Governorate, much to the relief of residents there.

Starting June, people in Hamad Town and Barbar will receive round the clock service from health centres.

Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al-Sabah health centre in Barbar and Mohammed Jassim Kanoo



Mohammed Jassim Kanoo Health center will operate around the clock

Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al-Sabah health centre in Barbar, Mohammed Jassim Kanoo Health Center in Hamad Town will operate 24 hours

Health Center in Hamad Town will operate 24 hours as directed by the Ministry of Health.

The move, according to ministry sources, was made considering the size of the Northern

Governorate and the number of people. Hamad Kanoo Health Center in Riffa, Muharraq Health Center, and Engineer Health Center in Isa Town are currently operating 24 hours.

The two additional health centres are expected to take some pressure off the Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), especially during evening hours.

The Ministry is also taking various other measures to improve the situation at SMC.

At present, the accident and emergency section at SMC receives around 800 to 900 patients daily with an average waiting time of 75 minutes at the section.

The Ministry is updating its system there based on UK's 'Manchester Triage System'.

The new system will adopt a more efficient mechanism in categorising patients received based on the severity of the injuries/illnesses.