

Kingdom

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Sunday 6 December 2009 (19 Dhul Hijjah 1430)

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Flood probe report soon

Muhammad Humaidan | Arab News

JEDDAH: The first meeting of the committee investigating the circumstances that led to the deadly flashfloods in Jeddah on Nov. 25 was held under the chairmanship of Makkah Gov. Prince Khaled Al-Faisal at his office in Jeddah on Saturday.



"The compensation and sheltering offered to the victims under the orders of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah helped a lot to allay the sufferings of the victims," Prince Khaled said after the meeting.

The committee, which set up a number of subcommittees, decided to take steps to complete its task and submit a final report to the king soon, the prince added. He said a second meeting of the committee will be held today.

Meanwhile, Mansour Al-Mazrouei, head of the Department of Meteorology and an expert on climate change at King Abdulaziz University, warned that unexpected climatic changes could be experienced in the Kingdom in future.

"The urban planners in Jeddah should consider unexpected turns in the weather when they make plans," Al-Mazrouei told Arab News. He said the 90mm rainfall in six hours on Nov. 25 in Jeddah was a record. "The volume of rain that fell in a very short time triggered flashfloods that ravaged the southern and eastern districts of Jeddah." He said Jeddah received considerable rainfall in 1996, but it was spread over a period of six days, not exceeding 40mm on any one day.

Al-Mazrouei added that only five times in the recorded history of Jeddah had rains exceeded 60mm a day, but they did not cause heavy damage.

They were all recorded in November when most rains fall in the western region in the Kingdom. "The huge volume of rain that fell in Jeddah after a long spell of rainless years could be indicative of the phenomenon of climate change coming to the Kingdom," he said.



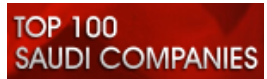
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Section Navigation

- Kingdom

- » [Local Press](#)
- » [Law & You](#)
- » [Art & Culture](#)
- » [Weather](#)
- » [Community News](#)
- » [Review](#)
- » [Side Lights](#)

- Home



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