

Kingdom



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Tuesday 1 December 2009 (14 Dhul Hijjah 1430)

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Outpouring of citizen action after flooding

Hassna'a Mokhtar | Arab News

JEDDAH: A group calling itself the "National Campaign to Save the City of Jeddah," which set up an Arabic-language Facebook site after Wednesday's devastating floods in Jeddah, gathered 800 volunteers on Monday to help survey the damage, register the victims and relocate displaced people to temporary residences.

"There are many volunteer groups dedicated to different tasks," Riyadh Azzahrani, supervisor of the campaign, told Arab News.

"The Facebook campaign functions to make announcements on what's needed and to coordinate and connect volunteers with official organizations providing aid to the victims."

Meanwhile, lawyer Khalid Waleed Abu Alkhair is expected to meet with flood victims on Saturday to receive power of attorney to take legal action against the municipality.

Work under the campaign's umbrella has been divided into three main categories — volunteer work to aid the victims, legal representation of the victims and media reports to voice the seriousness of the situation and call for immediate solutions.

Volunteer groups such as Asdiqaa Jeddah (Friends of Jeddah), Al-Faisaliah Women Charity Society and others have started a field survey to quantify the number of people who have been severely affected by the flooding and to find out what they need.

"Asdiqaa Jeddah functions under the municipality but works in collaboration with the governorate, the Society of Majed Bin Abdulaziz and in coordination with the Civil Defense," said Azzahrani. "Al-Faisaliah has distributed financial aid in Al-Hindawayah and Al-Jamea districts."

Lawyer Abu Alkhair said he intends to approach the Court of Grievances to "ask for compensation to those who suffered losses and damages. That's the least they should get."

Thousands have rushed to join the group since it was set up on Thursday. So far over 22,000 Facebook users had joined the Arabic-language group and hundreds of photos of the flooding have been posted.

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Prince Ahmed Bin Salman



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Arab News 30th Anniversary Supplement



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