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NATION

Residents do their own safety checks on Misk Lake

By Ibrahim Al-Qerbi

JEDDAH – Residents no longer trust their civil servants and are now doing their own safety checks on the barriers holding Misk Lake's raw sewage from flowing into the city.

Misk Lake, located in east Jeddah, has become a nightmare for the inhabitants of this coastal city.

City officials have told residents the lake is safe but environmental experts have rejected this and claim it is an imminent threat to the city.

Muhammad Al-Qahtani, 70, who lives in Al-Samer District, one of the four threatened districts, said he is making periodic checks on the lake. "I live within walking distance. All the inhabitants in the district sense the danger. I now come to check myself how safe the banks were," he said.

Hassan Siddiqi Yousif of Al-Safa District 11 has been working with his camels in the area for 25 years. He said there are now cracks in the land that he has never seen before and believes this is caused by the lake. "I came myself to see if the lake poses a threat because I read about it in the newspapers. I wanted to see whether the concrete barrier, which protects the lake from collapse, is leaking or not. The barrier is still strong and not leaking."

Muhammad Faisal, from Al-Samer District 3, said he thanked Allah Almighty that his area was not affected by the floods, but said that he is also worried about the lake. "The rise in the water level of the lake has become a source of great worry to all the residents in the city, that's why I have come to probe the matter myself."

Muhammad Al-Mazmoumi said he started visiting the lake after hearing that officials had warned people to evacuate the area.

He said the warning caused a great deal of panic among people living east of the Jeddah-Makkah Expressway. He added that he had also visited the district of Quwaizah to see the damage caused by the floods. "If there were flood canals, this disaster would not have happened," he said. – Okaz/SG

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