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NATION

Jeddah Mayoralty failed to respond to warnings, says Municipal Council

By Hussein Hazzazi

JEDDAH – The city was officially warned about the potential danger of flooding four years ago, said Tariq Fadaq, former chairman of the Jeddah Municipal Council. The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs was also warned, he said.

Fadaq like many others, including two former Mayors of Jeddah Nazih Nasief and Abdullah Al-Mualimi, said he would be happy to help the investigation committee formed by King Abdullah to establish the reasons for the disaster that has claimed over 100 lives and to try to determine responsibility.

Fadaq said he still has copies of the detailed official documents containing the warning which were submitted to the Jeddah Mayoralty in the wake of the heavy rains that lashed the city some four years ago.

The warning focused on unplanned districts established in riverbeds east of Jeddah, where last week's rain unleashed floodwaters that led to death and destruction.

The council also discussed detailed studies of many environment-related issues including Misk Lake, he said.

The current chairman of the Jeddah Municipal Council said that the damage and losses as a result of the torrential rains were "huge."

Hussein Ba-Aqil was speaking shortly after his visit to flood-hit districts east of Jeddah, Thursday.

He hoped that government departments would work with the council to overcome the problems in unplanned districts.

Some residents have stayed in their flood-stricken houses without electricity surrounded by streets full of debris, he said. – Okaz/SG

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