

Gulf Arab countries on alert for heavy rains

January 2 2022



A bus is engulfed on a flooded road in Kuwait City following torrential rain.

Authorities in several Gulf countries renewed weather warnings on Sunday as several days of heavy rains batter the usually arid region.

Gulf countries usually experience [mild winters](#), with the exception of rare and brief episodes of flooding rains between November and

January.

Such weather is highly disruptive in the region, where authorities often do not install heavy drainage systems due to the rarity of such precipitation.

Torrential rainfall has hit the United Arab Emirates, including Dubai and Abu Dhabi, with official WAM news agency saying the bad weather was expected to last until Thursday.

The rain has been exacerbated by cloud seeding, which authorities use to increase usually low and rare rainfall, the national centre of meteorology told AFP.

In the UAE emirate of Sharjah, pedestrians and vehicles were caught up in brown-coloured water. Authorities have not reported any casualties.

Heavy rain has been falling in the vast desert kingdom of Saudi Arabia, impacting pilgrims in the holy city of Mecca.

The Saudi civil defence warned that moderate to heavy rain was expected to continue in several regions.

Oman on Saturday had announced "stormy rains of varying intensity" in several regions of the country, and state broadcaster Oman TV showed images of wet roads and rising waters.



Cars are seen in floodwaters in the emirate of Sharjah following heavy rains in the United Arab Emirates, on January 1, 2022.

Authorities in Qatar urged residents to remain vigilant and forecast "stormy rains" and strong winds in several parts of the country from Sunday.

In Kuwait, "generally average intensity" rain was expected through Sunday evening, the official KUNA news agency reported meteorological authorities as saying.

School classes and exams across the country would be suspended on

Monday due to the weather, it added.

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Citation: Gulf Arab countries on alert for heavy rains (2022, January 2) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2022-01-gulf-arab-countries-heavy.html>

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