

Deadly wildfires kill more than 30 across Algeria

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Algiers, July 25 (RHC)-- Wildfires are raging across Algeria and have already taken the lives of more than 30 people. Those killed include 10 soldiers who were trying to get the flames under control in the face of high winds and scorching summer temperatures, government ministries said on Monday. At least 1,500 people were evacuated.

Wildfires, some spread by strong winds, moved across forests and agricultural areas in 16 regions causing 97 blazes in the North African country.

The largest and deadliest fires ravaged parts of Bejaia and Jijel — in the Kabyle region east of Algiers — and Bouira, about 100km (60 miles) southeast of the capital Algiers, the interior ministry said.

Operations to tamp down the fires included some 7,500 firefighters and 350 trucks on the ground as well as air support.

Algeria is no stranger to summer wildfires. At least 37 people were killed last August after wildfires blazed near its northern border with Tunisia. A year earlier, authorities said dozens were killed in blazes — including soldiers called in to help fight the fires in the mountainous Kabyle region that is dotted with villages.

Strong winds and successive heat waves have fuelled vicious fires in Greece and elsewhere around the Mediterranean this summer.

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