

Fire destroys a dozen shops at Al Ain central market

Spokesmen for the police and fire brigade said it was not yet clear how the fire started, but investigations were continuing.

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Published: 11:17 August 28, 2010



Crews from the Quick Emergency Response units, fire brigade, and Al Ain police battled the blaze at Al Ain's Central Market, or Souq Al Markazy, for hours on Saturday.

Image Credit: Aftab Kazmi/Gulf News

Al Ain: An early morning fire destroyed about a dozen shops in the city's Central Market (Souq Al Markazy) on Saturday, causing substantial damage.

Crews from the Quick Emergency Response units, the fire brigade, and Al Ain police, battled the blaze which took more than two hours to bring under control. Shops destroyed included a restaurant, barber shops, and clothing stores.

Eyewitnesses said the fire started at one shop at about 3:30am, a couple of hours after it closed. The market had been open until 1am due to the holy month of Ramadan.

No serious injuries

Police from the Technical Rescue and Quick Intervention Section prevented the fire from destroying the entire block of about 100 shops.

There were no reports of serious injuries other than some people who suffered from minor smoke inhalation. Spokesmen for the police and fire brigade said it was not yet clear how the fire started, but investigations were continuing.

Eyewitnesses said people sleeping in the closed shops' galleries were rescued safely and had not been harmed.

Hundreds of people gathered by the market, which is downtown Al Ain, but were moved to a safe distance by the police. Thick smoke also entered nearby residential buildings, causing breathing problems due to smoke inhalation among some residents.