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7 Israeli air strikes hit Gaza after bloody border protests



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28 Kerber stuns Serena to win Wimbledon title



Kuwait security situation stable, northern borders under control

Two killed in southern Iraq • Protests held at Safwan border • KAC halts flights to Najaf



KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff of Kuwait's Army Lt-Gen Mohammad Al-Khudher meets troops stationed at the northern borders yesterday.

AL-QURNAH, Iraq: Protesters demonstrate yesterday in front of oilfields some 100 km north of Basra. — AFP

Fingerprints of 2 million expats in MoI database

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The interior ministry's criminal evidence department announced it has uploaded the digital fingerprints of around two million expatriates older than 18 into its systems in a bid to have a full database of fingerprints of all expats in the country, including those yet to enter Kuwait. Informed sources said building such a database of all expats in the country, including those in prison, is part of the ministry's projects designed to update its database and stay abreast with security-related scientific and technological advances.

"The digital fingerprints will help identify expats wanted in Kuwait, those banned from travelling and those banned from entering Kuwait," the sources explained, noting that the new system will also prevent deported expats from returning to Kuwait with new passports as well as help investigators identify criminals.

The sources noted that the process has helped identify people who obtained residency visas without being fingerprinted after the liberation of Kuwait, identify deportees applying to renew their residency visas - and thus their applications were rejected, in addition to identifying expats who turned 18 and whose fingerprints had been found at some crime scenes, and thus they were arrested.

KUWAIT/BASRA: Kuwait's overall security situation is stable, under control, and unaffected by the ongoing protests in southern Iraq, the Kuwaiti army announced yesterday. The incidents that are currently taking place near Kuwait's northern borders with Iraq are interior affairs of a neighboring country, the army said in a press statement. The

recent actions carried out by the Kuwaiti army in cooperation with security bodies in the country are merely precautionary measures, added the statement.

The Chief of the General Staff of Kuwait's Army Lt-Gen Mohammad Al-Khudher, accompanied by a number of military and security leaders in the country, inspected the northern area to check

on the Kuwaiti forces and the precautionary procedures, it noted. Yesterday, tens of protesters demonstrated at the Safwan border crossing with Kuwait as well as at the entrance to the Majnoon oilfield, one of the largest in the country which lies 40 km north of Basra, local security sources said.

The Kuwaiti foreign ministry also said

the situation on the northern borders of Kuwait is totally under control with no incident occurring because of the protests in Iraq. Kuwait is closely following the situation and developments in Iraq, said a foreign ministry source in a statement, adding that Kuwaitis were confident that their

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Pak mourns bombing that killed 128

MASTUNG, Pakistan: Pakistan was in shock yesterday after a suicide blast killed 128 people, shaking confidence in security just as the dramatic arrest of ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif ratcheted political tensions higher ahead of nationwide polls. Sharif's highly-anticipated return from London and subsequent arrest for corruption was overshadowed as the carnage in Mastung, in the southwestern province of Balochistan, unfolded late Friday. Newspapers branded the blast - one of the deadliest in Pakistan's history - a "massacre", as analysts and media called on the military to, in the words of the daily

Dawn, "do the job they are meant to do - ie preventing attacks".

One week ago, Sharif was sentenced in absentia to 10 years in prison on corruption charges. He was transferred to the garrison city of Rawalpindi, adjacent to Islamabad, after landing in Lahore Friday. Media reports said he was being held in a prison there. Sharif has claimed he is the victim of a military conspiracy, and there are widespread allegations from the media, politicians and analysts that the powerful security establishment is meddling in the polls. Mobile signals were blocked and police deployed in the eastern city of Lahore where Sharif's supporters had gathered as he landed.

Soon after, the scale of the destruction in Mastung - hundreds of kilometres to the southwest, where an Islamic State suicide bomber had detonated at a crowded political rally - began to emerge.

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ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani civil society activist holds a placard yesterday as she protests against the suicide blast during an election rally. — AFP

Belgium secure third place finish



SAINT PETERSBURG: Belgium's team pose with their medals after winning their 2018 World Cup playoff for third place against England at the Saint Petersburg Stadium yesterday. — AFP (See Page 28)

Eritrea president hails unity with Ethiopia on visit

ADDIS ABABA: Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki pledged to resolve his country's dispute with Ethiopia yesterday in a historic visit to Addis Ababa aimed at cementing peace less than a week after the nations declared an end to two decades of conflict. Isaias arrived in the Ethiopian capital just five days after Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed visited Eritrea as part of a dizzying peace process aimed at ending years of violence and animosity between the neighbors who were once part of the same nation.

Abiy and Isaias shared laughs and hugs at an official lunch yesterday as the Ethiopian leader said his counterpart was "beloved, respected and missed by the Ethiopian people". "We are no longer people of two countries. We are one," Isaias told political and cultural figures gathered in a palace built during Ethiopia's imperial days. "We'll go forward together." Isaias started his three-day visit at Addis Ababa's airport, where he and Abiy strode down a red carpet as a brass band played and traditional dancers cheered.

The leaders then drove into the city on a road lined with thousands of people dressed in white shawls and



ADDIS ABABA: Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki (right) is received by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed as he arrives at Bole International Airport yesterday. — AFP

waving palm fronds as Ethiopian and Eritrean flags flew side-by-side from lampposts. There were also banners and pictures of the two leaders who on Monday signed a declaration declaring an official end to the war. "Welcome home President Isaias!!" Abiy's chief of staff Fitsum Arega wrote on Twitter as the Eritrean leader arrived.

Later in the day, the two leaders flew to the southern city of Hawassa where Isaias toured an industrial park that's key to Ethiopia's economy. Eritrea was once part of Ethiopia and comprised its entire coastline on the Red Sea until it voted for independence in 1993 after decades of bloody conflict.

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