

Local

Amir receives Crown Prince, Speaker, PM



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday His Highness the

Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir also received National Assembly Speaker

Marzouq Al-Ghanem and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. In the meantime, His Highness

the Crown Prince received Ghanem and His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled yesterday at Bayan Palace. — KUNA



Minister inspects vaccination site

KUWAIT: Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah yesterday visited Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref, where a hall is being prepared to provide COVID-19



vaccines. The ministry had announced in November that the BNT162 vaccine, developed by BioNTech and distributed by Pfizer, will arrive to Kuwait before the end of the year, noting that it will be subject to local

health authorities' approval. Priority will be given to frontliners and people at risk, before the vaccine is made available to the public optionally and free of charge, the government had explained. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Diplomats sign the book of condolence at the Pakistan Embassy in Kuwait for the former Prime Minister of Pakistan Zafarullah Jamali, who passed away on December 2, 2020 in Pakistan. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

World set for 3C warming by 2100

PARIS: Earth is still on course to warm more than 3 degrees Celsius by the century's end despite a dip in greenhouse gas emissions caused by the pandemic and pledges to curb pollution, the UN said yesterday. In its annual assessment of emissions levels, the UN's Environment Program found that 2020's 7-percent fall in carbon pollution would have "negligible impact" on warming without a broad and rapid shift away from fossil fuels.

The Emissions Gap report analyses the gulf between action required under the Paris climate deal and emissions cuts currently planned by countries. It found that a "green recovery" from the pandemic, in which emerging net-zero pledges are accelerated, could shave 25 percent off of emissions by 2030. This would bring the world closer to levels required to limit warming to 2C as stipulated under Paris.

With just over 1C of warming since pre-industrial times, Earth is already experiencing stronger and more frequent droughts, wildfires and superstorms rendered deadlier by rising seas. "Obviously the world has been in lockdown. During this time we saw a 7 percent decline in emissions," UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen told AFP. "But we also know that the answer is not to lock up the world and have 1.9 billion children out of school."

She said yesterday's report showed that a green pandemic recovery "can take a huge slice out of greenhouse gas emissions and help slow climate change". UNEP said last year that emissions must fall 7.6 percent annually through 2030 to keep the more ambitious Paris temperature goal of 1.5C in play. While 2020 is likely to see emissions fall broadly in

line with that figure, it took an unprecedented slowdown in industry, travel and manufacturing to achieve.

Experts fear that a rebound in carbon emissions is nearly inevitable in 2021; last week the UN said that countries planned to increase fossil fuel production by 2 percent each year this decade. To limit warming to 1.5C it said oil, gas and coal production instead must fall 6 percent each year. Yesterday's assessment found that emissions in 2019 - a year scientists still hope will represent a peak in annual carbon pollution - stood at 59.1 gigatonnes of CO2 equivalent.

This represents a 2.6 percent increase compared with 2018, largely driven by an increase in forest fires, UNEP said. All told, Earth is still on course to warm more than 3C by 2100 - a temperature rise that would displace hundreds of millions of people because of rising seas, crop failures and increasingly extreme weather such as droughts and storms. It said reduced travel, industrial activity and electrical generation during the pandemic would see emissions fall 7 percent compared with last year. But that would only translate to a 0.01C reduction of global warming by 2050.

UNEP said a green recovery from COVID-19 would see emissions hit 44 GT in 2030 compared with a predicted 59 GT, giving humanity a 66 percent chance of holding temperature rises under 2C. This would need widespread switches to renewable energy, direct support for zero-emission technology and infrastructure, reducing fossil fuel subsidies, no new coal plants and widespread reforestation, it said.

Yet the pandemic recovery already appears to have support for high pollution industries already figured in, with only a quarter of G20 nations dedicating spending shares to low-carbon measures. The report also laid bare the vast inequality of carbon pollution: the wealthiest 1 percent account for more than twice the combined emissions of the poorest 50 percent. — AFP

37 lawmakers back Humaidhi as...

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He also called on the prime minister to "read the events carefully after the agreement on Humaidhi".

Leading opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri said he will vote for Humaidhi as the next speaker,

Family-to-work visa transfers...

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Meanwhile, only 400 out of 130,000 expats in violation of residency laws have come forward since the start of a one-month grace period to correct their legal status or leave the country.

Gaza's 'only Iranian' wants...

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"I became a bodyguard for (Arafat) and Abu Jihad," he recalled, referring to Khalil Al-Wazir, the former head of the PLO's military wing who was killed by Israeli commandos in Tunisia in 1988.

Security sources with Hamas, the Islamist movement which has controlled Gaza since 2007, said Abu Hashem was the only known Iranian currently in the territory. His age is a subject of some uncertainty. His Palestinian papers put him at 70, his Iranian documents at 78 but, as far he is concerned, he's been around for nearly 100 years. His box of yellowed and dog-eared photos tell a somewhat clearer story.

In several, he is wearing military fatigues, straight-backed and looking fit, with Arafat firmly grasping his shoulders with both hands. Abu Hashem, an explosives expert, was however evasive when asked for details on the nature of his work for Arafat in Beirut. When Arafat moved the PLO from Beirut to Tunis in 1982, Abu Hashem headed for the then North Yemen, where he trained Palestinian fighters.

Among his papers is an expired Iranian passport that was issued in Yemen as well as forged papers identifying him as a Palestinian refugee. After Israel and the Palestinians signed the historic Oslo Accords, Arafat set

adding that the next Cabinet must not include what he called ministers who stir problems. MP Bader Al-Mulla said the agreement on a new candidate for speaker is the translation of the outcome of the elections.

Opposition MP Hasan Jowhar stressed on the need to reform the Assembly speakership in order to achieve national reconciliation and tackle corruption issues. He declared his support for Humaidhi. The unanimous selection of Humaidhi comes after his only competitor - MP Mohammad Al-Mutair - withdrew from the race on Tuesday.

Sources said nearly 2,300 violators applied for appointments, but those who actually went to residency departments is very low, either because they changed their minds or changed the dates.

The sources said the reasons behind violators' reluctance can be inability to pay fines and expensive tickets, but they advised expats to take advantage of the amnesty because the interior ministry will launch round-the-clock security campaigns to arrest and deport violators, who cannot return to Kuwait or any other GCC country for five years.

up a new base in Gaza from where he was to launch an era of Palestinian self-governance beginning with control over the territory and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Abu Hashem joined Arafat in Gaza and was promoted within the fledgling Palestinian security forces. He married three women and fathered six children. His eldest daughter Mona Sheyasi said she remembered seeing her father alongside Arafat, who died in 2004. "After Gaza, he never travelled again," said the 24-year-old, who lives in a shack made of concrete and tin next to a landfill.

Economic opportunities are limited in Gaza which has been under Israeli blockade since 2007, the year Hamas took power in the coastal enclave. Before the pandemic the poverty rate was above 50 percent and is widely believed to have surged in recent months. Abu Hashem said he still receives his Palestinian pension of \$460 per month, hardly enough to support his wives, children and grandchildren. "It's humiliating. I lost everything. My family is suffering from poverty," he said.

Compounding Abu Hashem's plight is his connection to Arafat. Hamas is a longstanding rival of Arafat's Fatah movement, making it nearly impossible for Abu Hashem to make connections with Gaza's current rulers, even though the Islamist movement is close to Iran. Short on money or powerful contacts, Abu Hashem is effectively a prisoner in Gaza.

The enclave is wedged between Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea. Exit through Israel, which considers Iran its number one enemy, is a non-starter, while travel through Egypt would require a valid passport, which Abu Hashem no longer has. "Even Iran's sewers are better than Gaza," he said. "I was a fool to stay here." — AFP



QULUSUK, Greenland: This file photo taken on Aug 17, 2019 shows bergy bits and growlers floating in front of the Apusijak glacier. — AFP