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# Speaker says Amir to return soon; Assembly term begins on Oct 29

Defense minister vows impenetrable security • 5 MPs demand debate on situation



KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets top military officials at Seif Palace yesterday. - KUNA

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is in good health and will return to the country from the United States following a period of recuperation. His Highness the Amir travelled to the US a few weeks ago for medical tests and is currently recuperating there before returning to Kuwait.

Ghanem, who visited the Amir in New York, said that it was agreed with Sheikh Sabah that the start of the new Assembly term will be on Oct 29, meaning His Highness the Amir will be back before that date. The Amir inaugurates every Assembly term by delivering a key speech that tackles political and economic affairs.

Meanwhile, five lawmakers yesterday submitted a motion demanding a general debate at the start of the next term to clarify the government's policy over the breaching of Kuwaiti airspace and the readiness of security and military services to deal with such intrusions. The motion, signed by MPs Riyadh Al-Adasani, Osama Al-Shaheen, Mohammad Al-Dallal, Abdullah Al-Kandari and Thamer Al-Suwait, was based on the highly explosive regional situation, especially after the devastating attacks on Saudi oil installations on Sept 14.

The lawmakers want to know the reasons for the intrusion,

which some MPs said included a drone and 16 cruise missiles, and the parties responsible for it with the aim to deal with it professionally and objectively. MPs also want to know the government's readiness to safeguard the security situation in the country. Kandari said a debate is necessary over these serious developments and the initial results of the investigation into how the intrusion happened and which country or side is behind it.

The motion coincided with a high-level meeting of the supreme defense council chaired by Acting Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and attended by top army commanders. The meeting at Seif Palace reviewed regional developments and precautionary measures taken, including raising the readiness level of part of the armed forces. The Kuwaiti military will do everything in its power to adopt stringent security measures to ensure the protection of the country's borders, Sheikh Nasser said. He urged media outlets to perform their duty at this critical time and called on the public not to pay heed to rumors.

Meanwhile, the Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee yesterday discussed in the presence of the finance minister amendments to the pensions law in a bid to make the legislation more beneficial for retired people. More meetings will be held to finalize the amendments.

## MoE, MoH to sack hundreds of expatriates

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Civil Service Commission urged the education and health ministries to report the names of expat employees they wish to terminate before the end of the year so that it could complete the needed procedures and replace them with Kuwaitis in the new fiscal year. In this regard, informed sources said statistics had shown that MoE and MoH have the largest numbers of expats, and that the former is expected to terminate 450 employees, while the latter is expected to terminate 300.

The sources said MoE has already started making its list including English, Computer and Literature teachers and administrative staff members, starting with the eldest. "The list will also include supervisors, namely in subjects where expats can be replaced by citizens," the sources stressed.

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## Trump joins rally in Modi bromance

HOUSTON: Tens of thousands of Indian-Americans packed into a Houston stadium yesterday for a rally with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, joined by US President Donald Trump, in a rare mass show of support for a foreign leader on US soil. The event gives Modi, a nationalist facing international criticism over a recent crackdown in disputed Kashmir, a chance to energize his relationship with Indian-Americans who are active political supporters. Trump, meanwhile, faced a largely foreign-born audience that may not prove receptive to his typical strident anti-immigrant messages.

Jubilant supporters dressed in everything from ornate saris to simple dhotis and even a few cowboy hats waved American and Indian flags, chanted "Modi! Modi!" and munched on concession stand snacks that included Indian staples of samosas and naan breads - along with nachos. "His presence is an indication of his support and endorsement of the strengthening of India's relations with America," said Preeti Dawra, a spokeswoman for the Texas India Forum that organized the event. "This event is about strengthening those ties."

Members of India's religious minority Sikh and Muslim groups held noisy gatherings near the stadium to protest Modi's Kashmir policy. A Kashmiri-American group called a demonstration, saying that India has violated basic human rights and cut off contact with relatives.

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HOUSTON: US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attend the "Howdy, Modi!" rally at NRG Stadium yesterday. — AFP

## Five-year period ending 2019 set to be hottest: UN

UNITED NATIONS: A damning new UN report published yesterday said the world is falling badly behind in the race to avert climate disaster as a result of runaway warming, with the five-year period ending 2019 set to be the hottest ever. It comes ahead of a major UN climate summit today that will be attended by more than 60 world leaders, as Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pushes for countries to increase their greenhouse gas reduction targets.

The report "highlights the urgent need for the devel-

opment of concrete actions that halt global warming and the worst effects of climate change," said its authors, the Science Advisory Group to the summit. Average global temperature between 2015-2019 is on track to be the hottest of any five-year period on record, according to the report, which was compiled by the World Meteorological Organization. The period "is currently estimated to be 1.1 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial (1850-1900) times and 0.2 degrees Celsius warmer than 2011-2015," it said.

The past four years were already the hottest since record-keeping began in 1850. Guterres said last week the world was "losing the race" on climate change, with the latest report spelling out the extent to which the gap between what is required and what is happening is widening. Rather than falling, carbon dioxide grew two percent in 2018, reaching a record high of 37 billion tonnes.

More importantly, there is also no sign yet of reaching what is known as "peak emissions," the point at which levels will start to fall, though these are not growing at the same rate as the global economy. The 2015 Paris Agreement saw countries lay out national targets to reduce their emissions in order to limit long term temperature rise by either 2 degrees Celsius or 1.5 degrees Celsius. These are benchmarks that will limit in important ways the impact of warming on world weather systems.

But even if all countries meet the goals they set themselves, the world will warm by 2.9 degrees Celsius to 3.4 degrees Celsius, the report found. The current levels of ambition would need to be tripled to meet the 2 degrees Celsius goal and increased five-fold to meet the 1.5 degrees Celsius goal - technically still possible.

"This reads like a credit card statement after a 5-year

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### News in brief

#### Card skimming gang sentenced

KUWAIT: The court of cassation yesterday sentenced an international gang with members from Kuwait, UAE, Syria, Jordan and Egypt to 10 years in jail with labor and fined them KD 198,000 for the sums they had illegally withdrawn from some bank accounts and money laundering operations they had conducted using fake credit cards and special equipment they had imported for this purpose. — Meshaal Al-Enezi

#### Divorce proves costly

KUWAIT: Lawyer Fatima Al-Shatti said the family court ordered a Kuwaiti to pay his ex-wife KD 700 in monthly expenses, KD 600 in monthly rent, KD 1,200 to recruit two housemaids, KD 220 for the maids' monthly salaries, KD 10,000 to buy a car, KD 800 to recruit a driver and KD 120 for the driver's monthly salary. — Meshaal Al-Enezi

#### UAE to open synagogue

DUBAI: Construction on the United Arab Emirates' first official synagogue will begin next year and be completed by 2022, according to local media reports. The synagogue will be part of the multi-faith "Abrahamic Family House" complex in Abu Dhabi, which will also feature a mosque and church of which full construction will be completed in 2022. Abu Dhabi newspaper the National reported yesterday. — Reuters

## Iran slams foreign forces for raising Gulf 'insecurity'

TEHRAN: President Hassan Rouhani yesterday denounced the presence of foreign forces in the Gulf and said Iran will put forward a peace plan, after arch-foe the United States ordered reinforcements to the tinderbox region. "Foreign forces can cause problems and insecurity for our people and for our region," Rouhani said before a massive military parade marking the Iran-Iraq war. Rouhani also said Iran would present a peace plan to the United Nations within days.

"In this sensitive and important historical moment, we announce to our neighbors that we extend the hand of friendship and brotherhood to them," he said. Rouhani and top military brass saluted as row after row of soldiers

marched past them in tight unison followed by an array of homegrown military hardware. The parade showcased tanks, armored vehicles, drones and missiles - including the Khorramshahr said to have a range of 2,000 km.

Tensions between Iran and the US and its allies have threatened to boil over since May last year when President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal and later began reimposing sanctions. The tensions escalated in the wake of devastating September 14 attacks on Saudi oil installations that Washington and Riyadh have, to varying degrees, blamed on Tehran. Following the attacks, which caused global oil prices to spike, Trump

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TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and top military commanders attend the annual "Sacred Defense Week" military parade yesterday. — AFP