

Local

Kuwait looking forward to GCC Summit in Saudi Jan 5

Foreign Minister hosts GCC ambassadors in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah said that he was looking forward to the GCC Summit to be hosted by Saudi Arabia on January 5, 2021, saying that the summit reflects keenness of GCC leaders to achieve the shared ambitions of their countries. Sheikh Dr Ahmad made his statements as he hosted ambassadors of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries at the Foreign Ministry's building yesterday, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah attended the meeting, which grouped ambassadors of Saudi Arabia Prince Sultan bin Saad bin Khaled Al-Saud, Qatar Bandar Bin Mohammad Al-Attiya, Bahrain Salah Ali Al-Maliki, and Oman Saleh bin Amer Al-Kharousi, in addition to Acting Charge d'affaires at the United Arab Emirates' Embassy Khaled Rashed Al-Marshoudi.

Sheikh Dr Ahmad began the meeting by re-laying greetings to the GCC envoys from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. He then reiterated Kuwait's commitment to continue on the same path that was drawn by the late Amir



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah meets ambassadors of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries at the Foreign Ministry yesterday. —Foreign Ministry photo

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in avoiding interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and staying committed to Gulf unity in the best interests of the GCC people.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Dr Ahmad highlighted the challenges facing GCC states, including the COVID-19 pandemic, improving the health system, boosting food security and addressing the demographic imbalances. The Kuwaiti Foreign Minister also pointed out the fact that the region has lost two great leaders this year; the late Sultan of Oman Qaboos bin Said, and the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, in addition to "another GCC icon," Bahrain's late prime minister

Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa. The GCC ambassadors expressed gratitude for the meeting, and congratulated Sheikh Ahmad for earning His Highness the Amir's trust and being renamed for the foreign minister's post in Kuwait's new cabinet. The meeting ended with a symbolic ceremony to celebrate national days of GCC countries.

The meeting is the latest breakthrough signal in the ongoing negotiations to end the GCC rift since Sheikh Dr Ahmad announced on Dec 4 that fruitful talks were held recently in hopes of achieving reconciliation and supporting Gulf and Arab solidarity and stability. "Within the framework of reconciliation efforts, previously led by

His Highness (the late Amir) Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and in continuation of the efforts currently being carried out by His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of Kuwait, and President Donald Trump of the friendly United States of America to resolve the crisis, fruitful discussions took place recently, in which all parties affirmed their keenness on Gulf and Arab solidarity and stability and to reach a final agreement that would achieve the aspirations of lasting solidarity between their countries and achieve what is good for their people," Sheikh Dr Ahmad said in a public address on state TV.



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah met yesterday the Lebanese Embassy Acting Charge d'affaires Hadi Hashim. The meeting was held at the Kuwait Foreign Ministry Diwan. —KUNA

KIPIC signs KD 32.5mn refinery deal

KUWAIT: Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) announced yesterday it signed a KD 32.5 million (around \$106 million) deal with Greek Hellenic Natural Gas System Operator S.A. (DESFA) to operate and maintain Al-Zour refinery, to launch its operations in summer of 2021. A statement by KIPIC indicated that DESFA had a 50-year experience in this field. Deputy CEO of Al-Zour Refinery Hatem Al-Awadhi commended the deal, revealing that it will achieve the highest levels of operational security for the facility. He expressed confidence that KIPIC will build strong relations with DESFA to create a solid and beneficial partnership. The liquefied natural gas import facility will enable the reception of 22 million tons of gas annually, which will in turn provide enough clean fuel to current and future power stations. Zour refinery is expected to begin operations in the fourth quarter of the 2021-22 fiscal year, indicated Al-Awadhi, revealing that the daily production of British Thermal Unit



KUWAIT: Officials attend the signing ceremony. —KUNA

(BTU) will be at 3,000 billion, equaling 540,000 barrels per day. He added that Al-Zour refinery has two docks ready to receive the largest liquefied gas tankers and other important facilities. Mahmoud Abul, KIPIC's deputy CEO for financial and administrative affairs, indicated that the recently signed deal included a clause stipulated training of Kuwaiti workers and reach 60 percent of operational work force in the future. Al-Zour refinery project is part of the new Kuwait vision 2035 and within the strategy of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) to develop the industry in Kuwait. —KUNA

KPA chief hopes to achieve KD 56mn profits next year

KUWAIT: Kuwait Ports Authority Director General Sheikh Yusuf Al-Sabah said yesterday he was looking forward to achieve KD 56 million (\$182 million) in profits for next fiscal year. Sheikh Yusuf made the remarks during a visit by Minister of State for Housing and Minister of State for Services Dr Abdullah Marafi, who said he

wanted to remove all obstacles facing KPA to achieve biggest profits possible, part of government's quest to diversify income and improve services. Marafi highly appreciated KPA's employees for their "dedication, hard work and sacrifice" during the coronavirus pandemic. Sheikh Yusuf, meanwhile, said KPA registered profits in the past five years that doubled revenues of the five years before them, or by at least 230 percent. He said total profits in the past five years was over KD 220 million (\$716 million), and "we hope to reach KD 56 million (\$182 million) in profits for next fiscal year." KPA, said Sheikh Yusuf, would continue execution of its projects despite the COVID-19 pandemic. —KUNA



Sheikh Yusuf Al-Sabah and Dr Abdullah Marafi are seen during the tour. —KUNA