

## Local

# Deputy Amir receives new Kuwait State Security Chief



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (center) meets with Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh (left), and Chief of the State Security Bureau Major General Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh at Seif Palace yesterday. During the meeting,



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (center) meets with Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh (left), and Chief of the State Security Bureau Major General Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

minister Saleh presented to His Highness the Deputy Amir Major General Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, on the occasion of his appointment as Chief of the State Security Bureau. Minister Saleh also presented the new State Security Bureau chief to His



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Separately, His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA

## KRCS sends third relief plane to Sudan

KUWAIT/KHARTOUM: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) sent yesterday a third relief plane to Sudan, carrying humanitarian aid meant for the victims of flashfloods. In a statement to the press, KRCS's emergency management director Yousef Al-Miraj said the third plane contained humanitarian aid and 10 tons of blankets. He expressed his gratitude to the donors who contributed to the 'Relief Sudan' campaign, which was launched through the society's website, adding that they are coordinating with the Kuwaiti embassy in Sudan and the Sudanese Red Crescent to rapidly distribute the aid to affected people. Al-Miraj thanked Kuwait's defense and foreign ministries for facilitating the delivery of aid to help Sudan recover from this disaster.

A second planeload of relief supplies dispatched by Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) had arrived on Sunday in the Sudanese capital to relieve victims of wide-scale flash floods that made thousands of people homeless and inflicted heavy damage. Abbas Fadlallah, the humanitarian affairs commissioner in Sudan, expressed in a statement upon the plane's arrival deep gratitude to the State of Kuwait for the generous and ongoing support for the nation particularly during dire times. The KRCS General director Abdulrahman Al-Aoun indicated that camps would be built to shelter people whose houses were destroyed or washed away with the raging waters that also swamped large swathes of land in the nation. The aircraft that took off from Kuwait earlier on Sunday carried 40 tons of humanitarian aid meant for the victims affected by the flash floods. Miraj had said in an earlier statement that the plane contained foodstuffs, medicines, tents and water pumps. Miraj added that the association will inspect affected places and determine requirements of those affected by the natural disaster. "This is an obligation towards our brothers in Sudan," he said.

Sudanese authorities, since September 5, have



KUWAIT: This photo released by the Defense Ministry yesterday shows humanitarian aid being loaded into a plane heading to Sudan yesterday.

enforced a three-month state of emergency throughout the country amid mounting natural disasters, namely fall of heavy rain and overflow of the Nile. More than 557,000 people have been adversely affected with the catastrophes in 17 states of

Sudan. The torrential rainfalls and the raging waters have caused deaths of more than 100 people and injured at least 50 others. Thousands of houses have been demolished or swept away and many cattle have perished. — KUNA

## KRCS restores 150 homes in Beirut

BEIRUT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) signed an agreement yesterday with the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) to restore homes of 150 families affected by the Beirut Port explosion which occurred on August 4. The Secretary General of LRC George Ketani said in a press statement that this agreement comes within the framework of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's keenness to providing humanitarian aid to those in need "in difficult times." He indicated that the restoration cost will be determined in line with condition of each family, especially those whose breadwinners were killed or

injured by the massive blast that claimed lives of at least 170 people and injured over 6,000 others. Meanwhile, head of KRCS mission to Lebanon Dr Musaed Al-Enezi affirmed the society's keenness to support the affected families, especially those who were unable to repair their homes in such difficult economic conditions. He pointed out that the society also provided medical equipment to hospitals affected by the explosion, as well as health supplies, food and electrical tools for the affected families. KRCS continues its humanitarian efforts in supporting Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon following the port explosion. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met yesterday US Ambassador to Kuwait Alina Romanowski. During the meeting, both sides discussed mutual relations besides regional and international developments. — KUNA

## Marrakesh 'suffocates'...

Continued from Page 1

Usually teeming with people, the square lies forlorn and empty of the musicians, souvenir sellers and fortune tellers who ordinarily ply their trade. Morocco declared a state of health emergency in mid-March and shut its borders to stop coronavirus from spreading. The North African nation of 35 million inhabitants has recorded over 1,500 deaths from coronavirus and more than 86,600 confirmed cases.

In the labyrinth of alleys leading from the Jamaa El Fna, the narrow streets once packed with stalls selling everything from slippers to spices are largely shuttered. Only a few are open, but the shopkeepers have little hope. "Most of the traders have closed their shops," said Mohamed Challah, who sells flowing caftan robes. "The others are opening to kill time because there is nothing to do at home," he said, adding that his store "no longer sells anything".

After the initial pandemic restrictions were eased, traders and tourist operators hoped domestic tourism might mitigate their losses. But then the surprise announcement of new restrictions, including the closure of Marrakesh and seven other cities, shattered hopes of a revival. Last year, the city attracted three of the 13 million tourists who came to the country.

## No grace period for iqamas...

Continued from Page 1

since residency affairs departments had started receiving the public by the end of June.

For Jalil Habti Idrissi, who runs a 45-year-old travel agency, it will be "very difficult to bounce back". "We have experienced major crises in the past, but never of this magnitude," Idrissi said, adding his business had "collapsed." On social media, there are calls to "save" the city, with many using the hashtag "Marrakesh suffocates".

But many are also worried about the COVID-19 crisis itself, posting images of patients suffering from the virus. They show patients sleeping on the floor in the hospital in Marrakesh. The city's testing laboratories were overwhelmed. Marrakesh, along with the economic capital Casablanca, is among the most affected cities.

Like all governments, the authorities have to weigh lockdown measures against the need to keep the economy alive. Official figures predict the pandemic could push the country into its worst recession since 1996, with a contraction of more than five percent of its GDP. In desperation, some took to the streets to protest, calling on the government for help. "The coronavirus will not have time to kill us, hunger will take care of it before," read one banner held by protesters in Marrakesh on September 11.

Tourist operators cling on to a glimmer of hope, with the government allowing travellers not needing a visa to fly to Morocco - upon the presentation of a hotel reservation and a negative coronavirus test. But it is only a "partial opening of borders", said Ibtissam Jamili, who runs a five-star hotel in Marrakesh, mourning what he calls "colossal losses". — AFP

In addition, the sources stressed that other residency and visit visas that had expired before the end of August will be automatically extended till the end of November without any fines, and holders will have to legalize their status as soon as possible. Finally, the sources noted that new instructions indicate that no further grace periods would be given beyond the end of November, adding that extending absence permits for expats stranded abroad will continue provided their residency visas remain valid.

## Backlash after gender reveal on Dubai tower

DUBAI: Social media stars in Dubai are facing an online backlash after staging what they billed as the "biggest baby gender reveal ever" on the world's tallest building in Dubai. While some were quick to congratulate Anas Marwah and Asala Maleh on their second child as the needle-like Burj Khalifa lit up in blue for a boy, others criticized the extravagant light show. Gender reveal parties are held during pregnancy to unveil the sex of the expected child, sometimes announced by pink or blue smoke fireworks.

The Dubai show coincided with a deadly blaze in California ignited by a firework at a gender reveal party. "What a waste!" said one Twitter user, after reports that the couple - whose families originally come from war-ravaged Syria - had spent tens of thousands of dollars on the stunt, allegations they denied. "We want to do something special but also memorable," Asala said.

The video of the event has been popular. By Sunday, it had been viewed more than 19 million times on the family's

YouTube account, which has more than 7.8 million followers. One critic took a more humorous approach to the event, tweeting: "Can you imagine the flex of these kids when they are older? 'Dubai kid: My gender was revealed at the Burj Khalifa! American kid: that is nothing, mine caused fire in California, burned more than 10,000 acres and caused pollution!'"

The display also came amid a spike in coronavirus cases in the United Arab Emirates, whose daily toll hit an all-time high on Saturday with 1,007 infections. "Glad to see the negative reactions towards the influencer gender reveal event on Burj Khalifa," said another Twitter user. "Thought the pandemic would cause an end to how grossly money is spent for PR stunts."

Gender reveal parties have fallen out of favor recently. Apart from the use of pink or blue fireworks, which are prone to causing accidents and fires, they are accused of reinforcing gender stereotypes. Even the woman credited with inventing the trend - lifestyle blogger Jenna Karvunidis, who wrote about her own party in 2008 - has urged people to stop. "Stop having these stupid parties," she said in a Facebook post last week. "For the love of God, stop burning things down to tell everyone about your kid's penis. No one cares but you." — AFP

"getting to know you" phase that observers say could be marked with rows and misunderstandings as well as declarations of affection.

"It's not like they're oil and water cultures - but they are very, very different social and political cultures," said Barbara Leaf, a former US ambassador to the UAE and now a fellow at the Washington Institute. In Emirati circles, "their hair was blown back by the clamor of the Israeli discussion on everything.. and so they're going to now meet and it's going to be pretty interesting to watch", she told AFP.

As the two sides head into uncharted territory, the framework in the accord will give confidence in what to discuss and how, said Moran Zaga, a researcher on the Gulf at Haifa University. "We're going to see a boom in almost every field," she said. "On a civilian level, science, culture, musicians performing here and there" along with endless business and diplomatic delegations exploring collaborations. "We haven't been talking about peace for the last 25 years, it was a word that wasn't heard much in my lifetime. So this is something that Israelis are so enthusiastic about hearing again... it has given them a sense of hope." — AFP

## Israel-Gulf deals chart new era...

Continued from Page 1

Within minutes of the stunning announcement on Aug 13, there was a tussle over the terms of the deal with the UAE saying that plans to annex Jewish settlements had been stopped, only for Israel to insist they were merely suspended. There was also a testy exchange over the UAE's long-held ambitions to buy F-35 stealth fighter jets - which the accord could make a reality - after Netanyahu said he opposes a move that could blunt Israel's strategic edge.

But analysts say that despite the jarring optics, the UAE with its highly pragmatic brand of foreign policy is very much on board with a deal that will drive its goal of becoming a leading international player in a region long dominated by traditional powers Saudi Arabia and Egypt. To follow the Jerusalem deputy mayor's dating analogy, the two sides are now in a