

Local

Kuwait's Foreign Minister meets Bahrain's Ambassador

Kuwait, GCC discuss boosting cooperation among members



KUWAIT: Foreign Minister and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah meets with Bahrain's Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Al-Malki. —KUNA



Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan meets with Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf.

KUWAIT: Foreign Minister and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah received Bahrain's Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Al-Malki at his office yesterday. Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Affairs Nasser Al-Muzayyen and Assistant Foreign Minister for the Office of Foreign Minister Saleh Al-Loughani attended the meeting, the ministry said in a statement.

In the meantime, Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan and Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf discussed boosting cooperation between Gulf states on Sunday. The meeting also discussed joint GCC economic efforts in light of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement. Moreover, they discussed a patent protecting local

distributors and tackling issues facing the GCC countries in the commerce field. Senior state officials representing different state institutions attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Minister of Finance Barrak Al-Sheetan discussed with Dr Hajraf economic issues facing the Gulf states on Sunday. The two sides also discussed means of tackling economic difficulties caused by the coronavirus crisis, the Ministry of Finance said in a statement. The talks also dealt with boosting the work system of the GCC Customs Union, patent rights, as well as enhancing development and economic activities. GCC General Secretariat's assistant secretary for economic and developmental affairs Khalifa Al-Abri and a number of senior GCC and Finance Ministry officials attended the meeting. —KUNA



Minister of Finance Barrak Al-Sheetan meets with Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf.

Kuwait: 708 diagnosed with COVID-19 in 24 hours

KUWAIT: Up to 708 people contracted the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Kuwait in the past 24 hours, official spokesman of the Ministry of Health Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad announced yesterday. Dr Sanad, in a statement to the press, said the new batch of infected cases included a number of persons who contracted the virus due to mingling with people sickened with COVID-19, adding that infection circumstances of others were still to be determined. The latest group of people who tested positive for the globally spread pandemic were recorded, according to the country's health zones, as follows: 189 in Hawally, 165 in Al-Ahmadi, 157 in Farwaniya, 121 in the capital and 76 in Al-Jahraa. The number of ailed people that continue to receive intensive medical care has amounted to 86, Dr Sanad said, noting that the whole count of proven cases that remain under treatment has reached 9,408.

Medical staff conducted, during the past 24 hours, up to 3,928 swab tests, he said, putting the tally of such examinations, so far, at 679,670. The health ministry declared earlier that 506 of COVID-19 patients recovered during the same period, and revealed that the total figure of the recuperated stood at 85,501. Dr Al-Sanad appealed upon the public to remain vigilant and continue to heed the calls for protective measures against the highly contagious pathogen. —KUNA

Kuwaitis' 60 years efforts in OPEC prominent: Official

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti employees at OPEC played a big role in developing the organization's work for 60 years, said Kuwait's Governor at OPEC Haitham Al-Ghais yesterday. Kuwait is one of the founding countries of OPEC in 1960, Ghais said in a press statement on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of establishment. He noted that the organization is run by the Governors Council and the economic council, hailing the efforts of all Kuwaitis who worked in these positions. The hard work of Kuwaiti employees represents the great reputation of Kuwait in the oil field, said Ghais.

OPEC Secretary-General Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, marking the organization's 60th anniversary, had highlighted the vital role of the organization in maintaining the stability of the global oil market. In a message to the press, Barkindo said the

organization stood the test of time over the past six decades and continued contributing to the world's economic development. OPEC was founded on September 14, 1960, in Baghdad in the presence of the oil ministers of the five co-founders, namely, Ahmad Sayed Omar (Kuwait), Dr Fuad Rouhani (Iran), Talaat Al-Shibani (Iraq), Abdullah Tariki (Saudi Arabia) and Juan Pablo Perez Alfonzo (Venezuela).

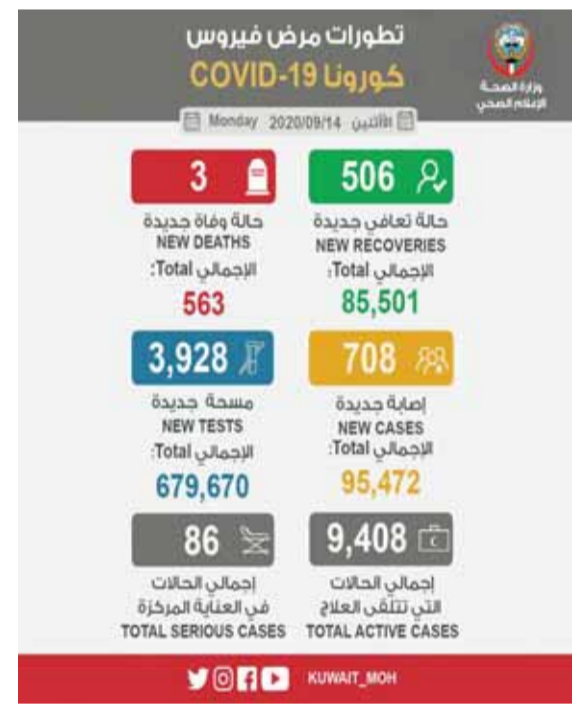
The OPEC chief recalled the late Venezuelan minister's statement at the founding ceremony that the founding countries got united "to make history." The organization has become an integral part of the global energy community and plays an indispensable role in the policymaking of the oil industry, Barkindo stressed. It also backs up the humanitarian issues through contributions to the sustainable development, the combat against poverty, environ-



Haitham Al-Ghais

ment protection and ensuring energy for all, he pointed out. Barkindo renewed OPEC's resolve to address all challenges and continue its commitment to striking a balance in the oil market so as to serve the interests of producers and consumers alike.

OPEC will also continue strengthening cooperation and dialogue with non-OPEC countries with a view to addressing the challenges lying ahead in the humanitarian issues and sustainable development, he vowed. Concluding, he thanked Austria, on behalf of the OPEC members, for hosting the Organization's HQ in Vienna and facilitating all activities of the Organization for more than 55 years. Early this month, OPEC decided to postpone sine die the celebrations of its Diamond Anniversary, originally scheduled to take place in the Al-Shaab Hall in Bab Al-Muaadham in Baghdad, due to outbreak of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19). In a letter to Barkindo, Iraq's Oil Minister Ihsan Abdul-Jabbar Ismael said, "It is very unfortunate that we are unable to mark OPEC's Diamond Anniversary in September at the same site where the historic Baghdad Conference took place." He added, "The health and safety of all are of utmost importance." —KUNA



News in brief

265 companies suspected of human trafficking

KUWAIT: Kuwait referred 265 companies to authorities during the COVID-19 crisis on human trafficking suspicions, Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel said. She also revealed that the government signed 4,497 contracts with private companies in the past 10 years. There are 28,748 expatriate employees whose visas have expired, out of a total of 419,421 hired under those contracts, the minister said in response to an inquiry filed by MP Khaled Al-Otaibi, and published by Al-Anbaa yesterday. There are 1,348 companies that have contracts with the government, employing around 100,000 employees, the minister said.

Rent cases back in court

KUWAIT: Head of Kuwait High Court Dr Adel Bourseli ordered rent judicial departments in courts around Kuwait to handle a total of 132 rent cases a day, Al-Qabas reported yesterday. There are 66 rent judicial departments in five governorates, operating for five days a week. This decision helps address the large number of rent court cases that were put on hold during the COVID-19 crisis, said sources quoted in the report, adding that the crisis itself has caused an increase in the number of rent cases due to several tenants' failure to pay rent.

Bureau sends warning

KUWAIT: Used tires continue to pile up in Shaqaya due to lack of coordination between state departments and failure to push forward recycling projects, the State Audit Bureau said. The bureau warned that unless action is done to regulate the area, it might end up facing a similar scenario as Erhaiya which had witnessed a huge blaze in a massive used tire dump in recent years, Al-Jarida reported.

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