

Local

Kuwait commends Saudi achievements as kingdom celebrates 90th national day

Deputy Amir praises development, progress under King Salman's reign

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti leadership congratulated on Tuesday the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is celebrating its national day, commending on the occasion all the Saudi achievement throughout the fellow GCC nation's history. In a congratulatory cable, His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the King of Saudi Arabia Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on this joyous occasion. His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince lauded the strong and historic relations between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, praising the development and progress attained during the reign of King Salman. He expressed wishes for evermore welfare and growth for Saudi Arabia under its keen and wise leadership. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of similar content to the Saudi King.

Saudi Arabia celebrates today the 90th national day to commemorate the efforts of founder King

Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al-Saud, who unified one of the biggest countries in the region. The kingdom enjoys a big geographical and cultural diversity, giving it strength at a regional and international level. The late King Abdulaziz had set a great economic, military, political, cultural and educational



Amir's greetings conveyed to Saudi King

system, leading the country to become an international key player. King Salman bin Abdulaziz followed on his father's steps in building a modern country today.

Saudi youth have great ambition and opportuni-

ties now under the Saudi Vision 2030. Moreover, holding the G20 summit in Riyadh in November is part of the effective economic role the kingdom plays globally. Saudi Arabia also plays a big role in keeping a balance in international oil markets through Aramco company, which showed great expertise in dealing with crises and overcoming obstacles. On the political level, the kingdom is a key player in preserving peace, security and stability in the Arab and Islamic World, as well as being part of international decision making on prominent issues.

The country also exerts great efforts every year in Hajj season to ensure the safety of worshippers, especially during the spread of coronavirus, and develop and expand worship sites. The kingdom has very strong and historic relations with Kuwait as the two countries cooperate in all fields regionally and internationally. On 18 July, 2018, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and King Salman signed an agreement to establish a coordination council for the two countries. — KUNA



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

GCC chief, Bahraini Foreign Minister mull cooperation



MANAMA: GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf meets with Bahraini Foreign Minister Dr Abdullah Al-Zayani. — KUNA

MANAMA: Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf discussed Monday with Bahraini Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Abdullah Al-Zayani boosting cooperation among GCC states. This came during Zayani's reception of Dr Hajraf and his accompanying delegation in Manama today, according to the Bahraini News Agency (BNA). The Bahraini Foreign Minister lauded GCC

chief's relentless efforts to promote joint GCC work and boost relations of the GCC countries with the rest of the world in order to meet the aspirations of the GCC leaders and peoples. Meanwhile, Dr Hajraf expressed happiness about visiting the Kingdom of Bahrain to discuss key issues pertaining to GCC joint work. Both sides discussed a number of issues related to joint GCC work and means of tackling various challenges. — KUNA

Spain's parliament speaker praises Kuwaiti women

MADRID: Speaker of Spain's House of Representatives Maritxell Batet praised Kuwaiti women's leading role in politics and taking leadership positions. Batet made the remarks during a meeting with Kuwait's Ambassador to Spain Ayadah Alsaïdi at the parliament to discuss boosting bilateral ties between two nations, Kuwait Embassy in Madrid said in a statement Tuesday. She praised appointment of Kuwaiti women as judges, which was highly recognized at the government and parliamentary levels in Spain. Batet called on importance of exchanging political and parliamentary expertise between both nations. Batet said she would urge the Spanish government to support Kuwait's quest to waive European Union's (EU) Schengen visa

requirements on Kuwaiti citizens. The 26 Schengen countries are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The Kuwaiti diplomat highlighted the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in boosting bilateral ties. Batet expressed her deepest wishes for a fast recovery for His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and further progress, prosperity, stability, and security for Kuwait and its people, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir. — KUNA



MADRID: Speaker of Spain's House of Representatives Maritxell Batet meets with Kuwait's Ambassador to Spain Ayadah Alsaïdi. — KUNA

Kuwaitis urged to abide by German travel guidelines

BERLIN: The embassy of the State of Kuwait in Berlin yesterday urged Kuwaiti citizens in Germany to comply with the new travel guidelines set by the

German authorities. A statement by the embassy called on expired Schengen visa holders to leave German soil before the end of September. Those seeking to stay in Germany must go through official channels to obtain residency, indicated the statement, adding that persons with expired Schengen visas - who could not leave the country due to special circumstances - were implored to contact the department of foreigners' affairs to look into their individual cas-

es. The Germany Foreign Ministry, as of October, will issue new coronavirus (COVID-19) travel restrictions connected with each pandemic-stricken country individually. The Kuwaiti embassy reiterated that travel ban, instituted by German authorities, would remain as is, adding that people seeking travel to Germany must contact the European country's embassies and diplomatic missions in their respective countries to view the latest guidelines. — KUNA

Kuwait's COVID cases top grim...

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All countries have lifted internal curfews and lockdowns, but restrictions on gatherings and foreign travel remain, and social distancing measures are being enforced.

Since reaching 100,000 cases in mid-May, the time it takes for infections to double has widened from half a month, to one month to three months. A longer doubling rate indicates slower growth in the infection rate. As of yesterday, the tally in the energy producing region stood at 800,651 infections, with 6,805 deaths.

The UAE, Oman and Bahrain have seen daily case numbers rise again in September. Ten days ago, the UAE recorded its highest daily number of infections since the start of the pandemic, at 1,007. Authorities said people were not adhering to social distancing measures. The business hub Dubai reopened to foreign visitors in July while airports in the rest of the UAE remain closed to visitors.

Saudi Arabia, which has the highest regional count at more than 330,000 infections and over 4,500 deaths, has seen a downward trend in daily case numbers since early July. On Monday 492 new cases were reported, compared to mid-June peak of 4,919. A week ago the kingdom partially lifted a suspension of international flights to allow "exceptional categories" of citizens and residents to travel. It will scrap all air, land and sea travel restrictions for citizens on Jan 1, 2021.

Iran yesterday announced the highest number of cases of the novel coronavirus in a single day, with 3,712 people infected in 24 hours. The highest case number recorded before was on June 4, when 3,574 cases were detected, according to official figures. Iran has been battling the Middle East's deadliest

outbreak of COVID-19, with the death toll standing at 24,656 people out of a total of 429,193 people infected.

Meanwhile, the United States registered its 200,000th death from COVID-19 yesterday, the latest grim milestone for the country just weeks before voters decide if President Donald Trump will stay in office. According to a rolling tally by Johns Hopkins University, 200,005 Americans have died and 6.86 million have been confirmed infected by the novel coronavirus.

The coronavirus pandemic appears to be accelerating worldwide, with new cases soaring last week to a new seven-day high of almost two million, even as new deaths decreased, WHO statistics showed. In a fresh global update, the World Health Organization said late Monday that during the week ending on Sept 20, 1,998,897 new cases of the novel coronavirus were registered around the world.

That marks a six-percent increase over a week earlier and "the highest number of reported cases in a single week since the beginning of the epidemic", the UN health agency said. Since the novel coronavirus first surfaced in China late last year, it has infected more than 31 million people around the globe and has killed nearly 962,000, according to an AFP tally from official sources on Monday.

Nearly all regions of the world saw new cases rise last week, WHO said, with Europe and the Americas seeing new cases swell by 11 and 10 percent respectively. Only Africa, which has remained relatively unscathed by the pandemic, dodged the upward trend, reporting a 12-percent drop in fresh cases from a week earlier. Even as cases shot up across much of the world, the number of new deaths is going down, the WHO statistics showed.

Last week, some 37,700 new deaths linked to the virus were recorded worldwide, marking a decline of 10 percent compared to the previous week. The decline was driven by the Americas, long the hardest-hit region, where new deaths were 22 percent lower than a week earlier, and by Africa where new deaths dropped 16 percent. — Agencies

cial position and parliamentary and popular positions, which reject the Israeli occupation and establishing ties with Israel. He also asked if the government contacted the US administration to see why Trump made such remarks and if the Kuwaiti government has denied the country's intention to normalize ties with Israel.

Dallal also asked if the Kuwaiti delegation which received the award discussed the issue of normalization with US officials and why the foreign ministry has not issued any statement regarding Trump's remarks, which apparently aim at involving Kuwait in the normalization issue. The UAE and Bahrain last week signed deals with Israel at the White House, breaking decades of Arab consensus that there would be no relations with the Jewish state until it had made peace with the Palestinians.

10 MPs sign non-cooperation...

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During the debate of the grilling, the prime minister praised his government's handling of the coronavirus crisis, saying Kuwait has booked enough vaccines for the deadly pandemic when they become available. Responding to accusations about the government's failure to handle the coronavirus crisis, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, the first Kuwaiti prime minister to face a grilling in public, insisted that Kuwaiti authorities took a large number of bold decisions that averted a food crisis and the spread of the disease.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said the government only spent KD 500 million on the coronavirus, denying that it spent KD 1 billion. He reiterated that the ideal population structure of Kuwait is 70 percent citizens and 30 percent expats, exactly the opposite of the existing demographics, but acknowledged that a long time is required to achieve the target.

MP Kandari began the grilling by accusing the prime minister of failing to devise policies to tackle problems faced by the country in almost all aspects of life. He said the prime minister should have resigned following the uncovering of a state security spying case.

This case should have resulted in the resignation of the whole government, the lawmaker said. Another leak was related to the Malaysian sovereign fund scandal. Kandari charged that spying on people by the secret service police is in contradiction of democracy and accused the government of attempting to turn the country into a police state.

The lawmaker charged that the government failed in handling the coronavirus pandemic, claiming that the government committed a number of mistakes, adding that in the beginning the government demanded a PCR test from expats, but the decision was cancelled after Egypt protested. He said the government's incoherent policy in fighting the coronavirus had resulted in a rapid rise in the number of cases, which has now passed 100,000 cases.

Kandari claimed that the government spent a lot of money on containing the coronavirus and some of its projects have been rejected by the Audit Bureau. The lawmaker also accused the prime minister of failing to introduce a policy for controlling the population structure, which is heavily in favor of expatriates.

Protest held against ties...

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The honor was received by Sheikh Nasser, the Amir's eldest son, as HH the Amir is undergoing medical treatment in the US.

A number of lawmakers have called on the foreign ministry to issue a statement denying Trump's remarks. In a question to Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, MP Mohammad Al-Dallal inquired about Trump's remarks, which contradict Kuwait's offi-

cial position and parliamentary and popular positions, which reject the Israeli occupation and establishing ties with Israel. He also asked if the government contacted the US administration to see why Trump made such remarks and if the Kuwaiti government has denied the country's intention to normalize ties with Israel.

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