

Local

Crown Prince congratulates Amir on return to Kuwait

Sheikh Nawaf condoles with UAE leaders on Sheikh Hamdan's demise

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on Tuesday, received a cable from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of his return to Kuwait. In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince congratulated His Highness the Amir on his return after the successful medical check-ups abroad. In turn, His Highness the Amir thanked His Highness the Crown Prince for his sincere sentiments.

His Highness the Amir also received cables of congratulations yesterday from various state officials after the successful medical checkup he recently underwent in the United States. The cables were from National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, the President of Kuwait National Guard His Highness Sheikh Salem Ali Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and Deputy Chief of Kuwait National Guard Lieutenant General

Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The senior officials wished continuous success and thrive to the country under his wise leadership. In turn, His Highness the Amir sent a cable thanking them for their kind words and sentiments.

Amir sends condolences

Separately, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent cables of condolences to leadership of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over the passing of Deputy Ruler of Dubai and UAE's Finance Minister Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashed Al-Maktoum. His Highness the Amir sent cables of condolences to President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Vice-President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohamad bin Rashed Al-Maktoum, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE's Armed Forces Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, praying to Allah to bless the

deceased with mercy, and to bestow the family with solace. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent cables of condolences to President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashed Al-Maktoum and Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan over the passing away of Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashed Al-Maktoum. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing deep sympathy over the passing of Prince Bader bin Fahad bin Saud Al-Kabeer Al-Saud. In his cable, His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah to bless the deceased with mercy, and to bestow the family with solace. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables of condolences to the Saudi leadership.

Colorado shooting

In other news, His Highness the Amir sent on Tuesday a cable of condolences to US President Joe Biden over the deadly Colorado shooting. In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed sincere sympathy over the shooting at a central market in Colorado State that left several people dead and injured, wishing a speedy recovery to those wounded. His Highness the Amir stressed Kuwait's condemnation and denunciation of this criminal act against innocent people. He added such acts run counter to all religious and humanitarian values. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables to the US President, while National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem sent cables of condolences to President of the US Senate Kamala Harris and Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi. — KUNA

EU official: Kuwait strong partner in efforts to resolve Syria crisis

BRUSSELS: Kuwait has been at the forefront in organizing conferences on Syria and remains a strong partner of the European Union in ongoing efforts to resolve the 10-year-old Syrian conflict, a senior EU official said in Brussels. "Kuwait remains a strong partner with whom we have regular conversations on aid as well as on the overall political situation and is part of the international consensus to back the efforts of the UN in solving the conflict," said the official in an online press briefing ahead of the fifth Syrian conference in Brussels next week. Kuwait has played a leading part in organizing pleading conferences on Syria (in 2013, 2014, and 2015), said the EU official speaking on condition of anonymity.

Kuwait was also the co-chair of the Brussels I conference on Syria, he recalled. Sixty countries have been invited to the Brussels conference including the key actors in the Gulf, as well as several regional and UN agencies. The European Union together with the UN is organizing the fifth Brussels Conference on "Supporting the future of Syria and the region" on March 29-30. In view of COVID-19

restrictions, the Conference will take place in virtual format. The Ministerial Conference will take place on March 30. On March 29, the Day of Dialogue will allow pursuing dialogue between civil society, refugee-hosting countries, the EU, and the UN.

The first objective of the conference is to support a political solution and to ensure the implementation of UN resolutions. The second objective is to raise pledges, to raise humanitarian support for the Syrians inside and outside Syria. The objectives of the Brussels conferences have been unchanged since 2017. These conferences are here to remind the world of the unity of the international community behind the efforts that are being made by the UN, said the official. March 15th marked the 10th anniversary of the Syrian crisis. The conflict is still ongoing, the situation in Syria and the region remains highly critical, with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the deterioration of the economies across the region over the last year further exacerbating the dire humanitarian situation inside Syria and the conditions for Syrian refugees and their host communities in neighboring countries. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Head of Kuwait's Diwan of Human Rights Ambassador Jassem Al-Mubarak meets with Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Jonathan Gilbert. — KUNA

Kuwait Human Rights Diwan chief meets Australian Ambassador

KUWAIT: Head of Kuwait's Diwan of Human Rights Ambassador Jassem Al-Mubarak held talks with Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Jonathan Gilbert yesterday on duties of the Diwan and how they were in compliance with international human rights accords. The Diwan, in a statement yesterday, said the meeting was within the framework of ongoing

meetings with officials locally and internationally. Mubarak noted progress of human rights situation in Kuwait, which was keen on promoting human rights, it said. Gilbert reaffirmed Australia's support to human rights issue, and said the country was keen on exchanging expertise to promote human rights agencies. — KUNA

Islamic party kingmaker after...

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But that alliance fractured earlier this year amid ideological divisions between Abbas and his former partners.

The conservative Abbas long had frictions with other Arab Israeli factions, including those with communist roots. Weeks before Tuesday's vote, Abbas indicated an openness to dealing with Netanyahu, even though the premier has demonized Arab-Israelis at various points through his political career. But Abbas argued that Arab leaders have a responsibility to partner with whoever is in power in order to

tackle a crime epidemic rocking Arab communities.

Analysis by state broadcaster Kan vote showed that the combined strength of the declared pro-Netanyahu parties was 52 seats while those seeking to end his long reign commanded 56. For Netanyahu, that means securing a 61-seat majority could require an alliance with his estranged former protegee, the religious nationalist Naftali Bennett, who is projected to control seven seats, as well as with Abbas. Such alliance would however be plagued by bitter divisions.

The pro-Netanyahu bloc following Tuesday's vote also includes the far-right extremist Religious Zionism bloc whose members have spouted incendiary anti-Arab rhetoric. The prospects for Raam and Religious Zionism to sit a stable coalition under Netanyahu appear dim. For the ideologically divided anti-Netanyahu camp, bringing Abbas on board could also prove complicated. — AFP

The bright jets of energy and matter that extend some 5,000 lightyears from M87's core are one of the galaxy's great mysteries. Most matter lying close to the edge of a black hole falls in, but some particles escape moments before capture and are blown far out into space.

The groundbreaking image of M87's black hole and its shadow in polarized light allows astronomers to see for the first time this interplay between matter flowing in and being ejected. Of the competing theoretical models, only those assuming strongly magnetized gas are consistent with these new observations, the researchers said. The EHT is not a single instrument but a network of eight radio telescopes spanning the globe in order to create a virtual, Earth-sized telescope. Even then, locking in an image of M87's supermassive black hole is comparable to photographing a pebble on the Moon.

There are two kinds of black holes. The first form when the center of a very big star collapses in on itself, creating a supernova. These can be up to 20 times more massive than the Sun, but are tiny in space. So-called supermassive black holes - such as the one sitting at the center of the Milky Way and most galaxies - are at least a million times bigger than the Sun. The results were published in The Astrophysical Journal Letters. — AFP

- locally known as bedoons - basic civil rights, including permanent residency and jobs. The bill calls to provide all bedoons with a civil ID valid for five years, which can be renewed. On the basis of this ID, bedoons should be entitled to free medical care, education - including at the university level - and priority for jobs after Kuwaiti citizens. Under the bill, bedoons will enjoy all other basic rights, many of which they are currently deprived of.



A handout satellite image released yesterday shows the Taiwan-owned MV 'Ever Given' (Evergreen) container ship lodged sideways and impeding all traffic across the waterway of Egypt's Suez Canal. — AFP

Wedged giant ship blocks...

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Storms with dense dust clouds carrying fine sand have swept across much of the Middle East since yesterday. Shipping monitors MarineTraffic said the vessel had been in the same position since at least Tuesday afternoon. "Rescue and tug units are continuing their efforts" to free the MV Ever Given, involving at least eight tug boats, SCA chairman Admiral Osama Rabie said yesterday morning.

Photographs released by the SCA also showed excavators onshore digging soil from the canal's bank, with the earth-moving equipment dwarfed by the giant hull towering above. A MarineTraffic map showed large clusters of vessels circling in both the Mediterranean to the north and the Red Sea to the south. Historic sections of the canal were reopened in a bid to ease the bottleneck, with dozens of ships waiting at both ends of the waterway.

A source at the SCA said later that the first of the ships stuck to the north of the Ever Given had entered an alternative navigational channel and was on its way to the Red Sea. "It is unclear at this point how long ships will remain in the transit area in the lakes region or if they will continue their journey southwards," the source told AFP.

Instagram user Julianne Cona posted a photo of the grounded ship from the Maersk Denver, which was forced to wait behind the Ever Given. "Ship in front of us ran aground while going through the canal and is now stuck sideways," she wrote. "Looks like we might be here for a little bit."

The canal, which links the Mediterranean to the

Red Sea, was opened to navigation in 1869, and was expanded in 2015 to accommodate larger ships. The journey between ports in the Gulf and London, for example, is roughly halved by going through the Suez - compared with the alternate route via the southern tip of Africa.

Even a short closure of the route has a big impact on "just in time" logistic chains, said Camille Eglhoff, transport and logistic expert at Boston Consulting Group. While Eglhoff said the ship was in a "hyper-controlled environment" and suggesting it would be "a matter of hours" before traffic was moving freely again, the costs would add up. "It costs a lot of money, because it blocks the traffic behind," she said. "There will be a domino effect in all the European ports in the coming days."

Bjonar Tonhaugen, head of oil market research at Rystad Energy, was more optimistic in his assessment. "The effect is likely to be small and transient" because "demand is currently soft amid the refinery maintenance season and concerns about extended lockdowns," he told AFP. However, he warned "if the blockage lasts for more than a few days, it could impact prices more and for a longer time".

Nearly 19,000 ships passed through the canal last year carrying more than one billion tons of cargo, according to the SCA. It has been a boon for Egypt's economy in recent years, with the country earning \$5.61 billion in revenues from the canal in 2020. President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi unveiled plans in 2015 for an expansion designed to reduce waiting times and double the number of ships using the canal daily by 2023.

Most of the cargo travelling from the Gulf to Western Europe is oil. In the opposite direction, it is mostly manufactured goods and grain from Europe and North America headed to the Middle East and Asia. — AFP

34 lawmakers demand vote...

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Meanwhile, MP Ali Al-Qattan submitted a draft law calling to grant over 100,000 stateless people