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Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf named Kuwait new PM

Fifth head of government since 2003



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: An Amiri order was issued yesterday naming the Interior Minister in the outgoing Cabinet Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah as Kuwait's new prime minister, replacing Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah. Sheikh Ahmad is the son of HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and will be the country's fifth head of government since 2003.

The appointment of Sheikh Ahmad comes after a series of political disputes rocked Kuwait since the December 5, 2020 general elections between the government and the opposition which won a majority in the 50-seat Assembly. After Sheikh Ahmad forms the new cabinet, the

Amir is expected to dissolve the National Assembly and call for fresh polls. The new prime minister is expected to put the rich country back on track.

Sheikh Sabah submitted his Cabinet's resignation in early April after 26 opposition MPs, two more than the required quorum, said they will back a non-cooperation motion against him following a grilling in the National Assembly. The outgoing prime minister was appointed to the post just three years ago after ex-prime minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah resigned after allegations linking him to a high-profile corruption case. But he has been acquitted by the court and the Public Prosecution has challenged the verdict.

Proposed law will save KD 100 million per year

KUWAIT: Ministerial Economic Committee has prepared an executive plan to cut the inflated salaries and wages which takes more than KD 13 billion out of the total budget which is KD 22 billion. These inflated wages affect the country's development plans and hinder progress. Salaries will be rationalized - they will neither be slashed nor increased.

The basic work will be on approving the salaries' alternative proposed law which will make all allowances

equal among most government entities as long as they have the same academic qualification instead of the current system. In this current system, employees' allowances differ according to their places of work. An engineer in the oil sector receives incentives and allowances more than his/her counterpart in the Electricity and Public Works ministries even though they all have the same academic qualifications.

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Gaza's women see no escape from violence

ABASSAN: Seventeen-year-old Istabraq Baraka fell pregnant soon after her wedding in the Gaza Strip. Three months later her husband killed her. "She died from a severe beating, which caused bleeding on the brain and lungs and broken ribs," said her mother Nazmiya. Sitting with her husband Suleiman in a garden in Abassan, near the city of Khan Yunis in the south of the Palestinian territory, the 53-year-old talks at lightning speed about last year's killing of one of her two daughters, as well as the loss of an unborn grandchild.



GAZA: Palestinians Suleiman and Nazmiya Baraka show a picture of their slain daughter Istabraq Baraka, who was killed by her husband last year.—AFP

Istabraq's father wipes tears away with the corner of a red-and-white keffiyeh wrapped around his head. He laments the slow pace of legal proceedings since his daughter's husband handed himself in to the police shortly after the killing. "The perpetrator admitted his crime, a year and a month until now and nothing's happened," said the 70-year-old. Femicide is on the rise in Gaza, according to figures from the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling, a Palestinian civil society group.

The organization registered six killings and suspicious deaths related to domestic violence in 2019, a figure which rose to 19 the following year. UN Women said the situation worsened at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, which resulted in the "lockdown of survivors of violence with their abusers". Ayah Alwakil, a lawyer from the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, said women can consider violence from their husbands' normal behaviour in Gaza's patriarchal society, which has been controlled by the Hamas Islamist group since 2007. "Some women don't know their rights and some others are afraid of going to court, for lack of family support," she added. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics said 38 percent of women in Gaza faced physical or psychological violence from their husbands in 2019, but Alwakil estimated the true figure to be far higher.

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3 killed in Philippine university shooting

MANILA: Three people were killed Sunday in a rare shooting at a university in the Philippine capital Manila, officials said, in what appears to have been a targeted assassination. The incident happened at Ateneo de Manila University as law students and their families arrived for a graduation ceremony that was to be attended by the Supreme Court chief justice, Rose Furgay, a former city mayor in the restive southern province of Basilan and whose daughter was among the graduates, was killed, authorities said.

Furgay's executive assistant and a university security guard were also killed. Her daughter was wounded and is in a "stable condition" in hospital, police said. "We are quite distraught and bereaved by this occurrence," Joy Belmonte, the mayor of a local government unit where the shooting happened, told AFP. The alleged gunman fled the

scene by forcing a driver out of their vehicle, before abandoning it and continuing his getaway in a jeepney, police said. He was eventually detained near a church.

Police recovered two handguns and a silencer allegedly used by the suspect, who they identified as Chao Tiao Yumul and said had a "long history" of legal disputes with Furgay. Yumul was on a bail for a cyberlibel charge. "This looks to be a determined assassin," said Police Brigadier General Remus Medina told reporters, describing the incident as "isolated". Yumul, with abrasions on his face, was presented by police to reporters. He accused Furgay of being a "drug lord" and that her family had ordered three attacks on him.

A political family
School and university shootings are rare in the Philippines despite its lax gun



QUEZON CITY: A police officer collects evidence by a pool of blood after three people were killed in a shooting at Ateneo de Manila University on July 24, 2022.—AFP

rules. But targeted killings of politicians are fairly common, particularly during elections. Furgay, whose family dominates politics in Lamitan City, served three terms as mayor and was prevented by the constitution from seeking reelection in the May 9 polls. She was suc-

ceeded by her husband, who had held the position before her - a common occurrence in the Philippines where powerful clans hand positions from one family member to another to maintain their influence. The university cancelled the graduation ceremony.—AFP

Jordan protests border attacks

AMMAN: King Abdullah II protested in an interview published Sunday over attacks on Jordan's borders by "militias linked to Iran", following deadly clashes with drug smugglers on the frontier with Syria. Jordan faces "regular attacks on its borders by mili-

tias linked to Iran", he told Al-Rai newspaper. Abdullah called for "a change of behavior by Iran" and said that Jordan "does not want tensions in the region".

"Jordan, like the rest of the Arab countries, seeks good relations with Iran, with mutual respect, good neighborliness, respect for the sovereignty of other states and non-interference in their affairs," the king said. Abdullah said that Jordan, like other Arab nations, was being targeted by smugglers of drugs and arms that he said were in transit to Europe.

"Jordan is coordinating with its brothers (Arab countries) to confront this and protect its borders," he said. The Jordanian army conducts regular anti-smuggling operations on the border with Syria, where Iran-backed fighters support the Damascus regime in a civil war that erupted in 2011. On January 27, Amman said its forces killed 27 drug traffickers supported by armed groups, seizing a large quantity of drugs. An officer and a border guard were killed in a similar clash earlier the same month.—AFP

Egypt small farms play big role but struggle to survive

SINDIYUN: Egyptian smallholders grow nearly half of the country's crops, a lifeline role increasingly important after grain imports were stalled by war in Ukraine — but they are struggling to survive. Despite their crucial role providing food for the North African nation's 103 million people, smallholders are cash-strapped and indebted, frequently selling their harvests at a loss.

"The farmer is dead, trampled," farmer Zakaria Aboueldahab told AFP, brewing tea on his rented plot of wheat and onions in Qalyubia, 30 kilometers north of Cairo. "I'm trying to sell my

onion harvest but I can't find a market," he said, the remnants of his crop scattered across the soil. "I just want to break even. I don't know how I'm going to pay rent". His onions would sell in Egypt: but financing, marketing and infrastructure hurdles create massive gaps between supply and demand.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), small farms are the "primary producers" of food for domestic consumption in Egypt. Farmers cultivating less than three feddans (1.2 hectares, three



BENI SUEF: A farmer collects the pepper crop, in El-Fashn in Egypt's Beni Suf governorate, some 150 kilometers south of the capital.—AFP

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