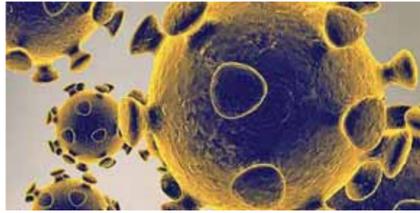




5 Coronavirus subvariants cast shadow over Europe summer



8 Iran's oldest pistachio trader readies daughter to take over



11 Zionist entity uncovers rare early mosque in Negev



16 1.2 million tickets sold for Qatar World Cup



Kuwait upholds democracy

Amir, Crown Prince address nation • National Assembly to be dissolved



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah address the nation on June 22, 2022. — KUNA

Amir: Speech will explain current developments • Crown Prince: Constitution won't be suspended

- Kuwaitis urged to elect new house that can bear great responsibility of maintaining state stability
- Heavy responsibility lies on shoulders of Kuwaiti people to reelect members of parliament

- Constitution untouchable and foundation of legitimacy to ensure security, stability, prosperity
- Call to be cautious and careful amid lingering repercussions of coronavirus crisis

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah said on Wednesday he has decided to dissolve the National Assembly and call for fresh polls to end the ongoing political disputes between the government and MPs that threatened national unity. This was one of the opposition's major demands.

In a hard-hitting speech delivered on his behalf by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Amir said a decree will be issued "within months" to officially dissolve the Assembly and call for snap

polls after taking the necessary legal procedures. "We have decided the way out of the current political scene (deadlock), with all the non-agreement, non-cooperation, differences and disputes ... is to dissolve the National Assembly and

call for fresh general polls," he said in the speech.

He added that the decision to go back to the people will allow them to rectify the political scene marred by disputes and differences. This will be the ninth

time in Kuwait's 60 years of parliamentary democracy that the National Assembly is either dissolved or suspended due to political disputes.

Around 20 opposition MPs who had been on strike in the National Assembly building for the past week celebrated the announcement as they listened carefully to the speech on national television. They prepared to end the strike which they had staged to press for the protection of the constitution. In the speech, HH the Crown Prince stressed the government will not interfere in the elections nor in the election of the Assembly speaker.

[SEE PAGE 3](#)

Speaker welcomes Amiri speech

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem welcomed the announcement by HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in a speech delivered on his behalf by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to dissolve the National Assembly and call for fresh polls.

Ghanem called on the people to rally around the political leadership amid ongoing political disputes between the government and MPs that threatened national unity. "We have to rally around the political leadership for what it takes to serve higher national interests, and back it in order to help the country reach the shores of safety," Ghanem wrote on Twitter.



Marzouq Al-Ghanem

At least 1,000 killed in Afghan earthquake

SHARAN, Afghanistan: A powerful earthquake struck a remote border region of Afghanistan overnight killing at least 1,000 people and injuring hundreds more, officials said Wednesday, with the toll expected to rise as desperate rescuers dig through collapsed dwellings. The 5.9-magnitude quake struck hardest in the rugged east, where people already lead hardscrabble lives in a country in the grip of a humanitarian disaster made worse by the Taliban takeover in August.

"People are digging grave after grave," said Mohammad Amin Huzaifa, head of the Information and Culture Department in hard-hit Paktika, adding that at least 1,000 people had died in that province alone. He said at least 1,500 people were injured, some critically. "People are still trapped under the rubble," he told journalists.

The death toll climbed steadily all day as news of casualties filtered in from hard-to-reach areas in the mountains, and the country's supreme leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada, warned it would likely rise further. The earthquake struck areas that were



already suffering the effects of heavy rain, causing rockfalls and mudslides that hampered rescue efforts.

Photographs and video clips posted on social media showed scores of badly damaged houses in remote rural areas. Footage released by the Taliban showed local residents digging a long slit trench to bury the dead, who by Islamic tradition should be laid to rest facing Makkah. Even before the Taliban takeover, Afghanistan's emergency response teams were stretched to deal with the natural disasters that frequently strike the country. — AFP (See Page 5)

Saudi Crown Prince visits Turkey for talks

ANKARA: Saudi Arabia's crown prince paid his first visit to Turkey on Wednesday since the 2018 murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the kingdom's Istanbul consulate. The talks in Ankara between Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan come one month before US President Joe Biden visits Riyadh for a regional summit. Those talks will focus on the energy crunch caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Turkish leader personally welcomed the crown prince at his presidential palace at a grand ceremony featuring a parade of horses and a military honor guard. They then held a two-hour meeting and a private dinner but no media event.

A joint statement issued by their foreign ministers said the meeting was held "in an atmosphere of sincerity and brotherhood embodying the depth of excellent relations between the two countries". It said the sides discussed Saudi investments but announced no concrete deals. A Turkish official had said the sides would discuss a range of issues, including cooperation between banks and support for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Analysts believe Prince Mohammed came to see if



ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan welcomes Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman upon his arrival during an official ceremony at the Presidential Complex on June 22, 2022. — AFP

he could win broader backing ahead of a possible new nuclear agreement between world powers and the Saudis' archenemy Iran. "There is increased confidence (in Riyadh) that Ankara could be more useful in the current geopolitical environment," the Eurasia Group said in a research note. Analysts also believe that Washington is watching this gradual return of regional calm with an approving nod. — AFP