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ARAB TIMES

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A happy Eid Al-Adha to all

There will be no issue of the Arab Times on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The next issue of the Arab Times will appear on Monday morning. — See you then

MPs voice Eid greetings... Ask all to prioritize Kuwait

By **Abubakar A. Ibrahim**
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 23: Lawmakers have expressed their Eid Al-Adha greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim, members of the legislative and executive authorities, the people of Kuwait and expatriates.

They also stressed the need for the citizens of Kuwait to take advantage of such occasions to unite and put aside their differences for the entire nation to move forward.

Deputy National Assembly Speaker Mubarak Al-Khuraiej wished that Almighty Allah continues to bless the people of Kuwait, as well as other Arab and Islamic nations, for them to enjoy a prosperous and peaceful life. He called on everyone to fully benefit from these blessed and good days by praying to Allah for the people to obey His teachings, please Him and work together to ensure that Kuwait is safe and prosperous under the wise leadership of the humanitarian leader - HH the Amir and HH the Crown Prince.

National Assembly Secretary MP Adel Al-Kharafi stressed the need for the citizens of Kuwait to unite in thwarting attempts to wreak havoc in the country. He prayed that Allah blesses the Amir with good health so he continues his great career in leading Kuwait towards development. He urged everybody to prioritize national interests and rally behind the political leadership, asserting that every official should be honest in carrying out their tasks.

MP Askar Al-Enezi added, "We are here to live good and blessed days as pilgrims come from every everywhere to perform Hajj and Arafat Standing. We pray to Allah to protect Kuwait's Amir and its people from all forms of harm and bestow blessings of security and stability under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir."

Meanwhile, MP Saleh Ashour said Kuwait is facing a new political reality due to changes in the political arena, so it is now time for the government and Parliament to align security priorities with current events and foil attempts to sow discord between Kuwaitis.

He pointed out that people feel anxious due to the series of terrorist-related incidents which began with the bombing of Imam Sadiq Mosque, followed by the discovery of Abdally terrorist cell; in addition to traffic accidents and squabbles among youths in complexes, resulting in the pointless death of many young people. He urged the government to work hard in the

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US\$/KD 0.30210/20
Euro/KD 0.3383
Yen/KD 0.0025
British £/KD 0.4611
KSE -4.33 pts at closing, Sept 22
DOW -37.21 pts at 20:45, Sept 23 See Page 35
Nasdaq +6.10 pts at 20:45, Sept 23
FTSE +96.40 pts at closing, Sept 23
Nikkei -362.06 pts at closing, Sept 18
Gold \$1,131.35 per oz (London)
NYMEX crude \$45.00 pb
Brent crude \$48.31 pb
3-month \$ LIBOR rate 0.32650%

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Pilgrims Stand, pray... 'flag' peace



Muslim pilgrims pray on a rocky hill called the Mountain of Mercy, on the Plain of Arafat, near the holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia, on Sept 23, during the Hajj pilgrimage. For most, it is an emotional once-in-a-lifetime experience — a chance to stand on the spot at Mount Arafat, some 20 kms (12 miles) east of Makkah, where Muslims believe Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) gave his final sermon. (AP)

No Corona cases among Hajj pilgrims

MOUNT ARAFAT, Saudi Arabia, Sept 23, (Agencies): Millions of Muslim pilgrims congregated at Arafat outside Makkah on Wednesday, many of them praying for peace in the Middle East countries ravaged by war and chaos as the annual Hajj reached its climax.

"What is left of our Arab nation? Iraq was the symbol of power and civilisation. What happened to it now? Look at Syria: the refugees are greater in number than the pilgrims here," said Egyptian Mohammed Rizq, 65.

Hajj is a duty for all Muslims at least once in their lives if they can afford it, and for many of the faith's

1.6 billion adherents it represents a moment of supreme spiritual worth that was reflected in the joy expressed at Arafat.

Unlike previous years, the pilgrims were not carrying their countries' flags, in what local media said was a "ban" on flags during the pilgrimage.

The kingdom's authorities have repeatedly warned against the use of any political slogans or banners during Hajj.

To organise the flow of pilgrims, security forces formed human chains along the roads, while volunteers handed out boxes of food and cold water bottles.

The faithful gathered in their hundreds of thousands for noon prayers, as water sprays were turned on to cool them down while helicopters hovered overhead.

Oman helps free US hostages in Yemen

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Sept 23, (AP): The two American hostages, freed after months of being held hostage in Yemen's raging civil war, took their first steps to freedom down a staircase pushed against a gleaming Oman royal air force jet.

It's not the first time a scene like this has played out in recent years as the unassuming sultanate of Oman wields its influence as one of the Middle East's most useful go-to mediators of thorny disputes.

From hosting secret talks between Washington and Tehran over the Islamic Republic's contested nuclear program to seeking a negotiated resolution in Yemen, Oman has struggled to keep the peace among the much larger powers that surround it, including archrivals Saudi Arabia and Iran.

"Because of its location, and because of the very limited resources in Oman, Omanis have learned how to actually be diplomats, how to be mediate, how to connect," said Ahmed al-Mukhaini, an Omani political analyst. "This connection to the world seems to have continued and become a residue within the Omani culture."

The most recent example of Oman's diplomacy under Sultan Qaboos bin Said came Sunday night, when it announced that it had negotiated the release of two Americans, three Saudis and a British citizen held by Yemen's Shiite Houthi rebels, without elaborating on the terms of their release.

While the Saudis and the Briton have yet to be named, the New Orleans-based logistics company Transoceanic Development confirmed its employee Scott Darden was one of the Americans. The other was Sam Farran, a former US Marine from Dearborn Heights, Michigan, who worked in the security industry in Yemen, his wife Zeina told Detroit's WJBK-TV. "We are very, very relieved and thrilled that it's all over and thank God that we are over this ordeal," she said. "We can go on with our life and I can't wait for him to come home."

Oman stands apart from its Gulf Arab neighbors in not joining the Saudi-led coalition battling the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen. It instead has positioned

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Jazeera 'pens' pardoned

CAIRO, Sept 23, (Agencies): The Egyptian president on Wednesday pardoned two journalists for Al-Jazeera English, state media and the lawyer of one of the reporters said, a dramatic development in a case that was widely condemned by human rights groups and international organizations.

The two — Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy and Egyptian national Baher Mohammed — were expected to be released later in the day, along with dozens of human rights activists.

They were among a group of 100 people pardoned by President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi on the eve of the major Muslim holiday of Eid Al-Adha. The pardon also comes a day before el-Sissi is to travel to New York to

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A man checks on his wife as they arrive with other migrants on the shores of the Greek island of Lesbos after crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey on an inflatable dinghy on Sept 22. More than 260,000 asylum-seekers have arrived in Greece so far this year, most reaching the country's eastern islands on flimsy rafts or boats from the nearby Turkish coast. (AP)

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs will launch new curricula in the Quranic Learning Centers affiliated to the ministry starting from the current academic year.

In a press statement, Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Management Affairs at Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs **Al-Amadi** said the new curricula will be launched after Eid al-Adha holidays, explaining that the curricula of two terms were amended to include new lessons on proper behaviors and religious moderation. He revealed that Ministry of Education is also planning to amend the Islamic Education syllabus of the schools in line with the plan of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs in this regard, adding that a summary of the new syllabus will be printed and distributed to the students before the textbooks are ready.

WASHINGTON: Coalition forces killed a senior leader of the Islamic State group in an air strike in Iraq, the Pentagon said Tuesday, also confirming the death in Syria of a French jihadist.

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Mohammed al-Nimr, the father of Ali al-Nimr, a Saudi youth facing execution for taking part in pro-reform protests speaks to AFP in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, on Sept 23. (AFP)

Father pleads pardon for son

RIYADH, Sept 23, (AFP): The father of a Saudi youth facing execution for taking part in pro-reform protests appealed to King Salman on Wednesday to spare his life.

The sentence against Ali al-Nimr, only 17 when he was arrested in February 2012, has drawn international condemnation over his young age at the time and allegations that he was tortured into making a confession.

In an interview with AFP, Mohammed al-Nimr said he hoped the king would save his son.

"We hope that the king will not sign" the execution order, Nimr said, after Saudi Arabia's

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to cool them down while helicopters hovered overhead.

For many pilgrims, Hajj is the spiritual highlight of their lives.

"We feel blessed. I got goosebumps, a feeling that cannot be explained, when reaching the top of the mountain," said Ruhaima Emma, a 26-year-old Filipina pilgrim, who said she has been "praying for a good life for everyone".

For Akram Ghannam, 45, from war-torn Syria, being in Arafat is a "feeling that cannot be described. I pray to God for the victory of all those who are oppressed."

Many reached Arafat by bus while some walked from the holy city of Makkah about 15 kilometres (nine miles) away.

Other pilgrims arrived from nearby Mina using the elevated Mashair Railway linking the holy sites of Arafat, Muzdalifah and Mina, a tent city where many pilgrims spent Tuesday night.

No major incidents were reported on Arafat but the civil defence agency announced that there were more than 200 cases of "fainting and fatigue" after doors failed to operate at one of the railway stations, causing crowding.

After sunset on Wednesday the faithful were to move to Muzdalifah. There they will gather pebbles for a symbolic stoning of the devil ritual on Thursday, which is also the Eid Al-Adha feast of sacrifice marked by the world's more

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