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KUWAIT MAY DEPORT FOREIGN INMATES... WILL BUILD NEW PRISON MPs open army ranks to non-Kuwaitis



Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attends Tuesday's Parliament session at Kuwait's National Assembly in Kuwait City. (AFP)

First Deputy Prime Minister lauds Assembly vote

By Abubakar A. Ibrahim Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 6: The National Assembly approved, in its regular session on Tuesday, the proposal to amend Family Court Law Number 12/2015.

The Assembly added an amendment to Article 11 in the second deliberation as follows: "Authorization to issue birth certificate, civil identification card and any personal documents of the applicant."

It also added an amendment to the first clause of Article 13 as follows: "Rulings on personal status matters issued by the appeals circuits of the Family Court cannot be appealed through the cassation circuit. However, the Public Prosecutor can appeal if the ruling contravenes provisions of the Islamic Shari'a pertaining to public order as set forth in Article 338 of the Personal Status Law. Also, the opponents may challenge the ruling through the cassation if it is re-

lated to last wills and inheritance."

The Assembly also approved the following proposals in their second readings:

- Amendment of the Small and Medium Enterprises Law to include approval of the Civil Service Commission on the organizational structure, as well as financial and administrative accreditation and establishment of branches of the fund in governorates.
Conflict of Interests Bill

Meanwhile, the Assembly approved the request of the Public Prosecution to lift the immunity of MP Faraj Al-Arbeed in Case Numbers 615/2016-1269/2016.

The Assembly also assigned the Human Rights Committee to investigate Bedouins' suicide attempts by setting themselves to fire, and extended the tenure of the Kuwaitization and Employment Committee until the end of May.

Furthermore, the Assembly approved the draft law on accepting non-Kuwaitis in the Kuwaiti Army.

This came after the Interior and Defense Affairs Committee discussed the proposed amendment of Ar-

title 29 of Kuwaiti Army Law Number 32/1967.

The Assembly endorsed a parliamentary proposal to add an article stipulating that "priority shall be given to Kuwaitis in the recruitment process in the Army, followed by the children of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis, non-Kuwaitis included in the 1965 Census or those proven to have their origins in Kuwait, and then non-Kuwaiti children of military personnel."

In case of recruiting non-Kuwaiti experts or consultants, they must have rare fields of specialization or there is no Kuwaiti qualified for the post.

The proposal stipulates replacing Article 29 of Law Number 32/1967 with the following texts:

- (a) Non-Kuwaitis can be temporarily accepted in the Army as officers or experts through secondment or contracting and a decree in this regard shall be issued within three months from the date of implementing this draft law.
(b) If the need arises, non-Kuwaiti volunteers can

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1,700 fighters redeploy

Pause in 'IS' fight as SDF deploys to Afrin

Newswatch

BAGHDAD: Saudi Arabia has offered to fund a new football stadium in Iraq, as FIFA prepares to decide whether to lift its ban on Iraq hosting competitive international matches.

The offer came in a telephone call between King Salman and Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi on Monday evening, the prime minister's office said.

It provided no further details about the cost of the stadium or where it might be located. (AFP)

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May will hold talks with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman at her country residence on Thursday, diplomatic sources said, in another sign of the importance with which London is treating his visit.

The visit to Chequers, a 16th-century manor house 40 miles (60 km) northwest of London, will be in addition to a previously announced meeting at May's London office on Wednesday, the sources said on Tuesday.

Prince Mohammed's visit, part of his first foreign tour as heir apparent, is aimed at persuading Britain that his reforms have made his country a better place to invest and a more tolerant society. (RTRS)

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday that Saudi Arabia had granted Air India permission to fly over its territory on its new routes to and from Tel Aviv.

There was no immediate confirmation from either Saudi officials or Air India. Netanyahu made the announcement during a briefing in Washington to Israeli reporters after he had met US President Donald Trump. (RTRS)

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WASHINGTON, March 6, (Agencies): US-backed ground operations against Islamic State remnants in eastern Syria have been put on hold because Kurds who had spearheaded combat against the extremists have shifted to a separate fight with Turkish forces, US officials said Monday.

The public acknowledgment of what Col Rob Manning, a Pentagon spokesman, called an "operational pause" is the most explicit sign yet that Turkey's intervention in the Kurdish-held enclave of Afrin is hindering the US effort to finish off IS in Syria.

For weeks, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and other US officials have called Turkey's operation a "distraction" from the anti-IS campaign. Mattis also has said the US understands that Turkey has an active Kurdish insurgency inside its own borders and that it views Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, to be a terrorist organization. The US says the YPG is separate from the Kurdish fighters inside the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, but Turkey disagrees.

Airstrikes

Turkey launched its air and ground offensive in the Afrin enclave on Jan 20, conducting airstrikes and artillery strikes on a daily basis. It is just one dimension of a complex war in Syria that includes a range of local opposition fighters, extremist elements, Syrian government troops, proxy forces and military units from Russia and the United States.

Manning said that although ground operations against IS in the Euphrates River Valley have been temporarily suspended, US airstrikes against IS holdouts in that area are continuing. He said one airstrike Sunday near the city of Abu Kamal destroyed two IS supply routes.

"The nature of our mission in Syria has not changed," Manning said. He said the Syrian Democratic Forces, which are comprised of Kurdish as well as Arab fighters, remain "our major partner" in completing the war against IS in Syria.

Another Pentagon spokesman, Maj Adrian Rankine-Galloway, said he could not offer an estimate of the number of Kurdish fighters who have left the Euphrates River Valley battlefield to join the fight against Turks in Afrin.

"They're not fighting ISIS any more, and that basically meant that they're not taking territory back from ISIS as quickly as they had been in the past," Rankine-Galloway said. He added that the pause in offensive ground operations has not resulted in the loss of any territory retaken from IS.

Meanwhile, a US-backed alliance of Syrian fighters announced on Tuesday it would redeploy around 1,700 members from front lines against the Islamic State group to a Kurdish enclave under Turkish attack.

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A wounded Syrian boy receives treatment at a makeshift hospital following reported government bombardments on the rebel-held town of Hamouria, in the besieged eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital Damascus on Monday. (AFP)

Russian military plane crash kills 32

Violence halts aid to Syria's Ghouta

NATO 'forces' to stay in Iraq

BAGHDAD, March 6, (AFP): NATO forces are staying in Iraq at the country's request, alliance chief Jens Stoltenberg said during a rare visit Monday to Baghdad after parliament called for a foreign troop pull-out.

"We are here because Iraq wants us to be here, we are not here without the consent and without an invitation from Iraq," Stoltenberg told AFP.

"We should not stay longer than necessary, we will train the trainers as long as necessary to make sure IS does not reemerge," he said of the jihadist Islamic State group.

His comments come days after the Iraqi parliament called for the government to draw up a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the country. "The Iraqi parliament expresses its gratitude to all countries which have supported Iraq in its fight against DAESH (IS) and calls for the government to draw up a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign troops," it said in a statement.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared in December the end of the war to expel IS jihadists from the country, three years after they seized a third of Iraq, sweeping aside security forces.

Stoltenberg said NATO received a "written request" from Abadi to keep its troops in the country.

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UAE tightens social media

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, March 6, (AP): The United Arab Emirates says it will now require anyone conducting "commercial activities" through social media to register for a government-issued license.

The new rules announced Tuesday target so-called "social media influencers," who parlay their internet fame into advertising products.

Officials said the new rules would help ensure "that media material respects the religious, cultural

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Photo by Ihab Qurtal Nagin Nagin Cox (above), Senior Engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, delivers a lecture titled 'Dare to do Mighty Things: Hitting the Road on Mars' at the American University of Kuwait. — See Pages 15 & 16

BEIRUT, March 6, (AP): The first aid delivery in weeks to reach the besieged eastern suburbs of Damascus was cut short after Syrian government forces began shelling the area while aid workers were still inside, a local council said Tuesday, amid a renewed escalation in the government's deadly aerial and ground campaign.

Aid trucks had to leave before they could finish unloading supplies on Monday, as the eastern Ghouta suburbs suffered their worst day of violence since the UN Security Council demanded a 30-day cease-fire for Syria.

The Syrian American Medical Society charity, which supports hospitals in eastern Ghouta, said 79 people were killed in shelling and airstrikes, as the government, supported by Russia's military, pushed its assault on the rebel-held suburbs, where the UN estimates close to 400,000 people are trapped under unmanageable levels of violence.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said 80 civilians were killed on Monday.

The Security Council resolution, which passed unanimously on Feb 25, has gone unheeded. Monday's aid shipment was the first to enter eastern Ghouta amid weeks of a crippling siege and a government assault that has killed close to 800 civilians since Feb 18. Aid agencies, however, said Syrian authorities removed basic health supplies, including trauma, surgical kits and insulin, from the convoys before they set off.

The UN said airstrikes and shelling in eastern Ghouta and the shelling of Damascus continued for hours while the convoy was unloading supplies.

"After nearly nine hours inside, the decision was made to leave for security reasons and to avoid jeopardizing the safety of humanitarian teams on the ground," said Jens Laerke, deputy spokesperson for the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. As a result, 14 of the 46 trucks in the convoy were not able to fully offload critical humanitarian supplies. Of the 14, four were partially offloaded, he said.

Laerke said the team found a desperate situation for people who have endured months without access to humanitarian aid. "Food for civilians was in short supply or prohibitively expensive and high rates of acute malnutrition

were observed," he said.

The violence called into question future aid deliveries. Another aid convoy is scheduled to enter eastern Ghouta on Thursday, but Laerke said security measures must be guaranteed for this to happen.

The International Committee for the Red Cross also confirmed that its joint convoy with the United Nations had to leave before offloading all its supplies on account of the deteriorating security situation Monday.

Ingy Sedky, the ICRC spokeswoman in Syria, said most of the aid from a 46-truck convoy was delivered to the town of Douma in eastern Ghouta but the mission was cut short before the rest of the supplies could be unloaded.

Iyad Abdelaziz, a member of the Douma Local Council, said nine aid trucks had to leave the area after government shelling and airstrikes intensified in the evening.

Airstrikes continued Tuesday. The opposition's Syrian Civil Defense search-and-rescue group reported at least nine people were killed in airstrikes on the town of Jisreen, in eastern Ghouta. The group, also known as the White Helmets, added that two of its volunteers, and 28 others, suffered difficulties breathing following shelling on the town of Hammouriyeh on Monday evening. It accused the government of using "poison gas." The Observatory reported 18 people suffered breathing difficulties, without attributing a cause.

It was the eighth allegation of chlorine gas use reported by the Syrian American Medical Society this year. The reports could not be independently confirmed, and Russia used its Security Council veto to freeze the work of a UN body investigating such reports earlier this year.

Still, the allegations could provoke a response from Washington, which says it could take military action against the Syrian government for continued chemical weapons use against its own people.

The Syrian government, through the SANA state news agency, denied using chemical weapons in its eastern Ghouta offensive.

The convoy that reached Douma on Monday carried only a fraction of the relief needed for

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Table with financial data: USS/KD 0.29970/80, Euro/KD 0.3716, Yen/KD 0.0028, British £/KD 0.4163, KSE -0.17 pts at closing March 6, DOW +48.01 pts at 21:35 March 6, Nasdaq +38.17 pts at 21:35 March 6, FTSE +30.77 pts at closing March 6, Nikkei +375.67 pts at closing March 6, Gold \$1,331.40 per oz (London), NYMEX crude \$62.63 pb, Brent crude \$65.81 pb, 3-month \$ LIBOR rate 2.03490%