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IRAN HAS NOT BEEN, WILL NOT BE IN WAR: IRANIAN ENVOY

No intention to launch war: US envoy

DGCA has no plans to change flight routes; GCC begins enhanced maritime patrols

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (Agencies): The US ambassador to Kuwait, Lawrence Silverman, said his country does not intend to launch a war in the region, which officials in Washington have confirmed, but the presence of its troops in the region is to protect its interests, reports Annahar daily.

The ambassador told the daily, "His country is very serious about protecting its interests and any Iranian attack on these interests will receive a harsh response."
"The United States has warned Iran of its actions, as well as its intention to develop its nuclear weapons, which is a

matter of concern and destabilization of the region," Silverman said.
"If President Donald Trump has denied rumors of sending 120,000 troops to the region, we do not want war but we are serious about responding to the Iranian regime if our interests are attacked here," he said.
"There is no warning to our citizens in Kuwait because there is nothing to warn about, but the reason for the reduction of our staff at our embassy in Baghdad is based on information," he said.
Intelligence says that an attack will occur on the embassy or its surroundings and therefore the US is taking proactive measures for fear of reprisals from some loyalists of the Tehran regime. As for Kuwait, there is no intimidation and rumors. Our embassies operate normally and there is nothing and no warnings for our citizens.

Opinion

Geography hasn't separated Morocco from the Gulf

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

A MODEL of Arab-Arab relations is worth emulating. This model can be built and worked on to cement it among Arab League nations. This model is the Morocco-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) relationship which is based on continuous cooperation in a bid to interpret the unit of national security within a strategic perspective.

Based on this firm rule, it is possible to look into all the events the Arab region has gone through and the role of Morocco which led to suggestions to incorporate it into the GCC despite its geographical distance that is overshadowed by its political and economic coherence. This coherence is greater than the distance and it is the bridge between the two sides.

In the Gulf, we view Morocco as the Arab gate to Africa. This huge continent promises vast investment projects, in addition to the stability it enjoys and its ability to overcome the challenges it encountered during the wave of the so-called 'Arab Spring'.

The royal awareness of people's needs in Morocco has rendered it more attractive to foreign investors because it forms a link between Arabs, Africans and Europeans. It possesses enough capabilities for intellectual and cultural conveyance - an investment prelude desired by any country.

This fact has existed and continues to exist from the minds of Gulf elites and leaders of the GCC. This is the basis of the context of the letter of King Muhammad IV to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz about the terrorist attacks that Saudi Arabia encountered recently.

The Moroccan King affirmed absolute solidarity of the Kingdom of Morocco with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and that it constantly supports the course to counter all threats and assaults on the latter irrespective of the forms or justifications.

At some point, terrorists targeted Morocco; thus, it realizes very well the level of strength in solidarity and condemnation of any criminal act, especially those targeting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which has weight in the Arab and Muslim world in terms of the economy and politics.

It is not a secret that Saudi Arabia is considered the thermostat of stability in the Arab world. Its fortification against the terrorism plague means fortification of Arab national security from East to West.

This position taken by Morocco is not strange. It has always been present in confronting any threats to GCC countries. This sparked the vision of the late King Al-Hussein II on unity of course and fate between these countries which are still stable during the reign of King Muhammad IV.

This excellent relationship has prompted adversaries to launch a shameful and misleading campaign through claims about differences between the GCC countries and Morocco. Certain events crushed such claims and this solidarity letter is one of the crystal clear pieces of evidence.

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Qatar's Amir in Kuwait in fraternal visit

News watch

BAGHDAD: A blast was heard in central Baghdad on Sunday night, with its cause and precise location still unclear, Reuters witnesses said. There was no immediate response from Iraqi officials.

Two Baghdad-based diplomatic sources also said they heard the blast close to the Iraqi capital's fortified Green Zone which houses government buildings and foreign embassies. (RTRS)

CAIRO: An explosion targeting a tourist bus injured at least 12 people on Sunday, mostly South African tourists, near a new museum being built close to the Giza pyramids in Egypt, two security sources said.

A third security source said the bus was carrying 25 South African tourists from the airport to the pyramids area, and that four Egyptians in a nearby car were also injured by broken glass. (RTRS)

DUBAI: Dubai has issued a circular requiring food organisations to give details on calories on all menus, the government media office tweeted on Sunday.

"The first phase will be introduced in November 2019 for restaurants with more than 5 branches. (The) second phase in 2020 for all restaurants, catering establishments and hotels," it quoted a municipality circular as saying. (RTRS)

ADEN: Yemeni army forces arrested a person wanted by the US and Arab Gulf countries, and listed in their sanctions list, a senior officer said Saturday.

Colonel **Abdo Al-Saghir**, chief operations of Brigade 17, told KUNA a special unit ambushed Belal Al-Wafi, also known as Abu Al-Waleed, in the western suburbs of Ta'ez governorate. (RTRS)

Ramadan Timings

Iftar Monday 18:36
Imsak Tuesday 03:12

■ **US\$/KD 0.30370/80**

▲ **Euro/KD 0.3403**

■ **Yen/KD 0.0027**

▼ **British £/KD 0.3879**

▼ **KSE -73.18 pts** at closing May 19
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▼ **Dow -98.66 pts** at closing May 17

▼ **Nasdaq -17.76 pts** at closing May 17

▼ **FTSE -4.89 pts** at closing May 17

▲ **Nikkei +187.11 pts** at closing May 17

▼ **Gold \$1,295.55** per oz (London)

▼ **NYMEX crude \$62.76** pb

▼ **Brent crude \$72.21** pb

▼ **3-month \$ LIBOR rate 2.52188%**

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and his accompanying delegation have arrived in Kuwait in a fraternal visit to congratulate His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the Holy Month of Ramadan.

The Qatari Amir was received at the airport by 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, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and senior State officials.

Sheikh Tamim was accompanied by a delegation including Qatari Amir's personal representative Sheikh Jassem bin Hamad Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Qatar's Amiri Diwan chief Sheikh Khaled bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Sheikh Jowaan bin Hamad Al-Thani, Sheikh Mohammad bin Hamad Al-Thani and Sheikh Thani bin Hamad Al-Thani.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, received on Sunday at Dasman Palace Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and his accompanying delegation who are in fraternal visit to Kuwait.

KIA Pakistan spend denied

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Several media outlets in Kuwait and Pakistan have recently published false press stories claiming that the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) is pursuing a USD 20 billion investment program in Pakistan. The KIA would like to emphasize that the story is false and unfounded, and does not have a relationship with the person cited by the media outlets as the source of this reporting, Mr Ahmed Idrees.



His Highness the Amir receives Qatar's Amir upon his arrival in Kuwait for a visit. KUNA photo

MP push to pass 4 bills

By Ahmed Al-Naqeeb
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The National Assembly has triumphed over the power struggle which hindered parliamentary progress; thereby, pushing for important legislation in the service of the nation and its people, says MP Khaleel Abul.

Abul is hoping for approval of four more important bills before the end of the current legislative term. He said the chairpersons of several parliamentary committees are currently coordinating with the State Priorities Committee to determine bills and proposals which should be approved immediately. He added that two or three sessions out of those dedicated for the discussion of budgets and final accounts will be allotted for deliberation on priority bills.

The bills, which are expected to be prioritized, include the proposed amendment of the Legal Profession Law. MPs are currently debating whether students majoring in Sharia

should be allowed to join the legal profession.

MP Majed Al-Mutairi argued that Sharia graduates should not be excluded as they studied the foundations of jurisprudence, Sharia laws and philosophy. "They have always been able to join the legal profession with some of them becoming judges and public prosecutors. Therefore, any proposal that will strip Sharia graduates of the right to be registered at Kuwait Lawyers Association will be outrightly rejected," he asserted.

On the other hand, Chairman of Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee MP Khaled Al-Shatti stressed that accepting Sharia graduates as public prosecutors is a flaw which must be corrected. He urged the minister of justice to issue a decree limiting employment in the legislation, fatwa and criminal investigation departments at the Ministry of Interior to law graduates only. "If we accept Sharia graduates in legal positions, we might as well

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Deal close: Iraq

Exxon evacuation faulted

BAGHDAD, May 19, (RTRS): Exxon Mobil's decision to evacuate its foreign staff from the West Qurna 1 oilfield in southern Iraq on Saturday was "unacceptable and unjustified", Iraq's Oil Minister Thamer Ghadhban said on Sunday.

"The withdrawal of multiple employees - despite their small number - temporarily has nothing to do with the security situation or threats in the oilfields in of southern Iraq, but it's for political reasons," Ghadhban said in a statement.

A major oil deal between Iraq and Exxon Mobil was "very close" but had been slowed by Exxon's decision to evacuate its international staff from the West Qurna oil field, Ghadhban said on Sunday.

"Had we concluded we would have signed a heads of agreement," he said, referring to a preliminary document that would set out terms of cooperation on the South Integrated Project. "But now they are out of the country, why should I run after them?" he said at an oil meeting in Jeddah.

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An LED billboard is seen along the Gulf Road. Flashing LED billboards cause disturbance to residents and danger to drivers blinded at pivotal turns on the Gulf Road as well as to pedestrians. - See Page 13