

Kuwaiti government in turmoil after Cabinet resigns



KUWAIT (AP) — The Cabinet resigned Wednesday, and Kuwaitis were looking to the make-up of the next government as an indication of whether the ruling Al-Sabah family intends to cooperate with the newly elected parliament.

The emir, Sheik Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, accepted the resignation of the Cabinet headed by Crown Prince Sheik Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah, and asked him to form a new government by Oct. 20.

On that day, the 50-seat National Assembly will hold its first session since the emir dissolved it in July 1986.

Opponents of the conservative Al-Sabahs won 19 of 35 seats contested in Monday's election, which saw a 90 percent turnout of the 81,500 male elector-

ate. Some of the opposition victories came in remote tribal areas long considered the turf of the ruling family.

The constitution recommends that the Crown Prince choose a number of ministers from the parliament. Sheik Saad has never given more than three of the 16 Cabinet posts to lawmakers.

Opposition figures say the number appointed this time will set the tone for relations between the legislative and executive branches — stormy since Kuwait got its first parliament in 1962.

The Assembly was dissolved in 1976, and restored in 1980. Six years later, at the height of the Iran-Iraq war, Sheik Jaber again suspended the body after members criticized the government, sparking the resignation of one royal member.

When Iraq invaded in August 1990

and drove the Al-Sabahs into exile, the emir promised to hold elections after liberation.

The restoration of democracy in Kuwait, and the course of relations between the elected parliament and the royal family, has implications that transcend Kuwait.

Kuwait's Arab neighbors — including Saudi Arabia — have promised to create powerless consultative councils in an effort to appease democracy activists. Only Yemen has scheduled parliamentary elections for later this year.

There seems to be little hope for representative democracy in the region. Even before Saddam Hussein's forces invaded, other monarchs were pressing Kuwait to reduce the oversight powers of its parliament.

Sheik Saad is expected to start consul-

tations on the new government Saturday, but there are already signs of tension over its makeup.

In a recent television interview, the crown prince complained that members of past parliaments had refused to accept government positions. He also struck a defensive tone in his resignation letter, which noted attacks on his Cabinet during the election campaign.

"It's not a secret that this Cabinet was the target of an organized campaign... to undermine it and throw doubts on its capability to get work done," Sheik Saad said.

But members of the organized opposition and their independent allies said they declined to take Cabinet posts in the past because of meddling in the ministries by the royal family.

Investigators find flight recorder

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands (AP) — Investigators found the charred and dented flight data recorder of an El Al Boeing 747 Wednesday, saying the "black box" could provide clues to why the jet slammed into a suburban apartment block.

The briefcase-sized box was found as hundreds of searchers, sifting carefully through an unstable mountain of rubble and wreckage, pulled more bodies from the apartment building destroyed in Sunday's crash.

By Wednesday night, 40 corpses had been removed from the smoldering rubble, but 250 people were still unaccounted for, according to city hall spokesman Robert Kaercher. He said the missing were presumed dead.

If confirmed, the toll would make it the world's deadliest air disaster in terms of deaths on the ground.

Authorities said a more precise casualty toll was impossible because an unknown number

of illegal immigrants lived in the low-income apartment block.

The recovery was also slowed because searchers were finding bits and pieces of bodies in the rubble, charred in the intense heat from the fuel-laden jumbo jet that exploded on impact.

Authorities said they hoped the flight recorder would provide details of the last moments before the Boeing 747-200 cargo plane crashed into the 10-story building 10 miles east of Schiphol Airport, destroying 80 of its 230 apartments and heavily damaging 150 others.

At a news conference Wednesday, Henk Wolleswinkel, a senior inspector at the Dutch aviation authority, said only one of the plane's starboard engines had been found, not two as reported earlier. He said a tail cone also fell off, and "that has most likely led to the confusion."

Peru's guerrilla leader sentenced to life in jail

LIMA, Peru (AP) — A secret military tribunal sentenced Abimael Guzman, the mastermind and top leader of the deadly Shining Path guerrilla movement, to life in prison without parole on Wednesday.

The trial was held on a heavily guarded island near Lima, where the judge also ordered the rebels to pay \$25 billion for the damage they caused. Nothing was said about what that total included.

The Maoist group's brutal 12-year insurgency has caused 25,000 deaths and \$22 billion in economic damage. Guzman's capture and trial has not halted the bloodshed.

Defiant rebels killed four air-

men and two policemen hours before the judgment was announced.

The military judges, who wore hoods throughout the trial to protect their identities, convicted Guzman and 10 other rebel leaders of treason, according to the communique from the Supreme Military Tribunal, Peru's highest military court. The others received the same sentence, the maximum under Peruvian law.

Guzman and two other rebels, including his companion Elena Iparraguirre, were tried and sentenced at the naval base on San Lorenzo Island near Lima.

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