

Chambers of Commerce Conference

The Minister of National Economy, Said Nabulsi, on 24 July opened the fifth conference of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce. The delegates included 21 from the Israeli-occupied West Bank, who asked for arrangements to be made for more goods produced there and in the Gaza Strip to be exported to Arab markets.

Kuwait**POLITICAL: Foreign****Loan of Aircraft to Egypt Denied**

The Interior & Defence Minister, Shaikh Saad Abdullah al-Sabah, denied on 23 July that there was any truth in agency reports that Kuwait had lent Air Force planes and personnel to Egypt. Such suggestions, he said, were 'preposterous', although the government was always ready to expand its military co-operation with Egypt in any way needed. Shaikh Saad also refuted reports that Kuwait was acting as a mediator in settling differences between Egypt and Jordan.

Ambassador to China Accredited

Kuwait's first Ambassador to China, Abd-al-Hamid Abd-Razzaq Saad al-Buhaijan, presented his credentials on 25 July.

Relations with Uganda

It was announced on 23 July that Kuwait and Uganda had decided to establish diplomatic relations.

Parliamentary Delegation in North Korea

A parliamentary delegation headed by the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Khalid al-Mukhalid, arrived in Pyongyang on 20 July, after visiting Peking, and had meetings with the North Korean Premier, Kim Il-sung, and ministers. Kuwait Radio reported that Mukhalid and his colleagues left on 26 July for a 'private visit' to Moscow, in an aircraft 'provided by Kim Il-sung'.

Internal Affairs**No Attempt on Premier's Life**

The press attache at the Kuwaiti Embassy in London denied on 21 July that there had been any attempt to assassinate the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Shaikh Jaber Ahmad Jaber al-Sabah, as had recently been reported (ARR 328).

ECONOMIC: Finance**Oil Payments in Gold Requested**

Talks between a British economic mission and a delegation headed by the Finance & Oil Minister, Abd-al-Rahman Salim al-Adqi, ended in Kuwait on 22 July. Kuwaiti sources said that British offers to renew a bilateral financial agreement due to end in 1973 were rejected, on the grounds that it should not be discussed until it expired, and that Atiqi and his colleagues asked for payment of royalties and taxes on oil to be made in gold instead of sterling. Britain's recent decision to allow the pound to 'float', and its possible effect on Kuwaiti deposits in British banks, were also discussed, the sources said.

Trade**Talks with Indonesia**

An Indonesian delegation led by Colonel Somari Dan, adviser on economic and military affairs to President Suharto, arrived in Kuwait on 25 July for talks with the Trade & Industry Minister, Khalid Adasani, on the possible purchase of Kuwaiti fertilisers.

Lebanon**POLITICAL: Foreign****Kuwaiti Foreign Minister in Beirut**

The Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, Shaikh Sabah Ahmad Sabah, held talks with his counterpart, Khalil Abu Hamad, in Beirut on 28 July to discuss the Arab situation in the wake of President Sadat's order to the Soviet military personnel to withdraw (see EGYPT).

Water Distribution Agreement with Syria

Agreement was reached with Syria on 24 July on the distribution of the waters of the Orontes river, it was officially announced in Beirut. Under the agreement Lebanon will be entitled to make use of 80 million cubic metres of water annually.

Syrian Intelligence Accused

A magistrate's indictment on 17 July accused Syrian intelligence leaders of having planned the assassination of former Syrian Defence Minister, Muhammad Umran, on 4 March in Tripoli (ARR 114). The magistrate said Umran was killed because intelligence leaders feared his possible reinstatement by President Asad. He had been living in exile in Lebanon since 1967.

Lebanese Hijackers Tried in Malawi

Two Lebanese accused of hijacking a South African Airways airliner in May (ARR 258) appeared before a court in Malawi on 27 July. They face a possible jail sentence of 25 years if found guilty.

Jumblatt Returns from India

The leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, Kamal Jumblatt, returned on 17 July from a seven-week visit to India.

Diplomatic Appointments

It was announced on 17 July that the Liberian Ambassador to Italy, Henry Gemayal, had been additionally appointed Ambassador to Lebanon.

The new Pakistani Ambassador to Lebanon, Samihalla Kuraisi, arrived in Beirut on 24 July.

Defence**Crotale Missile Dispute Continues**

More details were revealed on 17 July about Lebanon's agreement to buy Crotale ground-to-air missiles from the French arms manufacturing company, Thomson-CSF (ARR 329). A statement issued by the Army Command, announcing cancellation of the deal, said the government had agreed to pay 8