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Abbas barred from UN talks

AFP | Washington

A US official said yesterday that Palestinian Authority president Mahmud Abbas is among 80 officials being denied visas to attend next month's UN General Assembly, where France is leading a push to recognise a Palestinian state.

"Abbas is affected by this action along with approximately 80 other PA officials," a State Department official said in a statement, detailing those impacted by the extraordinary decision announced on Friday by the US, a key ally of Israel.

Arad building fire

TDT | Manama

Civil Defense contained a fire that broke out in a residential building in Arad.

The National Ambulance transferred the injured to hospital, where their condition was reported stable.

Houthi Premier, ministers killed in Israeli strike

AFP | Sanaa

Yemen's Houthi rebels said yesterday their prime minister and other ministers were killed in an Israeli air strike earlier this week, the most senior officials known to have died in a series of attacks during the Gaza war.

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Workplace comfort

MPs study draft amendment requiring suitable seats for women at work

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Parliament's Services Committee is studying a draft amendment to the Labour Law in the Private Sector to require employers to provide suitable seating for women at work.

The proposal is being prepared for debate in the next session and for presentation in the fourth session of the current legislative term.

Its aim is to ensure a comfortable and safe workplace for women employees.

MP Hanan Fardan, a main sponsor, said the draft seeks to protect women's rights by obliging employers to offer appropriate seats for female staff, creating conditions that support productivity and job stability.

Complaints

She said the idea followed repeated complaints from Bahraini staff in shops and private companies who were made to stand for whole shifts under a policy she described as 'enslavement', exploiting a woman's need for work.



The lawmaker said such treatment is inhuman and unacceptable.

Supporters argue that the chance to sit during long hours eases strain, lifts morale and raises output and loyalty, which also serves employers.

They add that passing the measure would advance social justice and equal opportunity.

According to the proposal's explanatory memorandum, the Constitution requires the state to balance a woman's duties to her family with her work in so-



"The draft seeks to protect women's rights by obliging employers to offer appropriate seats for female staff, creating conditions that support productivity and job stability."

- MP HANAN FARDAN

ciety and to guarantee equality with men in political, social, cultural and economic life without prejudice to Islamic sharia.

The memorandum says the duty to provide seats would apply in all workplaces, even where tasks involve movement.

Long shifts

Regular sitting during long shifts, it notes, reduces fatigue, improves performance and cuts absenteeism.

It adds that seating helps prevent injuries linked to long periods of standing, especially in roles that demand constant activity.

Providing seats, it says, gives women a sense of comfort and safety, which supports better mental health and higher output, to the employer's gain.

The explanatory memorandum states that seating for women workers is essential to protect health, improve performance and invest in human capital, and that it would help to reduce harassment and violence in the workplace, with a likely rise in employee loyalty.

On humanitarian and social grounds, it says a working woman has a right to conditions that offer comfort in line with her health, especially during pregnancy or urgent medical needs, and that the proposal matches national goals to support women in the labour market.

Biggest rescue operation

Floods displace half a million people in Pakistan

AFP | Lahore

Nearly half a million people have been displaced by flooding in eastern Pakistan after days of heavy rain swelled rivers, relief officials said yesterday, as they carried out a massive rescue operation.

Three transboundary rivers that cut through Punjab prov-

ince, which borders India, have swollen to exceptionally high levels, affecting more than 2,300 villages.

Nabeel Javed, the head of the Punjab government's relief services, said 481,000 people stranded by the floods have been evacuated, along with 405,000 livestock.

Overall, more than 1.5 million

people have been affected by the flooding.

"This is the biggest rescue operation in Punjab's history," Irfan Ali Khan, the head of the province's disaster management agency, added at a press conference.

He said more than 800 boats and over 1,300 rescue personnel were involved in evacuating fam-

ilies from affected areas, mostly located in rural areas near the banks of the three rivers.

The latest spell of monsoon flooding since the start of the week has killed 30 people, he said, with hundreds left dead throughout the heavier than usual season that began in June.

"No human life is being left un-

attended. All kinds of rescue ef-

orts are continuing," Khan said.

More than 500 relief camps have been set up to provide shelter to families and their livestock.

In the impoverished town of Shahdara, on the outskirts of the provincial capital of Lahore, dozens of families were gathered in a school after fleeing the rising water in their homes.

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