

LOCAL

New law targets drivers 'parking' cars in places meant for disabled

KDSC chief hails success of 'You are Our Pride' festival

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 8, (Agencies): Director General of Public Authority for the Disabled Affairs Dr Shafiq Al-Awadhi revealed about an agreement reached with Ministry of Interior to apply a new law against those who wrongly use the parking spots designated for the disabled people, indicating that this law is due to come in effect from January 2017, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement she issued following her meeting with the As-

sistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Fahad Al-Shuwei, Dr Al-Awadhi said the ministry has affirmed the need for launching an awareness campaign targeting vehicle users from next Sunday prior to activating the law.

Dr Al-Awadhi explained that the awareness campaign will be aimed at informing the public about the need to respect the parking spots allocated for the disabled, and the legal repercussions to be borne by those who violate the law.

She urged people with disabilities to renew their disability cards, adhere to the new cards provided by the authority, and keep track of its validity in order to avoid any inconveniences or clashes with the law enforcers.

Dr Al-Awadhi said discussions are underway to link the database of the disabled people with that of the ministry in order to facilitate the identification of those with disabilities and special needs.

She revealed about an ongoing study to install surveillance cameras at the parking spots allocated for the disabled people with the aim of deterring those without disabilities from parking their vehicles there and for issuing citations against those who commit this violation.

Al-Awadhi indicated that authority is considering the possibility of providing the ministry with the list of people with mental disabilities so that they are not issued with driving licenses.

She also revealed about a plan to possibly exempt disabled people from paying fees of Ministry of Interior as per Article 37 of the disability law.

It is worth mentioning that the penalty against those who wrongly park their vehicles in parking spots allocated for the disabled will be one-month imprisonment and/or fine of KD 100, as per the decision to come in effect from January 2017.

Activities

Meanwhile, Chairperson of Kuwait Disabled Sports Club (KDSC) Shafi Al-Hajiri applauded the success of the just-concluded festival entitled, "You are Our Pride," marking the World Disabled Day which included several activities and competitions.

In a press statement, Al-Hajiri disclosed the festival consisted of local sports events and memorization of the Holy Quran competitions. He said the festival was aimed at recognizing the remarkable achievements of Kuwaiti disabled sportsmen and women since the inception of the club in 1977 till date.

He added the champions of the club won a total of 50 Olympic medals in various sports tournaments and more than 2,200 medals in international, regional and continental competitions.

He revealed the festival highlighted the victory of Kuwaiti athletes in the 2016 Paralympics in Rio, Brazil particularly Ahmad Naqa Al-Mutairi who won a gold medal during the games that ended in September.

The festival also honored two champions in shooting - Fuhaid Al-Daihaani and Abdullah Al-Rashidi, gold and bronze medalists respectively in the Rio Olympics.

Al-Hajiri pointed out the local athletes faced difficult challenges as they strived to win first places in football for the mentally disabled as well as the table tennis, shooting, fencing and other games for the blind.

He asserted the festival was an opportunity for exchanging experiences between the sportsmen and women in the club, and to develop their technical levels.

In the Holy Quran competition, many people with special needs participated and their performance was excellent. The club will soon organize a ceremony in honor of the winners in different levels and categories.



Al-Hajiri



Top & above: some photos from the seminar.

Photos by Mahmoud Jadeed

'Kuwait in the Eyes of Diplomats' seminar held

The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NC-CAL), in collaboration with International Women Committee, recently organized a seminar titled "Kuwait in the Eyes of Diplomats". In attendance at the event

were Consultant at Amiri Diwan Mohammad Abu Al-Hassan, French Ambassador to Kuwait Christian Nakhla, Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Yasser Atef and Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Alexi Solomatn.

IMF Mideast center, KFESD jointly organize symposium

Path to inclusive 'economic growth' in Kuwait, other Arab countries discussed

By Cintra Fernandes
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 8: The IMF Middle East Center for Economics and Finance, jointly with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, held a symposium that discussed the path to inclusive economic growth in Kuwait and other Arab countries, at the Arab Organisation Headquarters on Wednesday evening. Drawing on international country experiences, the discussion aimed to identify the core ingredients of successful inclusive economic growth strategies and address the different sources and dimensions of inequality.

The symposium featured Professor James Robinson of the University of Chicago, whose seminal work on the role of institutions in economic development includes the award-winning book "Why Nations Fail", and Professor Adeel Malik of Oxford University, who has authored highly influential publications on political economy of the Arab world; the discussion was moderated by the CEF's Director Dr Oussama Kanaan.

Dr Kanaan shared that this was the fifth in a series of lecture held this year that addressed challenges facing the Arab world in a timely way, not with a policy description or an ideological lens, but in an attempt to promote scholarly discourse. As the symposium invited ideas from the audience to identify gaps in the discussion, the feedback of previous forums necessitated this discussion on inclusive economic growth. He remarked that even though policy descriptions were well thought out, obstacles to successful adoption were observed due to institutional weaknesses and socio-political factors.

Provided

He provided an overview of the roots of the current economic slow-down, and discussed the special features of inequality in Arab countries along several dimensions beyond simple measures of income distribution. Firstly, he pointed out, a wide geographical disparity had emerged over time, within most countries, in income, wealth, and access to public services and infrastructure with widespread protests and demands for inclusiveness in many Arab countries fanned by discontent in economically neglected, atrophying locations.

He noted that in most countries the younger groups have been increasingly alienated economically and socially, suffering from much higher rates

of unemployment, with skills and overall human capital generally ill-matched to the demands of globalized markets. Also, income and wealth inequality had increasingly been rooted in differences across social groups in their ability to exercise their civil rights, often emanating from institutionalized discrimination by gender, religion or national origin.

"Economic growth is not mysterious", Professor Robinson began, and argued that economists know through strong theoretical beliefs and evidence, that sustained economic growth is a result of investment in human and physical capital and the innovation, creation and adoption of new technology.

Contrast

He also explained that the contrast between monopoly and innovation, introduces inclusion. Citing examples, he argued that a monopoly creates economic losses and blocks the entry of new talent and ideas into an industry. Making the case for appropriate regulations to counter this, he pointed out that patents are meant to create incentives for innovators and they initially drew participation from people from all backgrounds, not just manufacturing. Strong anti-trust laws in economies are also geared to sustain this.

"The way societies are organised creates patterns of incentives or opportunities that lead to poverty or prosperity," he remarked. He added that in order to prosper a society has to unlock all of its latent talent by creating broad based incentives and opportunities through the institutions of society and regulations.

He emphasized that countries which have grown successfully have done so because they moved their institutions in a more inclusive direction, citing examples of China after 1978, Ethiopia after the fall of the Derg in 1991. He pointed out that the difficulty of sustaining inclusive institutions in the absence of inclusive political institutions is that concentrated power can be used at the expense of the economy. Promoting economic change and diversification challenges many ways of organizing politics and societies in developing countries and thus creates difficult trade-offs for rulers and politicians. It also risks political instability and unleashing forces that are difficult to contain or manage.

Professor Robinson gave examples of institutional transitions that took place when a political and social project emerged as a way of balanc-

ing these tensions. These projects, he informed, often emerge for quite idiosyncratic reasons, as that of Deng Xiaoping did after 1978, or with President Park in South Korea in the 1960s, or the United Arab Emirates in the 1970s.

Countries which have successfully created inclusive political and economic institutions have done so with strategies which simultaneously build different dimensions at the same time. He urged that institutions required both accountability and the capacity to implement regulations in order to aid inclusive growth.

For his part, Professor Malik started by discussing the importance of an inclusive growth strategy in the Arab world by examining the domestic and regional dimensions of trade liberalization. He presented a general account of the politics of trade protection in several Arab countries, with a focus on Egypt and Tunisia.

Research

Based on his recent research on the Egyptian experience, Professor Malik argued that trade liberalization, when it became a policy imperative, was only selectively pursued to suit the interests of politically connected insiders. Such partial liberalization created rents for insiders that were used to sustain the ruling coalition. However, these rents were created at the expense of continued exclusion of unconnected firms facing substantial barriers to entry and growth. The resulting economic repression of firms has huge implications for job creation and prospects for inclusive growth in Egypt.

Professor Malik then argued that regional economic integration is the single most important collective action dilemma facing the Arab world since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. It is the most desirable component of any strategy for diversification and inclusive growth. Yet, it is also the most politically challenging aspect of economic reform, as both domestic political elites as well as geo-political stakeholders might stand to lose, at least in the short-term, from a more economically integrated region. He concluded by emphasizing that the emergence of a new economic and political order in the Middle East is inherently connected with solving this collective action dilemma.

A lively discussion with the audience who included participants from the public sector, the banking and business community, academia and representatives from international and donor organizations, followed.

mp profile getting to know you

Voting Record

- Electricity and Water Tariffs (2016), approved
- Financial Controllers — auditors (2016), approved
- Domestic Workers and Domestic Workers Recruitment (2015), approved
- Consumer Protection (2015), approved
- Anti-Corruption (2015), approved
- Cyber Crime (2015), approved
- Surveillance Camera (2015), approved
- Military Service — Conscription (2015), approved
- DNA Law (2015) approved
- Granting Citizenship to 4,000 Bedouins Bill (2013), approved
- Anti-Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism Bill (2013), approved
- Writing-Off Loan Interests of Citizens Bill (2013), approved
- Unemployment Insurance Bill (2013), approved
- Small and Medium Enterprise Bill (2013), approved
- One Vote Decree Bill (2013), rejected
- National Unity Decree Bill (2013), approved
- Amendment Decree of the Sport Law (2013), approved
- Anti-Graft and Financial Disclosure Decree (2013), approved
- Annual Plan for 2011/2012 (2013), approved
- Foreign Agreements (2013), approved
- Amendment of Housing Care Law (2013), approved
- Privatization of Kuwait Airways Corporation Law (2013), approved
- Electronic Transaction Law (2012), approved
- Final Accounts for 1999/2000 and 2010/2011 (2013), approved
- Telecommunications and Information Technology Authority (2013), approved
- Amendment of Companies Law (2013), approved
- Amendment of Cooperative Societies Law (2013), approved
- Settlement Decree with Iraqi Airways (2013), approved
- Amendment of Penal Code — Death Penalty for Blasphemy (2012), approved
- Amendment of Pre-Trial Detention Law (2012), approved
- Amendment of Public Tenders Law (2012), approved
- Postponement of former Prime Minister's grilling by Ahmed Al-Saadoun and Abdulrahman Al-Anjari (2011), rejected
- Referral of Adel Al-Saarawi and Marzouq Al-Ghanim's grilling request against former Development Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Fahd Al-Sabah to the Legal Committee (2011), rejected
- Removal of former prime minister's grilling by Ahmed Al-Saadoun and Abdulrahman Al-Anjari from the agenda (2011), abstained
- No-confidence vote against the former prime minister by Waleed Al-Tabtabaei, Mohammed Hayef and Mubarak Al-Walaan (2011), abstained
- Re-voting on Teachers and Students Bonus Bill (2011), approved
- Holy Qura'an Authority (2011), approved
- State Budget (2011), approved
- No-confidence motion against former Information Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah by Ali Al-Deqbasi (2010), approved
- No-confidence motion against former prime minister by Faisal Al-Muslim (2010), rejected
- No-confidence motion against former prime minister by Musallam Al-Barrak, Saleh Al-Mulla, Jamaan Al-Harash (2010), approved
- Revamping KPC (2010), abstained
- Loan Interest Cancellation Bill (2010), rejected
- Proposal to re-vote on Loan Interest Cancellation Bill (2010), rejected
- Loan Defaulters Fund (2010), approved
- Development Plan (2010), rejected
- Privatization Bill (2010), approved
- Transfer of Investigations Department from Interior Ministry to Public Prosecution (2010), rejected
- No-confidence motion against former Interior Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Khaled Al-Sabah by Musallam Al-Barrak (2009), rejected
- Private Sector Labor Law (2009), approved

Marzouq Al-Ghanim
(Liberal/Conservative)
Second Constituency

MARZOUQ AL-GHANIM was born in 1968 and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering. He occupied a number of positions, including chairman of Boubyan Petrochemicals and chairman of Kuwait Sports Club. He is a member of Kuwait Engineers Society and International Mechanical Engineering Society. He was elected MP in 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2013; in addition to the annulled February 2012 Parliament.

In the 2016 parliamentary election, Al-Ghanim won first place in his constituency with 4,119 votes ahead of his rival Riyadh Al-Adsani who got 3,578 votes.

In July 2013 election, he also took the first place with 3,170 votes under the one-vote system. A liberal who is considered representative of the merchants' community, he was elected speaker with 36 votes compared to 18 votes obtained by MP Ali Al-Rashed — speaker of the scrapped Assembly.

The 2013 Parliament was supposed to complete its term in June 2017 but it was dissolved in early October 2016 through an Amiri decree.

As an MP Since 2006, Al-Ghanim was elected chairman of Youth and Sports and Foreign Affairs committees and member of Financial and Economic Affairs, Public Funds Protection and Response to Amiri Address committees.

He decided not to run in the December 2012 election in objection to the one-vote one-man system which was issued through a decree of urgency, but he did not formally join the opposition stance.

However, he participated in the July 2013 election after the Constitutional Court declared the decree valid in June. He said then, "Boycotting elections is not good for the country."

He explained that he boycotted the earlier elections because he was waiting for the Constitutional Court to issue its verdict on the one-man one-vote decree. He stressed the importance of respecting the court decision "because there are many important lessons to be learnt from this verdict."

He said the court stamped its authority on the emergency decree and set for itself a jurisdiction to decide on any emergency decree. He argued the court did not state that an emergency decree is the absolute right of HH the Amir, but it is the court which makes the decision.

On the other hand, Al-Ghanim was surprised when the so-called majority opposition demanded for a constitutional monarchy and a popular government. "What the opposition members are saying is far from seeking reforms. They have no reform agenda, as they rather have an election agenda and that is why they are divided," he added.

He rejected any call for street demonstrations which contradict democratic principles. "Changes should be done inside the Parliament and not on the streets," he asserted.

He is inclined to take liberal pro-government stances, but was also witnessed siding with conservatives on certain issues. He questioned the government on issues that need to be addressed. He submitted 49 draft proposals and 69 questions to various ministers during the 2009 Assembly.

He was a member of the permanent Economic and Financial Affairs and Budgets and Final Accounts committees as well as the temporary Environment and Nuclear Energy Committee.

Statement

After registering for the July 2013 election, Al-Ghanim said that changes can only take place inside the Parliament, not on the street. He added, "The next Parliament will be the crossroad like the Parliament of 1971 and it will see more achievements."

He expected a huge voter turnout in the election because the Constitutional Court the one-man one-vote decree.

Asked if the National Action Bloc (NAB) will return to the Parliament, he said it is left for the Kuwaiti people to decide.

While campaigning for the February 2012 election, he called on all Kuwaitis to unite as the country "cannot be built by a divided people." He criticized the State's development plan and urged the Cabinet to present "practical and executable projects and ideas."

He also expected Kuwait to restore its pioneering role in all fields. "The moderate approach is the right way for justice to prevail," he said, urging the coming MPs to be self-righteous in order to keep their integrity and credibility.

He suggested launching a State sponsored cultural center to promote arts and preserve traditional handicraft and heritage. He called for building capacity of national workforce and to obligate the private sector to conduct vocational training



Al-Ghanim

courses during summer holidays.

On the grilling of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, Al-Ghanim said, "All those who think the sports case is simple or just a conflict between two people are mistaken. It is a conflict between those who believe in the need to live under the law and those wanting to practice the law of the jungle." He warned about the consequences of the issue in other fields, "which means if we accept violations in the sports sector, we will be obliged to do the same in other fields."

The lawmaker denied that his bloc delayed submission of the grilling motion. He clarified, "Grilling as a tool should be used to ensure that the law is enforced, it is not to be used for political gains. The government admitted that it failed in implementing laws and committed itself in an official statement. That is why we postponed the grilling to avoid being accused of getting personal."

He emphasized that success of the grilling is not determined by the number of votes and pointed out that even if the grilling was held in a closed-door session, the message of the bloc will be announced to mass media.