



Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Dr Taleb Rifai. KUNA photo

## 'Huge tourism, cultural future seen in Kuwait'

Call for more investment

**MADRID, Dec 25, (KUNA):** Kuwait has huge cultural and tourism potential, said Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Dr Taleb Rifai expressing optimism about the Gulf country's eagerness to invest more in its tourism sector.

The Kuwaiti government has recently shown growing interest in boosting tourism sector and even took several measures to use its potential to give impetus to this important sector, Rifai said in interview with KUNA, just few days before the end of his tenure.

He forecast that Kuwait will prove successful its endeavor to develop the tourism sector. Kuwait has great capabilities and resources, especially at the cultural level, the UNWTO official.

Rifai, a former Jordanian minister, described Kuwait as a beacon of creative thinking and dialogue. In sixties and seventies of the last century, Kuwait was a hub for creative writers and artists in the region, he said, adding that this has not changed a lot nowadays.

In the Arabian Gulf level, Rifai noted that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also increased its interest in the tourism sector considering it a new and important source of income especially after the sharp decline in oil prices. He urged the oil-rich Gulf countries to

take tourism seriously as an important investment domain. On the Arab level, he pointed out that the leading Arab touristic countries, namely Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan have been making huge gains from tourism and benefiting up national economies despite the current challenges caused by the political unrest and terrorism.

He unveiled that he plans to visit Syria shortly to get first-hand information about the situation in the country's archaeological sites, particularly in Palmyra. In this regard, he called on the international community to unite to protect historical sites in the war-torn Syria. Rifai holds this position since Jan 1 2010. He was unanimously elected at the 18th session of UNWTO General Assembly (October 2009) and was reelected for a second in 2014.

From March to December 2009, he was UNWTO Secretary-General ad interim. From February 2006 to February 2009 he was Deputy Secretary-General. From January 2003 to February 2006, Rifai was the Assistant Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Prior to this appointment, he served in several ministerial portfolios in the Government of Jordan as Minister of Tourism and Antiquities; Minister of Information; and, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation.

During his term as Minister of Tourism, Mr. Rifai served as Chairman of the Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

### New guidelines soon

## 'Car dealers using govt land'

**KUWAIT CITY, Dec 25:** Kuwait Municipality has been considering reviewing the mechanism of issuing licenses for car dealers to use open spaces belonging to the State, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily quoting a source noted the Municipality is on the verge of preparing a new study to fix prices for such spaces. He noted the rate of encroachments on government landed properties along the coastal areas and some highways are higher than the authorized spaces. He stated the automobile offices encroaching on spaces by the roadside will be held responsible by officials from concerned governorates.

He reiterated the concerned departments have since been mandated to prepare the list of authorized offices and spaces allotted them. He indicated inspectors will later set out on campaigns to signify seriousness of the reports. He reaffirmed the municipality's commitment to protecting the coastal areas against violations and the issuance of new

licenses and renewal of those in use will be suspended.

In another development, Deputy Director General for Human Resources Development at Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Major General Khalid Al-Tarkit announced the issuance of a ministerial decree regulating training courses for the appointment of firefighting cadres, reports Al-Anba daily.

He indicated that the courses will include those that will train university degree holders to graduate as specialized firefighters.

Major General Al-Tarkit affirmed that this is similar to the courses organized by Ministry of Interior and the Coast Guard Department for specialist officers. He explained that the appointment was previously through the Civil Service Commission and applicants had to undergo training courses to become competent officers. However, under the latest decree, the appointment shall be through KFSD based on its needs and by placing advertisements in newspapers.

# DIWANIYA ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

### 'Punish those dividing nation'

## 'Kuwait enjoys due to wise leadership'

"KUWAIT enjoys because of a wise and beloved leadership, by the grace of God," columnist and Editor-in-Chief of **Annahar** Dr Emad Bu Khamseen wrote for the daily.

"The country under the leadership of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his Heir Apparent and right-hand man, HH Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has always been appreciated at both the Arab and international levels. "His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, is always committed to honesty, loyalty and allegiance. He is well-known among the Kuwaitis for his attitude, patriotism and modesty.

"Just recently, some of the mercenaries attempted to offend the sublime position of HH the Crown Prince by airing some footage of the opening ceremony of the Gulf 23 — the Gulf soccer cup.

"Although, we are positive and confident that such things cannot affect the sublime position and the strength of Nawaf Al-Ahmad, HH the Amir has repeatedly warned against the existence of some elements who are striving to promote sedition and divide the citizens of this homeland who have always supported and are loyal to their leadership.

"However, a man of reputation, given the history and the glory of Nawaf Al-Ahmad, he does not need anybody to defend him, because his history and his positions are bigger than to be described and more than to be counted, simply because 'Abu Faisal', has spent all his years in the service of the State of Kuwait and its people in several positions.



Bu Khamseen

"The people of Kuwait love and give him a degree of respect and reverence because they always see him as a loyal, sincere, honest and always faithful citizen. He is an example to be followed in terms of purity and his keenness to work silently and as a matter of fact the people have showered him with respect, love and all the appreciation he deserves.

"Such being the case, Almighty Allah, has frustrated all the efforts of those who were striving to divide the country and as a result of this, their scheme is doomed to failure because of the cohesion of all Kuwaitis who throw their support behind their leadership in addition to their absolute rejection of all attempts that may have been aimed at offending HH the Honest Crown Prince.

"Hence, we found all Kuwaitis speaking in one tongue 'Oh Abu Faisal, you will always remain in the hearts of the people of Kuwait because they know you Nawaf Al-Ahmad is and they will always revere you as the apple of their eye — the Kuwaitis who know your genuine nature, a lover of the State of Kuwait and its people and because of your sincerity for the leadership'.

"Consequently, on behalf of the people of Kuwait, we call upon the officials of the ministries of Interior and Information to follow the thread of this despicable attempt to harm our leadership and arrest those who are behind it and those who act as cover up for such incidents and incite others because our political leadership is a red line that we will not allow anybody to violate. Those who are behind such acts should be brought to justice."

Also:

"Yesterday, in a statement to reporters, Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanim sent a message to all those who wish to see the failure of the 23rd Gulf Cup tournament which is currently being held in Kuwait," columnist **Abdurrahman Al-Awwad** wrote for **Al-Sabah** daily.

"The very fact that the State of Kuwait is hosting this event signifies that the people of the Gulf are bigger than all the manipulations that have been woven for the failure of this tournament.

"The people of the Gulf shall foil all attempts and shall remain united in the face of those who try to undermine the success of this tournament especially through their malicious attempts by focusing on certain footage of the inauguration of the championship in a manner that has nothing to do with the facts.

"The statement of Al-Ghanim has actually dotted the i's and crossed the t's and put things in the right perspective. This is a clear cut response to those who want to spoil the celebration and deprive the people of Kuwait and the Gulf the pleasure and joy of this event.

"We also affirm that Kuwait is the country of friendship and peace and that all our people in the Gulf are welcome at any time and every time and that the ultimate goal for which the championship was established is to bring the people of the Gulf on a common platform.

"No one will succeed in distorting or insulting anyone. We have understood the purpose of those who wanted to knock the wedges and dismantle the unity between us.

"Al-Ghanim through his known wisdom has refuted the lies of the disgruntled people and had emphasized that the Saudi soccer team will participate in the current Gulf championship.

"He also declared that he was honored to meet the Advisor at the Royal Court of Saudi Arabia Prince Turki bin Mohammad bin Fahd on the sidelines of his visit to HH the Amir and had said the Saudi prince had assured him that the Saudi team will not withdraw from the current championship."

"The citizens did not show much interest in the resignation of the government, and they were not too concerned about the formation of the new government. This is due to the fact that the people of Kuwait are in despair and lack a sense of optimism when it comes to such issues," **Mohammad Al-Ruwaihil** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"However, the citizens have regained a sense of optimism through the new minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad, who is considered as someone who can initiate a new era that will change the current scene of corruption and mess.

"The citizens are counting on him based on what they know about him in terms of upholding the constitutional values for the ruling family, and what they read about him through his famous articles. He is also known to possess a balanced and reformist personality.

"Personally, I cannot claim to know Sheikh Nasser apart from what majority of people know about him. I haven't met him, but it seems his presence in the Cabinet has brought hope to the people of this country, which has been lost for quite some time. He symbolizes a period that will see the disappearance of corruption and materialization of a bright vision for the future of this country."

"We in Kuwait along with the people of other GCC countries are very pleased about the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup," **Zaid Aqab Al-Khateeb** wrote for **Al-Kuwaitiah** daily.

"This happiness for the championship has been expressed in all TV channels of the Gulf and Arab region as well as the international mass media.

"When FIFA listed the football matches of 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup "Khaleeji 23," which was launched on December 22 in Kuwait, within its international agenda as friendly matches, all sportsmen became happy about the lifting of the ban from Kuwait National Football Team. FIFA posted on its website the list of international friendly matches for the eight teams that are participating in the championship.

"Eight football teams will participate in the championship. The first group will comprise of Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Oman. The second group comprises of Qatar, Iraq, Yemen and Bahrain."

"As stated in my previous article, the agitation of various democratic and advanced national political organizations in favor of an alternative electoral system to replace the current bad one (10 votes per electorate) is appropriate for the country at this stage," **Dr Bader Al-Daihani** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"It is a perfect step toward long-term democratic political reform instead of engaging in perpetual talks about the uncountable institutional political corruption scenarios. There is another significant step that should be dealt with simultaneously with the alternative electoral campaign system to ensure it doesn't lose substance.

"It is simply about the need to press for enacting a law to usher in political organizations based on national and democratic principles, because a real democracy is impossible without political parties.

"The democratic civil political organizations constitute a refined system, and any alternative to the aforementioned may yield permanent critical political crisis amid the sectarian, sectional and tribal division in our political terrain at present."

"Member of the Parliament Omar Al-Tabtabaei is calling for a prime minister who is not from the ruling family to surmount conflict within the family. It would have been easy to overlook the statement if it was made by any common person who ignores content of the constitution," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"We all know the Constitution gives HH the Amir of Kuwait the sole authority to appoint the prime minister and even the crown prince. This means that no other authority can interfere in this issue irrespective of the circumstance. Therefore, for an MP to call for something of this nature compel us to ask what he is up to? The idea is completely unacceptable, because it's deemed a direct violation of the constitution and public opinion that refuses anything which may lead to chaos and tamper with stability of the country.

"Therefore, it is necessary for the MPs, before anyone else, to know the content of the Constitution to revere and abide by it. Not everything that crosses someone's mind is sound, and it's unwise to solve a problem by another problem. The three main authorities in the country should work within their mandate to cement the concept of separation of the authorities in a modern country."

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb

### News in Brief

**Indian attacked, robbed:** Jahra Criminal Investigations teams are hunting for three masked men who attacked an Indian expatriate and robbed him, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, an Indian expatriate in his 30s lodged a complaint at Jahra Police Station, explaining that he was on his way home when he was intercepted by three people in a vehicle. They beat him severely and then took his wallet which contained about KD 15 cash and his civil ID card.

He said the robbers were masked and he was unable to identify their vehicle properly because it was dark then.

The victim presented a medical report to indicate the injuries he sustained as a result of the attack. A case was registered and referred to the concerned authorities.

**Kuwaiti trio with drugs:** Three young Kuwaiti citizens including a girl were arrested in Ahmadi area for possessing drugs and driving under narcotic influence, reports Al-Rai daily.

A patrol team affiliated to Ahmadi Security Directorate, while patrolling Ahmadi area based on instructions from Ahmadi Security Director Brigadier General Abdullah Safa to intensify security presence in the areas of Ahmadi Governorate, suspected a car with three young occupants including a girl after their laughter and the way the car was being driven caught the attention of other road users.

Securitymen ordered the motorist to pull over and realized that they were all in a disoriented state. They searched the vehicle to discover two packets of "Chemical" drug and drug paraphernalia.

They arrested the trio and referred them with the confiscated items to the concerned authorities.

**Drug pills with Egyptian:** An Egyptian expatriate was arrested in possession of 40 "Tremadol" pills in Farwaniya area, reports Al-Nahar daily.

Farwaniya securitymen, after noticing the vehicle being driven in a reckless manner, ordered the driver to pull over and checked his details to discover he is an Egyptian. Seeing him sweat with fear and nervousness, securitymen searched his vehicle and found the narcotic pills.

When questioned, he confessed to selling the drugs to teenagers in cafés and in front of schools.

They arrested him and referred him with the narcotic pills to the Drugs Control General Department for necessary legal action.