

Total 23,902 citizens registered under CSC for jobs

MPW planning to replace expatriate employees

KUWAIT CITY, March 23: Ministry of Public Works is planning to replace all its expatriate employees with Kuwaitis within the next five years before the year 2022, reports Al-Shahed daily quoting informed sources.

They said the ministry is keen on benefiting from the experiences of national labor and contributing in pro-

viding job opportunities to the youths based on the plan of the Cabinet and in line with the Kuwaitization policy in the public sector.

The sources said the government has been seriously working on reducing expatriates and replacing them with national workers in all state instructions, adding that the

ministry will take necessary steps gradually in coordination with the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

They affirmed that reduction of expatriates will contribute in solving the problem of population imbalance.

Meanwhile, according to statistics issued by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), there are a total of

23,902 citizens registered under CSC and waiting for employment, reports Aljarida daily.

Kuwaiti women top the list with a total of 17,975 while the number of Kuwaiti men awaiting employment is 5,927.

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The investigation committee formed

by the National Assembly is sifting through a pile of documents which may shed light on financial irregularities which occurred in the Kuwait Health Office in Germany, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to reliable sources a confidential report on financial irregularities was sent by the Audit Bureau calling on the Undersecretary of the

Ministry of Health to investigate (suspicious) disbursements made to the tune of Euro 658 million – embezzlement of public money.

This happened after the Audit Bureau discovered the Health Office in Frankfurt did not send documents to support the disbursement for long periods of time.



Top and above: Photos from the IGCF confab in Sharjah.

IGCF confab in Sharjah

Encourage youth to 'achieve' sustainable development goal

SHARJAH, UAE, March 23: Her Excellency Shamma bint Sohail Al Mazrouei, UAE Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Wednesday attended a special youth circle titled 'The Role of Government Communication in Motivating Youth to Participate in the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals'.

Organised by Sharjah Government Media Bureau (SGMB), in collaboration with the Emirates Youth Council, on the first day of the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2017) currently underway at the Expo Centre Sharjah, the panel discussion drew the participation of more than 30 people in the 15 to 30-year age group from diverse specialisations.

The panel discussion was moderated by Doaa Al Hammadi, a journalist at Sama Dubai TV. Building on the IGCF's theme 'Societal Participation ... Comprehensive Development', Al Mazrouei, who is also the Chairperson of the Emirates Youth Council, said at the beginning of the session: "Sustainable development can be achieved when governments and officials collaborate with the youth to enhance their role and engage youngsters in advancing development policies."

Platform

She encouraged young people to share their opinions on ways to develop government communication tools to achieve better results with regard to societal participation. She noted that youth councils in the country today are building a unified online platform that engages the youth with different government departments and entities. Aiming to maximise its reach among youth segments, the platform will ensure that all government initiatives are communicated to the youth.

Participants pointed out that government communication enables government entities and diverse social segments to understand one another's points of view and act proactively to achieve sustainable development. They added that today social media channels offer significant opportunities to look at and replicate leading international experiences locally in engaging the youth in development initiatives.

Speakers also highlighted that in a rapidly evolving global socio-economic

landscape, where change is the norm, it is imperative that the youth of any country must demonstrate responsible social behaviour and proactively ensure that society and the country at large are shielded from any negative impact as a result of these changes.

The participants pointed out that there is an imbalance in the selection of targeted groups in government communication today.

They suggested that government bodies should understand the social, cultural and economic environment of the groups with whom they wish to communicate in order to formulate plans that suit their requirements, respond to their aspirations and benefit from their potential.

However, other attendees noted that the diversity of communication platforms and smart applications has become a challenge for institutions when it comes to choosing the most appropriate and effective platforms to speak to the young people.

Youth circle panellists said that while the government plays its role in launching the development plans and initiatives, the youth should work relentlessly to not only follow these initiatives but also interact proactively in communicating their views and suggestions to become real partners in the development process.

Demonstrate

Some participants also focused on the importance of government organisations dedicating community hours to employing young people. This would fulfil a dual purpose – in addition to instilling a sense of duty in the youth, it would demonstrate the commitment of the government entities to enhancing the role of the youth in achieving positive change in the community at large.

They also underlined the importance of collective action from young people and urged the youth to transition from competing among themselves to competing with themselves in unleashing their true potential.

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the sixth edition of the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2017) runs from March 22 to 23 at Expo Centre Sharjah.

EU calls for more 'engagement' with Arab Gulf states on counter terrorism

'Belgium doing everything to end violent radicalism'

BRUSSELS, March 23, (KUNA): The European Union's top anti-terror chief Wednesday called for more cooperation and engagement with the Arab Gulf states on counter-terrorism and counter radicalisation.

"We have to engage more with the Gulf. We have several level of cooperation with the Gulf countries. One is countering terrorism financing. We have seen progress. We have every year interesting discussions," said Gilles de Kerchove EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator.

He was speaking at an event to launch a book titled "One year after the Brussels attacks: The challenges of jihadist radicalisation in Europe and beyond," organised by the think tank European Policy Centre in Brussels this evening.

In reply to a question by the Kuwait news agency, KUNA, on the engagement with the Gulf countries, De Kerchove said "I have been myself to several Gulf countries, UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia." "The last meeting in Saudi Arabia was very interesting. Saudi Arabia has started the process of restructuring the economy the vision of 2030 to be less dependent on oil. It is an interesting process. This process will have an impact on civil society as well" he said.

"They asked for our support. EU High Representative Federica Mogherini is ready to help the Saudi government in this delicate process."

"It has to be stated that Saudi Arabia is part of the international counter-IS alliance and they share a lot of intelligence with us," he added.

On the use of terms like "Islamic terrorism" by some Western leaders and the western media, he said "when we use the term Islamic terrorism our Arab friends get mad. They say you cannot equate Islam with terrorism. It's an offensive way to capture their attention. So we have to be cautious," he said.

Speaking at the same event, Belgian Interior Minister Jan Jambon said the Belgian government is doing everything to put an end to the cancer of violent radicalisation.

He said since the Paris and Brussels terror attacks Belgium has taken 30 measures to counter radicalisation and terrorism including increase of budget for police and security forces, action plan against network of terrorists and dangerous criminals and cancellation of ID cards and passports of foreign fighters, etc.

The Belgian minister said since one year police have launched raids in the Brussels district of Molenbeek, considered to be a breeding ground for terrorism, every three days.

'Boost security of Gulf, Arabs'

MANAMA, March 23, (KUNA): Chairman of the Arab Lawyers Union Sameh Ashour said on Thursday that the Arab nation is in dire need for "real action" to safeguard security of the GCC states and the whole nation.

Ashour, speaking at the opening of the union conference hosted by Manama under the theme, "the Gulf security is inseparable from the Arab nation's security," said the region is "currently at a dangerous crossroad," alluding to "conspiracies aimed at partitioning the Arab countries for service of the Zionist entity."

The Arab common security is unattainable without unified industries and remedying crucial issues namely the youth unemployment, he added.

He criticized reports by international human rights agencies saying that they "are selective and tuned to the mood of some politicians." Huda Al-Mehze', chairperson of the Bahrain Bar Society, said the conference "coincided with plots targeting the Arabian Gulf to undermine its security and stability and spread sectarian discords."



The Kuwait Red Crescent Society officials pose with the Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer.

KUNA photo



Environment experts discuss role of civil society in climate change at the IGCF meet in Sharjah.

'Private sector plays major role in climate change'

Experts discuss role of civil society

SHARJAH, UAE, March, 23: Day one of the sixth International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2017) concluded with an insightful panel discussion on the importance of putting civil society at the centre of the climate change dialogue across the globe.

Environmental experts from the public and private sectors concurred on this point at the session themed 'Environment and Climate Change in Media Policies'. Both segments agreed that media communication needs to be impactful and relay the right messages to civil society to enable them to effect meaningful change.

Mark Schapiro, an author and award-winning journalist specialising in international environmental stories, moderated the discussion. Panellists included Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al-Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, John Bruton, former prime minister of Ireland, former EU ambassador to the US and Chairman of International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) Ireland, Khaled Issa Al Huraimel, CEO of Sharjah environmental company Bee'ah, Safa' Al Jayoussi, Head of Climate and Energy Campaign in Arab World, Founder and Executive Director for IndYACT in Jordan and winner of the 2016 Young Energy Professional of the Year Award, and Kehkashan Basu, UAE-based student and winner of the 2016 International Children's Peace Prize.

Speaking on the role of the private sector in the climate change dialogue, Safa' Al Jayoussi said: "Private sector entities play a major role in communicating the needs of the people to the government, as well as in advocating for change. There is an urgency in this region to create a dialogue between the public and private sector as well as civil society."

Unfortunately, climate change does not seem to be a priority, with the UAE being an exception. The steps the UAE has taken, including the establishment of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, shows that the country cares about environmental challenges. Across the region, we need to be able to communicate the benefits of climate change intervention, especially from a cost-cutting perspective."

Demonstrating the success of public-private partnerships for environmental causes, Khaled Issa Al Huraimel said: "Bee'ah was created as a public-private partnership with the aim of addressing the huge waste management challenge

we faced in the UAE, and establishing Sharjah as the environmental capital of the Middle East.

Today, seven years after we envisioned this goal, I can safely say we have achieved record rates of over 70 per cent waste management away from the landfills. We are also actively involved in taking our vision across the UAE and the region. To this effect, we have tied up with Masdar to develop renewable energy sources.

Our work at Bee'ah, in collaboration with the Sharjah Government and Shurooq, also extends to managing air quality and water quality, all of which will ensure a better future for the region's environment. While most environmental initiatives in the region are fully run by the private sector, we have learnt that there are great benefits to working hand in hand with the government."

Speaking from the perspective of the EU nations, John Burton said: "The success of environmental intervention, such as recycling initiatives and setting of zero-landfill targets, has been largely driven by the fact that these targets are set individually for each country in the EU with clear indications of penalties, such as fines levied in case of violation."

Hazards

This has worked in most EU nations, except in cases such as Poland, which has a coal-driven market, or Ireland, where methane gas from livestock created environmental hazards. Within this framework, however, we find that it is very important to get the people on your side, to make the decision to recycle. Moreover, we need to repeatedly remind the people of the impact their household decisions could have on their own children and future generations."

Representing the viewpoint of the public sector, Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi said: "The UAE Cabinet has agreed on the UAE Centennial 2071 to make our government the best in the world. This shows that we are well aligned with a long-term vision for the nation. In terms of communicating the effects of climate change, studies show that less than 19 per cent of nations globally are engaged in environmental dialogue, which shows that people are disengaged on this topic."

"We as a government need to convey these complex concepts to our communities, as well as impress upon them the

consequences and impact of their actions. In this context, we find the role of the media to be very important, especially in simplifying the concepts for the people. Unfortunately, much of the media reporting today focuses on the catastrophic nature of climate change. Whereas, in my opinion, the media needs to additionally shed light on the positive actions that are being taken to mitigate environmental degradation."

Giving the example of the Heroes of the UAE initiative, he added: "The UAE has effectively used this platform to educate children on the effects of climate change, and to encourage them to enable positive environmental behaviour within the household. Issues such as the impending water crisis in the region need to be conveyed with a sense of urgency to the people to help them become participants in the relevant interventions such as the UAE Energy Plan 2050 to make renewables account for as much as 44 per cent of our nation's energy mix."

Integrate

In response to Kehkashan Basu's question on how to integrate the youth in the climate change dialogue, Al Zeyoudi said: "We need to build up the environmental responsibilities of the youth through the education system."

In the UAE, our leaders created a new Ministry of Youth last year, which has also been instrumental in establishing national and local youth councils that seek to get the youth involved in addressing the nation's challenges. The Ministry of Climate Change also worked recently with youth across the region to create Arab Youth Centres that aim to involve the youth in the future dialogue."

Under the patronage of Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the sixth edition of the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2017) runs from March 22 to 23 at Expo Centre Sharjah.

Themed 'Societal Participation... Comprehensive Development', IGCF 2017 examines how the world's nations can leverage effective government communication to achieve the United Nations' sustainable development goals (SDGs) that have become the top priority of government programmes, international institutions, media organisations and civil society.

News in Brief

'Third Identity' expo opens: Under the patronage of Rima Al-Khaldi (spouse of the Palestinian ambassador to Kuwait) in the presence of the wives of several ambassadors in Kuwait, Palestinian Plastic Exhibition titled "Third Identity" opened recently with the participation of six Palestinian artists, reports Al-Anba daily.

The artists include Abd Abedi, Asad Ozai, Ibrahim Nobani, Mickle Hilal, Nisereen Abu Bakr and Samah Shihadi.

In an address, Rima Al-Khaldi stated the significance of the exhibition in showcasing Palestinian art, which also conveys a strong message from Palestinians to the world.

UN chief to attend AL meet: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will attend the Arab League Summit,

due on March 29 at the Dead Sea, Jordan.

He will travel to Amman, Jordan, on March 27, where he is expected to meet with King Abdullah II and other senior officials, UN Deputy Spokesman Farhan Haq told reporters Wednesday.

"He will also visit the Zaatari refugee camp, which hosts close to 80,000 Syrian refugees," the deputy spokesman added.

The UN chief will meet with participating Arab heads of state and government, as well as with the Secretary-General of the Arab League Ahmed Aboul-Gheit.

Earlier this week, Aboul-Gheit met with the Jordanian Monarch and underlined the significance of the upcoming even in light of the challenges faced by Arab countries. (KUNA)