



Members of PAI delegation at the Basra Building Expo.

KUNA photo

Turkish firm to build Kuwait housing units

PAI lauds Basra Expo

KUWAIT CITY, March 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) signed Monday a KD multi-million contract with Turkey's Limak Holding to construct, complete and maintain infrastructure of 3,260 housing units and power stations in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak housing project.

Kuwait Minister of State for Housing and Minister of State for Services, Jenan Bushehri, said following the signing of contract with Limak Holding the ministry was keen on completing projects according to the set timetable.

Limak will have 730 days to complete the project, which also includes road networks and parking lots.

Bushehri said past contracts with Turkish construction companies yielded positive results because they were operating within the specified timetable, sometimes less.

The contract value is 28,990 million Kuwaiti Dinars (\$96 million).

PAHW Director General Eng Bader Al-Wuqayyan said the contract also included the construction of sewerage system, rain water drainage, telephone network as well as placement of power cables.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Public Authority for Industry's (PAI) participation in Basra's Building Expo is a great opportunity to increase exchange between industrial entities in the two countries, a PAI official said Monday.

Hammad Al-Zube, head of Marketing and Export Department, said in a statement Basra Building Expo was a good venue to market Kuwaiti products and thus boost opportunities to export locally-made goods.

He said a meeting took place between Mohammad Fahad, head of PAI delegation to Basra Expo, and Aqeel Al-Khaldi, member of Basra's local council, during which they discussed means of encouraging mutual industrial investment.

Al-Zube said the two officials agreed to facilitate visits of investors, setting custom tariffs and exploring investment opportunities. The March 5-8 Basra Expo features participation of over 70 companies from 10 countries. Some 15 Kuwaiti construction companies are taking part.

'Extremism not the answer'

'Terrorist' seeks 2nd chance

KUWAIT CITY, March 6: A Canadian who admitted to plotting a terrorist attack on New York City and has spent a month in a psychological ward in Kuwait, and eight months in rehab in Egypt is pleading for "a second chance" in a letter submitted to the court ahead of his upcoming sentencing, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Court records show he has spent time at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto.

In the letter filed with the court in New York, Abdulrahman El Bahnasawy of Mississauga, Ont., outlined his personal history with addiction and mental illness, and explained that he felt American airstrikes against the Middle East drove him to jihad.

The 20-year-old wrote he felt the Americans were trying to disrupt the lives of people in the Middle East with airstrikes and he thought "it was appropriate to use similar methods back until and unless they stop."

The 24-page hand-written letter, addressed to the judge in his case and partially redacted, is part of a package his lawyers submitted ahead of his sentencing for multiple terrorism-related charges that he pleaded guilty to last year.

El Bahnasawy described his disenfranchisement with Western society, including "so-called democracy and freedom."

He said he chose to go to the US to carry

out the plan because Canada had recently stopped its airstrikes, "and it didn't make sense to transgress against them in such a way."

Police secretly arrested El Bahnasawy, then 18, in what they said was a plot by Islamic State sympathizers to attack New York City concert venues, subway stations and Times Square.

He was arrested after travelling from Canada to New Jersey in 2016. The records in his case were sealed for over a year as police tried to hunt down his accomplices.

Authorities announced the charges against him after two other suspects were arrested in Pakistan and the Philippines.

The Canadian didn't discuss the specifics of the plot in the letter, instead focused on why he decided to go to such extremes.

"My detailed reasons about this are in no way a justification for it, I merely am explaining my thought process at the time," he wrote, adding that he no longer believes extremism is the answer.

"There are many issues in this world but I don't want to lose my life or freedom to try fixing them, and I definitely do not want to resort to violence or harm to fix them. I sincerely apologize for my (behavior) and I only ask for a second chance."

El Bahnasawy's sentencing hearing is scheduled for April 9.

DIWANIYA ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Solution for regional wars elusive'

'West thrives on Mideast chaos'

"I BELIEVE whoever bets on any role for the current US administration to solve the problems of the Middle East needs to re-read the world political map, not the geography of the world," columnist and the director of Al-Shahed Satellite TV Channel *Hisham Al-Diwan* wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily.

"There actually is a great interest for Washington and the American military, security, commercial and industrial institutions in the deterioration of the situation of the region by creating more problems and confrontations and not to extinguish the fires in this part of the world.

"In this context I would like to see one same person who can tell me what is the interest in all what is happening in Iraq, Syria and Yemen and the Gulf crisis with Qatar and the situation in Libya, Lebanon and Algeria now and the Polisario (a movement supported by Algeria to found an independent state in the western desert of Morocco against the desire of Algeria).

"And where is the interest in the aggravation of the situation in Jordan and push to stir up things in Egypt and the Sudan? Is there any similar situation in the world which looks like this? Is it necessary for the US to support the stipulation of sectarian rule in the Iraqi Constitution, and why and whose interest?"

"And is it necessary for some Arab countries to support the American, Israeli and Turkish tide against the ruling regime in Syria? America could have changed Saddam Hussein through some conditions, offers, dictates, and by a coup instead of trying to kill Iraq.

"But it looks like the US motivated by several grounds seemingly preferred to kill the caretaker instead of harvesting the grapes.

"Meanwhile, we wonder, why the war is currently taking place in Yemen. Why the sectarian conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran? And why Jordan has been pushed on the edge of catastrophe? Why does the Western Sahara revolve around Morocco instead of understanding it with autonomy?"

"We have said before that the province of Catalonia 'Barcelona' supports the Spanish budget of \$200 billion a year. In this context, we would like to point out that Spain and Greece, are the poorest European countries for one million reasons, so why these causes for financial corruption.

"And why the Kurds of Iraq and some Arab regions, as is the case with the Kurds of Turkey, the Copts and even the Nubians of Egypt and the people of South Yemen and others want to break away from their countries and/or are ready to take up arms against their country if they have the opportunity, such as the opposition Syrian armed factions, which are funded and armed by nine countries as is the case of the Iraqi opposition, which was funded and brainwashed by more countries that support the dismantling and fragmentation of Syria Iraq, Libya and Yemen?"

"It is needless to say that the reform represents a right to correct the wrong situations. The right to build modern systems, the right for participation of the peoples in the governance and existence of a monitoring power, an independent judiciary, fair laws, integrated constitutions in terms of rights, freedoms and the guarantees for achieving an appropriate standard of living.

"All of the above represent rights and basics, but not alms to be given or vehicles to lure terrorizing the people or dictation to get the public comply with. But the question here is: why the above should be achieved through the US or by carrying the weapons or through the extremism and terrorism.

"As a matter of fact, the United States of America derives its might by feeding the world with problems and sowing of seditions and war in the Middle East, hence, it is Washington which will not accept solutions for the problems that

have been created by the US."

Also:

"It seems the solution to the Gulf crisis is just around the corner by virtue of the efforts of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, the 'Leader of Humanity' who has spared no efforts and wasted any time to heal the Gulf rift since the beginning of the crisis," columnist *Abdurrahman Al-Awwad* wrote for *Al-Sabah* daily.

"The disagreement between the brothers and the severing of relations between Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt on the one hand and Qatar on the other was a great shock to the Gulf House, because the dispute was not expected to reach to this extent, but it has happened, and the most important direction is to exert efforts to heal this rift and resolve the dispute.

"Since the start of the crisis, the wise man among the Arabs, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad as usual picked up his sword of diplomacy and wisdom to avert the big crisis among the brothers. His Highness shuttled between the conflicting nations to bring the views of the parties to the problem closer together.

"The rapid move made by His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad has reflected positively on the situation in easing tensions between the brothers. It is clear that there is great hope for the return of the Gulf water to its proper course.

"The role played by His Highness the Amir confirms the continuous quest of His Highness to achieve peace, security and love between the Gulf House, represented by the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and the Gulf reunification, based on the wisdom of His Highness, which he has acquired throughout his white history and his honorable record in the diplomatic corps.

"Finally, we can only pray to Almighty God to protect our Gulf, our leaders, our countries and our peoples from all evil."

"It has been established beyond reasonable doubt that the current administration of General Traffic Department is not capable of dealing with the traffic snarls in Kuwait," *Talal Al-Sa'eed* wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"To understand the mess on Kuwaiti roads, one only needs to drive through Shuwaikh Industrial Area to see weird and wonderful incidents. There is no fear or shame in the absence of monitoring by the concerned authority, and workers at the garages within the vicinity are the real authority!"

"Those who are unsatisfied must visit Hawaii to grasp another painful reality that could make them feel sorry over the deplorable situation there. Each person sits where he pleases without considering whether the act obstructs traffic or not. The situation would be normal if everybody is busy with his/her priority, but the absence of traffic officers creates disorder. You may use the two scenarios to measure the real situation in other areas."

"The book titled 'Doing Business with Kuwait' or the way to transact business with a Kuwaiti is a roadmap for whosoever is interested to be successful in such transactions," Professor *Hisham Al-Awadhi* wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"The book authored by Paul Kennedy is primarily intended for Western investors who do not know much about the Arab, Gulf or Kuwaiti society. It presents details about a transaction that can facilitate a successful business relationship.

"Although we are acquainted with most of the things mentioned by Kennedy and consider it normal without further ado, it is important for us to know how others see us and what they write about us. I believe the most interesting part of the book is the way he presents his ideas in sequence.

"In the chapter that discusses 'background of behaviors', Kennedy says the manner in which Kuwaitis behave as individuals and groups socially or in business transactions takes its root from varieties of traditions and the rich collection of heritage affected by culture. Kennedy listed the major sources of modern Kuwaiti culture and included the rural traditions, Islam, Persia and trade

norms that prevailed by the Indian Ocean."

"In 2004, the Italian Parliament approved a law to prevent overlapping of interests in order to prevent the then Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi from taking advantage of the power of his position to enhance his business empire," *Uwaid Al-Sulaili* wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily.

"That law prevented Berlusconi from managing his companies including the largest TV network. This attitude of preventing overlapping of interests via relevant laws is practiced in all advanced countries. Those countries assign specific state bodies to organize competitiveness and prevent monopoly.

"The Cabinet recently approved the bill on prevention of overlapping of interests. We have been waiting for such a law for several decades as state positions were being used for achieving personal commercial ambitions.

"Many of the state officials took advantage of their senior positions to grab some tenders and projects that were in favor of their businesses regardless of the interest of the state and citizens. Many also used their positions to achieve personal interests by offering tenders to companies owned by their relatives of first or second degree. Corruption expanded to such an extent that some officials had even established their own businesses for receiving tenders at prices that they decided.

"Unfortunately, we see ministers and senior officials engaged in their private businesses either directly or indirectly. We even see the same with many of the MPs who are supposed to be engaged in issuing laws that prevent the overlapping of interests.

"The tricks and manipulation practiced by corrupt people are not limited. They do everything they can to bypass the laws. This makes it a must to enhance the power given to bodies that are in charge of confronting corruption especially the corruption practiced by influential individuals. The problem is that the power given to some corrupt people exceeds the power given to the bodies that are in charge of confronting corruption!"

"Her life story deserves to be studied by the younger generations. She was the pioneer of voluntary work and she dedicated her life for the disabled people," *Dr Ibrahim Behbehani* wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"This country has many distinguished people including the late Modhi Al-Sultan Al-Essa. Allah gave her long life and made her a savior of the needy and the disabled. She gave a lot of herself and her money for this category of people.

"She died on an unforgettable day, on one of the National Days. She had built respectful relations with people and using their donations, she had built mosques in Kuwait, Bahrain, Sudan and other countries. From a total of 1,000 women globally, she was chosen for an international charitable award in 2005."

"Parliament's Public Utilities Committee recently discussed the draft law on establishment of the Public Authority for Management of Disasters and Crisis," *Abdurrahman Al-Awwad* wrote for *Al-Sabah* daily.

"Establishment of such an authority has been demanded by many Kuwaiti people for several years especially after the Iraqi invasion 27 years ago. We have suffered from disasters and there are dangers surrounding us.

"The politicians in the country have not experienced the bitterness of the invasion when such a committee or authority concerned with management of crisis and disasters was absent. The real fear herein is not the lack of such an authority but the way it is managed.

"If this authority is run the way some of our state institutions are run, then we will not realize any real achievement and will only witness the increase in the number of authorities to suck up the state budget."

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb

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News in Brief

Awareness on sign language: Gulf Bank has announced its cooperation 'With the Sign' Team which was formed recently to assist people with hearing disabilities, reports Al-Anba daily.

Through this partnership, Gulf Bank is keen on realizing the goals of the team by sponsoring its projects and initiatives. The new partnership succeeded in raising public awareness on sign language during the national holidays.

Commenting on the initiative, Assistant General Manager for Corporate Communications at the bank Laila Al-Qattami affirmed the bank is proud to cooperate with the team as part of its corporate social responsibility.

She said the services that the bank offers match the needs of all categories in the society, pointing out there are well-equipped branches in the six governorates to serve clients with special needs and the employees are well-trained in using sign language to deal with deaf clients.

70 pc water for agriculture: Director of Partnerships and Programs Department at the British Cultural Center Heba Al-Zain revealed that 70 percent of fresh water is used for agricultural production in Kuwait and other GCC countries, and the remaining 30 percent is used for drinking purposes, reports Al-Qabas daily.

This was a part of a press statement she issued on the sidelines of the forum titled "Drainage water — handling and reuse" which was organized by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences with the cooperation of British Culture Center, British Science and Creations Network, British Embassy in Kuwait and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in Britain.

Al-Zain stressed the importance of recycling projects and reuse of wastewater that result from irrigation activities and human use in order to reduce dependence on desalination plants and underground water.

She said the traditional irrigation methods fail to reduce the rate of dissolved solid substances to reach the accepted levels that allow the reuse of water, which represents a major challenge for the GCC countries.