



Photo by Bassam Abu Shanab
Members of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee pose for a picture at the gathering.

GCC urged to cope with global economic moves

'Youth role vital in development'

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf said on Monday it is significant for GCC countries to keep abreast of swift world economic development through uniform economic visions. Addressing the one-day meeting of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee, held in Kuwait today, the minister called on GCC countries to harness all capabilities and potentials to fulfill the objectives of the GCC leaders by means of creating a strong economic bloc able to vie with other global economic groups.

This meeting is considered a means and tool for attaining Gulf economic cooperation and translating GCC directives into action programs and turning ambitions into tangible reality, he said.



Mohammad Al-Jabri

The meeting is part of key gatherings purposed to prop up Gulf economic integration, the Kuwaiti finance minister pointed out. "In spite of the accomplishments achieved on the ground, there is still a long way to meet the hopes and ambitions of our people in a proper fashion," he said. On his part, GCC Secretary-General Abdul-Latif Al-Zayani lauded Kuwait's sincere efforts to cement and consolidate Gulf integration and cooperation among the GCC member states in various fields.

He pointed out the never-ending and fruitful efforts of the GCC ministers of

finance in line with the GCC leaders' directives, with a view to promoting inter-Gulf cooperation and establishing the basics of Gulf economy.

The meeting is mainly meant to bolster Gulf people-to-people relations and to achieve economic integration.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Minister of Information Mohammad Al-Jabri said on Monday his country's political leadership strongly believes in the significant role of young people as "key partners in national development."

This was reflected by the Kuwaiti government's action program since the youth ministry was set up in 2013 at the behest of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Al-Jabri addressed the 41st version of the Council of Arab Ministers of Youth and Sports, held in Cairo today.

Buoyed by the country's political leadership, the ministry, though still fledgling, has made much headway in the realm of youth activities, he boasted, citing several plans and strategies in this regard. The State of Kuwait attaches much significance to young people by announcing a high-profile award to 10 distinguished young people every year in the fields of entrepreneurship, education, media, culture, arts and literature, voluntary work, science and technology, sports, health, urban planning and housing, and Islamic sciences, he added.

DIWANIYA ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Arab politicians divided'

'Despotic regimes invite meddling'

"AS WE expected when the US President Donald Trump canceled the Iranian nuclear deal signed by the United States under President Barack Obama the tensions in the region have escalated and this is evident following the confrontation between Israel and Iran," columnist and former director of Culture Department at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters Waleed Al-Rujaib wrote for *Al-Rai* daily.

"The European Union and the international community had warned that the cancellation of the agreement would pose a threat to military conflicts and ignite the war, which no one knows to what extent it will expand.

"With regard to Israel, it actually is not looking for a justification for aggression, both on the Palestinian people or on the neighboring peoples. Israel has actually seized the opportunity and attacked Iranian positions in Syria.

"The clash may not end there, and it is not unlikely that a broader and more dangerous confrontation will follow in a destructive regional war, whose sparks may reach our land and our peoples, especially that we have American military bases on our lands that may be inevitably used as platforms during the prospective war under the pretext of protecting allies and American interests in the region.

"Since the very beginning of foreign intervention in Syrian affairs, we and the Syrian people were expecting Israel to enter as a party in the equation, under the pretext of protecting its territories and installations, whether through the occupied Golan front or the southern Lebanese front.

"On the other hand, Iran continues to interfere in the affairs of other countries and its control over the capitals of Baghdad, Damascus, Sana'a, Beirut and others. Despite its repeated statements about respecting the sovereignty of neighboring countries, Iran continues to engage in hostile acts and provocations in various forms in the Arab countries.

"These interventions have negative repercussions on Tehran because it suffers from a deteriorating economic situation. This is because the money that has been spent on arms and armament could have been used for economic development, and to raise the standard of living of the Iranian people.

"However, no one can be classified as innocent of the escalation and tension in the region. The regimes seek to subjugate their peoples and deprive them of their political rights in the absence of democracy. This is the environment that allowed foreign forces to violate the sovereignty of these countries.

"Given the above, we conclude that the peoples shall remain the protecting fort of these states and their ruling regimes simultaneously and as such the absence of this shall help create loopholes for foreign intervention.

"In this context, we also say that the problem rests in the fact that the Arab politicians who should have shouldered their responsibilities to enlighten and mobilize their peoples, are currently divided into two opinions, both of which are wrong.

"In this connection, we elucidate that one of the opinions in question sees that the problem rests only in the imperialism, and that Iran and Syria represent one of the resistance axes.

"Some believe that the Russian presence is not limited to its role of limiting the policy of sole superpower, rather Russia represents the savior of the Syrian people.

"But all the people ignore the internal dimension, the absence of freedoms and democracy, corruption and theft of wealth, and fall into the arms of imperialism."

Also:

"During the summer of 2015 after a long negotiations which lasted for 18 months, Iran and the G5+1 nations – the United States of America, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany inked an agreement in the Austrian capital Vienna to solve the issue of the Iranian nuclear program," columnist *Dr Mubarak Al-Wasmi* wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily.

"That negotiations and that agreement was achieved by the participants who were looking forward for the targeted gains. But this agreement divided the Arab countries into three parties, those who fell in the category as 'restless', 'satisfactory' and the 'in-between'.

"The 'party of restless' said the agreement did not take into consideration their interests and said their American ally had cheated them and ignored the regional tensions caused directly or indirectly by Iran, hinting this agreement is likely to allow Iran to resume its position as 'a regional policeman'.

"While the 'satisfactory party' blessed the agreement in the belief its political effects will reflect on all of them following the enhancement of the Iranian influence in dealing with the regional issues, while the third party preferred neither to remain close to the 'restless' group or consider Iran as a threat to their security.

"In other words, the third party saw as Iran's threat didn't rise to the level of restlessness but did not want to be too far away from the 'satisfactory' group and as such based on its interests saw the agreement in question as creating a new atmosphere to deal with Iran instead of an inevitable confrontation with it.

"Today, America has exited from the agreement, not because it had not made any gains, rather because America wants to achieve some other gains either from Iran or from some other parties or even from its allies.

"In other words, it is America which seeks gains that shall exceed billions of dollars from the money that was frozen in America prior to sending the same in cash to Iran post the agreement.

"But the Western party represented by 'France, Britain and Germany' which still call for respecting this deal, are likely to find themselves fol-

lowing the footsteps of America when the latter starts implementing its sanctions on the companies which may violate the US sanctions on Iran."

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"We hope ministers and MPs will work hard for achieving real development in all aspects of our lives that have witnessed wrong practices and trembling hands that hesitate taking relevant decisions," *Adel Nayef Al-Mezel* wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"People are tired of imperfect democracy. We wish for real supervision by some ministers to realize achievement and overcome all obstacles.

"We have huge concerns and problems including the high rate of unemployment among our children, disguised employment, and lack of improvement in the performance of some employees who do nothing but talk and read newspapers.

"Let us employ the right person in the right position, and involve the private sector in solving the housing problem and shortening the long waiting time lasting many years. More attention must be given to the education sector, sufficient number of efficient teachers must be hired, and universities must be built for our students who are accumulated in one university. Is it actually reasonable to have only one university considering the fact that we are in an oil country?"

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"Does the new Minister of Education have the ability to change the culture of malpractice during examinations and leak of question papers which has become rampant among teachers and officials of Ministry of Education," *Uwaid Al-Sulaili* wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily.

"Kuwait has attached much importance to education and teachers since many decades. It allocated lands and financial resources to disseminate education among the members of the society. It brought the best of teachers from Arab countries and built model schools, one of which is the Mubarakiya School which was opened in 1911, followed by other schools in various areas of Kuwait.

"After independence in 1961, education developed rapidly, as the country went offensive in fighting illiteracy and developing the quality of syllabuses. It built one of the best schools and incorporated the best teachers. These great efforts soon translated into quick development of the country and her people, far ahead of other Arab countries.

"After the Iraqi invasion, the country did the same through reconstruction of schools and educational facilities. This was the approach of the country represented by Ministry of Education.

"In 2008, the ministry, under the leadership of former minister Nouriya Al-Sabeeh, embarked on radical changes in educational syllabuses and years but was soon attacked and held accountable by Parliament's political blocs. This marked the beginning of the sad deterioration of our education sector.

"Parliamentary pressures and interventions in the affairs of the ministry besides threats and grilling of the minister and her team resulted in dissemination of an oral message to school directors to be lenient with students during examinations because of the alleged complexity and difficulty in the new syllabus. The educational sector succumbed to pressures to avoid the expected attack in case the percentage of failure increased. That behavior represented the calamity that destroyed education in Kuwait and is still haunting it.

"Taking things lightly and helping out students during exams has resulted in chaos at all levels. Directors, heads of departments, and teachers have been helping students commit malpractice. In fact, a lucrative trade has been established, spearheaded by those who have no conscience among teachers who have created groups to leak question papers and sell them to students under the eyes of Ministry of Education and its leadership."

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"Nobody gave it a thought that crimes perpetrated by Iran in Syria, where it legitimized the territories and exterminated thousands of innocent people in collaboration with the criminal Syrian regime, would meet any challenge or resistance," *Dr Wael Al-Hassawi* wrote for *Al-Rai* daily.

"Iran has cemented ties with the leading European countries and garnered support from Russia to perpetrate crimes. It benefited from the N-deal, which President Trump described as the worst deal in history, and expanded by invading neighbors while upgrading its ballistic missiles to intimidate the neighbors.

"It took pride to invade four Muslim nations while repressing its citizens that went on a rampage few months ago due to several reasons such as hunger and poverty. The people took to the streets to express their anger against the expansionist dictatorial regime that led the country into a pitfall!

"However, Allah the Almighty planned to rescue the weak people on earth and to teach their common enemies a lesson they will never forget. For this reason, He placed a foe they never envisaged to torment them. The person now threatens to reinstate the US sanction on Iran, as in the past, after condemning and canceling the distorted N-deal."

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"As the bells rang to signal the beginning of the final exams for primary and intermediate grades of public and private schools, students made serious attempts to grab and memorize as much information as possible, while the hearts of parents were invaded by deep fear," *Abdulrahman Al-Awad* wrote for *Al-Sabah* daily.

"Parents started issuing orders to stop their wards from using the internet and watching television and playing games. All parents should know that obtaining high marks depends on abilities and capabilities that differ from one individual to another. This is the nature of life!

"Individual differences have been present in humans since creation, so our children need encouragement more than enduring pressures from leaders who issue orders to imprison those who refuse to carry out their directives."

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb

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