

Oman author Jokha Alharthi wins Booker International Prize

LONDON, May 22, (Agencies): Omani author Jokha Alharthi won the prestigious Man Booker International Prize on Tuesday for "Celestial Bodies," the story of three sisters in a desert country confronting its slave-owning past and a complex modern world.

Alharthi is the first Arabic-language writer to get the prize and the first female writer from Oman to be translated into English. She will

split the 50,000 pound (\$64,000) purse with her UK-based translator, Marilyn Booth.

Historian Bettany Hughes, who led the judging panel, said the "lyrical" winning novel was "a book to win over the head and the heart in equal measure." "Celestial Bodies" confronts Oman's history of slavery, which was abolished in the country only in 1970.

"It's a sensitive subject and kind

of a taboo," Alharthi said in onstage interview at the awards ceremony in London. "But I think literature is the best platform to discuss sensitive issues. And slavery is not exclusive to Oman - it's part of human history."

She said her victory meant "a window has been opened to Arabic literature."

"Celestial Bodies" beat five other finalists from Europe and South America, including last year's win-

ner, Olga Tokarczuk of Poland.

The prize is a counterpart to the Man Booker Prize for English-language novels and is open to books in any language that have been translated into English.

This is the final year of sponsorship by investment firm Man Group PLC, which is halting backing after 18 years. Starting next year the award will be known as the International Booker Prize.

Also:

NEW YORK: British author Hilary Mantel is ready to complete her million-selling trilogy of Thomas Cromwell novels.

Henry Holt and Company announced Wednesday that "The Mirror & the Light" comes out in the US on March 10, 2020, five days after HarperCollins Publishers releases it in the UK. The first two Cromwell novels, "Wolf Hall"

and "Bring Up the Bodies," each won the Man Booker Prize. Mantel said in a statement that the novels have been a "long journey" through Cromwell's rise in the court of King Henry VIII and the "last miles" to the "scaffold at Tower Hill," where he was beheaded in 1540.

"Wolf Hall" was published in 2009, and "Bring Up the Bodies" in 2012. Worldwide sales for the two books top 5 million copies.

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Family visa

I am from India, I got an offer in KNPC as Instrumentation Supervisor on a basic monthly salary of KD300, accommodation as KD100, food allowance as KD25, others as KD25 and totally KD450. Whether this KD450 is eligible for family visa?

Name withheld

Answer: The basic salary as stated in your work permit is that which is taken into consideration in determining if you qualify to apply for family visa. Other allowances that form part of your remuneration are not considered. Specifically in your case, your basic salary of KD300 is what matters, the allowances don't count and hence you fall short of the KD450 needed to be able to sponsor any member of your family on dependent visa (Visa 22).

My wife and I are residing and working here in Kuwait. My salary is KD265 and my wife's salary is KD250. We have a daughter in India who is with my parents right now. I would like to bring my daughter to Kuwait on a family visa.

Can you please advise me the procedure?

Name withheld

Answer: To be able to sponsor your daughter or any other member of the family on dependent visa you should earn a monthly salary of KD450 or more. This salary must reflect in your work visa and the salary your wife earns has nothing to do with your ability or otherwise to get a visa for your dependents. In short your salary falls short of the required amount and you are not allowed to combine your salary and your wife's to attain the magic figure. You can therefore not be qualified to get a family visa for your daughter and hence no need to take the procedure to apply for a family visa.

Notice period

I am a teacher working in a private English school here in Kuwait. The contract gets renewed every year. In January we must sign for the following academic year (end of August to end of August). I am considering leaving the country but I'm not sure what my position will be. Can I hand in my notice and leave without penalty? Would I still get my gratuity? How much notice would I need to give them? (Am I entitled to do this?)

Name withheld

Answer: The notice period which is for a duration of three months is mandatory unless either of the sides is willing to forego it. As you explained your contract period is from August to August, we advise that you submit your letter of resignation on June 1 to take effect on September 1. By so doing you will cover the three-month notice period if it is required and at the same time you have nothing to lose if you are not required to give the notice period as the contract is of one year duration subject to renewal.

Visa transfer

I am currently on visa 18 and came to Kuwait in 2015. Since 2015 I have been working with same employer in the private sector with engineer designation however due to KSE issue in Nov 2018 my company changed my designation to admin supervisor under gov contract. I have now got a job offer from another private sector company in Kuwait and after checking my visa they informed me that it is transferable after 1 year only by paying KD 300. What I understand from my sources is that my visa should be transferable in 6 months after paying KD 300. I would like to know if you could throw some light on this.

Name withheld

Answer: A Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour decision was issued in 2016 on new fees for some transactions related to the transfer of work permits in the private and oil sectors. The decision stipulates that in line with Labour administrative decision number 842/2015 regarding work permit transfer in private and oil sectors and its amendment, the employer is allowed to transfer the work permit

of the employer through the Supreme Committee for Individual Disputes by paying fees depending on the nature of the transfer.

According to the decision KD 200 should be paid for transferring the work permit of an employee registered under an expired contract to another government contract of the same employer, KD 350 for transferring work permit of an employee registered under a government contract, whether expired or not, to the main file of the same employer.

The decision also adds that it is permissible to transfer the work permit of an employee registered under expired or valid government contract, to another government contract of an employee, who was brought into the country to work in the private sector, to another employer without completing the required work period - one year under the current employer. It also permits an employee, who worked in the government sector and transferred to the private sector, to transfer to another employer before completing one year upon paying a fee of KD 300.

KD 300 fee is also applicable for the transfer of work permit of a locally retired employee registered under a government contract to the private sector before finishing one year.

It is also permissible to transfer the work permit of an employee, who was on dependent visa and transferred to the private sector to another employer before completing one year with the current employer. The fee for this is KD 300. A similar fee of KD 300 is imposed for the transfer of the work permit of a domestic employee who had earlier transferred to the private sector without completing three years under the current employer.

As requested, I have, thrown more light on the subject in question and from the various scenarios given, it is clear that when you go through the process and make the required payments, the work permit transfer will be effected without any time lapse.

Driving licence

I came to Kuwait for working in 2002. I got a driving license in September 2008. My Kuwait driving license was valid till August 2018 only. But I left Kuwait November 2009. I need to come back to Kuwait again with new company visa. Basically, I am an engineer, can I renew my expired Kuwait driving license without going for a new one.

Name withheld

Answer: Your driving licence was automatically cancelled when you left Kuwait for good in 2009. Upon your return to Kuwait therefore, you can only apply for a new driving licence as you currently don't have a Kuwaiti driving licence that you can renew.

I am an Indian national living in Kuwait for more than 2 years, I am a graduate and I have attested degree certificate, my salary is KD 550 with designation computer programmer in my IZAMEL. I want to know if I can get Kuwait Driving license based on my home country driving license?

In a website of Traffic Department it mentioned that there is a process to apply for Kuwait Driving License on the basis of home country license. Is this applicable for Indian National holding Indian Driving License.

Name withheld

Answer: No, you cannot get a Kuwaiti Driving License on the basis of your Indian License as your salary is below the minimum of KD 600 required to be able to apply for a license a possible option you can explore is to seek exemption from meeting the salary cap from the Director General of the Traffic Department as a software engineer. To do this however, you need a no-objection certificate from the Kuwait Engineers Society.

The Arab Times invites questions on all aspects of Kuwaiti law. If you face a problem, or need specific advice on any legal matter, from commercial and investment law to divorce and labour, send questions to the Managing Editor, Arab Times, P.O. Box 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait, or Fax to 24818267. E-mail: arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com



Photos from the event.

KNES Secondary Dept conducts 'job shadow' at the KDD

Falling in line with our Mission Statement and as part of our continuing effort to keep our students abreast with development in this world, our secondary students went on a Job shadow at the Kuwaiti Danish Dairy Company (KDD) in Sabhan.

The Kuwaiti Danish Dairy Company (KDD) is the longest est-

ablished manufacturer and distributor of food and beverages in the Arabian Gulf. It was founded in 1960 and is based in Kuwait City, Kuwait. It offers dairy products, ice creams, fruit juices and drinks, and tomato paste; and culinary products, such as oil, sour creams, and butter.

Pasteurization of milk and other drinks preserved and keep the dairy products fresh and safe for a long time. During the process bacteria are killed and the shelf life of the item is prolonged. It involves heating the milk to a high temperature and then quickly cooling it before packaging it.

At Kuwait National English School we aim to enhance the opportunities available to all our students by carefully nurturing their academic life, positioning them for future successes in education and career. We provide more opportunities for our students to obtain real-world skills.

Sony and Microsoft to collaborate on cloud-based game streaming

Familiar faces, modes coming to 'Call of Duty: Mobile'

LOS ANGELES, May 22, (RTS): Activision detailed the user interface, newly announced modes and maps, and returning characters that will be in the upcoming "Call of Duty: Mobile" ahead of its beta via a blog post on Friday.

First, let's take a look at the UI in the upcoming free to play game.

The main menu screen shows the player's character, and this is where players can customize their experience. Settings key for the gameplay experience are here - in particular, the choice of simple mode or advanced mode. Basically, the simple mode offers a streamlined gameplay experience for mobile, in that it automatically fires a weapon when focused in on an enemy.

The advanced mode allows for manual fire, which is a bit trickier on a mobile game. But, players can customize the experience further by choosing how to hold weapons, meaning they could choose to fire from the hip for certain weapons, for example, or aim down sight. There are also 17 sliders for adjusting weapon aiming sensitivity.

The HUD (heads up display) is also customizable, so players can move different functions around their screen as they choose and make the best use of the smaller space of a mobile game. There are also some set "team phrases" to choose from to quickly communicate with teammates.

As for the gameplay itself, some modes coming to the mobile game were announced which can support up to 8 or 10 players, according to the original post:

Free-For-All: The classic every-player-for-themselves deathmatch.

Frontline: After spawning at a team base, defeat players on the opposing team.

Team Deathmatch: The classic defeat-players-on-the-opposing-team mode.

Hardpoint: Capture and hold the hardpoint to earn points.

Domination: Capture and hold the designated positions to gain points.

We've previously heard about the maps Nuketown, Crash, and Hijacked. More multiplayer maps were announced Friday which offer up a range of different terrains and challenges:

Crossfire: A small desert town full of "cramped and confined structures" which means players might need to pull out their shotguns for close-range combat.

Standoff: This map is set between China and Kyrgyzstan, and those who played "Call of Duty: Black Ops III" might know it as Outlaw, which is accessible to a variety of gameplay styles.

Crash: A "Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare" map full of shelled out buildings in a desert town.

Killhouse: A warehouse interior which is ideal for small teams and constant action.

Firing Range: A "military practice facility" that's a reworking of a "Call of Duty: Black Ops 4" that's described as "classic and chaotic."

When the upcoming beta was announced in March, we learned that players will get to choose their character from familiar faces of past "Call of Duty" games. Now, we've got the specifics of who to expect:

Alex Mason from "Call of Duty: Black Ops" games; David "Section" Mason from "Call of Duty: Black Ops II"; Thomas A. Merrick from "Call of Duty:

Ghosts"; Simon "Ghost" Riley of "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2"; John "Soap" MacTavish from "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare" games; John Price of the "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare" games.

Sony and Microsoft are partnering on "new innovations to enhance customer experiences in their direct-to-consumer entertainment platforms and AI solutions," they announced in a news post on Thursday.

Under the strategic partnership, the two companies will explore joint development of future cloud solutions that will benefit their respective game and content streaming services, xCloud and PlayStation Now. They are also looking into using current Microsoft Azure data centers for Sony's streaming services, as well as building better development platforms for content creators.

While PlayStation Now has been around since 2014, Microsoft is currently working on its xCloud service. It officially revealed it was working on the technology at E3 2018. It reportedly supports gameplay with an Xbox Wireless Controller via Bluetooth or touch input.

Additionally, Sony and Microsoft said they will collaborate on semiconductors and artificial intelligence. This means Sony's image sensors could be combined with Microsoft's Azure AI technology, or Microsoft's AI platform and tools could find their way into Sony consumer products in the future.

"Sony is a creative entertainment company with a solid foundation of technology. We collaborate closely

with a multitude of content creators that capture the imagination of people around the world, and through our cutting-edge technology, we provide the tools to bring their dreams and vision to reality," said Kenichiro Yoshida, president and CEO of Sony. "PlayStation itself came about through the integration of creativity and technology. Our mission is to seamlessly evolve this platform as one that continues to deliver the best and most immersive entertainment experiences, together with a cloud environment that ensures the best possible experience, anytime, anywhere. For many years, Microsoft has been a key business partner for us, though of course the two companies have also been competing in some areas. I believe that our joint development of future cloud solutions will contribute greatly to the advancement of interactive content. Additionally, I hope that in the areas of semiconductors and AI, leveraging each company's cutting-edge technology in a mutually complementary way will lead to the creation of new value for society."

Going forward, the two companies said they will share additional information when available.

The move seems to be part of a burgeoning era of cooperation between the three biggest game publishers. During this year's DICE Summit in Las Vegas, PlayStation's Shawn Layden heaped praise on his competitors and called for unity among game makers. Earlier that same month, Microsoft revealed it's releasing a software development kit that will allow developers to integrate its Xbox Live service into titles across multiple platforms, including the Nintendo Switch.

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Drinking problem?: Friends of Bill W. are available to help. Totally confidential. Email: rohsecretary@gmail.com

Narcotics Anonymous: NA can help with addiction problems. Totally confidential: 94087800 English/Arabic.

SMCA elects office bearers: Syro Malabar Cultural Association General Body Meeting was held on 10 May 2019 at Royal auditorium, Mangaf.

Thomas Kuruvilla Narithookil elected as President, Biju Anto Pallikunnel as the General Secretary and Wilson Devassy Vadakkedath the Treasurer for the year 2019-20.

Other office bears are Sunil Joseph Rappuzha-Vice-President, Leo Jose Kollamur-Joint Secretary, Joby Mathew Pullyamthottiyil-Joint Treasurer, Binu Gregory Padingare Veedu-Office Secretary.

Johny Abraham Tharappil will be new Baladeepthi Chief Coordinator, Santhosh Joseph Vadakkemundaniyil elected as cultural committee convener, Sajimon George Valliyattikkariyil for

social, Baiju Babu Puthenchira for arts and sports, George Joseph Vakkithinal will be media convener.

Area general conveners for Abbassiya will be Sabu Sebastian Vadayattukunnel, Johna George Manjaly - City, Farwanja, Antony Manoj Kiriyanthan and Denny Thomas Kanjooparampil for Fahaeel and Salmiya areas respectively.

Bijoy Ouseph Chiriyankandath is elected as Syro Malabar Youth Movement (SMYM) President and Master Jeffrey Joy will be new president for Baladeethi.

General body was presided by former president Kalamparambil. Annual report was presented



Narithookil



Pallikunnel



Vadakkedath

by Aneesh Thomas Thengumpally and financial report was presented by Joshy Devassy Vallachirakan.

Cancer online support group: If you are Cancer patient or family member fighting with this deadly disease, come join our online support group. Best way of dealing with this disease is providing support and share our experience with each other. There are lot of things which even doctors can't tell so be member of this website and start sharing your experiences which may help others. October is recognized as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM). The primary purpose is to promote self examination and screening mammography as the most effective way to save lives by detecting breast cancer at early stage. For more information visit: <http://fightingwithcancer.webs.com/>

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