

Residency brokers in Egypt ... for the influential in Kuwait!



KUNA photo

Minister of Information with head and members of Kuwait Artistes Association.

Government asks ministries to cut down, rationalize spending

Bid to improve economic environment

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The government wants all ministers to take measures within the economic reforms plan, by reducing and rationalizing spending through ministries and public institutions which are under their respective supervision to put an end to wasting government money and

improve the economic environment in the country by getting rid of deficiencies and expenses that cost the state huge sums, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

The sources said some ministers will translate these directives by intensifying meetings with the senior officials in their respective ministries and obliging them to take steps to imple-

ment the government directives, the most prominent of which is the collection of overdue money from the concerned authorities and accumulated debts that have not been collected for years which allegedly runs in millions of dinars and follow-up cases filed in courts through coordination with the Fatwa and Legislation department and the Audit Bureau.

The sources pointed out that one of the most important reform steps that will be followed is to reduce

the external official tasks and stopping the work of the committees during after working hours, granting rewards to the eligible officers and employees.

The steps also include, according to the sources, administrative and financial reform "by organizing the structures in state institutions, abolishing and merging some sectors to reduce waste, emphasizing the follow-up of some delayed projects, taking legal measures against the failing parties, and reporting on the achievements of each ministry separately.

Visa merchants continue to violate the law

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: With their insatiable appetite and unlimited greed, "residency merchants" continue to violate laws by bringing in laborers from all places and disregarding the issue of marginal employment, which contributes to the country's imbalance demographic composition. The merchants are not concerned about the implications of their actions, as long as it pumps dinars into their coffers, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Officials from concerned authorities describe many of the residency dealers as "influential" as they have made fortunes from this trade, which distorts the country's image and increases its problems. It constitutes a burden not only on roads but the state facilities and service destinations. More importantly, they harm the expatriates who are committed and highly qualified to work after entering the country on official work contracts.

The brokerage operations had to be monitored "from the source", so Al-Qabas toured Cairo's offices of brokers and middlemen that specialize in selling visa to those who want to travel to Kuwait. They work for the benefit of residency dealers in Kuwait in return for a commission that is deducted from sums paid by those who stick to the dream of traveling to Kuwait, which in the eyes of many, is "an opportunity to get rich quickly" or achieve financial gains in a short time. This view has prevailed and benefited the residency dealers and their agents in Egypt for many years.

In spite of the successive announcements by relevant government agencies concerning the issue of imbalance demographics showing Kuwaitis constitute only 30 percent of the country's population- according to statistics of the Civil Information Authority in 2018, traffickers continue to play with the fate of the country and its people without being monitored by the eyes of law.

Within a period of two weeks, Al-Qabas met Egyptian workers inside the Kuwaiti embassy premises in Dokki and Giza, the central laboratories and quarantine, during the completion of their travel procedures to Kuwait and discovered that many of them bought residencies called "free visa" in large sums, while others obtained governmental and civil contracts with private companies.

"Free visa" is a common method used for many years in the employment offices abroad where a person who wants to travel pays the owner of a private company in Kuwait in exchange for a work contract and easy entry to Kuwait provided that the person agrees to search for a job upon reaching the country. He's then required by the company owner to convert his residence within a specified deadline, while the recruitment offices act as a mediator against commission per person.

The price is 100 thousand

Amid the long lines in front of the embassy, Al-Qabas correspondent met a person named M. Mamdouh, 30, waiting for his turn to document his treatment. He confirmed buying "Free Visa" from an employment office in Maadi District where he paid 40,000 Egyptian pounds. He stated that upon his arrival in Kuwait he would pay 60,000 Egyptian pounds in installments, which is equivalent to KD 2000. Asked about the place to live and the job to do, Mamdouh said, "I do not know what is available in the labor market but I will search for work in any field upon my arrival".

The case is no different for H. Abdel Samad, a native of Sohag Governorate, who took the train from his hometown to Cairo for 8 hours in order to finish his travel procedures. He said, "I bought free visa at 110,000 pounds for two years, and I intend to work in the contracting and construction field due to my professionalism in this field."

As for Nahid (an English language teacher) who bought free visa through a mediator.

She said: "I presented my credentials several times in periodic announcements to the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower to no avail, so I had to buy a free residence, and I will stay with my friend until I find work in a private school".

Unlike others before him, F. Muhammad indicated he agreed with an office in Kuwait to pay 120,000 pounds in exchange for the provision of a job opportunity and driver's license in a taxi company, indicating driver's visa is more expensive than normal visa.

Formality residencies

In one of the employment offices in Ahmed Orabi Street in the Mohandessin area, Al-Qabas correspondent stated his desire to purchase "free visa" and he learnt about the mechanism of sale and prices. The owner of the office said: "All granted residencies are for formality sake, despite the existence of an employment contract and entry visa, but this matter does not mean provision of job opportunity. They are just paper despite their validity, because they only guarantee legal access to Kuwait, and the office is not responsible for anything afterwards".

Job title according to the money

The manager of another office in Agouza Region told Al-Qabas, the amount is determined "according to the job title obtained for the person who wants to travel, which could be one-year residency or two years. In the end, all of them are mere job titles that do not guarantee the opportunity to work in the place."

Wait your Turn

A phone call made by Al-Qabas correspondent to one of the offices in Assiut Governorate, Upper Egypt, which sells "free visa" with the job title of "an employee" of a major company in Kuwait, revealed that the company is asking to pay a sum for reservation to confirm their seriousness and wait for their turn, given the massive demand for visa.

Receipt of trust

As for the payment method, the person wishing to travel guarantees his right whereby the payment mechanism is at intervals, which starts after issuance of the visa. Before the customer signs a trust receipt document, and after the visa arrives, he pays half of the agreed amount, and upon his arrival to Kuwait, pays the rest of the amount in two installments. He's required to sign the payment before traveling.

The Egyptian "Manpower" ... No comment

Al-Qabas contacted spokesperson of the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower for days to ask about licenses of the offices granted by the Ministry to employment agencies that sell the so-called "free" residencies, a name not included in the labor regulations in Kuwait, but he did not comment.

Employment office: We work for Kuwaiti companies

At an overseas employment agency in Manial Region, the manager agreed to expose the controversial sale of residencies. He told Al-Qabas: "Kuwait is one of the most desirable countries to travel to due to the currency difference, and the offices in Egypt do not work on their own but through companies. It is a Kuwaiti company that grants visas and work contracts through delegates and mediators who cooperate with it.

He pointed out that "many people bought free residence, searched for work and settled legally, indicating "the residence business is a legitimate matter and occurs in all countries of the world and done according to supply and demand".

He added, "We provide you the opportunity to travel and obtain residency, in exchange for a service sum," explaining that his office provides accommodations for many Arab and European countries and that "employment recruitment offices play their role legally."

Public cafes relieve daily stress, patrons point out

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Various types of ideas and opinions abound in public cafes and café joints spread across the country, which are mostly frequented by young people every morning and evening, where they also meet for business, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Qabas reporters shared tables with café goers to try to understand why they enjoy visiting, while others don't do. The idea was to find out the reason for the spread of café joints, whether it's motivated by "prestige and rumbling" or youthful exuberance or they are driven there in search of a distinguished service, varied taste or elite destination?

The taste of coffee or the nature of its production is not the basis for patrons choosing the public cafes, as they all agreed on the fact that their presence in those places is only to spend free time and search for renewal in fresh air that distinguishes most cafes placing their tables outside the location. There are many things that distinguish public cafes. It could be beauty or attractive "fashion" depending on the atmosphere they provide, and presence of several spatial features therein, such as proximity to the work site or study place- in most cases- alongside other preferences. Others enjoy those places, because they have distinctive decorations that allow them to take photos to publish in their coffee group on social media.

Yousef Al-Failakawi, who uses a café characterized by the introduction of cold products or sometimes serves ice cream, asserted that his presence there is mostly by coincidence if he's waiting to ensure completion of his vehicle's maintenance. Sometimes, he visits by preference of someone close to him, indicating he prefers smoker-friendly places and services.

Change of atmosphere

Salih Al-Enezi stressed that "frequenting of cafes is not a matter of elegance, saying it's related to changing the atmosphere to relieve daily pressures." He stated that curiosity and experience allows the selection of cafes and hot drinks, whether in areas inside or outside the Capital, while the basis of selection is mostly related to decoration and public comfort. He ruled out the possibility that his choice could be based on products, but brand and acceptability by many young men.

Spatial proximity

Ahmed Dashti said, "Drinking coffee anywhere is not based on a specific reason, but rather a daily routine or spatial proximity."

Ahmed Al-Enezi considered "quiet places

without visitors and closeness to the university location the basis of choosing café, and not for products or coffee, given the fact that the product itself is everywhere." He explained "there are people who choose cafes to entertain themselves and the rumble sometimes, but most of them are related to the university and study."

As for Ahmed Al-Hajri, he considered the spatial proximity to his residence or work as the basis of choosing cafes, indicating he drinks coffee more than once per day according to free hours in his study schedule.

He clarified that he does not visit Shuwaikh and its cafes outside of study time, but he does resort to cafes near his place of residence in Area 10. This is in addition to enjoying the beautiful decorations that allow him to photograph, while friends can gather there without any problems.

Morning activity

As for Noura, who is a citizen working in the field of coffee marketing with a private company, she emphasized that "coffee choices are made based on the wishes of customers, and marketing to them is closely related to the gifts that the market is witnessing." She stated that "most of the coffee shops or centers depend on coffee imported from South America, especially Brazil and Colombia," pointing out that "the gift of coffee and people involved in it depend on a greater demand for specialized coffee, not the usual ones, but those coming from the large companies." She indicated that the frequent use of café joints for coffee is related to activity, especially in the morning before work, preferring cafes that offer milk-blended varieties, or known as latte and cappuccino.

Natural views

Abdullah Al-Ajmi talked about the goal of going to the café, as he indicated preference for cafes that provide distinctive drinks other than coffee, like tea of all kinds." He pointed out that "the café is a destination for those who want to be shouting in the morning, while the choice of the place is related to general comfort of the site and proximity to the seaside or garden."

Coffee and smoke

Nasser Al-Ajmi said that "cafes are distinguished by the different taste of each products", pointing out that he "got acquainted with cafes offering Colombian or Ethiopian coffee, driven by the distinctive taste, away from the place."



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