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Talks set to sensitize 60-plus rules

Cancellation seen in outreach for what's possible

Day by Day

EXPERTS have raised the issue of foreign ownership of real estate, as is the case in several countries and the entire Gulf region, but one of the realtors issued a fatwa saying this cannot be allowed to happen in Kuwait because, from his point of view, this will raise the price of real estate and affect the citizens.

We say to this smart guy: Foreigners will not buy real estate in Dahiya, Yarmouk or Shamiya. They will buy apartments in Mahboula or Khaitan, because in these areas a lot of apartments are available. After the residents have been deported these are apartments have become breeding ground for cats and dogs.

Even if the prices of real estate shoot up, Kuwaiti owners will benefit. I do not know why this shortsightedness? After all this, we dream of making 'Our country a financial hub'. Which center are you talking about?

... Yet, tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 11: The Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr. Abdullah Al-Salman is scheduled to present a briefing to the Cabinet on the latest developments regarding the barring of renewal of work permits for those above the age of 60 years and hold secondary certificates or less, based on the opinion of the Fatwa and Legislation Department, which concluded that resolution No. 520/2020 issued in August 2020 and its implementation as of January 1, 2021 is illegal, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In this context, informed sources explained that the board of directors of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) will hold a meeting in the next few days to decide on canceling the

decision issued by the director of the authority, and setting less difficult conditions that these workers can implement.

The most prominent among the new conditions proposed are the worker has to obtain comprehensive health insurance, and the fees for renewing the work permit will be increased a little more than normal such that it is an amount that any worker can pay.

The goal of the first decision was to reduce pressure on hospitals and health cadres in treating these workers.

However, comprehensive health insurance would be a solution to this problem. It would not procedurally allow the renewal of work permits for the "60-year" segment according to the automated system.

Prior to the meeting of the Board of Directors and its official approval, the authority may cancel the decision, and afterwards, the system will be opened for renewal.



KUNA photo
His Highness Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace, Monday, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud. The ambassador handed in a letter from the Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud to His Highness Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Opinion

A government of 'let whatever happens happen, I'm immune'

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IT is not surprising that about 8,000 administrative lawsuits have been filed against the Cabinet for the various decisions that it has taken. Such decisions often prove to be faulty, but instead of correcting the errors, the members of the Cabinet do not flinch at all.

Therefore, the public funds are diverted to covering those mistakes. Or in the weakest faith, the Cabinet circumvents the ruling issued by the court to prove their ability to impose what they want.

Given that the Cabinet, from its president to even the undersecretaries, are, by virtue of "deaf ears", unnerved by loud screams, even if the voices of Kuwaitis become hoarse, and their throats burn.

It seems that the popular cries delight the government, as they continue to push the citizens to scream more, and resorts to injury time dialogue that it thinks would offer all solutions on a plate of gold.

For the 100th time, we say that this dialogue will only strike the last remaining prestige of the state that seems to be living its lean years. There is nothing on the horizon for its president and his crew to expect in finding someone like Yusuf (PBUH) to save them as he saved the king and Egypt from famine.

In fact, it seems the Cabinet is convincing itself that - as long as it is immune, let whatever happens happen, and as long as it will not take the interpellation stand, everything else becomes of no concern to it.

The administrative lawsuits filed are not the last, but they represent the tip of the iceberg that threatens the "Titanic" institutions that are floating in a choppy sea without a captain who is aware of the risks facing the country.

In this regard, the decisions taken to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are enough. What preceded it from about two years to this day affirms that the country is snowballing, but we hope that the matter will not exacerbate.

With a government of this type, it would not be surprising that decisions are issued by non-specialized bodies and imposed on everyone. No one was left to raise their voice, declaring how harmful they are; the government, as big as it is, could not stop it.

For example, the decision to ban the renewal of work permits for expatriates above the age of 60 years of age was recently nullified by the Fatwa and Legislation Department, which is the government's legal advisor. Nevertheless, it was still enforced.

The entire state accepted it, because the Cabinet is simply unaware of its position. All that it is interested in is fortifying its president from constitutional accountability.

We beg to ask - Did His Highness the Prime Minister inquire from his ministers regarding the use of a dialogue that seems to be limited to amnesty for Musallam Al-Barak, Jama'an Al-Harbish, and other fugitives to Turkey? Are they convinced that this will solve the rest of the country's problems? Or is the government reluctant and waiting for what tomorrow will bring?

This situation, which has continued since the announcement of the results of the last elections, will not end in the victory of one party over another. In fact, the people are the ones who will continue to suffer until Almighty Allah makes it easy for us to get out of this tunnel, which continues to become darker and darker. Also, the psychological and physical suffering continues, and diseases of neglect are spreading among the officials.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Ministry of Health said Monday 42 more coronavirus cases over the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 412,121.

One more mortality took death toll to 2,455, the ministry's spokesman Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad told KUNA.

As many as 44 patients have cured of the pandemic, bringing the overall recoveries to 409,046, he noted, adding that the percentage of recoveries to infections amounted to 99.25.

Nine patients are at intensive care units (ICUs), while 620 others are being treated, including 28 at hospital wards, he stated.

Some 21,267 swab tests were conducted over the last day, taking the total to 4,482,390, he added. (KUNA)

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KUWAIT CITY: The Kuwait International Airport (KIA) said it is gearing up to work to full capacity once it gets a green light from the concerned authorities and said till then it will stick to the allotted quota and health protocols, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily said after about more than two months the airport continues to work with the allotted quota of 10,000 passengers per day but waiting for full resumption of direct flights to all countries of the world.

The sources stated the airport is abuzz with travellers moving in and out of the country with the opening of many destinations, foremost of which is the destination of Egypt, which is still witnessing a great demand for travel.

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KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Cabinet is allowing commercial activities with proper permits to operate in public open spaces as of Sunday, provided the venues comply with guidelines aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19.

The decision comes into effect starting on Sunday, October 17, the center for government communication said on Twitter. (KUNA)

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RIYADH: Kuwait may allow foreigners full ownership of companies in a push to attract more investments and boost the economy, Arab News reports.

Abdullah Al-Sabah, deputy director general for investment operations at Kuwait's Direct Investment Promotion Authority, highlighted the possibility of such a move in an interview with Al-Arabiya on Sunday.

Al-Sabah said in the last five years Kuwait managed to attract 1 billion dinars (\$3.3 billion) worth of investments in different sectors particularly technology, health and procurement.

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NEW DELHI: Talks between Indian and Chinese army commanders to disengage troops from key friction areas along their border have ended in a stalemate and failed to ease a 17-month standoff that has sometimes led to deadly clashes, the two sides said Monday.

The continuing standoff means the two nations will keep troops in the forward areas of Ladakh for a second consecutive winter in dangerously freezing temperatures.

India's defense ministry, in a statement, said it gave "constructive suggestions" but the Chinese side was "not agreeable" and "could not provide any forward-looking proposals." A statement from a Chinese military spokesperson said "the Indian side sticks to unreasonable and unrealistic demands, adding difficulties to the negotiations." (AP)

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CANBERRA, Australia: An Afghan army deserter who murdered three Australian soldiers had been released from custody in Qatar and his whereabouts were not known, officials said on Monday.

The soldier known as Hekmatullah fled after shooting dead the Australian soldiers and wounding two others on a base in 2012 and was sentenced to death in 2013.

"The government's position has always been that Hekmatullah should serve a just and proportionate sentence, appropriate to his crimes, and not be granted early release or pardon," an Australian government statement said. (AP)

IS 'billfold' caught in op



Firefighters work to extinguish a fire in an oil facility in the southern town of Zahrani, south of the port city of Sidon, Lebanon, Monday, Oct. 11. A huge fire broke out at an oil facility in southern Lebanon's coastal town of Zahrani, but the cause was not immediately known. Energy Minister Walid Fayad said the fire broke out when workers were transferring gasoline from one storage tank to another in the coastal town of Zahrani. He said nearly 250,000 liters (66,000 gallons) of gasoline were burnt during the blaze, which lasted more than three hours. No one was reported hurt. The fire came as cash-strapped Lebanon struggles through a serious power crisis partly due to severe shortages in fuel that have resulted in electricity cuts lasting up to 22 hours a day. (AP)

BAGHDAD, Oct 11, (Agencies): Iraq said on Monday it has detained a top leader of the Islamic State group and a longtime al-Qaida operative in a cross-border operation.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi tweeted the news, identifying the man as Sami Jasim, who oversees the Islamic State group's financial operations and served as the deputy leader of IS under the late Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Al-Kadhimi described it as "one of the most difficult" cross border intelligence operations ever conducted by Iraqi forces.

Jasim has a \$5 million bounty on his head from the U.S. State Department's Rewards for Justice program, which describes him as having been "instrumental in managing finances for IS terrorist operations."

"While serving as IS deputy in southern Mosul in 2014, Jasim reportedly served as the equivalent of IS's finance minister, supervising the group's revenue-generating operations from illicit sales of oil, gas, antiquities, and minerals," the website says.

Iraqi intelligence officials told The Associated Press that Jasim was detained in an unidentified foreign country and transported to Iraq few days ago. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak of the operation on the record.

Jassem worked with al-Qaida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian militant who was killed in a U.S. airstrike in Iraq in 2006. He assumed various security positions in Iraq, and moved to Syria in 2015, after the Islamic State group, an al-Qaida offshoot, declared its caliphate in 2014 and became the deputy of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the extremist group's leader.

Al-Baghdadi was killed in a U.S.-led raid in northwestern Syria in 2019, under former U.S. President Donald Trump.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday two cables of congratulations to Iraqi President Barham Salih and Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi on the successful legislative poll.

In his cables, His Highness the Amir extolled the election which showed keenness of Iraqi people on their national duty to select their representatives in the parliament.

His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah the Almighty to bestow the Iraqi President and Premier everlasting good health, and Iraq further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Deputy Amir and the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent two similar cables.

NIS aims to diversify revenues

Riyadh launches investment strategy

RIYADH, Oct 11, (KUNA): Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs Mohammed bin Salman announced on Monday the launch of the National Investment Strategy (NIS), a key enabler to deliver on Vision 2030.

According to the Saudi News Agency (SPA), the NIS is a catalyst to deliver the Kingdom's economic transformation plan Vision 2030, which was first outlined by the crown prince during its launch five years ago, as he said, "Our country holds strong investment capabilities, which we will harness to stimulate our economy and diversify our revenues."

The Crown Prince noted that the Kingdom also seeks to harness its strengths: the strategic geographical position, investment power and place at the center of Arab and Islamic worlds.

The NIS will contribute to the growth and diversification of the Kingdom's economy, which, in turn, will achieve many Vision 2030's goals, including raising the private sector's contribution to GDP to 65 percent; increasing the contribution of FDI to GDP to 5.7 percent; increasing the contribution of non-oil exports to GDP from 16 to 50 percent; reducing the unemployment rate to 7 percent; and positioning the Kingdom among the top ten economies in the Global Competitiveness Index; by 2030.

"Today, the Kingdom embarks on a new investment era to empower Saudi and international private-sector investors with more and better opportunities. Investment is without a doubt one of the main routes for us to achieve the ambitions and aspirations of Vision 2030, among them economic development, diversification and sustainability; technology transfer and localization; infrastructure development; better quality of life; job opportunities and the upskilling of our human resources, leaving a legacy of prosperity for future generations," said the Crown Prince said at the launch of the National Investment Strategy.

"The National Investment Strategy is all about empowering investors, offering investment opportunities, providing financing solutions and enhancing competitiveness. It also clarifies the partnership between the public and private sectors, as our mission is now to open the door to the private sector and allow it

to grow and prosper," he said.

"The NIS will draw up comprehensive investment plans for sectors, including manufacturing, renewable energy, transport and logistics, tourism, digital infrastructure, and health care," he noted.

The Crown Prince reiterated that KSA's ambitious investment goals will be achieved through the combined efforts of several entities such as the Public Investment Fund, and large Saudi companies through the Shareek Program, as well as further domestic and international investments.

"Today, we are proud of the remarkable achievements made in the 'Kingdom of Opportunities' during the first phase of Vision 2030, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. We will continue our work to pave the way towards a bright future, enriched by a diversified and sustainable economy. This strategy is one means to achieve this goal, and we are confident in our abilities to reach our ambitious targets and meet the aspirations of our great people," he continued.

He concluded his announcement by emphasizing the importance of investment in driving the economic growth and sustainable development targeted under Vision 2030. He highlighted that more than SAR 12 trillion (USD 3.2 trillion) will be injected into the national economy through investment activity by 2030; the Shareek program initiatives will inject SAR 5 trillion, the Public Investment Fund is set to contribute SAR 3 trillion (USD 0.8 trillion), and the remaining SAR 4 trillion (USD 1.07 trillion) will be generated by investments facilitated by the NIS. Further, the economy will receive SAR 10 trillion (USD 2.67 trillion) through government spending during the next 10 years and a further SAR 5 trillion (USD 1.3 trillion) from private consumption spending in the same period. This represents a total injection of SAR 27 trillion (USD 7 trillion) in the next decade.

By achieving these goals, the investment contribution to GDP is expected to increase from 22 percent in 2019 to 30 percent by 2030, making KSA's economy one of the 15 largest in the world, and NIS is expected to raise annual FDI flows to SAR 388 billion (USD 103 trillion) and increase annual domestic investment to SAR 1.7 trillion (USD 0.45 trillion) by 2030.

'Kuwait against torture, inhumane treatment'

GENEVA, Oct 11, (KUNA): Kuwait's participation in the 18th meeting of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) reflected its keenness in human rights issues with all its forms and aspects, said a senior Kuwaiti diplomat Monday.

This came in the speech Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international Organizations Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim gave during the meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Kuwait's contribution to the CAT committee

elections, that will take place during the meeting, comes in support of efforts in this domain, he added.

Kuwait is among few countries keen on implementing all of its obligations, including handing the periodical reports in its schedules timings, due to its partnership in international agreements related to the human rights, including CAT.

This commitment came from the high responsibility and transparency Kuwaiti policy follows on human rights issues, which highly served a good reputation, and mutual trust with human rights institutions, and all other international conventions committees related to this matter, he added.