



KUWAIT: Frans Potuyt, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kuwait launches the new visa application center in Kuwait City yesterday. — KUNA

## NETHERLANDS LAUNCHES NEW VISA APPLICATION CENTER

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Embassy of the Netherlands yesterday launched a new visa application center in Kuwait City to facilitate the growing number of visitors from Kuwait. Last year, about 8,000 visitors from Kuwait traveled to the country famous for windmills, tulips and cheese. Speaking at the opening of the VFS Global visa center, Frans Potuyt, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kuwait, said the number of visa applications rose sharply over the last couple of years and the embassy could no longer accommodate the large number of applicants, and wanted to serve and extend the services for everyone.

"Kuwaitis and other nationals' visa applications are growing rapidly, who would like to travel to the Netherlands. Of course we will miss the direct pleasant contacts with all these travelers, but we are confident that VFS and its professional staff will do everything to secure a swift application process," the envoy mentioned. "I hope that we welcome even more friends from Kuwait to our beautiful country," he added.

Kuwait is the seventh country in the Middle East from where applicants can apply for a visa to the Netherlands. The center is located on the first floor of Al-Banwan Bldg on Ali Al-Salem Street in Kuwait City, and services commenced yesterday. "The decision of who gets the visa still lies in our hands. Once you get a Schengen visa, you are getting a visa to most of the countries in Europe. We trust Kuwaitis and they can visit us any time, so I believe that the visa system for Kuwaitis is outdated. Visas for Emiratis have already been removed, so the idea is to apply the same with Kuwaitis. One of the requirements for doing so is that the passports must be biometric compli-

ant, and I think they are now in the process of doing so," Potuyt said.

### More convenient

The Netherlands joins eight other Schengen countries offering visa services at the same center, making it more convenient for travellers planning multiple business or leisure trips abroad to apply at a single location. VFS Global serves a total of 13 client governments in Kuwait, and has operated visa processing services in the country since 2005. The company has partnered with the government of Netherlands since 2006, and serves it in 24 countries with 54 visa application centers globally.

"Our long-standing partnership with our esteemed client government, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, is reflective of the trust they have bestowed on us through this time-honored and successful relationship. We are privileged to further extend our services in Kuwait to them and remain committed to providing comprehensive end-to-end visa services for applicants," said Srinarayan Sankaran, COO Middle East, VFS Global.

Bilateral relations between the two countries are great, according to Potuyt, with a shared trade volume of \$2.5 billion. With regards to the political tensions in the region, Potuyt noted with the moderate role of GCC countries, he hoped that problems in the Middle East will be settled. "We are facing tougher days ahead especially with the solution we all want for the Syrian crisis. I really hope that parties involved will be ready to compromise or give way to solve the crisis. It's very complicated now with IS, but with the will, we shall overcome this. We now have the biggest immigration problem in Europe, and I heard many Syrians want to return home if political settlements are reached to rebuild the country," he added.



KUWAIT: Samir Khader speaks during the training course.

## KJA, SKY NEWS ARABIA HOLD TRAINING COURSE

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA), in collaboration with Sky News Arabia, organized a training course in 'visual editorial press' on Sunday at the headquarters of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). KJA Director Adnan Khalifa Al-Rashed said cooperation between KJA and Sky News Arabia is a beginning of a professional and community partnership between the two sides that seeks the development and qualification of a generation of young Kuwaiti journalists from the private and government sectors.

He added that training young journalists is a priority of the Kuwaiti Journalists Association, which is working to provide all the necessary requirements to inform young people about the technical and professional developments in the field of media and journalism in general, especially to develop the Kuwaiti media's message.

"These specialized training programs are part of a series of activities launched by Sky News Arabia in 2013 aimed at colleges, universities and institutes, as well as media practitioners through advanced levels of programs consistent with the nature of their fields and their specialties," said Nart Bouran, Head of Sky News Arabia. Bouran added that one of the

main goals of Sky News Arabia's initiatives is to contribute to the development of the media industry by providing Arab media with the best experiences, stressing the success of training courses to graduate more than 70 media students and more than 50 specialists in the field of journalism and media in the Gulf and the Middle East.

"Sky News will strengthen partnership with the local media in Arab countries and especially in Kuwait for mutual benefit and supporting our colleagues in the media," he said. "The training course explained the methods that have been used in the media and showed the difference between news, analysis, commentary and investigation and how to present the final article in both voice and image. The course also teaches participants about editorial, monitoring, and analytical skills and summarizing the content of television news broadcasts from various sources," Bouran added.

Samir Khader, Executive Editor of Sky News Arabia, explained how to write professional news stories and deal with the camera in order to familiarize the participants with the media message tools of text and image, and practically showed the best methods of delivery to enable them to make quality sound and picture stories.

## CABINET HOLDS WEEKLY MEETING

KUWAIT: The cabinet held its weekly meeting yesterday at Bayan Palace chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. As the meeting started, the cabinet was informed of a message from Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud inviting His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to attend a summit for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders with US President Barack Obama in Riyadh on April 21, said Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

The ministers were also notified of a message from King Mohammed VI of Morocco to His Highness the Amir, on the distinguished bilateral ties and keenness to bolster them in all fields, as well as promoting the GCC-Moroccan relations. Then, the cabinet was apprised of a message His Highness the Amir received from Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, and President of the European Council Donald Tusk, on a conference on Afghanistan slated for next October in Brussels, minister Sheikh Salman added. The ministerial event will be hosted by the European Union (EU) and the Afghan government.

After that, the cabinet was informed about a message from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon inviting His Highness the Amir to attend the comprehensive high-level Mid-term Review of the implementation of the Istanbul Program of Action (IPOA) for the Least Developed Countries, due in Antalya, Turkey, in May.



KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA

The ministers were given notice of a message from President of the Islamic Development Bank (IBD) Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali, congratulating His Highness the Amir on the success of the fourth conference for Syrian donors held in London in February. Ali reiterated IBD's readiness to cooperate with the international community to muster more financial resources to fulfill the development needs of the Middle East countries.

Meanwhile, Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-

Sabah briefed the cabinet on the outcome of the recent visit to Kuwait by Sudan's chief diplomat Ibrahim Ghandour, Sheikh Salman said. The talks focused on means of broadening bilateral ties in all fields, besides issues of common concern.

In the meantime, the cabinet decided to apply e-messaging in all government bodies as of January 1, 2017, replacing paper-messaging. Concluding the customary meeting, the ministers reviewed political developments on the Arab and international scenes. — KUNA



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah tours a gallery held on the sidelines of the conference.

## AMIRI DIWAN MINISTER OPENS CONFERENCE ON LATE SHEIKH ABDULLAH AL-SALEM AL-SABAH

KUWAIT: A conference on the era of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah (1950-1965) was held at Kuwait University's Faculty of Arts yesterday under the auspices and in presence of Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The National Anthem was played at the onset of the conference, followed by recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran.

Addressing the event, the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs voiced much thanks and appreciation to the organizers of the conference which handles the political and social aspects of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Elaborating on his relationship with the late Amir, the minister said he used to see Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem everyday as he always visited his family at Dasman suburb early morning. He said Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem was a great model for treating children and teens so kindly and moderately. Remembering the sad moment when the late Amir died, Sheikh Nasser said he hurried to have his last look at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem before his death. Afterwards, Dean of the Faculty of Arts Dr Suad Abdulwahab said the late Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem, who ruled the country between 1950 and 1965 and passed away at 70, is considered the founder of modern Kuwait.

She said this conference should handle everything, not only political or social aspects, about the late Amir who really laid the foundations of the nation. Hailing him as a wise skipper, she said the late Amir efficiently managed to overcome all obstacles and problems the nation faced during his era thanks to his experience and foresightedness.

Meanwhile, Head of the Faculty's History Department Dr Abdulhadi Al-Ajmi said his section was so proud of holding this conference on the era of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, during which the country witnessed the creation of governmental and civil establishments, independence and constitution. He said the late Amir's era was actually the golden age of the State of Kuwait.

Dr Ajmi expressed much appreciation to the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs for patronizing and attending this event, stressing Kuwait University's significant and influential role in promoting knowledge and culture in Kuwait by hosting such events. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (center) attends the conference. — Amiri Diwan photos



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah is seen during the tour.

## CONFERENCE FOR OVERHAULING EDUCATION KICKS OFF IN KUWAIT



KUWAIT: Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa (right) and Walid Al-Hasawi, Chairman of the Kuwait Teachers Society attend the conference. — KUNA

KUWAIT: The scheduled 42nd educational conference, themed "Our Educational Curricula and Development Requirements," got underway yesterday with speakers underscoring His Highness the Crown Prince's attention to this vital sector as well as the need to develop it to cope with modern-day scientific advancement.

Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa, in his statement at the opening session of the convention, organized by Kuwait Teachers Society (KTS), praised the event sponsor, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for dedicating special concern for education and teachers.

Overhauling the education is a feature of civilization, said Dr Essa, also the Minister of Higher Education, affirming that his department is revising the teaching curriculums and seeking to limit methods based on conventional ways such as memorizing and dictating.

Walid Al-Hasawi, the society chairman, boasted of His Highness the Crown Prince's sponsorship of

this annual gathering, affirming the approach to examine issues in the sector seriously during the convention. He expressed hope that it would cap with recommendations to advance the education and encourage decision makers map out strategies to face challenges in the field.

Abdulrahim Al-Kandari, the conference's general registrar, said meanwhile that the conference logo was chosen with aim of harmonizing schemes with requirements for technological and scientific development. Other key speakers lauded His Highness the Heir Apparent as well as His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for spearheading the approach for developing education. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad was also lauded for earning the UN designation, the "Humanitarian Leader."

The State of Kuwait has repeatedly affirmed the approach to develop education and cope with latest innovations in technology and sciences. Digital methods and tools have been already incorporated in the curricula. — KUNA