



A buck silhouetted at sunset bellows yesterday near the village of Gorodilovich, some 300 km north of Minsk. — AFP

Tillerson woos Gulf allies...

Continued from Page 1

great potential" for further cooperation. He noted the August reopening of a major border crossing and the resumption of direct flights between Riyadh and Baghdad. "Both represent the beginning of what we hope will be a series of even more tangible actions to improve relations and strengthen cooperation on a host of issues," he said. "Your growing relationship between the kingdom and Iraq is vital to bolstering our collective security and prosperity and we take great interest in it."

History, religion and lots of politics stand in Tillerson's way, but both the Saudi king and the Iraqi prime minister appeared optimistic about the prospects. "We are facing in our region serious challenges in the form of extremism, terrorism as well as attempts to destabilize our countries," King Salman said. "These attempts require our full attention. ... We reaffirm our support for the unity and stability of our brother country of Iraq." Abadi expressed pleasure with "the thriving relations between our two brotherly countries". "We are open and we want to move away from the past," he said. "The region cannot tolerate any further divisions. Interference in the internal affairs of other state should stop."

Tillerson's visit, his third to the region as secretary of state, comes nearly five months after Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt cut ties with Qatar and imposed an embargo on Doha, accusing it of supporting terrorism and cozying up to Iran. Qatar denies the charges and has rejected their terms for a settlement. Tillerson, a former chief executive of energy giant ExxonMobil, declined to take sides in the Gulf crisis, after



DOHA: Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani meets Tillerson at the Prince's Sea Palace residence in the Qatari capital yesterday. — AFP

an unsuccessful attempt to resolve the dispute during a trip to the region in July.

"The United States maintains very strong relationships with all the countries involved in the Qatar dispute, including Qatar, and the United States intends to maintain those very strong, positive important relationships," Tillerson said in Riyadh. "They're important for a security standpoint. They're important from an economic standpoint."

Trump had initially appeared to support Saudi Arabia in isolating Qatar but has since called for mediation, predicting a rapid end to the crisis. Tillerson however indicated there had been little progress before he arrived at Riyadh's King Salman airbase on Saturday. "I do not have a lot of expectations for it being resolved anytime soon," he said in an interview with financial news agency Bloomberg. "There seems to be a real unwillingness on the part of some of the parties to want to engage."

The State Department has said the conflict

in Yemen, where Saudi Arabia and Iran back warring parties, will also figure in Tillerson's talks in the Gulf. But on the Qatar crisis, Tillerson's goal will be to try to persuade the two sides to at least open a dialogue. Simon Henderson, a veteran of the region now at the Washington Institute of Near East Policy, said the disputing parties do not want to lose face. "Tillerson will say: 'Come on kids, grow up and wind down your absurd demands. And let's work on a compromise on your basic differences'," he said.

Kuwait has tried to serve as a mediator, with US support, but the parties have yet to sit down face-to-face. During his trip Tillerson is also to visit New Delhi in order to build what he said in a recent speech could be a 100-year "strategic partnership" with India. Tillerson will stop in Islamabad to soothe Pakistani fears about this Indian outreach, but also pressure the government to crack down harder on Islamist militant groups. — Agencies

Opposition MPs warn...

Continued from Page 1

Babtain said invitations were sent out to 23 lawmakers but some of them could not attend, adding that the MPs expressed readiness to discuss these issues with anyone. He said that there will be no political stability except through cooperation to approve the abovementioned legislation, adding that they were not interested in clashing with the government in the Assembly. He warned that if the government continues to behave in the same way it did in the first term, there will be collisions. Regarding grillings, Babtain said it was decided to deal with each grilling separately, but criticized the way the government has been behaving to protect any minister facing questioning.

Saudis crave revival of...

Continued from Page 1

Saudi Arabia's highest-ranking cleric warned in January of the "depravity" of cinemas, saying they would corrupt morals.

But authorities appear to be shrugging off the threat, with some comparing Saudi Arabia's reform drive to a fast-moving bus - either people get on board or risk being left behind. Saudi Arabia in recent months has organized concerts, a Comic-Con pop culture festival and a mixed-gender national day celebration that saw people dancing in the streets to thumping electronic music for the first time.

A ban on cinemas does not make sense in the age of YouTube, filmmakers say. Saudi films have been making waves abroad, using the Internet to circumvent distribution channels and sometimes the stern gaze of state censors. "Wajida", by Saudi female director Haifaa Al-Mansour, made history in 2013 after it became Saudi Arabia's first Academy Award entry. The film depicts the dream of a 10-year-old girl to get a bicycle just like the boys in her conservative neighborhood.

This year, the country is again vying for an Oscar with the film "Barakah Meets Barakah", the kingdom's first romantic comedy which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival. "Without cinemas, the country's rich artistic talent will die," Hisham Fageeh, the film's lead actor, told AFP. "Saudis need a nuanced cultural identity outside the prism of religion."

The government is yet to officially announce a date for ending the ban, but

Opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri meanwhile said he will back the grilling against the state minister for Cabinet affairs and the planned grillings against the ministers of oil and social affairs and labor. He charged that administrative and financial violations have been committed in a number of departments under the state minister, adding that the minister of social affairs does not respect court rulings.

Meanwhile, MP Abdullah Fahhad warned the government against its failure to fulfill promises to return citizenships revoked from a number of opposition figures over three years ago. Fahhad said an understanding was reached with the government to return the citizenships, and failing to fulfill the pledges could lead to serious consequences. MP Mohammad Al-Dallal said that the issue of a Cabinet reshuffle is on the table and called for dealing with it seriously, but admitted that a Cabinet reshuffle is in the hands of HH the Amir and the prime minister.

already the hashtag "cinemas opening in Riyadh" is gaining traction on social media, as memes swirl online showing people imagining booking their cinema tickets. The expected reform stems partly from an economic motive to boost domestic spending on entertainment as the kingdom reels from a protracted oil slump.

Saudis splurge billions of dollars annually to see movie shows and visit amusement parks in the neighboring tourist hubs of Bahrain and Dubai. Without cinemas, investment in films is unlikely to flourish and the depiction of society will not move beyond the foreign portrayal of Saudis as extremist or culturally primitive, filmmakers say. "Cinemas will make us feel human," said Ali Kalthami, co-founder of C3 Films and Telfaz11, which provides comedy videos on YouTube.

Kalthami's film "Wasati", or moderate in Arabic, is based on a real-life event in the mid-1990s when a group of ultraconservatives disrupted a play at a Saudi university. The film was screened for one night earlier this year at the same theatre where the play was shut down. Back at King Fahd Cultural Centre, Alharbi's "National Dialogue" was watched by a rapt audience.

The film addresses the social dilemma of young Saudis struggling to find the right match. It dramatizes an encounter in the streets between an unrelated man and a woman, both checking each other out without talking. They appear to like each other, but in the film's denouement the man rejects the woman, judging her to be immoral after she lifts her veil to give him a glimpse. Alharbi said the film intended to promote dialogue between the genders - and the screening did just that. As the lights came on, the raucous crowd of men erupted into cheers. They were vigorously booed by the female audience. — AFP



Saudi women arrive to watch Saudi short movies at the King Fahd Culture Center in Riyadh. — AFP

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
ads@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Anniversary Offers

SAMSUNG Galaxy J7 Prime G610 LTE

62 الآن
89 قبل
27 فقط

Available Colors ●●

5.5" 16GB 3 RAM GB

SAMSUNG Galaxy J5 Prime G570 LTE

Limited Quantity
44 الآن
69 قبل
25 فقط

Available Colors ●●●

5.0" 16GB 2 RAM GB

SAMSUNG Grand Prime Plus G532F LTE

34 الآن
44 قبل
10 فقط

شريحة Dual Sim

5.0" 8 GB

best بست
AL-YOUSIFI اليوسفي

Credit: Start from 6KD • Up to 48 month • Interest approved

Shop Online www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

• Kuwait 1 (The New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Kuwait 3 (Souq Sharq) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khaldon str.) • Shuwaikh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)