

Local

Former speaker, MPs call for amnesty for jailed lawmakers

Officials discuss unified lease contract

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti political blocs are currently preoccupied with coming up with legal and political ways out of the recent ruling by the court of cassation against lawmakers and activists who had stormed the parliament seven years ago. According to the court's ruling on July 8, 2018, 13 of the defendants, including MPs Waleed Al-Tabtabaei and Jamaan Al-Harbash, six former MPs including Musallam Al-Barak and five activists, were sentenced to 42 months in prison. Former speaker of the house Ahmad Al-Saadoun was the first to call for activating article 75 of the constitution concerning a general amnesty.

Saadoun referred the matter to MP Mohammed Al-Mutair, who was acquitted in the same case, and who held a meeting on Thursday with seven other MPs and several activists. During the meeting, they issued a special statement that recommends referring to the 'political leadership' (HH the Amir) to resolve the problem. Riyadh Al-Adasani, one of the MPs attending the meeting, said 24 lawmakers had so far signed a plea requesting a general amnesty as stipulated in article 75 of the constitution, adding that the cases of storming the parliament and the millions in bank

deposits were closely related, as the latter was the motive for the former. "The deposits case was shelved due to legal loopholes, but this does not mean acquitting the accused," he underlined. MP Adel Al-Damkhi echoed Adasani, noting that those who stood up were iconic reformists who were now paying the price.

Meanwhile, constitutional expert Mohammed Al-Feyali said the court of cassation's ruling was a criminal penalty that entails cancelling MPs' memberships. He remarked that the seats would not be declared vacant before announcing the cancellation. "Passing a sentence or imprisonment does not mean that the seat is vacant - this has to be decided by the parliament," he explained. Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem has stressed that no urgent sessions would be held during the parliamentary recess and that the first session of the third term will be held in October.

Unified contract

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry's (MoCI) lease department manager Mariam Al-Bahrani met Kuwait Real Estate Brokers Union's board of directors and discussed various topics, including the unified lease contract that is awaiting Minister Roudhan's approval, linking e-contracts

made at real estate brokers' offices with relevant bodies, updating brokers' information and issuing special IDs for them. Head of the real estate brokers union Emad Haidar said that the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) is currently working on linking sale and purchase contracts made at any real estate brokerage offices with relevant authorities at MoCI, justice ministry, PACI, Kuwait Municipality and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS). Commenting on the unified lease contract form, Haidar said the final form is currently awaiting the minister's approval before printing it and officially distributing it to various offices before the end of the year.

Sabah Al-Ahmad City

Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State for Services Jenan Boshehri said the project of building an industrial area in Sabah Al-Ahmad City will be allocated to a number of crafts workshops, light industries and warehouses. The minister added that the project's feasibility studies had been completed pending offering it to investors. She added that the 1.23 million-square-meter project will be offered for investment according to the public-private-partnership (PPP) system.

The situation in Iraq

local spotlight



By Muna Al-Fuzal

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It is a difficult time for Iraq, which is still recovering from crises and problems since 2003, after the fall of the regime of former president Saddam Hussein. During the following years, Iraq witnessed some internal protests, but last week the protests expanded in the province of Basra in southern Iraq to include the provinces of Najaf, Karbala and Babel. The protesters are demanding job opportunities and improvement in living conditions.

The demonstrations swept the streets of the province of Basra, which contains the largest oil-fields and ports exporting Iraqi oil. The situation worsened after the death of a demonstrator last Sunday, who was protesting against unemployment and deterioration of the situation in the communal sector.

Iraq since 2003 has succeeded in avoiding a civil conflict for the simple reason that all the Iraqi powers, despite differing agendas and objectives, reject the idea of dividing Iraq and believe in unity. Also, there are many other reasons, including intelligence by these political parties that a civil war could make the situation worse and no one can win it. Another reason that contributed to the agreement of most parties on Iraqi unity is the external threat of ISIS and the war against terror.

I think all these reasons prevented a civil war in Iraq despite the conflicts and militias. Let's remember that Iraq was affected by the war against terror and suffered damage to its infrastructure. But Iraq is a rich county and the second largest oil producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) after Saudi Arabia, with a production capacity of 4.8 million barrels per day. The protesters in Basra prevented access to the port of Umm Qasr, while others stormed Najaf airport. The city is a religious center. Fights later resumed after the withdrawal of demonstrators from the airport.

Dr Saadi Al-Ibrahim is an Iraqi writer who has published a long report in 2016 in the newspaper Al-Quds Al-Arabi entitled "Will Iraq remain unified until 2020?". The report analyzes the future of Iraq under unstable conditions. The report is long and one of the most prominent observations is of regional conditions, in which he says no one wants to divide Iraq, and the role of the international community towards Iraq since 2003.

I think we should not be surprised that there is a difference of views on the situation in Iraq and its future between powerful forces or demands to improve the situation. The problem here is that political instability is a negative indicator and has important implications on the security and social levels.

The most important question remains: Will the fate of the current Basra protests be like the fate of its predecessors? No one wants that, and it depends on how the Iraqi government deals with the situation in general. I believe that in the Gulf region, we need a strong and stable Iraq because it is a very close neighbor.

But when your neighbor's house burns, you have to be careful not to be exposed to the fire or the sparks coming from that direction in the event of instability. Kuwait's interior ministry has raised the alert level on the northern border due to events in southern Iraq. This is a normal procedure and required until the situation calms down. Preserving our internal security is essential.

Parents questioned over children social media misuse

KUWAIT: The public prosecution asked the juvenile police to question children who use social media applications the wrong way and hold their families responsible for allowing them to use those apps. The new instructions come in line with the rules issued by the Supreme National Childhood Committee of the Health Ministry applicable to children 13 years old and younger. Al-Jarida reported.

The prosecution said parents must be held responsible for allowing photography of their children from the above mentioned group on social media for commercial purposes, or to speak about their personal life or for fame, or those who expose their children to torture scenes and verbal or physical harm, in addition to those who are not sending their children to school. It asked juvenile police to summon violating parents and get undertakings from them not to allow their children to see such scenes and take them to court if the offense is repeated.

Union demands fish market's relocation

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fishermen Union issued a statement concerning its repeated demand to move the imported fish auction from the main fish market in Sharq, reminding that since the market was moved from Mubarakiya to Sharq, intolerable odors had been spreading inside and outside the fish market. The union added that some influential people had been using their powers to slander the union and make groundless accusations that it has been absent as a guide for all fishermen. The statement stressed that the union will continue contacting various government and relevant bodies to move the imported fish market to Rai, where an entire market has been built, and leave Sharq market for local fish only, especially since the transfer from Mubarakiya was supposed to be for only two months but extended to a year.



KUWAIT: People buy fish at the fish market in Sharq during a daily auction. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Shuwaikh blaze under control

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Firefighters battled a blaze that erupted in car repair workshops in Industrial Shuwaikh Area on Friday. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) said. Firefighters from five stations rushed to the scene immediately after the control room received a call about the fire, it said. The fire erupted in five workshops with a total area of 3,000 square meters, it said, but no injuries were reported. An investigation was launched to know cause of the fire.

Separately, the prevention sector of KFS carried out inspections in Hawally on the instructions of Deputy Director General Maj Gen Khalid Fahd to check buildings in violation of safety laws and issued several citations.

Man drowns

A man drowned while swimming near Blajat beach. Salmiya sea fire station men responded to a call reporting that a swimmer went missing, and divers found the victim's body following extensive search. The body was taken by the forensics department.

Smuggling foiled

Nuwiseeb land border outlet customs officers caught a traveler with hashish joints after they searched him. The joints were hidden in a pack of cigarettes. He said they were for his personal use. The suspect was handed to concerned authorities.

Physical assault

A citizen who returned from a trip abroad went to the travel agency where he had made reservations to blame the Jordanian agent for reserving seats apart from each other for his family. The agent said seat assignment is the responsibility of the airline, but the citizen became angry and started beating the agent, who called police, and the citizen was arrested.

Freak accident

An eight-year-old Egyptian girl lost her life after she was stuck between the elevator cabin and the wall in an Abu Halifa building. Firemen, paramedics and police responded to a call and removed the girl in critical condition, but she died on the way to hospital. A malfunction caused the tragedy.

Drunk driving

Police patrols spotted a car driven erratically in Hawally and pulled it over. Policemen asked the driver, a woman, to lower the volume of the stereo, but she did not pay attention to the officer and verbally insulted him. Police found she was drunk, so she was arrested and will face legal action.

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