



Rhea

KUWAIT, GCC COORDINATE TO REGISTER KUWAIT'S LAWYERS

GCC APPROVES KUWAIT'S ICJ MEMBERSHIP BID

DOHA: Kuwait is coordinating with the GCC countries to officially register Kuwaiti lawyers to enable them to work in any of the Gulf countries, said Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yagoub Al-Sanea. Lawyers' registration in other GCC countries is in accordance with the articles of the Gulf economic agreement for self-employed persons, the minister said yesterday prior to leaving Doha, where he headed the Kuwaiti delegation in the 27th meeting of GCC justice ministers. Meanwhile, he noted that the meeting appointed the committee of international cooperation and relations to study steps and regulations of registering GCC lawyers.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Minister of Justice said yesterday that the GCC justice ministers have consented to Kuwait's International Court of Justice (ICJ) membership bid. Speaking to KUNA on the sidelines of the 27th meeting of GCC justice ministers, the Kuwaiti minister said the GCC ministers agreed during the meeting to support Kuwaiti judge Abdulhadi Al-Attar's 2018 ICJ nomination for Asia. The Gulf step is a springboard for rallying up more support

from Arab countries, the minister added.

Kuwait has committed itself to this agreement by adopting a relevant law, allowing many Gulf lawyers to register with the Kuwait Society of Lawyers, the minister pointed out. Meanwhile, the justice ministers approved a draft agreement for the extradition of suspects and convicts among the GCC countries, he said. On how to implement court rulings in the GCC countries, the Kuwaiti minister said the GCC committee on international cooperation and relations was asked to introduce amendments to a relevant agreement during its next meeting in 2016.

Moreover, the committee was also awarded the task of working out a uniform law for fighting terrorism and then referring it to the 20th meeting of the member states' undersecretaries of justice ministries. The 27th meeting of GCC justice ministers, which kicked off here earlier in the day, focuses on a number of topics related to strengthening joint cooperation in the justice and judicial field. It will also review results of undersecretaries' meetings and other key issues of concern to the GCC member states. — Agencies

FILIPINO MAIDS SUFFER MONTHS OF BRUTALITY

JOB OPPORTUNITY TURNS INTO A NIGHTMARE

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A job opportunity in a faraway land turned into a nightmare for two Filipina domestic workers. Rhea and Flora came to Kuwait to work as housemaids in December last year, but found themselves in the clutches of a brutal employer in Andalus. According to them, for eight straight months, they experienced 'hell' at their workplace. They suffered months of brutality until they finally got the chance to escape in August. Rhea arrived in Kuwait on Dec 15, 2014, while Flora came a week later at the same employer's house.

Rhea first got a taste of her female employer's cruelty two days after arrival. "I was beaten with a huge wooden paddle on my back only two days after starting work. My employer told me I was beaten because I worked slowly, but it didn't end there - she kept up her cruel ways against us on a daily basis," Rhea said. In Feb 2015, the employer inserted a spice bottle up Rhea's private parts. "She did this as a form of punishment because I cleaned the bathroom slowly. She called me in the kitchen and told me to remove my underwear.

When I refused, she grabbed me and forcibly removed my panties. She then inserted the bottle of spice up my private parts, but this wasn't enough - she daubed the spices on my genitals," Rhea narrated between sobs. "Because of that incident, I have no monthly period now - it just stopped. There was another brutal incident too. Once I cooked rice - you know we like to eat rice - but she got very angry about it and held a scissor over my head, saying she would cut my tongue. But she failed because I was shielding it, but she managed to cut my lips. I was bloodied and cried a lot," Rhea added.

Flora also experienced brutal beatings and biting by her employer. "She shaved our hair twice. Both of us experienced the same brutality from our female employer - the eight months were very vicious. In fact, she also tried to gouge our eyeballs, pounded our hands and fingers and was happy seeing us scared and bloodied. We all have bite marks on our bodies, because for her this was normal," Flora claimed, showing scars on her hands and back. Rhea has tens of scars as well, including deformed fingers. "She wanted to see blood on our bodies - she was happy seeing us in pain," Flora said. "If we were slow in our work, she would bring us to the veranda, tell us to prepare ice water, remove our dresses and pour the water on us in between beatings," she added.

Henpecked Husband

The woman employer's husband is a top security officer and according to the two housemaids, he was very kind, but scared of his wife. "The baba would shout at us, but would explain later that he did so to spare us from harsh torture by our madam," Flora said. The two were able to escape on August 8, 2015 when her employer went abroad and they were temporarily placed with the employer's relative. "We were able to run away on August 8 and went straight to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office. On August 9, they transferred us to the Assistance to Nationals Unit (ATNU).

After we fled, the employer called our husbands and told them that we had run away with our boyfriends, but

she didn't know we had contacted our family already and they knew the real story," Flora narrated. Asked why they didn't try to escape and report the matter to authorities while at their employer's house, Rhea said they wished they could have escaped, but the entire house was surrounded with a fence and the gates were locked. There was no way out.

They contacted their local agency many times too to report the abuses, but they were rebuffed. "At first they told us to hold on and stay at the employer's house. Then they told us to pay the full amount spent by employer, and if I didn't have the amount, I must stay," Flora said. In order to hire a Filipina housemaid, an employer must spend about KD 1,000. After almost a year at the house, Rhea received only three months' salary, while Flora received two months' salary.

Bribery charges

After two months at the embassy fighting their case, the housemaids were brought to Andalus police station by ATNU Officer Mar Hassan. The two accuse Hassan of allegedly settling their case in exchange for money from their employer. "We thought that our case was progressing well. At 5 pm on September 21, the two of us were brought to the police in Andalus by Mar Hassan, and left there overnight. We don't know why, but we saw our employer there. Hassan told us that we were being deported because we had an absconding case filed against us and our dues would be sent home later.

We were shocked because we had a case filed in court, so why were we being deported without the resolution of the case? That night, a Kuwaiti came to us and told us to drop the case because we would lose the case anyway and only our lawyer will benefit. He told us to drop the case, go back home and the employer will pay whatever amount we need," the two claimed. "We told Mar Hassan that we don't want to stay in police custody, but he reminded us that we were being detained because of the absconding case. The following day, he came with our bags, indicating that maybe we would be deported soon. Thank God the vice consul came to our rescue and was able to take us back to the embassy," Rhea said.

Hassan explained that the two housemaids were initially brought to the police station in Andalus in compliance with a request of the Ministry of Interior to present the victims so they could positively identify their employer. "This is part of the legal process in Kuwait. They also called the employer so to explain her side. I tried my best to bring them back after the procedure, but they had an absconding case filed against them, and as per the procedures in Kuwait, they had to be detained and we couldn't do anything about it," he said.

Asked if the allegations of a 'settlement' were true, Hassan denied it. "No, not true. I believe I was misunderstood in that context. I even told them not to sign any papers or documents without the embassy's knowledge. I exerted a lot of effort to bring them back to the embassy. I had brought their bags so that they could change their clothes as the Eid holidays were almost upon us, and I was assuming they would be detained for a while," he explained.



Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yagoub Al-Sanea.

EPA, KNPC DISCUSS MINA AL-AHMADI GAS LEAKAGE

KUWAIT: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) said it is closely monitoring the investigation on the gas leakage from Kuwait National Petroleum Company's Mina Al-Ahmadi refinery. In a press statement, EPA Director General Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said the authority members held a meeting with KNPC officials to weigh the measures taken - to control the leakage and the aftermath of the accident which occurred late Tuesday. KNPC has announced that the leakage occurred when one of the refinery's flare gas units suffered a technical problem which caused incomplete burning of some gases and the leakage of sulfur oxides emissions for about 25 minutes. The company also noted that the situation was completely under control and that no harm was posed on people living in surrounding area.

KOC security level 'red'

In another development, Kuwait Oil Company has raised the security level at the company to 'red', to go along with the current precautionary measures in Kuwait. A security circular shows that KOC received instructions to increase inspection procedures of oil fields and security gates and double them than before. Instructions were also given to facilities' security men guarding KOC oil centers to adhere to strict entrance and exits procedures of employees and contracted workers who are allowed to enter. The circular urged all employees to call the emergency lines in case they notice any suspicious activity. He also said that no vehicles should be left unattended on the side roads in restricted areas. — Agencies



KUWAIT: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) holding a meeting with KNPC officials. - KUNA

AMERICAN ARRESTED; ILLICIT DRUGS, KD 72,000 SEIZED



By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Criminal detectives arrested an American expat working at Camp Arifjan with 1,400 envelopes of the drug "chemical", in addition to KD 72,000 he made from sales. He confessed to receiving the drugs by courier at Camp Arifjan. He said he also manufactures the drug at home. In another development, DCGD busted a network selling imported liquor in Ahmadi, run by a Kuwaiti citizen and four Indians. They had 850 imported liquor bottles. The arrest was made after an undercover agent was sent to buy 10 boxes (120 bottles) of Black Label whiskey for KD 10,000. The Asians used to supply the citizen with the liquor and he sold it.

Man found dead

A man in his fifties was found dead in a car behind Al-Dahdah Mosque. The body was recovered by the coroner.

Inspector arrested

Residency detectives, in cooperation with the manpower authority, arrested an inspector at Mubarak Al-Kabeer labor department who manipulated the estimations of the number of workers needed for an establishment. Information was received about the inspector's involvement in forging documents in favor of a restaurant to increase the number of workers from 11 to 56 in exchange of money. He confessed to the charges.

Elevator on free fall

American arrested; illicit drugs, KD 72,000 seized
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32 juveniles arrested

Ahmadi traffic police arrested 32 juveniles in front of schools, and they were sent to the juvenile prosecution.

Locally made liquor

A soda drink resulted in busting a grocery store selling locally made liquor. A police patrol in Farwaniya stopped to buy sodas, but when policemen opened the fridge, the grocery owner fled on foot. Liquor bottles were found inside.

Forged stamps

An Egyptian national was arrested for selling forged



Photo shows suspects with bottles of whiskey