

CRIMINAL COURT ACQUITS CITIZEN

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Criminal Court has acquitted a citizen who had been accused of possessing a variety of drugs for his use. The citizen was arrested in Salmiya.

Alternative national income

MP Talal Al-Jallal urged the government to implement reform measures to resolve the problem of the budget deficit resulting from decreasing oil prices. "The government must find alternative national income sources," he stressed, noting that relying on oil as a sole resource forever was very dangerous in view of falling oil prices. In another development, a consortium including three main companies led by the Spain's Tecnicas Reunidas, who won a bid to execute the first phase of the Al-Zour refinery project, arrived in Kuwait pending signing the contracts on Tuesday. The first phase of the project is worth KD 1.21 billion and the contract's duration is 45 months.

Jaber Al-Ahmed Hospital

MoH Undersecretary Dr Khalid Al-Sahlawi said CSC recently allocated 2,800 job vacancies for nurses to work at Jaber Al-Ahmed Hospital and that those nurses had been temporarily working at various hospitals pending referral to Jaber Al-Ahmed Hospital once it is ready for operation.

GCC ministerial meeting

The GCC ministerial meeting due to be held in preparation for the GCC summit in Riyadh in December will be dominated with discussing military and security issues, said informed sources, noting that most of the summit's decisions would focus on GCC security and establishing a GCC unified army, especially since the Arab unified force idea had so far failed.

Al-Turajji's threats

Governmental sources stressed that MP Abdullah Al-Turajji's threats to grill Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh if the government sold

KIFCO were unjustified and only reflect how misinformed the lawmaker is. "The government had previously announced its intention to sell its shares in many companies, which was approved by the parliamentary financial affairs committee and many MPs," explained the sources, pointing out that the sale would be done according to the law.

76 armored vehicles

The office of the Iraqi national alliance leader Ayad Allawi demanded an investigation concerning 76 armored vehicles sent by Kuwait to equip the Iraqi army that have not so far been delivered to the defence ministry. The office added that upon the PM's instructions, Allawi had contacted several Arab and GCC states requesting supplying the Iraqi army with free carriers and that GCC states had agreed to send 500 of them, starting by shipping 76 by air to Baghdad international airport. According to defence ministry reports, the vehicles arrived at Baghdad airport but were not handed over to the Iraqi army.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Sabeeh yesterday praised the work being done by the Supreme Council for Planning and Development in meeting the national goals for growth and development. She stressed in a press statement yesterday the enormous importance the government was giving to development plans with particular attention to empowering the sector of the young in the nation's population. She referred to the fact that the Supreme Council held last Thursday an open forum under the banner line 'the role of the youth in the nation's development plans,' in which numerous government agencies and ministries and the private sector took part.

Local Spotlight

RUSSIAN INTERVENTION IN SYRIA



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Russia today is leading the political scene in the Middle East. It was a surprise for many Arabs that Russia sent its aircraft to Syria and set up a military base, but the question that comes to the minds of many is why Russia intervened in Syria at this particular time? This topic is worth talking about. Until last week, all signs in Syria were that the crisis in the country is heading to no solution, no peace and a long war of attrition, while organizations like the United Nations and its agencies around the world are observing the situation with faint calls demanding to stop fighting as more people are suffering and dying, especially in the absence of consensus to address the international crisis and a scary population displacement of almost the entire country of its citizens.

Russia chose to enter the Syrian quagmire with all its military and political power, and Russia has all the logical reasons to do so now. I find this timing perfect. It's really a hard blow to opponents of Russia, but Russia wants to protect its interests. Certainly, the Russian decision to intervene in Syria was not unilateral, but in coordination with Iran, Iraq and decision-makers in the region. Such a move can't be taken solo.

The Russian official justification was that fighters from Chechnya and the rest of the former Soviet Union have formed their own faction in the north of Syria and are posing a real threat to Russian national security. I remember how many times I wrote about the seriousness of foreign fighters and that they may evolve from merely scattered militants to a strong group with expansionist interests, especially since there are many countries adjacent to Russia that may constitute a threat to Russian security and interests. I know that some people do not see this as a satisfactory reason or only a half-truth. It is enough for those who just want to see the killings stop.

There are many objectives for Russia from Syria today. The first is to send a message to the world that Russia is a power that gave a long time to the US administration to resolve things to no avail. It became evident to the world that the United States is not serious in eradicating IS or ending the killings in Syria. A year ago, it formed an international coalition alliance to strike IS in Syria, but things appear that is more like an alliance to protect it, other terrorist groups and foreign fighters and not eliminate it, and today America plans to send weapons to the Syrian opposition. We are not so stupid!

Whatever the justifications and reasons for the Russian intervention in Syria, the important question is how will this be reflected on the course of events in Syria and in the region? The goals of the Russian intervention is not only to protect the Syrian regime - this may be one reason - but to change the military balance dramatically, and if Russia succeeds in doing so, it will impose itself as a superpower in the world and will have a view on all issues, plus gaining the respect and trust of the allies and more. So far, Russia looks strong enough to inflict painful blows to the militias' terrorist centers.

It is very important for Russia to resolve matters quickly there, so the coming months will be crucial to avoid entering a war of attrition like in Afghanistan, but the situation is different now than it was at that time. A military escalation is very likely in the coming weeks and possibly for Iraq too, and surrounding countries such as Kuwait may need to raise the level of security readiness. We are in a war zone or at least a conflict, so we need to be alert and cautious.

The success of Russia in Syria means that it will have easy access to Iraq to eliminate all terrorist demons there. This will have direct repercussions on all issues of conflict in the region, and will be an explicit declaration of victory of the Russian-Iranian axis over the American-EU alliance. It's a painful blow indeed. Certainly, we are on the cusp of a battle between international hubs, and the course of events in the region after the Russian intervention will never be as they were before.

FILIPINO BURNED TO DEATH

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A Filipino burned to death when his vehicle burst into flames after a collision along King Fahd Highway, said security sources, noting that three Indians and an Egyptian were also seriously injured in the collision.

Policeman stabbed

A policeman was stabbed in the shoulder when he was trying to arrest a drug abuser near a Jahra co-op branch, said security sources, noting that the suspect resisted arrest and stabbed the policeman, who was rushed to hospital for treatment. In another development, a criminal investigator reported that a citizen had insulted him while on duty, said security sources. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Construction worker killed

An Arab construction worker was killed instantly when a ceiling and a wall collapsed on him in a house he was working in Egaila, said security sources.



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