

Local Spotlight

THE GULF UNION



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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News of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit in Bahrain last week made headlines in all Arab media. Prior to this meeting, Arab media raised speculations and debated about the possibility of an announcement of the establishment of a Gulf federation during this summit. While some were urging Gulf leaders to proclaim the Gulf union, others stressed that regional and international circumstances won't make this possible. In all cases, the GCC summit achieved its proposed goals.

The Gulf union is an old dream of the people of this region and its inhabitants, especially the founders, because it speaks about good and strong relations, given the links between the peoples of the GCC countries. But all this wasn't enough to officially announce a union, despite the emphasis on the importance of relations between these countries, which is also very important. The Gulf union has not been announced officially, but the visit of Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz to Kuwait as part of his Gulf tour was very successful and achieved its desired objectives.

We all know that Saudi Arabia's relations with Gulf countries, especially Kuwait, are steady and strong and cannot be shaken, because we face the same threats, common destiny and conflicts. So even if the Gulf union wasn't officially announced, it is clear that we are wholeheartedly with Saudi Arabia. Being a Kuwaiti citizen, I am very supportive of such a transformation, which is an important step in the right direction.

The GCC summit succeeded in highlighting the unity of the Gulf at a time when many countries in the Arab world are hostage to serious economic conditions such as poverty, internal conflicts, loss of security and displacement of populations. I also believe that the presence of British Prime Minister Theresa May at the Bahrain summit was an indicator conveying an international message about the importance of the Gulf summit and European ties.

The final statement of the summit pointed out the importance of member states' commitment to the implementation of the GCC railway project, along with the rejection of the Iranian occupation of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates. Obsession with security is a key factor here and is justified by many elements, and it is the right of almost 50 million people (the population of the Arab Gulf states) to maintain prosperity in their countries when most Arab countries are falling apart due to religious conflicts and persistent violations of human rights, particularly as the Gulf states are one of the largest and most important economies in the world (worth around \$1.60 trillion).

It is natural to have security as a popular demand that can lead to strategies to increase the strength of these countries to promote their regional and global role and policies. We need economic integration before a political union, as we cannot ignore that the fall in oil prices changed many priorities, and therefore it is natural for every state to consider its internal circumstances and arrange its positions accordingly. The GCC summit highlighted this integration and the need for it, which means that everyone has agreed to work together. The GCC summit achieved its goals considering the disturbing political and security situations faced by all Gulf states, but also sent a message to all hostile forces that the Gulf is sound, strong and secure.

FORMER MINISTER CRITICIZES ALLOWING EXPATS TO RUN MORE THAN ONE COMPANY

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Former MP and minister Ahmed Baqer strongly slammed the government's decision to allow expats to be hired as managers in more than one private sector company, noting that the decision was against all development plans that call for increasing the number of citizens working for the private sector. "We expected the government to restrict some jobs like public relations and legal staff to Kuwaitis, as we have enough citizens in these fields," he said, calling for following in Saudi Arabia's footsteps in this regard.

New ministers express appreciation

Newly-appointed Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi thanked His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for their trust and for choosing him in this critical period. He promised to work hard with ministry officials and staff to develop healthcare services with a general motto of 'excellence in healthcare, enhancing trust in the health system and full cooperation with various ministries'.

Meanwhile, Minister of Social Affairs and

Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Subaih also expressed appreciation for the trust bestowed in her and stressed that the coming period will be highly significant. Speaking to reporters after announcing the new Cabinet formation, Subaih stressed that she will carry on with what she had already begun concerning economic issues, diversifying national income resources, developing manpower, going ahead with development plan projects and finishing automation projects. Subaih confirmed her keenness on equal law-enforcement on everybody and protecting citizens' rights.

In the meantime, Deputy Prime Minister

and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah affirmed determination to spare no effort for preserving the State of Kuwait security and stability. Speaking in aftermath of declaring the cabinet, minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) he would fully cooperate with "all parties to ensure continuity of the process of progress and development in the country." Hoping that aspirations of the political leadership would be attained, the minister re-emphasized that he would do his best to safeguard the country's security and stability, assuring citizens that the ministry's services would be improved.

IMF-CEF HOLDS SYMPOSIUM ON 'RAISING ECONOMIC GROWTH'

KUWAIT: The IMF Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF), jointly with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), held a symposium on 'Raising Inclusive Economic Growth in Kuwait and other Arab Countries' last Wednesday. The event was hosted at the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development's headquarters. The panel discussion was moderated by the CEF's Director Dr Oussama Kanaan, and included Professor James Robinson of the University of Chicago, whose seminal work on the role of institutions in economic development includes the award-winning book 'Why Nations Fail', and Professor Adeel Malik of Oxford University, author of highly influential publications on political economy of the Arab world. The symposium discussed ways for successful economic growth strategies for Kuwait and other Arab countries that benefit all segments of society and take on board future generations' needs.

Economic slowdown

CEF Director Kanaan provided an overview of the roots of the current economic slowdown, and discussed the special features of inequality in Arab countries along several dimensions beyond simple measures of income distribution. "First, a wide geographical disparity has emerged over time within most countries, in income, wealth, and access to public services and infrastructure," he said. "Indeed, in many Arab countries, widespread protests and demands for inclusiveness have been fanned by discontent in economically neglected, atrophying locations. Second, in most countries the younger groups have been increasingly alienated economically and socially, suffering from much higher rates of unemployment, with skills and overall human capital generally ill-matched to the demands of globalized markets. Finally, income and wealth inequality has increasingly been rooted in differences across social groups in their ability to exercise their civil rights, often emanating from institutionalized discrimination by gender, religion or national origin. Drawing on international country experiences, the panel discussion has aimed at identifying the core ingredients of successful inclusive economic growth strategies, with a view to addressing these different sources and dimensions of inequality."

Sustained growth

Professor Robinson argued that economists know very well what leads to sustained economic growth and diversification: the accumulation of human and physical capital, the innovation, creation and adoption of new technology. To prosper, a society has to unlock all of its latent talent. To do this it has to create broad based incentives and opportunities. It is the institutions of society the rules, which do this. In his lecture, he emphasized that countries which have grown successfully have done so because they moved their institutions (construed broadly) in a more inclusive direction. This is just as true of China after 1978, or of Ethiopia after the fall of the Derg in 1991, as it is about the contemporary countries of Western Europe or North America. He pointed out however that the difficulty is that moving institutions in a more inclusive direction is not just a technocratic problem; it is a political and social one. Promoting economic change and diversifica-

tion challenges many ways of organizing politics and societies in developing countries and thus creates difficult trade-offs for rulers and politicians. It also risks political instability and unleashing forces that are difficult to contain or manage.

Professor Robinson added that institutional transitions therefore take place when a political and social project emerges which can find a way of balancing these tensions. These projects often emerge for quite idiosyncratic reasons, as that of Deng Xiaoping did after 1978, or with President Park in South Korea in the 1960s, or the United Arab Emirates in the 1970s. Importantly, projects that can stimulate growth may not be consistent with the sustainability of that growth and therefore must necessarily adapt and change. In many parts of the world, however, they have never emerged in the first place. Despite these idiosyncrasies Professor Robinson argued that we do know quite a bit about what can promote inclusive institutional change on average and what can be done to foment it in particular contexts. He discussed some of the relevant empirical evidence and the type of lessons that Middle Eastern countries could learn from to help their economies prosper and diversify.

Trade liberalization

In the following part of the symposium, Professor Malik started by discussing the importance of an inclusive growth strategy in the Arab world by examining the domestic and regional dimensions of trade liberalization. He presented a general account of the politics of trade protection in several Arab countries, with a focus on Egypt and Tunisia. Drawing on his recent research on the Egyptian experience, Professor Malik argued that trade liberalization, when it became a policy imperative, was only selectively pursued to suit the interests of politically connected insiders. Such partial liberalization created rents for insiders that were used to sustain the ruling coalition. However, these rents were created at the expense of continued exclusion of unconnected firms facing substantial barriers to entry and growth. The resulting economic repression of firms has huge implications for job creation and prospects for inclusive growth in Egypt.

Professor Malik then argued that regional economic integration is the single most important collective action dilemma

facing the Arab world since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. It is the most desirable component of any strategy for diversification and inclusive growth. Yet, it is also the most politically challenging aspect of economic reform, as both domestic political elites as well as geo-political stakeholders might stand to lose, at least in the short-term from a more economically integrated region. He concluded by emphasizing that the emergence of a new economic and political order in the Middle East is inherently connected with solving this collective action dilemma.

DUO ESCAPED KUWAIT THROUGH FORGERY

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Residency detectives said two Egyptians managed to forge their way out of the country through Kuwait International Airport despite a travel ban issued against them. Security sources said Interpol had been contacted and the passport clerk who stamped their boarding passes was arrested. Separately, a company representative was arrested for forging five residency visas sponsored by the company he works for without the owner's knowledge.

Liquor brewery

Eight Asians (five men and three women) were arrested for running a liquor brewery in Yarmouk, said security sources, noting that detectives found 1,500 ready-for-sale bottles and tubes and barrels used in the process at the scene. In other news, a medical salesman was arrested with 60 illicit pills, 20 gm of heroin and 10 gm of ice (crystal myth).

Ads removed

Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations Department announced that Mubarak Al-Kabeer emergency teams removed 7,380 election ads from the streets in November.

Physiotherapy Job vacancy

مركز للعلاج الطبيعي
بالسالمية يطلب موظفين:

Rehafit rehabilitation center Kuwait owned by Fawzia Mubarak Al Hassawi, is hiring 2 female physiotherapist, nurse and one doctor (GP or Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Specialist).

- Minimum of 3 years post qualification
- Skills in team working
- Experience in neuro rehabilitation
- Additional qualifications in a sub-specialism would be beneficial
- Understanding and speaking English language
- All candidates must have MOH license and residency in Kuwait

Offer:

- Attractive tax free salaries
- 12-24 month contracts.
- 30 Days leave with
- Accommodation and transportation included

If you qualify and you are interested in this opportunity, kindly send us your updated resume.

- عدد 2 اناث للعمل كاختصاصيات علاج طبيعي
- عدد 1 ممرضة
- عدد 1 طبيب (تخصص علاج طبيعي وإعادة التأهيل).
- خبره لا تقل عن 3 سنوات
- مهارات في العمل الجماعي
- خبرة في neuro rehabilitation
- مؤهلات إضافية في التخصص الفرعي سيكون مفيداً
- اجادة اللغة الانجليزية
- على كل من يتقدم للوظيفة وجوب توافر ترخيص وزارة الصحة.
- رواتب مغرية
- عقود سنوية قابلة للتجديد.
- يوم اجازة

إذا كنت مؤهلاً وتكت مهتماً في هذه الفرصة، يرجى ارسال لنا سيرتك الذاتية المحدثة.

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tarik@rehafit-mhmc.com

ترسل السيرة الذاتية على البريد الإلكتروني:

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In cooperation with Kuwait Times

Colours of Australia

STUDENT ART COMPETITION

12 December 2016 to 26 January 2017

Supported by Australian Embassy In cooperation with Kuwait Times

Colours of Australia Student Art Competition

The Australian Embassy, in cooperation with the Kuwait Times, is proud to launch the 'Colours of Australia' drawing competition for students in Kuwait. The competition will have students in Kuwait learn more about different countries, cultures and civilizations, and to identify communities in other parts of the world through arts. The theme for the Arts competition is 'Colours of Australia' to encourage students to express their knowledge of Australia by drawing an icon, a natural scene, or any other expression they would find suitable. The drawing competition will be held from 12th December 2016 till 26th January 2017 for a period of forty six days, allowing participants from government, special needs and private schools enough time to submit their work. At the due date, the drawing sheets will be collected by Kuwait Times, and a jury of professional artists will be selected from the Kuwait Arts Association, who will choose the top Ten winners of each age group. The contest will be open to both boys and girls as follows: Elementary (6-9 years) Intermediate (11-13 years), Secondary (14 years and above), in addition schools of special needs. Valuable prizes, including phones and tablets, will be awarded to the top 10 entrants in each category. Three major winners will be selected in each category who will be given a plaque and major prizes, while the remaining seven runners up will receive a certificate and prizes. A certificate will also be given to the school as recognition of honourable participation. At the conclusion of the event, awards and prizes will be distributed to the winners by the honorable VIP guest, sponsors and other committees as part of a closing reception ceremony party. The competition is sponsor by Viva, Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) and hosted by Crown Plaza Hotel 'Al-Thuraya City'.

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