



Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah

AL-QURAIN FESTIVAL, KUWAIT CAPITAL OF ISLAMIC CULTURE KICKS OFF TODAY

KUWAIT: Celebrations of Al-Qurain Cultural Festival and 'Kuwait Capital of Islamic Culture 2016' will start today, sponsored by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Al-Qurain ceremony includes distribution of the State Encouragement and Appreciation Awards, honoring veteran actor Abdulhussain Abdelredha, Assistant Secretary General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Mohammad Al-Asousi said in a statement. He added that the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb is the dignitary of this year's ceremony.

The event will be used to emphasize how Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance, amid the current events in the region, as well as highlighting Kuwait as a 'Humanitarian Center,' Asousi said. The NCCAL official pointed to the UN honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a 'Humanitarian Leader' and Kuwait as a 'Humanitarian Center.' The celebrations will also focus on the role of culture to get people closer to each other, shedding light on Kuwait's efforts in cultural work. Asousi offered a video on the activities to celebrate "Kuwait Capital of Islamic Culture 2016" that will run through the whole year, with participation of government bodies and public benefit societies, such as the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Kuwait University and the Kuwait Writers Association. —KUNA

'SADA EL-SAMT' PLAY WINS TOP PRIZE AT ARAB THEATER FESTIVAL

KUWAIT: Minister of Information Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah on Saturday congratulated His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister on the honoring of the Kuwaiti theater at the eighth Arab Theater Festival.

The honoring came in recognition of the role of Kuwait's political leadership in promoting culture and arts, the minister told reporters following a prize-giving ceremony where the arbitration panel of the festival announced 'Sada El-Samt' (echo of silence) play as winner of the fifth version of Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Hamad Al-Qassemi theatrical prize for 2015. The play, offered by Kuwait Theater Troupe, is written by late Iraqi playwright Qassem Matroud directed by Faisal Al-Ameeri, and starring Al-Ameeri, Samah and Abdullah Al-Turkmani.

Initiatives

Sheikh Salman, also Minister of State for Youth Affairs and President of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), spoke highly of Qassemi, a member of the UAE Federal Supreme Council and Ruler of Al-Sharjah Emirate, for his role in founding the Arab Theatre Institute (ATI) in 2009 and the promotion of the Arab theatrical arts.

Qassemi, the co-founder and president of the ATI, made several initiatives to advance the march of Arab theater, including the offering of the ATI award - the most prestigious Arab theatrical prize which is named after him.

"Dr Qassemi's presence at this festival shows his keenness on the advancement of the theatrical arts," Sheikh Salman said, noting that the ATI Secretary General Al-Sayed



KUWAIT: Minister of Information Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah is pictured with honored celebrities at the closing ceremony of the eighth Arab Theater Festival. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Ismail Abdullah has also made praiseworthy efforts to ensure the success of the festival. Sheikh Salman renewed Kuwait's commitment to promotion of cultural exchanges and artistic activities as a means of bringing the Arab peoples close to each other.

Abdullah meanwhile paid homage to the pioneers of the Kuwaiti theater for their contributions to the Arab theatrical movement. The ATI Secretary General also appreciated the efforts made jointly by NCCAL and the ATI in setting the state for the festival and thanked all participants for contributing to the success of this annual event.

Fruitful

Meanwhile, head of the arbitration panel Mokhlad Nusair Zayoud commended as fruitful the cultural exchanges and cooperation between NCCAL and the ATI. "The themes of war, violence and terrorism featured prominently in the plays offered at this edition of the festival," he noted.

The closing ceremony saw the honoring of number of celebrities who influenced the Kuwaiti theater and were nominated by NCCAL.

These include Ibrahim Al-Sallal, Jassem

Al-Nabhan, Hayat Al-Fahad, Khaled Al-Obaid, Suad Abdullah, Saad Al-Faraj, Suleiman Hezami, Suleiman Al-Yassin, Abdulhussain Abdelredha, Abdulrahman Al-Aqel, Abdulaziz Al-Haddad, Abdulaziz Al-Sarayyeh, Abdullah Al-Hubail, Awatef Al-Bader, Fuad Al-Shatti, Mohammad Al-Mansour, Mohammad Abdulaziz, Mohammad Jaber, Maryam Al-Saleh and Hayfa Adel. The festival, which opened on Sunday, January 10, was co-organized by NCCAL and the Arab Theatre Institute (ATI). It gathered 415 Arab theatrical figures and featured 15 plays. —KUNA



ATI Secretary General Al-Sayed Ismail Abdullah speaks at the event.



Veteran actor Abdulhussain Abdelredha is honored.



Veteran actress Maryam Al-Saleh is honored.



Actors perform on stage during the ceremony.

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