



'BAYAN PALACE'S BOTANICAL GARDEN' MAIN ATTRACTION FOR STATE VISITORS

KUWAIT: The botanical garden of Bayan Palace is considered as one of the main attractions for official state visitors. At an area of 170,000 square meters, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah opened the garden on April 24, 2015. Every Thursday morning, the garden is opened for the public which is eager to get lost in this wondrous space filled with exotic plants and trees. —KUNA Photos



Crime

Report

Customs enhances services

KUWAIT: Acting Director of Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) Adnan Al-Qudaibi said yesterday that the administration was taking steps to enhance its services in the country. Al-Qudaibi said that steps were taken to develop security, improve revenues, and reduce smuggling, hoping that the measures will strengthen the national economy. Al-Qudaibi said the new measures included electronic data distribution and notification mechanisms for all outlets. He added that the measures would allow tracking of customs procedures. He said that an electronic monitoring system has been launched using the surveillance cameras at Shuwaikh seaport through an advanced network. KGAC, founded in 1899, is considered as one of the first governmental departments established in Kuwait.

Hot temperatures

KUWAIT: The temperatures during the weekend will be predominantly hot as usual for this time of the year, said the official at the Kuwait Meteorological Department Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi yesterday. Speaking to KUNA, Al-Qarawi said that the highest temperature during day will reach around 37-39 Degrees Celsius, adding that during evening, the temperature will go down to around 23-26 Degrees Celsius. Wind speed will be at 35 kilometers per hour (kph). As for the status of the sea, Al-Qarawi said that waves would be light to moderate at a height of two to five feet. Today will continue the same routine with south to southeast winds at speeds between 12 to 35 kph hitting Kuwait and bringing the high temperatures between 40 and 43 Degrees Celsius, said Al-Qarawi, adding that at evening, temperature will drop to around 21 to 23 Degrees Celsius. The status of sea Friday will be light to moderate winds at heights of one to four feet, said the meteorologist.

Gold price hits \$1,287

KUWAIT: The price of gold had made a considerable hike to \$1,287 per ounce due to geopolitical tensions which swept the world in the last six months, said a precious metals expert yesterday. CEO of Sabaek Al-Kuwait Company for Precious Metals Rajab Hamed said that investors were pushed to purchase gold, which is considered as a valuable commodity during tenuous times. Recent statements by US President Donald Trump regarding the strong value of the US Dollar and the importance of keeping the currency at low interest rates had made investors race towards gold, said Hamed. The price will vary due to the ongoing geopolitical tensions connected with the US and North Korea in addition to Washington's handling of the Syrian file, said the expert, adding that the price of gold might go down if investors decided to gain profits. The low rate of the US Dollar also played a part in the gold price hike, Hamed affirmed.

FILIPINOS IN GULF LOOK TO DUTERTE

Continued from Page 1

In the bustling Souq Waqif area of the Qatari capital Doha, Duterte's trip has prompted an air of expectation. On a balmy early summer evening, with temperatures touching the low 30 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit), conversation outside the busy Manila Supermarket quickly turns to the president's visit. Ray, a 38-year-old civil engineer, said he wanted to meet Duterte in person, something he could never achieve back home.

He admitted there was an issue with the poor treatment of some migrants, especially those in domestic service, but said life was generally good for Filipinos in the emirate. "All Filipinos come here because they want to earn money," he said. "But, if they had to choose the place they will live, of course they will live in the Philippines, they will choose it. Definitely."

Ray, who has been in Qatar six years, said he earns "three or four times more" in Doha than he would back home. Outside the Damascus International Gents Salon,

hair stylist Jim, 27, said he earns around 4,000 Qatari riyals a month (\$1,100, 1,030 euros). Back home he would earn the equivalent of \$190 (180 euros) at a barber shop, he said. Twenty-five-year-old Sunshine, who works in promotions, had never left the Philippines before heading to Qatar. Now she has been in Doha for three years. "It's better to leave first from the Philippines to earn money and then after a few years... you can go back," she said.

Winston Q8 clinics

Apart from the poor treatment, Filipinos migrants have been facing certification problems. According to a Filipino local newspaper, Overseas Filipino workers applying for jobs in Kuwait pay the P5,500 fee to a certification firm before they are examined by the eight accredited clinics. Winston Q8 has collected more than P100 million from 20,000 Filipino workers deployed to Kuwait from August 2016 to February 2017 despite the issuance of Department of Health Circular No. 2016-0627 on Sept 23, 2016 that prohibited the collection of exces-

sive fees for medical examinations for workers bound for Kuwait. Winston Q8 continues to defy the DOH circular and violate provisions of RA 8042 as amended, which prohibits the monopoly of a cluster of clinics to conduct physical-medical exams for certain receiving countries. Recently, the Department of Health was urged to revoke the accreditation of eight clinics affiliated with Winston Q8 - a Bonifacio Global City-based firm that is allegedly a front of extremist Islamic State (IS) members operating in the country.

The local clinics should have their DOH accreditation withdrawn for participating in the illegal medical examination scheme implemented by Winston Q8 Certification System that is being linked to captured alleged IS agent Husayn Al-Dhafiri. They could also be held liable for violating provisions of the Migrant Worker's Act, or Republic Act 8042 as amended by RA 10022. This was the call made by some recruitment agencies after National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and Bureau of Immigration (BI) agents arrested Al-Dhafiri at the Winston Q8 office in Taguig City. —Agencies