

JUDICIARY MEMBERS MUST SUBMIT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS BY MAY 13

OVER 9,647 ROAMING TAXI PERMITS IN KUWAIT

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Assembly Affairs Faleh Al-Azeb stressed that both members of the judiciary and the board of trustees will have to file their financial statements by May 13 and those who fail to do so would be held legally accountable. Speaking at an open meeting held at the diwaniya of former vice president of the Municipal Council Jassar Al-Jassar, Azeb stressed that as the head of the Public Anti-Corruption Authority, he would never hesitate to refer violators to prosecution. Responding to a question about the extradition of fugitive Fahd Al-Rajaan from Britain to Kuwait, Azeb said that he will be handed over soon to face a fair trial, because he had violated public funds. Azeb also stressed that grilling motions should be filed against the concerned ministers and not against the Prime Minister, and if a motion is found to be constitutional, the government has nothing to fear or hide.

He also said that the courts' notification representatives were not doing their jobs properly in terms of notifying prosecuted people about the hearings of cases filed against them. "Kuwait is a small country and it is not hard to reach any area," he said, warn-

ing that representatives failing to do their jobs properly would be held accountable along with their supervisors.

Taxi permits

Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah said the total number of drivers holding valid roaming taxi permits was 9,647 as of March 28. In a response to an inquiry by MP Abdulkareem Al-Kandari, Sheikh Khaled explained that ministerial decision number 182/2004 set some conditions for roaming taxi permits including limiting the permit to Kuwaitis. He added that the decision authorized the traffic licenses director to exempt non-Kuwaitis working for roaming taxi companies provided that the permits expire whenever the driver quits and changes companies, and that at least 30 percent of the drivers should be Kuwaiti.

Sheikh Khaled added that the conditions included holding a general driving license, having a good reputation, not be convicted for disgraceful crimes or felonies, not being involved in serious accidents or driving under the effect of drugs, alcohol or mind-altering substances, passing a test on Kuwait's geography, being able to speak both Arabic and English, work full time and renew the permit

annually. Sheikh Khaled stressed that the interior ministry regularly inspects these companies. He added that the ministry followed some measures to help reduce traffic congestions, including suspending the issuance of further roaming taxi commercial licenses and limiting the maximum number of taxis owned by a company to 30.

Island development

Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi issued an administrative decision forming a special team to study the Failaka island development project head by his deputy Faisal Al-Jumaa. According to the decision, the team will study all data about ownership on the island in order to overcome all the project's obstacles to help realize the development plan. The team will also include representatives from the ministries of defense, finance, electricity and water and public works, in addition to the housing, industries, and environment authorities as well as the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters.

Projects withdrawn

Minister of Public Works Abdulrahman Al-Mutawwa decided withdrawing the Wafra and Bidaa roundabout projects from a com-



Justice Minister Faleh Al-Azeb

pany contracted for it because it failed to meet the execution schedule. The minister also mandated the company to execute the projects at its own expense as stipulated in the penal clause agreed upon in the contracts signed with it.

Free Trade Zone

The Manpower Public Authority plans to legalize the statuses of commercial establishments located in blocks 1 and 3 of the Free Trade Zone and treat them as Kuwaiti private sector companies.

In my view

AMERICA: GOTHAMIZED?

By Jeri Al-Jeri

Comic books, novels, and movies all reassure a sense of old school heroism. But let us not forget that heroes need their polar opposites: 'evil doers.' Batman's greatness is dependent on villains, with all their stereotypes, to punch in the face, and to defeat. He can only remain the Dark Knight and gain what vote-dependent politicians desire, popularity, when he is out 'fighting' the good fight.

The world's police, however, does not veil its 'muscles' with a stealth attire. Instead, it champions justice loud and proud, imposing [where necessary] basic 'good' worldwide. Without being called an empire, the US federal government took it upon itself to advance a number of intercontinental missions to secure territory across the globe, regardless of how debate-worthy it is, as Senator Ron Paul would argue.

For the time being, wherever there is evil, it is going to be its last place, the soaring eagle of the west will put the fear at rest. Yet, there are louder voices that disagree. Do US President Donald Trump's supporters have a point in calling the military as fictional as a DC Comic's character? What happens to the eagle if it nests in the west permanently, with no fear-worthy enemies left in the world?

The feathers are getting too expensive, the nest is crashing down economically, the multiracial demographics are in a state of antagonization, scientific progression is not living up to the standards of the past generation, the funding of NASA decreased, and yet Silicon Valley thrives. Tragically, race relations and religious tensions have been inflamed by the government's political rhetoric. Will New York City or Washington, DC transform into Gotham? Is the true American way of life lost? Will America be great, but only historically?

Michael Moore laid down all of the signs of how empires fall: Rudeness sexuality, aggression as entertainment, violence for the sake of itself, and the social disintegration of the 'nuclear' family (which is very unfamiliar concept for other nations). I find Moore's observation to be exaggerated. Still, I believe that there is a noble soul in the rib cage of each American, a genie in the lamp, an eagle to be. A kind of Batman that is not fictional.

For example, one blond teenage girl who 'could not take it': One sunny day, a hijab-wearing brown skinned Muslim woman was being kicked out of a shop by the cashier under a barrage of racial slurs when, in the far back, a white young girl came forward. She marched to this racist employee and lectured him on how America became great through racial acceptance. Then she hugged the Muslim lady in tears, and made sure she bought her groceries and escorted the woman to her vehicle.

This was on TV. Soon afterwards, a cameraman came in and the TV host appeared to thank the girl and shake her hand. And then 'gotcha': it was all an act! But to the girl who thought it was real - and to people behind the TV show who set up the prank - the idea of racism being allowed was too much. America does not need a new Batman, just ordinary people willing to stand up against the casual racism of their compatriots and their leaders.

SPEAKER GHANEM, WORLD BANK PRESIDENT DISCUSS KUWAIT'S ECONOMIC REFORMS

WASHINGTON: The National Assembly Speaker of Kuwait Marzouq Al-Ghanem and his accompanying delegation met with World Bank (WB) President Jim Yong Kim in Washington late Tuesday, discussing with him economic reform in Kuwait. During the meeting held on the sidelines of the Global Parliamentary Conference, the two sides affirmed the importance of joint cooperation between the bank and Kuwait to boost the country's economy.

Speaking to Kuwaiti media, Ghanem said his meetings with international parliamentary delegations during the conference were of great importance. The Kuwaiti delegation learned of the impact of political changes on the economy of different countries, he noted. They also shared experience in overcoming obstacles facing small and medium-sized enterprises, he added.

Ghanem took part in the global confer-

ence held in Washington from April 17 to 18, organized by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The Kuwaiti delegation also included MPs Safa Al-Hashem, Salah Khorshid, Abdulwahab Al-Babtain and Thamer Al-Suwai.

Meanwhile, Ghanem and his accompanying parliamentary delegation met with experts in the small and medium-sized enterprises from the World Bank (WB) in Washington late Tuesday as well. The meeting discussed the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises in allowing the private sector to boost Kuwait's economy. It also involved studying the experience of other countries in the field in order to overcome obstacles. Later that evening, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Washington Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held a dinner banquet in honor of Ghanem and his accompanying delegation.— KUNA



WASHINGTON: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with World Bank President Jim Yong Kim in Washington, DC. — KUNA

KUWAIT NATIONAL GUARD SIGNS PROTOCOL WITH JORDANIAN ARMY

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti National Guard yesterday signed a protocol of cooperation with the Jordanian Armed Forces for promoting cooperation and coordination, and sharing experience in training, security and technical fields. The guard's undersecretary General Hashem Al-Refaai said in a press statement following a meeting with visiting Jordanian Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Major General Mahmoud Freihah that the protocol would lead to a further promotion and development of bilateral military and training domains.

The cooperation protocol would also enable Kuwait and Jordan to make use of each other's military experience, he added. He noted that the National Guard is eager to tap distinguished military experiences in Arab and friendly countries by means of consolidating cooperation in military, security and crisis-management domains. Meanwhile, the visiting Jordanian general said he was so hap-



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti National Guard's Undersecretary General Hashem Al-Refaai and Jordanian Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Major General Mahmoud Freihah sign a protocol of cooperation. —KUNA

py to sign the cooperative protocol with the Kuwaiti National Guard. He hoped that the move would lead to

promoting and bolstering existing historical relations and bonds between Kuwait and Jordan.—KUNA



KUWAIT: The land borders security department held a field exercise yesterday in the presence of Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Land Borders Security Major General Abdallah Al-Muhanna. The exercise was also attended by Director General of Land Borders Directorate Major General Fouad Al-Athari, Assistant Director General Major General Faisal Al-Essa, Commander of the Sixth Bridge Colonel Mohammad Al-Khurainej, along with other officials. —By Hanan Al-Saoudon

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