

Legalese

VISA REGULATIONS

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Visa concerns seem to be a growing worldwide trend and not just in Kuwait. It is not clear to people what regulations are in place. Can I travel to a certain country? Can I go to a country's border and cross over to another country? For non-nationals in Kuwait, the issue gets even more complicated. Can I transfer my work visa from one employer to another or one type of visa to another? The majority of people in Kuwait are non-Kuwaitis and cannot understand how to navigate the system. Today I answer major concerns of non-nationals in Kuwait regarding visas.

Tourist visa

Question: I have many friends working in Kuwait under a tourist visa or while they are on their husband's visa. Is this legal?

Fajer: No. It is illegal to work under a tourist visa in Kuwait or while being on a dependent visa, and the same goes for most countries. Unfortunately, I have seen it many times, especially teachers. It does not make sense that schools are allowed such practices - teachers need to be qualified to be teaching our students and there have to be strict regulations in place. If you are an employer and you are not offered a work visa by your employee, then be prepared to be deported for violating visa regulations, as it is a violation to work while on a tourist visa in many countries, resulting in deportation or even a ban from the country or region.

Transfer

Question: I don't want to work for my employer anymore and I want a transfer. Can I get a release from them even though I haven't found a new job? What can I do if I haven't found a job yet?

Fajer: I would always suggest my clients that they find another job before they ask for a transfer. This is because it is smart to always have a plan before you make a decision. Unless your work environment is not safe, I would wait it out and take all the right steps. With that said, you can get a release and some companies will give you a time frame for you to find another job. Most companies give around two weeks. You can always get an extension visa through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor or from your previous employer - it's a temporary visa and you can't travel on it, but at least you will be able to buy time to transfer.

Contractor

Question: I was told that since I work in a camp for another country's military as a contractor, Kuwait's laws do not apply to me even though I have a Kuwait work visa. Instead, the labor law of my employer applies to me - is this true?

Fajer: No, this is not true. Everyone who works in Kuwait for a company is under the Kuwait labor law (excluding those who work for oil companies). A simple way to understand this is to look at your passport - if you have a Kuwaiti work visa or a Kuwaiti work permit - most likely you do - then Kuwaiti law applies to you. On the other hand, if you are deployed to Kuwait for a certain project and a certain temporary timeframe, and you were already working in a foreign country and will go back to working in that foreign country, then we could say that Kuwaiti law is not applicable to you.

If you have any legal questions, please email Ask@FajerTheLawyer.com

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Faisal Al-Kandari criticized Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) for reportedly fielding job offers for expatriates at a time when thousands of Kuwaitis remain in the unemployment line. "What is happening in the oil sector is a farce," he proclaimed, saying in a statement to the press yesterday that KPC had contacted the Fatwa and Legislation Department demanding permission to appoint expat secretaries and administrative staff directly at a drilling company. "The problem is that the contract's value is KD 4 million and will not go through



MP Faisal Al-Kandari

the standard tendering process," he added, wondering why no tender was announced. Kandari added that KPC had recently laid off many expats with the excuse of rationalizing expenditure. He also noted that the concerned drilling company had been involved in various violations. Finally, Kandari urged Oil Minister Essa Al-Marzouq to subject whoever is behind this decision to legal accountability, especially since many unemployed citizens are waiting for a job opportunity in the oil sector.

Failure in legislation

Separately, Chairman of the parliamentary priorities committee MP Thamer Al-Sowaitt said some MPs like to hold the committee responsible for their own failure in legislation. Speaking to reporters, Sowaitt stressed that according to parliamentary norms, whenever a committee finalizes a report on certain bills, the priorities committee should be notified so that the report could take its turn in the priorities agenda. Meanwhile, MP Askar Al-Enezi urged the government to immediately intervene to stop what he described as illegal practices committee by the central apparatus for illegal residents affairs against thousands of bedoons, such as suspending the renewal of their security cards. Enezi stressed that this is inhumane, as it deprives bedoons any access to education, healthcare and employment.

Allowances suspended

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare warned that citizens who reject the housing unit allocated to them in new cities might have their rent allowances suspended unless they apply to get their units in new projects in South Khaitan, South Abdullah Al-Mubarak and South Mutlaa.

Free licenses

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has finalized preparations to use an online system to issue free licenses, which

will be completely ready after the Eid holidays, said informed sources, noting that the one-window system will be used to issue these licenses. Notably, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan had issued a ministerial decision announcing that the new licenses would include 20 activities such as fashion design, interior designing, software and website design and programming, telecom device repairs, translation, organizing sports championships, exhibitions, sports camps, photography and others. It is also expected that the national fund for small and medium projects will fund these projects.

Session postponed

Because of the upcoming Eid holidays and the engagement of many members in obligations abroad, the Municipal Council postponed its coming session till July 10. The last session in this council's tenure would be held on Aug 21.



AHLI UNITED BANK HONORS WINNERS OF ITS ANNUAL HOLY QURAN RECITATION COMPETITION

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced the winners of its annual Holy Quran recitation competition, which was organized throughout the month of Ramadan at the Bank's headquarters. The competition included four categories: male staff and female staff who recite An-Najm and Al-Toor verses of choice, staff children and also younger participants from outside the Bank whose ages range between 5-14 years old. The children had to recite Al-Mursalat or Al-Muzzmil verses.

The winners for the male staff members category included: Abdullah Sofyan Abu Ghali, who took the first place, Abd Al-Khader Sultan came second, Essa Abdullah Al-Hammer came third, Nabeel Abdulghafoor came fourth and Nouredin Ahmed came fifth.

Among the female staff members category, Dhuha Salmeen came in first place, Eman Mahmoud Omrani came second, Madahel Al-Baloul followed in third place, Aishah Al-Hendi came fourth and Fatema Ahmed Adam came fifth.

From the staff children's category, Maryam Adel Abbas ranked first, Hadi Mohsen Heikal followed in second place, Farida Ahmed Rashwan came third, Tasneem Mohmed Adel came fourth and Basel Mohsen Heikal came fifth.

Winning male children participants from outside also performed well. Jasser Hani Jamal won the first place, Mohammed Awad Fouad was in second place, Faisal Anwar Al Yaqout came in third, Abdelrahman Zakaria Al Failakawi was in fourth place and Amer Abdulla Badran in fifth place. In addition, Liyan Ghassan Abdelrahman won the first place in the female children category, whereas Taghreed Akram Al-Sayed won second place, Mariam Ahmad Antar third place, whilst Alia Makram and Hager Soud Al-Dousari won the fourth and fifth places respectively.

Winners were honored and rewarded during a special ceremony that was held at the Bank's main building, and was attended by Naqeeb Amin AUB's General Manager

Human Resources, Mariam Al-Mudhaf AUB's Head of Employee Relations and Abdullah Al-Shuaib, AUB's Shariah Manager.

The Bank said in a press release, "The bank continues its Ramadan Quran recitation activities every year to instill enthusiasm and competition among the contestants. AUB's management and organizing committee were impressed with the competitive and positive spirit portrayed by all participants, and in return congratulated all winners and all of those who made this unique event a success."

The bank added, "Such activities aim to reflect a positive contribution and collaboration across all members of society to truly understand the values of the Holy Quran and apply its principles throughout their daily lives. The Bank's commitment to similar initiatives is a core element of its comprehensive social responsibility approach that includes a broad range of activities that help to spread more awareness and encourage education around positive values."

MAN ADMITS TO STABBING WIFE DEAD AFTER ARGUMENT

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Investigations revealed that a woman who was found dead in Khaitan on June 11, 2017 was stabbed to death by her own husband who had been hiding in Jahra ever since he committed his crime. Police arrested the man in an ambush at his hideout, the Interior Ministry announced in a statement released Saturday night. The suspect told police that what started as an argument with his wife escalated into a fight which saw him grab a kitchen knife and stab her three times. He was sent to the concerned authorities to face charges.

KFSD DENIES REPORTS ABOUT FIRE IN SALMI JUNK YARD

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) denied Saturday a report that a huge fire broke out in the junk yard in Salmi Area, terming it as "not true." Social media reports suggested that a huge fire erupted in the junk yard. But the KFSD said the reports were inaccurate. There was a report of a fire in the junk yard and Salmi fire station rushed to the scene but the fire was "small and was even extinguished by people in the yard before arrival of the firefighters," KFSD added in a statement. No one was hurt, it confirmed. —KUNA



EQUATE PLANTS 300 TREES IN CHINA TO PRESERVE ENVIRONMENT

KUWAIT: EQUATE Petrochemical Company, a global producer of petrochemicals, continued its global sustainability initiatives by planting trees in China as part of ongoing efforts to preserve the environment and giving back to the society in partnership with one of its leading Chinese customers.

Representing the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the People's Republic of China Sameeh Johar Hayat, the event was attended by the Deputy Chief of Mission Adel Al-Salhat. Aimed at improving the air quality in the environment, the initiative included planting a total of 300 pine trees, of which 150 trees by EQUATE and 150 by the Chinese customer, Zhejiang Wonder Imp. and Exp. Co. Ltd.

EQUATE President and CEO Mohammad Husain said, "As a global contributor to the petrochemical industry, EQUATE continues its efforts to ensure overall Quality, Reliability, Sustainability and Growth for itself, its customers and all other stakeholders as 'Partners in Success.' Our participation in planting trees in China is part of our sustainability strategy within a balanced framework that includes the society, economy and environment, which includes pre-

serving and protecting our planet through all possible means. On behalf of EQUATE, I would like to extend appreciation and gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Hayat and the embassy's staff for their invaluable support."

The President of EQUATE Marketing Company (EMC) Ahmad Al-Saleh said, "EQUATE is always keen on translating its corporate values into strategic initiatives that emphasizes its commitment to service excellence, quality products, and unsurpassed customer experience. We enjoy well-rooted strategic partnerships in this region whereby EQUATE's name has become associated with world class products and services. It is a source of pride to execute this environmental initiative with one of our main customers in China and share our success with the society by preserving the environment and its elements, reflecting EQUATE's sustainability strategy."

During the ceremony, EQUATE presented tokens of appreciation to Al-Salhat and the Chinese customer. In 2014, EQUATE commenced its international sustainability efforts in China by planting a total of 200 pine trees at the same location in Beijing's Huairou District.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION PART OF KUWAIT'S 2035 VISION



KUWAIT: Environment protection and the establishment of natural reserves are integral parts of the 'Kuwait 2035' development vision. A number of government authorities were established to promote and protect the environment in Kuwait. In addition to that, some 11 natural reserves were created to safeguard Kuwait's marine and land ecosystems. —KUNA