

Local

Banks to increase nationals' employment to 80%; create 17,000 jobs for Kuwaitis

Health Ministry terminates expats over 65 years of age

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Local banks plan to increase the percentage of nationals amongst their staff to 80 percent by the end of this year instead of the current rates of 65-69 percent, well-informed sources said. Such a step will be taken upon direct instructions from the Central Bank of Kuwait to enhance the private sector's role in employing more national labor and providing more job opportunities for citizens, the sources added.

This move, which is based on article 9 of law number 19/2000 pertaining national labor support, is expected to provide 17,000 job opportunities for citizens in the private sector through mandating non-abiding bodies and companies to pay extra fees per expat employee hired beyond the number allowed, the sources noted. Meanwhile, the government plans to use its powers to prioritize citizens' employment in the private sector to end the problem of waiting for the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to provide enough jobs for citizens, Al-Anbaa daily reported yesterday. The report quotes a high-ranking parliamentary source who said that the Cabinet had issued immediate instructions to various ministries requesting detailed reports about jobs occupied by expats who could be replaced by citizens.

The source also noted that the instructions included mandating the private sector to employ citizens in administrative, human resources, public relations and reception jobs within the next five years. The source noted that such steps will be taken upon the Manpower and Government

Restructuring Program's (MGRP) instructions to increase the number of citizens working for the private sector.

Over 65 years

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah ordered laying off expats older than 65, with the exception of doctors. Sheikh Basel set special conditions to renew the contracts of expats older than 65, including having excellent performance reports in the last two years, specialize in a field needed by the Ministry of Health (MoH), a request by the expat's direct senior and to have the request approved by the hospital manager, health zone director and the related council. In another medical concern, Kuwait Municipality's assistant director for structural plan affairs Mohammed Al-Zo'by said the social security authority's Kuwait Medical City project was technically approved.

Contracted employees

Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said the total number of non-Kuwaiti employees working on contracts with various government bodies is 78,317, and those working on monthly payments number 6,697, including 2,086 bedoons and 1,639 children of Kuwaiti women. Saleh said the CSC has decided to extend the service of non-Kuwaitis holding university degrees and older than the legal age for one non-renewable year only.

Bedoons' issue

Sudanese Interior Minister Lt Gen Hamed Al-Merghany denied plans to grant stateless people in



No Sudanese citizenships to Kuwait's bedoons

Kuwait Sudanese citizenships and passports. In a statement he made to Al-Sudani newspaper yesterday, Merghany said Kuwaiti reports about this were mere allegations. "No respectable country will ever agree to act as a dumping ground for other countries' problems," he said, denying that the topic has ever been discussed with any diplomats or politicians. Notably, parliamentary sources had argued that the solutions proposed to resolve the bedoons' issue include granting those registered in the 1965 census the citizenships of Sudan and Somalia and giving them the choice of either living in Kuwait with legal residency visas or leaving to their new countries.

Allotments

MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei stressed the 'allotments issue' involves billions of dinars and that violators ought to be hanged for it. Tabtabaei added that, as usual, the ideas proposed within the government's economic and financial sustainability program sound good, but remarked that implementing such ideas has always been a problem, in view of the waste and manipulation involving political profiteering, looting of public funds and mismanagement of various state facilities, in addition to overpriced government projects such as the hospitals currently under construction.



Zain takes part in beach cleanup

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its participation in a beach cleanup initiative that came under the patronage and attendance of Hawalli Governor Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah. The campaign witnessed the participation of students from the schools of Hawalli Governorate, the Environmental Police, the Environmental Public Authority, and the Municipality of Kuwait with the aim of preserving Kuwait's marine life.

This initiative falls under Zain's Corporate Sustainability umbrella, and came as a continuation of its strategy towards the protection of the local marine environment, which is an integral part of the cherished Kuwaiti identity. The initiative received positive feedback by the participation of school students who all contributed as a team to clean the beach from harmful waste and left the beach in a clean and beautiful state.

Zain is keen on shouldering initiatives that contribute to preserving the Kuwaiti marine life, which is considered one of the main pillars of the valued Kuwaiti heritage. The company will spare no efforts to con-

tribute to spreading positive awareness of a better environmental culture in the society, as well as involving its own employees in such campaigns and initiatives that give back to the community.

As part of its environmental contributions, Zain dedicated a brand new boat to the Kuwait Dive Team last year 2017, which is utilized to carry out marine preservation projects throughout the upcoming years. The boat is fully equipped with the latest state of the art equipment, and is being used for removing wrecked ships and boats from the bottom of the ocean, removing abandoned fishing nets, installing and maintaining environment-friendly anchors, monitoring coral reefs, cleaning shores, islands, and beaches, documenting marine life, and more.

Zain's support to the Kuwait Dive Team throughout the past 14 years comes under its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards the environmental sector. The company's sustainable goals closely focus on preserving the Kuwaiti environment, especially Kuwait's marine life, and seeks to raise awareness of protecting it within the community.

During October 2016, the Kuwait Dive Team honored Zain in the occasion of completing 800 marine preservation missions using a boat the company dedicated to the team back in 2003. The newly dedicated boat from Zain is much more advanced, and features state of the art equipment that will ensure easy and fast marine preservation missions throughout the upcoming years.

OHCHR hosts program for govt bodies

GENEVA: The UN's Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) will organize a guiding program for a number of Kuwaiti governmental bodies, said Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN here Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim yesterday. Ghunaim said in a statement that the program will start mid-March at the Commissioner's headquarter in Geneva, aiming to explain the mechanism of

human rights to officials from ministries of justice, health, education and foreign affairs. The program comes in the framework of strong cooperation relations between Kuwait and the OHCHR, including a draft protocol of technical cooperation and programs of consultation, as well as raising capabilities of human rights workers in Kuwait. He affirmed Kuwait's appreciation and support for the noble role played by the office and its keenness to enhance cooperation. — KUNA

Ambassador Ghunaim further noted that there are several future projects between the State of Kuwait and the OHCHR, including a draft protocol of technical cooperation and programs of consultation, as well as raising capabilities of human rights workers in Kuwait. He affirmed Kuwait's appreciation and support for the noble role played by the office and its keenness to enhance cooperation. — KUNA

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