

Local

Handicrafts in Kuwait: Once a source of Income, overshadowed by modernity



KUWAIT: Handicrafts in Kuwait were not merely an industry for winning bread or decorating Kuwaiti ancestors' houses; they were rather a testament to the strong will in coping with hardships, opting to be creative and productive rather than inactive. These handmade crafts have turned into a symbol of the Kuwaiti identity, part of the national heritage, history and memories. Many Kuwaitis, in olden times, earned their bread with these creative works, using their brain, hands and some primitive tools. "Al-Galaleef" were builders of wooden dhows that had sailed to remote regions and countries for trade and cruised across territorial waters on pearl diving journeys.

Some Kuwaitis were involved in "sadu," weaving clothes including the "bishl," a garment that is a national symbol too. Others works and household accessories were done with gold and clay. Following the oil boom, these simple industries started to fade away as the bulk of Kuwaitis sought jobs in the public sector for secured income, in addition to expanding scientific-technological development.

According to the annual report released by Kuwait

Public Industrial Authority (PAI) (2017-2018), likened textile handicrafts have noticeably receded, with the record showing 1,142 permits between 2015 and 2016, compared to only 134 in 2016-2017 and 122 according to the latest report released by the authority in 2017-2018. As to wooden works, the permits reached 334 in the 2017-2018 period.

Yahya Jragh, who teaches handicrafts, called — in an interview with KUNA — on the government to support handcrafters to dedicate their maximum effort to these creativity works. Those engaged in carpentry and other wooden works suffer from shortage of supplies for the wood is largely imported from Turkey, the United States and Australia. Masira Al-Enezi, board member of the Kuwaiti handicrafts society, said Al-Sadu House was the first of its kind to be established in the whole Gulf.

The Al-Sadu Society prepares trainers, promotes the genuine industry and holds regular training and educating courses. Al-Enezi has lauded young Kuwaiti women who make various woven products such as bags, scarves and diverse accessories. Mtairah Al-Musallam, a woman weaver at Al-Sadu house, said she had been



making Sadu works since the 1970s. She called for preservation of the heritage noting the long process of



creating the ornamented and colored items, starting with sheep shearing. — KUNA

Holland amongst top European trading partners in 2018

KUWAIT: Kuwait Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Waleed Al-Khubaizi yesterday praised the trade partnership with the Netherlands, which was among Kuwait's top European trading partners in 2018. Al-Khubaizi said, in statement, that Holland was a major destination for Kuwaiti government and private investments. He made the remarks after senior officials from Kuwait and Netherlands held the 5th round of political consultations in the Hague last Friday.

He said the two countries agreed to organize an economic forum comprising major economic institutions and private sector with the objective of exploring economic opportunities. Al-Khubaizi said the senior officials highlighted deep-rooted relations which dated back to over 55 years, and welcomed level of cooperation

between the military institutions. He said oil sector was lucrative in the Netherlands, citing huge investments by Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI), better known as Q8, in the European country. The last Friday meeting, added Al-Khubaizi, also discussed cultural, academic and educational cooperation.

The two sides discussed possibility of sending Kuwaitis to study in Dutch universities, he said, and the Kuwaiti side appreciated facilities offered for Kuwaitis receiving treatment in the Netherlands. The two countries, he went on, called for solving crises via peaceful means and dialogue. Kuwait Ambassador to the Netherlands Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi, who took part in the meeting, appreciated Holland's positions vis-a-vis Middle East issues, foremost the Palestinian question. — KUNA



THE HAGUE: Kuwait Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe during his meeting with Dutch officials. — KUNA

Kuwait tops women obesity chart in GCC

KUWAIT: Head of Kuwait Association of Surgeons Dr Salman Al-Sabah said Kuwait topped the rate of obesity prevalence among women over 18, and has the highest count in all the GCC countries. Dr Salman said in a "medical paper" he presented at the First Arab Conference on woman health in Cairo, under the slogan "Boosting woman's health to achieve the goals of sustained development 2030".

His paper was titled "Obesity: A major challenge for women's health", in which he spoke about obesity as one of the challenges women face, and he spoke about Kuwait's experience in benefiting from the results and obesity indicators. The data taken from surgical procedures to treat obesity in 2019, as 1976 operations were conducted to treat obesity in women. He said the research focused on the risk factors of obesity, and what it represents in being a factor in many types of cancer growth among



women. The paper recommended that obesity must be confronted as a main priority in the development plans, programs and health strategies, and there should be high level commitment to face the problem, while facing non-infectious diseases and the world sustainable development goals until 2030.

The medical research paper stressed the importance of adopting programs to encourage physical activities, healthy nutrition while having research about obesity as part of research priorities. He said it is necessary to cooperate with International Organizations, Universities and Research Centers to have joint researches to close the information gaps, and have studies on the prevention economics, and the burdens of obesity on development programs.

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