

Tunisian president says GCC citizens exempted from obtaining visit visa

Al-Marzouki aspires to stronger ties, vows facilities for businessmen

KUWAIT: President of Tunisia Al-Moncef Al-Marzouki, who concluded an official visit to the country on Tuesday, confirmed that his talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah dealt with bilateral relations between the two countries at the political, economic, business and tourist levels.

The president, in an interview with Kuwait Television and Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), said all topics that were discussed during the top-level meeting "served one objective, which is full mutual understanding of political issues and aspiration for establishing robust and fruitful economic relations." Hoping that more Kuwaitis would choose his nation as a tourist destination, Al-Marzouki said he revealed to His Highness the Amir, during the meeting, that his country decided to not oblige citizens from Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to obtain a visit visa.

At the investment level, the president affirmed Tunisia's readiness to remove all barriers in face of the Kuwaiti entrepreneurs to enable them launch businesses in various sectors of the nation, noting that HH Sheikh Sabah expressed readiness to examine Tunisian proposals for carrying out business enterprises in the country.

"We in Tunisia encourage everybody to invest in various sectors in our country, namely in tourism, en-

ergy, sea water desalination, infrastructure and roads .. Now, we have more than 40 mega projects designed to place Tunisia among ranks of modern states and some of these ventures would be proposed to the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development," he said. Elaborating, he said the KFAED director general, during their meeting, affirmed readiness to finance a number of these major ventures.

These projects include construction of infrastructural utilities, roads linking coastal regions with inland areas. The Qataris are partially funding establishment of a highway linking the cities of Nafidah, Tozar and Qairawan.

He indicated that KFAED's activities in Tunisia, during era of the former regime, were cut, hoping that the fund would restore its investments on a wide scale, capitalizing on present political, economic and social facilities.

Al-Marzouki added that his talks with HH the Amir tackled regional events, namely Syria. "I listened to the Amir's views on solving this problem. We share identical opinions on tackling it, for we reject armament, external intervention in that country and aspire that Syria find a settlement within framework of the international organizations."

Elaborating, he noted that he briefed His Highness the Amir about matters related to the proposed Al-Maghreb federation, adding that he addressed an official invitation to the Amir to visit Tunisia for sake of following up on such meetings.

Al-Marzouki expressed deep gratitude for the warm welcome he was accommodated during the visit, noting that he had followed up on plight of the Kuwaiti people under occupation by forces of the former Iraqi regime.

"I am pleased to come to this country which I followed up on its hardships with distress, and at present, I follow up on its comeback among ranks of (free) states with pride and pleasure." He expressed deep admiration at the unique Kuwaiti democratic experience indicating that he used to follow up on the free debates at headquarters of the Kuwaiti parliament.

Asked about his assessment of the Kuwaiti-Tunisian relations, the president said he was aspiring to elevate the 50-year-old ties into a full-scale relationship covering not only economic issues, but also political, social and cultural affairs.

On post-revolution Tunisia, Al-Marzouki said the "revolution has crossed half of the road .. this revolution was based on dignity and bread, dignity means freedoms and liberation from fears, end of tyranny and the police suppression."

However, he indicated that greater efforts were needed to achieve development in low-income and poor regions in Tunisia. "We are now seeking to realize such demands and we hope that we will be able to make further achievements for our people amid hard international circumstances."

"We are capable, as a result of support, particularly from our Kuwaiti brothers, of completing program of the revolution, and the Tunisians in two or three years time will relish implementation of the pledges." All Tunisians are united on renouncing repressive or religious regimes and adopting a ruling system based on a constitution that guarantees individual and public freedoms, he added, acknowledging anew that realizing economic and social development constituted the major challenges facing the Tunisians after the revolution. -KUNA



President of Tunisia Al-Moncef Al-Marzouki. (KUNA)

MP Al-Yahya: Investigations committees will cause Parliament dissolving

Abdul Aziz Al-Fadli
Staff Writer

KUWAIT: Member of Parliament (MP) Faisal Al-Yahya asserted that investigations committees will lead to the dissolving of the National Assembly, and said that many political mechanisms must be reviewed.

He added that he had made an initiative to amend the Constitution since his electoral campaign, where he called for turning the Constitution into the parliamentary system in order to improve the performance of the political establishment, whether the Cabinet or the National Assembly.

He added that some issues must be prioritized, such as the judges, anti-corruption, integrity authority, and other draft laws enlisted on the agenda.

Moreover, he said that some MPs call for the amendment of Article 2 of the Constitution, while others call for the amendment of Article 79.

He stressed the importance of abiding by the Constitution, since making any amendments is considered to be an act of interpreting the Constitution according to interests. He stated that when MP Ali Al-Rashed called for amending the Constitution, he was attacked by 'Anything But the Constitution' group.

He stressed that the Constitution is the main law that organizes authorities and responsibilities, and explained that it protects the rights of others and their freedom of speech. He noted that teaching democracy at schools has become a pressing issue, and highlighted the importance of teaching the Constitution to students.

Four Filipinos suspected, arrested for drug use, trade

Two suspects were tested negative and other two positive, one was singled out dealing with trade.

Ricky Laxa
Staff Writer

KUWAIT: Three Filipino nationals have been arrested on last Wednesday evening in Hawally after undergoing surveillance for the past two months. After the arrest and investigation of the three suspects, another Filipino national was reported and detained early this week.

Recent development of the case reported that on Wednesday evening at 8:30 PM a raid was conducted in a residential house in Hawally where three Filipino nationals were arrested and detained for investigations. The suspects were caught unaware and were found to be in possession of "Shabu", a prohibited drug known to be addictive and destructive. Official of the Assistance to the Nationals Unit (ATNU) of the Embassy of the Philippines Abdulhalim Lango said that two of the suspects were later released on bail and hired legal counsel, since they claimed no knowledge of the trade and were tested negative of the drug.

The other suspect was tested positive and was found in possession of the drug paraphernalia. After the investigations, another suspect's name surfaced and being singled out as the trader that led to his arrest, he was tested positive of drug use.

Two of the suspects who are currently detained sought the assistance of the Embassy of the Philippines. "This is a drug issue and we believe that they know the repercussion of the crime they committed. The case has been reported in the Philippines, as with the case of the two suspects tested negative of use of Shabu. We will appeal to the court on minor charges and hope to repatriate them should the court allow. We are monitoring the development of both cases," commented Lango.

Currently there are at three Filipinos charged and jailed on similar cases and few have been deported for misdemeanors involving use of the substance. Lango said that two to three years jail term is imposed on those tested but for drug trade cases could extend to as much as ten years and death sentence.

Shabu is a psychoactive stimulant drug that



Shabu or Crystal Meth sold in smaller plastics to clients by traders (Agencies)

increases alertness and energy and in high doses, can induce euphoria, enhance self-esteem and increase sexual pleasure. Methamphetamine has high potential for abuse, activating the psychological reward system by increasing levels of dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin in the brain. It can cause paranoia, hallucinations, racing, anxiety, insomnia, memory loss and other forms of psychotic behavior.

Frequent use can cause the development of sores on the user's body because he compulsively scratches at delusional "crank bugs," or has the feeling that bugs are crawling under his skin. Some side effects of meth use are irregular heart-

beat, increased blood pressure, decreased appetite, increased respiration, hyperthermia (overheating) or weight loss.

Meth users frequently develop what is called "meth mouth" because it causes dry mouth, or cotton mouth, by drying out the salivary glands, bacteria and acidic substances in the mouth that would normally be neutralized by saliva can rot and decay teeth, causing cavities and cracks. A meth user may try to alleviate cotton mouth by drinking a lot of sugary sodas which aids in the decay of tooth enamel. Also, meth addicts do not tend to brush or floss due to a dependence on the drug.

Kuwait's anti-drug program has become an example to be followed

BEIRUT: Participants in a workshop on protecting students against drugs have applauded Kuwait's National Drug Awareness and Prevention Project (Ghiras) as a unique program at the regional level with accumulating experience in the field of combating this serious peril against the society.

Ghiras has become one of the pioneering experiences in this field, said Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti, the director of the department of public health of the Ministry of Health, in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Tuesday, on sidelines of the workshop that grouped officials and activists from Palestine, Libya, Iraq, Mauritania and Lebanon.

Many anti-drugs authorities have sought to benefit from expertise of the national program against narcotics,

he added.

On agenda of the workshop, Dr. Al-Shatti said it partially stipulated examining plans and methods for application in educational institutions, namely schools and colleges in the Arab world, to protect the students from drugs and other perils, namely smoking.

Ghiras has signed several agreements with international authorities and establishments, namely the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Executive Bureau of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Health Ministers and the International Mentor organization for drugs prevention.

The Kuwaiti delegation that took part in the five-day gathering included officials of the ministry of education. -KUNA

Iraq president gifts Kuwait envoy Saddam's gun

Photo of a Brno rifle that belonged to Saddam Hussein which the Iraqi president presented to Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday. (AFP)



SULAIMANIYAH: Iraqi President Jalal Talabani has given a visiting Kuwaiti minister a shotgun that belonged to Saddam Hussein, a source at Talabani's office in Sulaimaniyah told AFP on Tuesday. "The Iraqi president on Friday presented to Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, minister of the diwan (royal court) of the Kuwaiti prince, a Brno rifle that belonged to Saddam Hussein which Talabani recovered after the liberation of Iraq" in 2003, the official said. Sheikh Nasser last week headed a Kuwaiti delegation visiting the autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq where Talabani is from. The now-executed former Iraqi leader invaded Kuwait in August 1990 but his troops were driven out of the country in January 1991. The Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, made his first visit to Baghdad to attend the Arab summit on March 29. -AFP

Economics play key role in healthcare: Experts

KUWAIT: Two senior Kuwaiti health experts highlighted on Monday the significance of the concept of "health economics" in the quest for improving the quality of healthcare. Addressing a workshop organized here by the Arab Planning Institute (API) under the theme of "Health Economics," Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for the Planning and Quality Affairs Dr. Waleed Al-Falah said that better handling of the economic tools including auditing, financing and statistics leads to better health services. "The economic concepts help outline the priorities of health services and leverage the human and material resources across the health facilities," he said.

"The process of health reform should expand from administrative restructuring to revision of the cultural concepts relating to life and death and the manipulation of the financial resources," Dr. Al-Falah stressed.

"The Kuwaiti community is lacking in the culture of better management of the material resources," he said, noting that the concept of health economics doesn't concern hospital

constructions and bed capacity of hospitals only. Dr. Al-Falah added that the budget of the Ministry of Health rose to almost a double in the last five years from 620 million Kuwaiti Dinars in 2007 to KD 1.197 billion this year.

However, the figures aren't reflected on the aspects of efficacy and quality of the country's health services, he regretted.

On his part, Dr. Medhat Hassan, the ministry's advisor for health planning, said the traditional concept of health used to mean that a person is free from diseases or disabilities, but the World Health Organization (WHO) expanded the concept to include a person's physical, mental and social stability.

"The health economics, part of the economic science, handles the costs of, and spending on, the health facilities and equipment; this concept aims to ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for the health services," Dr. Hassan added.

The API is a non-profit regional organization whose primary mission is to advance the cause of economic and social development in the Arab countries. -KUNA

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