



Local Spotlight

NEW YEAR AND FRIENDS



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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I believe that New Year is the right time for celebration with your beloved ones. Loving ones can be your family members or friends. I do believe that true friends will always be around you especially when you celebrate New Year season.

As we grow older, our parents may depart us or may live away from you. Similarly, our brothers and sisters could also be away from us leading a busy life. Only our loyal friends will be around to share the moments of joy with us. That is what friends are for.

They say a friend in need is a friend indeed. Real friends are there with you not only during the times of happiness and joy. They are there for you to share your feelings on all occasions, be it happiness or sadness. They share your pangs during the times of misfortunes and cheer with you in hours of happiness. They wish you nothing but the best. Good friends are committed to supporting each other in good and bad times.

Sadly, true friends are seldom found these days. As we grow older and become more selective, sober and wise, we will surely be left with less number of true friends. Your social circle could be wider when you work in a big organization or when you are active in society. Many will know you because of your status in the society or position in official hierarchy. But how many would still be your good friends once you leave your official position and lead a retired life? Very few, I believe.

It is unfortunate that people maintain friendship looking at your social position or financial worth. Those friends are hypocrites who could belong to both genders. Once their goals are accomplished they would desert you. They are not true friends.

That is why New Year gathering of friends may be a best way to renew our lasting bond of friendship, love and commitment. This can be the right time to reiterate our commitment to each other and pray for the best for the New Year. I have only a limited number of true friends and I am very proud of all of them. I have chosen them with my free will and they have been around me for years. No doubt, I trust them with my life.

This year, I will not make a long list of resolutions for 2015. I will not wish for making big money or possessing a yacht etc. I will make my list short and resolute. I wish to be with my friends as long as I live. I wish to stay in touch with them and share this journey of life with them until it ends. Happy New Year!

CAN IRAQ STAND UNITED?

kuwait digest

By Dr Shamlan Al-Essa

While the allied countries are preoccupied with fighting Daesh, nobody is looking at the stage after the removal of the Islamic State and things are still unclear. The sheikhs of Sunni tribes who visited Washington recently said they received American guarantees to form an organized Sunni force, but the Americans did not give them any opinion on the status of Sunni governorates after the removal of Daesh.

The council of Muslim scholars described the lauding of the Iranian military intervention in Iraq by some American officials as a farce. They said in a statement that this matter is a rebellion against international law and the United Nations charter. They added that the lauding is a clear indication on the breadth of cooperation and coordination between the United States and Iran on the Iraq issue, apart from the American support for the crimes committed by militias such as kidnapping, killing, blackmail, displacement and burning houses.

American General James Terry said that US allies promised to send 1,500 soldiers to Iraq to help train Iraqi and

Kurdish forces, and it seems that the US in coordination with Iran is heading towards strengthening the three Iraqi entities - Kurd, Sunni and Shiite - because the state of a strong Iraq is over, and attention is now on shredding Iraq into three entities.

What is the future of Iraq? And is it possible to find a political system that can unify Iraqis, as former prime minister Iyad Allawi called for, especially that current politicians in Iraq find it not in their interest for a unified Iraq to return with all its components and united social fabric? Iraqi politicians want their own personal, partisan or sectarian interests at the expense of Iraq's unity. Politicians, whether those supported by the United States or Iran, do not think about bringing back a unified Iraq as a system and the evidence is accepting the idea of a National Guard for each entity with American support. How can the name National Guard be used, while it has nothing to do with patriotism?

The Sunni areas have tribal military units that are under the leadership of the tribe's sheikh. The Shiite areas have units and Shiite militias, and each group is under the leader-

ship of one of the religious Shiite parties, and Iran participates in supporting and training these militias. The same goes for the Kurds. All what they think about is the support of peshmerga forces to defend their areas, not the Iraqi territories.

Political leaders in Iraq have not agreed so far on the political parties law because it calls for transparency and disclosure of each party's accounts, as corruption in Iraq cannot be curbed or be limited because most politicians are involved in it headed by former prime minister Nouri Al-Maliki and the Islamic Daawa party.

It is not in the interest of anyone in Iraq to create animosity between people and create sectarian and ethnic crises for them, so will political powers join efforts to rescue Iraq by creating conciliatory policies that serve the interest of all? The experience of modern Iraq indicate that all attempts to impose one party, one opinion and one leader failed because they did not take the interest of all sects of the Iraqi people into consideration.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Watan

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE LAND OF PEACE

kuwait digest

By Labeed Abdal



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The way the city of Bethlehem, Palestine was dressed and decorated during Christmas celebrations asserts the city's uniqueness as the birthplace of Jesus Christ and the place where the miracle of Jesus' birth took place.

Priests, Muslim guests and others were present at the Church of the Nativity to celebrate Christmas, in a scene that solidifies the land's position as a cradle for religions. Thousands of people gathered at the Manger Square and celebrated in a scene that sends a message to extremists whose hands are stained with the blood of innocent people. It is also a message of solidarity with our brothers in humanity who follow a religion that calls for mercy, and who are supported by Muslims who call for peace, tolerance and respect. The whole world must join in their calls with those of men, women, and children who prayed in Bethlehem for peace in Palestine, a land that has always been a place of religious tolerance, and where people of different religions lived in peace and harmony.

The whole world must join in their calls with those of men, women, and children who prayed in Bethlehem for peace in Palestine, a land that has always been a place of religious tolerance, and where people of different religions lived in peace and harmony.

On this occasion, I call for people living in that land to commit to its identity as a land of peace and love for all. Jews, Christians and Muslims have called that place home for many centuries and had lived together in peace without denying each others' religious rights. That land must eventually return as a place where believers of all Abrahamic religions can live and

practice their rituals freely and safely.

Kuwait-Iraq ties

Iraqi Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Bahrulolom described the recent visit of Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah to Iraq as 'successful,' and expressed '100 percent optimism' in improvement in bilateral relations.

These statements, as well as his announcement that Iraq was proud of the 'good results' that his country's talks with Kuwait have achieved, make us feel optimistic and supports calls for opening more channels of cooperation, development and joint investment in oil and

other sector between the two neighboring countries. Furthermore, the fact that both sides signed agreements to regulate maritime movement in a way that protects mutual interest, reflects a large sense of responsibility, understanding and commitment to meeting the requirements of the

international law. Meanwhile, the agreement to open two Kuwaiti consulates in Erbil and Basra is also a positive step to boost investment, trade, and movement of persons and goods. I hope that the high-level meeting of the joint committee scheduled to take place next year according to the Iraqi ambassador, includes agreements on joint investment and cooperation in the oil field.

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