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Saudi king, Turkish premier discuss status of Jerusalem

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Under-30 expat ban on hold; MPs slam abuses by policemen

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh said the ministry has delayed the implementation of a decision to ban the recruitment of expatriates who are under 30 years of age. The decision was supposed to go into effect on Jan 1, but the minister said it was decided to delay it for further considerations and in order to study objections by some ministries and government departments. Meanwhile, opposition MP Adel Al-Damkhi said yesterday that

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RIYADH/DUBAI/TUNIS: Saudi King Salman and Turkey's premier yesterday discussed boosting ties and the status of Jerusalem, in a first high-level meeting since the US controversially recognized the city as Israel's capital. Firm US ally Riyadh and NATO member Ankara have both slammed President Donald Trump's Dec 6 decision to upend decades of careful policy by Washington. But the Saudis only sent a low-level representative to a conference of Muslim nations on the issue hosted by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, amid signs of strains in their relations.

The Saudi SPA agency said King Salman received Prime Minister Binali Yildirim in Riyadh and discussed "means of boosting bilateral ties and developments in the region," without providing details. Yildirim's office in Ankara said the status of Jerusalem and supporting the Palestinians were discussed at the meeting. "The importance of the status of Jerusalem was emphasized and that the whole Islamic world should act with unity to protect the rights of our Palestinian brothers," the office said citing Yildirim. He also said that they

discussed bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia, "one of the most important countries in the Gulf and the Middle East".

Ties between the sides soured following the 2013 ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood president Mohamed Morsi in Egypt, but warmed after King Salman's accession to the throne eighteen months later. However, analysts say there are signs ties are being tested again as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has shaken up the kingdom and amassed power. Turkish officials have avoided public criticism of Saudi Arabia but pro-government press have stepped up attacks on the kingdom, especially over its strong alliance with Trump.

Erdogan last week also lashed out at the powerful foreign minister of Saudi's chief regional ally the UAE after he retweeted a social media post critical of the early 20th century Ottoman governor of Madinah. But a senior UAE diplomat said yesterday the Arab world would not be led by Turkey, the Gulf state's first comment on Ankara since the

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RIYADH: Saudi King Salman (right) welcomes Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim yesterday. — AFP

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