

## Local

# Saudi Crown Prince receives Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker

## Ghanem, Saudi Shura Council speaker hold official talks



RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud meets with the visiting Kuwaiti Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. —KUNA photos



Kuwait's Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem holds official talks with Saudi Shura Council Speaker Dr Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammad Al-Sheikh.

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud received the visiting Kuwaiti Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and his accompanying delegation late Sunday. At the onset of the reception, Speaker Ghanem conveyed greetings of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the Saudi heir apparent, who, in turn, asked Ghanem to deliver good wishes to His Highness the Crown Prince. The meeting focused on distinguished and historical bilateral relations, where several senior Saudi officials attended.

Meanwhile, Ghanem held official talks yesterday with Saudi Shura Council Speaker Dr Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammad Al-Sheikh. During the meeting, the

two sides stressed strong historical brotherly bonds between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait at the parliamentary level and ways of strengthening them. On the other hand, they also discussed common matters and most recent regional issues. The Saudi Shura Council Speaker then held a luncheon banquet yesterday in honor of Ghanem and his accompanying delegation. The banquet was held on the occasion of their official visit to Saudi Arabia, and was attended by several senior officials from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Ghanem and his accompanying delegation are currently in an official visit to Saudi Arabia at the invitation of Speaker Al-Sheikh.

Ghanem said that his visit to Saudi Arabia has met its

objective, describing the talks he held there as very positive. "The Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation was honored to have met Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud," Ghanem told the press, saying the Saudi monarch bestowed some wise advice on the Kuwaiti lawmakers. He spoke of the Kuwaiti contingent's "lengthy and compelling" encounter with the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, emphasizing that no word can adequately describe the impenetrable bond shared by the Gulf neighbors.

Ghanem's fellow lawmakers were equally enthused over the talks, which encompassed political and parliamentary matters, saying it was a testament to the breadth and depth of bilateral ties. "We were honored

to meet Saudi Arabia's political leadership," said the Kuwaiti parliament's Secretary Ouda Al-Ruwaie, in a visit that was "unprecedented" at the wider parliamentary level. He went on to say that His Highness the Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is "greatly admired" by the Saudi people, which was highly evident during the talks.

Kuwaiti MP Thamer Al-Suwaid said the talks with senior Saudi officials were "successful in every sense of the word," helping push Kuwait even closer to its larger neighbor. Kuwaiti lawmakers Adel Al-Damkhi and Al-Humaidi Al-Subaie made similar remarks, collectively saying that bilateral ties would reach new levels in the aftermath of the visit. —KUNA



CAIRO: Kuwait's Information Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Tourism Sector Yousef Mustafa (center) is seen on the sidelines of the 45th Meeting of the UN World Trade Organization (UNWTO) Commission for the Middle East. — KUNA

## Kuwait's tourism sector made great strides: Official

CAIRO: Kuwait's tourism sector has taken several steps forward to materialize His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's vision to turn Kuwait into a financial and commercial hub, said a senior tourism sector official. The sector is actively backing any initiative to bolster tourism in Kuwait, the Kuwait's Information Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Tourism Sector Yousef Mustafa told KUNA Sunday after partaking in the 45th Meeting of the UN World Trade Organization (UNWTO) Commission for the Middle East, held in Cairo under the auspices of Egyptian Prime Minister Dr Mostafa Madbouly. "We are also interested in strengthening partnership with the UNWTO," he added. He underlined that the sector was playing an important role in attracting

tourists and investors to the country to turn the New Kuwait Vision 2035 into a reality on the ground.

Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Mohammad Al-Jabri was eager to develop the tourism sector into a public authority for tourism to give it a remarkable impetus, he stated. On the UNWTO meeting, Mustafa said the conference reviewed the WTO's report about the tourism in the Middle East region. The report showed that the region's share of world tourism had reached 10 percent and it had helped create millions of job openings, he noted. Mustafa described this figure a major leap for the tourism in the region, including Arabian Gulf states. It also proves that the region would be an important global tourist destination in the near future, he concluded. — KUNA

## Kuwait's Maatouq re-appointed as UN chief's advisor

KUWAIT: Kuwait's International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) said yesterday that its chairman Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq has been chosen as UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' special advisor for the third consecutive year. In a statement, the Kuwaiti official thanked the UN chief for his trust in him, saying he would continue to work diligently to serve humanity at a time where the world is rife with conflicts. He said the UN's renewed confidence in him is a testament to Kuwait's penchant for altruism and an acknowledgement of the Arab region's humanitarian efforts. Maatouq has served as the UN secretary



Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq

general's advisor since 2017, having also been appointed as the UN chief's envoy for four years. — KUNA



## Six startups pitch at Erada Business Incubator program held at ZINC

KUWAIT: Zain and Erada Business Incubator have concluded their second pitch day at the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in Kuwait, marking the conclusion of the Erada Startup Program. This initiative sees aspiring entrepreneurs participate in workshops while developing their skills and learning how best to setup their businesses with the guidance of experts.

The initiative is aimed at building a thriving ecosystem for the startup community in Kuwait through private/public sector collaboration. Through the Program, aspiring entrepreneurs spend 60 hours in specialized workshops and numerous hours meeting individually with mentors to refine their ideas and commercial execution strategies.

Waleed Al-Khashti, Zain Kuwait Chief

Corporate Communications Officer commented, "Zain works tirelessly with industry partners such as Erada Business Incubator to deliver projects that support the Kuwait 2035 vision, empower young entrepreneurs, and give back to Kuwaiti society. Leading the development of a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is important to us and we look forward to further successful collaborations with other incubators and promoters of this strategic ecosystem."

Khashti continued, "Holding such programs supports the development of ZINC and offers Zain a prime opportunity to capitalize on the most promising innovative ideas in the digital space in Kuwait and the region. Our aim is to invest in or partner with vetted entities to offer our customers unique, life-

enriching services."

During the pitch day, six aspiring business owners presented their projects to a panel of professionals from Zain, Erada Business Incubator, Tap Company, FTL Legal, and Seedsters, in addition to private investors.

The projects presented include innovative solutions in sport and fitness; shopping applications; educational products; tracking applications; as well as original gift products. Talal Al-Ajeel, Co-Founder of Erada Business Incubator said, "We are very proud of this cohort and the amazing work they have done in developing their ideas. We look forward to seeing these businesses in the market soon." Erada Business Incubator's next program will launch on 30 March. To apply visit Erada.io/applynow.

## South Africa woos Kuwaiti investors, tourists

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Embassy of South Africa together with its Department of Tourism organized a tourism and investment promotion event yesterday at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). KCCI Assistant Director General Emad Al-Zaid welcomed the delegation and hoped that the effort by South Africa to visit Kuwait will open the floodgates of opportunities for both countries. "We want to assure you that KCCI will support and continue to extend possible cooperation to strengthen our trade relations," Zaid said.

South African Ambassador to Kuwait Mzolisa Bona declared South Africa is open for business and tourism investment. "South Africa has established very strong relations with Kuwait.



South African Ambassador to Kuwait Mzolisa Bona (left) and Deputy Director General of the South Africa Department of Tourism Shamilla Chettiar (center) attend the meeting. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

We signed cooperation agreements in various sectors, including trade and other economic cooperation. We are here to show you the way and help you on how to proceed with investments, especially in our tourism industry, so that you will be part of our successful story," he said.

South Africa is a beautiful country rich in history, culture and nature waiting to be explored, said Shamilla Chettiar, Deputy Director General of the South Africa Department of Tourism. "We want Kuwaitis to visit our country, experience our hospitality and the warm welcoming people of South Africa. We have a large population of Muslims, and we have food that can be served

to these types of visitors. I want everyone to know we have deep respect and understanding of various ethnic groups and people," she said.

"We are here to meet people, to talk to them personally and understand the challenges. We want to know from their end what are their concerns with regards to the South African market. Admittedly, South Africa is not a popular destination for Kuwaitis. This is the primary reason why we are here today, to promote and encourage Kuwaitis to visit and invest in South Africa," Chettiar added. In 2018, the number of Kuwaiti visitors to South Africa reached 1,800. "It is quite a small number, and we want to increase it," she said.