



ESTABLISHED 1961

THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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JAMADA ALTHANI 19, 1434 AH

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Stage set for repatriation of 150 runaway Filipino maids



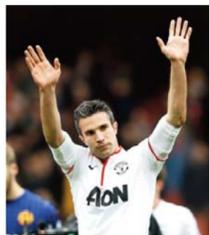
Two policemen shot as new Italian govt takes office



Mississippi man charged in suspicious letters case



Van Persie returns to punish Arsenal



150 FILS  
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## DEPORTATION OF EXPATS NOT RANDOM: MINISTER

EX-MP WINS CASE FOR DISSOLVING ASSEMBLY



Max 36°  
Min 18°  
High Tide 02:42 & 13:25  
Low Tide 08:08 & 21:01

conspiracy theories

### MILITARY ATMOSPHERE

By Badrya Darwish  
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I feel really sorry for the expats. They are what an Arabic proverb says: "Trapped between the rock and a hard place." If they get away and are saved from the latest rules and regulations set by the new lady Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Thekra Al-Rasheedi then they might face another fiasco of measures issued by the Ministry of Interior and applied only to expats. It is like a mousetrap.

Every day we read in the newspapers or we hear about expat innovations. It is as if the government and MPs jointly have nothing else to worry about except expats. I call this the new game!

The Honourable Gentlemen are hand in hand with the government against the expats as a quick fix solution to the problems in Kuwait. For instance, if they think about the traffic problems and the congestion on the roads, immediately nobody thinks of anything else but of expats. Everyone becomes so creative to give suggestions on how to punish expats and how to even withdraw licences of those who had a licence.

According to the new law, driving licences will be issued only to people whose university degrees match the careers they are in. May I know, what does a university degree have to do with a driving licence? Maybe I want to have the designation of a salesman in my work permit? Does a salesman then have to get a university degree? Every salesman needs a car. In my experience those who really need a driving licence in their jobs have lower degrees. If you have agreed previously to give someone a licence it is not a convincing reason to deprive him of it. I have said it million times before. This is not the way to solve the traffic problem in Kuwait.

The new campaign targets impounding expat vehicles unfit for the road. Though this regulation has been in force for a while, it has not been applied as vigorously as today. Every street and corner has now a checkpoint. If there is a car on the road which is obviously blowing too much gas or has a broken light the police have the right to stop the driver and get the vehicle off the streets. Otherwise you do not have to stop and fine people on flimsy grounds and use them as an excuse.

For instance, crossing the red light is a crime, according to me, because it could kill people. Such offences should also be studied on a case by case basis because not everyone crossed the red light for fun. Someone told me that once a fire brigade was behind him and he was forced to cross the red light. Another driver told me that a big jeep was behind him speeding like a rocket. The driver saw in the rearview mirror that the car behind him was not going to stop so he was forced to cross the red light. Common sense should prevail and there should be justice.

It is easy to sign a paper and deport people but fair is fair.

Is it proper for Kuwait to empty the country of people? Every country needs marginal labour. Reducing the number of expats is the right of the government and parliament if they think that we Kuwaitis can replace these jobs. Countries do not run like this. Start training our boys and girls from scratch for these jobs, which by the way might take many years. Then start replacing the work force. Do not do this at random. This will harm Kuwait. As it is economy-wise the situation is not brilliant. Seminars, conferences and debates should be held with participants from all walks of life. These events should demonstrate the minuses and pluses. Then we can research what our boys and girls are trained to do.

Do not carry the axe on expats. We are not in a war zone. After all they are human beings. Do not scare them and terrorize them. You need them to work. People cannot work properly in a military atmosphere.



ANKARA: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah carries a child during a dinner banquet that was hosted by Kuwait Ambassador to Turkey Abdullah Abdulaziz Al-Thowaiikh in honor of HH the Amir and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of his visit to Turkey yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 3)

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Thekra Al-Rasheedi said yesterday that a proposed plan to reduce the number of expatriates in the country by one million over the next 10 years "will not be random and will spare highly-skilled manpower".

The plan, announced by the minister last month, stipulates to reduce the number of expatriates by 100,000 every year for the next 10 years with the final target to cut one million expatriates from the current number of 2.6 million.

"This does not mean random deportation but regulating and organizing expatriate manpower. Kuwait doors will remain open for experts, advisors, consultants and highly-skilled people. Deportation is only intended for 'marginal laborers' who have no work, the minister said at a local function.

Rasheedi had never spelled out the measures that would be taken to achieve the goals but she had already ordered some constraints on the recruitment of expatriate labor and on the transfer of visas into work permits.

But reports have linked between actions by the traffic department of deporting expatriates for serious traffic offences and Rasheedi's statements. Two weeks ago, the National Assembly approved amendments to the labor law that allows for the establishment of a public authority for manpower which will be entrusted in the recruitment of workers from abroad.

In another development, the appeals court yesterday ordered in the first ruling of its kind the prime minister to compensate former MP Mohammad Hayef for damages he sustained from dissolving the 2012 National Assembly, the ex-MP lawyer Adel Abdulhadi said.

The constitutional court last year ordered the dissolution of the opposition-dominated assembly on the grounds of procedural mistakes regarding the Amiri decree that called for fresh general election in February. The invitation to fresh election came after His Highness the Amir dissolved the 2009 assembly in December 2011. The issuance of the Amiri decree triggered off a constitutional controversy in whether the decree violated the constitution or not.

About four months after the February 2012 election, which were swept by the opposition, the constitutional court declared the polls as illegal and ordered the new assembly dissolved.

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## IRAQ PULLS LICENSES OF AL-JAZEERA, 9 TVS

**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi authorities announced yesterday that they had revoked the operating licenses of pan-Arab broadcaster Al-Jazeera and nine other satellite TV channels, alleging that they are promoting a sectarian agenda as the country grapples with a wave of violence.

The move, effective immediately, comes as Baghdad tries to quell rising unrest in the country following clashes at a protest camp last week. More than 180 people have been killed in gunbattles with security forces and other attacks since the unrest began Tuesday. The violence follows more than four months of largely peaceful protests by Iraq's Sunni Muslim minority against the Shiite-dominated government.

Al-Jazeera, based in Qatar, said it was "astonished" by the move. "We cover all sides of the stories in Iraq, and have done for many years. The fact that so many channels have been hit all at once though suggests this is an indiscriminate decision," it said in an emailed statement.

"We urge the authorities to uphold freedom for the media to report the important stories taking place in Iraq," it added. The channel has aggressively covered the "Arab Spring" uprisings across the region, and has broadcast extensively on the civil war in neighboring Syria. Qatar itself is a harsh critic of the Syrian regime and a leading

backer of the rebels, and is accused by many supporters of Iraq's Shiite-led government of backing protests in Iraq too. Iraq and other governments across the Middle East have temporarily shut down Al-Jazeera's offices in the past because they were disgruntled by its coverage.

The other nine channels whose licenses were suspended by Iraq's Communications and Media Commission are Al-Sharqiya and Al-Sharqiya News, which frequently criticize the government, and seven smaller local channels - Salahuiddin, Fallujah, Taghyeer, Baghdad, Babiliya, Anwar 2 and Al-Gharbiya.

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## ALGERIAN PRESIDENT IN PARIS AFTER STROKE

**PARIS:** Algeria's President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was "responding well" in a Paris hospital yesterday after suffering a mini-stroke that has raised doubts about his ability to govern less than a year before a presidential election.

The 76-year-old, in power since 1999, suffered a "transient ischaemia" Saturday and was flown to Paris where he was driven under army escort to the Val de Grace military hospital, which often treats high-profile patients. Officials in Algeria were quick to allay fears over his condition, but the media raised fresh questions about his health, which has been an endless source of speculation since 2005 when he had surgery in Paris.

Rachid Bougherbal, director of Algeria's National Sports Medicine Centre, said the "transient ischaemia"-a temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain often called a "mini-stroke"- "did not last long". Bouteflika "did not suffer irreversible damage" and was "responding well", he told the state news agency APS, explaining that "no sensory function was impaired." The office of Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal said in a statement yesterday that tests undergone at the hospital had confirmed there were "no worries" over his state of health.

But according to the website of the American Heart Association, a transient ischaemia attack "is more accurately characterised as a 'warning stroke', a warning you should take very seriously".

Saturday's late-breaking news made headlines in Algeria, where Bouteflika's health has sparked much speculation amid doubts over the official version of events. "The very idea that this news is made public is in itself a media shock," wrote the francophone daily Liberte.

"This time the presidency has judged the incident to be serious enough not to hide it from the Algerian people." Elected in 1999 and re-elected in 2004 and 2009 thanks to a

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Abdelaziz Bouteflika



ALEPPO: A Syrian victim who suffered an alleged chemical attack at Khan Al-Assal village according to SANA, receives treatment by doctors, at a hospital in Aleppo, Syria. — AP

## OBAMA UNDER PRESSURE TO TAKE ACTION ON SYRIA

**WASHINGTON:** Republican senators yesterday pressed US President Barack Obama to intervene in Syria's civil war, saying America could attack Syrian air bases with missiles but should not send in ground troops. Pressure is mounting on the White House to do more to help Syrian rebels fighting against the government of President Bashar Al-Assad, which the Obama administration last week said had probably used chemical arms in the conflict.

Neutralizing the government forces' air advantage over the rebels "could turn the tide of battle pretty quickly," Republican Senator Lindsey Graham told CBS's "Face the Nation."

"One way you can stop the Syrian air force from flying is to bomb the Syrian air bases with cruise missiles," the South Carolina senator said.

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