

Local

SHEIKHA LATIFA HAILS ROLE OF KUWAITI WOMEN

(KUNA) -- Chairperson of the Women's Affairs Committee of the Kuwaiti cabinet Sheikh Latifa Al-Fahad Al-Sabah Al-Sabah declared yesterday that the committee will hold next Wednesday a seminar titled "Role of Kuwaiti Women in Development and Progress".

Sheikha Latifa expressed, in a press conference her belief in the vital and effective role played by Kuwaiti women in developing and constructing society,



Sheikha Latifa Al-Fahad

as well as achieving sustainable development.

She added that statistics show a steady increase in the rate of women's participation in the Kuwaiti workforce, as they amounted to 14 percent in 1995, then 35 percent in 2000, and became 41 percent in 2005, and exceeded 50 percent today.

"Kuwaiti women have recently joined the military corps to meet the society's requirements in this field, and out of the belief in their

abilities to address some societal issues," Sheikha Latifa made clear.

Further, Sheikha Latifa pointed out that Kuwaiti women also play a distinctive role in the social development through efforts made by the civil society organizations.

She added that this came following the establishment of several non-governmental organizations, besides the specialized women's societies, "in spite of lack of material resources, the

reluctance of experienced human resources, and lack of communication between civil society organizations and the regional and international bodies, besides the influencing power of the cultural and social heritage." Sheikha Latifa concluded by lauding the sublime patronage accorded by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Kuwaiti women, in what helped them achieve the current progress.

KUWAIT TO WITNESS MEGA INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS

(KUNA) -- The national industrial sector will witness upcoming mega projects that will tangibly contribute to efforts aimed at boosting the economy, Minister of Commerce and Industry Ahmad Al-Haroun has revealed. The industrial sector, with the execution of these "expansion projects," will turn into an effective contributor to the broad development strategy, said the minister, in a statement



Ahmad Al-Haroun

after sponsoring the annual ceremony for honoring employees of the Public Authority for Industry, held yesterday. Promoting the industry is one of the necessary factors for realizing the desire of His Highness Amir, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, for turning Kuwait into an international trade and finance hub, noted Al-Haroun, also pledging to spare no effort for aiding the industrialists.

The ministry is always keen on supporting the national product and removing all hindrances in the face of its marketing, affirming the solid belief in the capacity of the national industrial cadres. Industry is one of the prime sectors for employment of the domestic labor, he added, thanking personnel of the authority for their efforts, assuring them that many industrial ventures

would be launched in the coming few years. For his part, Ali Al-Mudhaf, the director-general of the authority, confirmed that relentless efforts have been exerted for execution of mega ventures, namely Al-Sheddadiyah industrial zone project, Al-Naayem industrial town, the industrial technological complex, sector 11 in the industrial Subhan district, in addition to several projects for utilization of sea water.

International

NOW WHAT? US AMBIGUITY ON LIBYA

(AP) The brutal realities in Libya, fears of damage to U.S. credibility and heavy domestic and international pressure pushed President Barack Obama into military action against Moammar Gadhafi. Now the president and his military chief are working hard to lower expectations about the outcome.

More than two weeks ago, Obama insisted that Gadhafi leave office and declared the Libyan leader had "lost the legitimacy to lead." In the meantime, Obama had appeared less and less inclined to join the fight in Libya until the United Nations suddenly approved military action late last week. As he announced on Saturday that



Adm. Mike Mullen

America had begun applying its overwhelming military force, Obama said the U.S. was engaged in "a limited military action in Libya in support of an international effort to protect Libyan civilians." Obama significantly moderated his anti-Gadhafi rhetoric even as U.S. forces began pouring Tomahawk cruise missiles on Libya's air fields and anti-aircraft batteries.

By yesterday, Obama's joint chiefs of staff chairman was saying the allied mission against the Libyan leader could end with him still in power.

Adm. Mike Mullen said the aim of the allied air campaign was limited and not "about seeing him (Gadhafi) go."

Asked on NBC television if the U.N.-approved air assault on Libya could be successful without dislodging Gadhafi, Mullen said: "That's certainly potentially one outcome."

Mullen was echoing Obama and, perhaps, intensifying the effort to ease back expectations in the midst of an uncertain military air campaign.

Throughout the more-than monthlong upheaval in Libya,

American statements have reflected the administration's internal ambiguity, particularly by comparison with its handling of the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt that sparked deep unrest throughout the Arab world.

Despite the shifting rhetoric, Aaron David Miller, a senior Mideast adviser to six U.S. secretaries of state, said Gadhafi's removal is the U.S. goal.

With the U.S., Britain and France now engaged, Obama faces significant opposition among critics who see dangers in a lack of precise goals and, as important, an exit strategy.

But what if things go badly? "The odds aren't in Gadhafi's favor. But if this goes wrong, we'll have to pick up the pieces," said Miller. "The issue is this: will enough pressure be brought to bear on those around Gadhafi to force the regime to crack before the conflict settles into prolonged stalemate."

Oil

OIL NEAR \$103 AS ALLIED COALITION BOMBS LIBYA

(AP) Oil prices jumped to near \$103 a barrel Monday in Asia after Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi vowed a long war, amid a second night of allied strikes in the OPEC nation.

Benchmark crude for April delivery was up \$1.82 to \$102.89 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 35 cents to settle at \$101.07 per barrel on Friday.

In London, Brent crude was up \$1.83 at \$115.76 a barrel on the ICE futures exchange.

Fierce fighting during the last month has already shut down most of Libya's 1.6 million barrels per day of crude output. Investors are now concerned inter-



national intervention could extend the conflict and keep Libya's oil production out of the market longer than previously estimated.

"The regime in Tripoli shows no sign of giving up," Capital Economics said in a report. "The prolonged loss of Libyan

oil could push prices all the way up to the highs above \$140 seen in 2008."

Gadhafi also warned that Western powers would not get Libya's oil, suggesting his forces may sabotage crude installations. Some traders worry a cornered Gadhafi could lash out in a last stand that disrupts regional tanker shipments.

"A scorched earth" response from Gadhafi could cause disruptions to ships traveling the Mediterranean, energy consultant The Schork Report said.

In other Nymex trading for April contracts, heating oil was up 3.9 cents at \$3.06 a gallon and gasoline added 5.1 cents to \$3.00 a gallon. Natural gas gained 3.1 cents at \$4.20 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Sport

Blatter ally slams Bin Hammam FIFA presidency bid



(AP) A former top official of the Asian Football Confederation has slammed Mohamed bin Hammam for challenging Sepp Blatter for the FIFA presidency.

Peter Velappan, who was the AFC's general secretary from 1978 to 2007, said yesterday that the Qatari's bid to bring new blood; into the leadership of world football was the joke of the century.

Velappan told The Associated Press that "FIFA will be doomed if Hammam became the president."

He claimed Bin Hammam was insincere in his pledge to bring more democracy, transparency and integrity to FIFA.

Environment

World learns from Dutch to keep head above water



(AFP) - Dubai's Palm Island, New Orleans' upgraded dykes and Australia's water recycling plants all have one thing in common: they benefited from Dutch know-how gained in the country's age-old quest for dry feet.

"The Netherlands has always battled against this natural enemy -- water," said Hanneke Heeres of the Union of District Water Boards (UvW), which after 900 years existence is the Netherlands' oldest government body.

"And with global warming and rising sea levels the world is more and more interested in Dutch expertise," he told AFP.

Currently, Dutch companies are focusing efforts on projects on delta areas in five countries: Mozambique, Egypt, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Vietnam.

An abiding image of the Netherlands is the boy from a famous children's tale who plugs a hole in a dyke with his finger to save his country from inundation -- and with reason: the country's lowest point is 6.74 metres (22.2 feet) below sea level.

In all, 26 percent of the country is below sea level.

"Already 10 centuries ago, the Dutch were making sand piles on which to build their homes, out of reach of the water,"

Bert Groothuizen of Van Oord dredging company told AFP.

Today, the country has a global reputation in "delta-technology" - claiming some 40 percent of the world's turnover in the open market.

This excludes states who protect domestic makers of flood-barriers, dykes and bridges with anti-competition measures.

Out of a population of 16.5 million, the Netherlands also boasts some 2,000 companies in the field of water, employing about 80,000 people.

"As early as the seventh century, Dutch specialists were creating canals and dikes near the Elbe" River in what is modern-day Germany, said Christine Boomsma, spokeswoman for Netherlands Water Partnership.

Netherlands has a global reputation in "delta-technology" - claiming some 40 pc of the world's turnover in open markets.

"The United States became interested in our expertise after Hurricane Katrina" killed

Another example of Dutch ingenuity: artificial island complexes constructed in the sea off Dubai -- not only the ambitious Palm Island, in the shape of a palm tree, but another mimicking a map of the world.

"The world has its Silicon Valley, we want to be its Water Valley," said Boomsma, referring to the area in the US state of California synonymous with high-tech innovation.

Twitter



Superman

Why Hollywood's new Superman needs to change -- and how to do it. <http://bit.ly/gLaeSY>



Rebecca Ferguson

X Factor's Rebecca Ferguson, 24, rumored to be dating Zain Malik, 18 - really?: #rebeccaferguson #xfactor #z... <http://holymo.ly/e1eTWt>



Mel Gibson

Mel Gibson is set to begin his court ordered community service at a kid's charity in L.A. soon -- and he's already getting support from some of the parents <http://bit.ly/fsCFbQ>



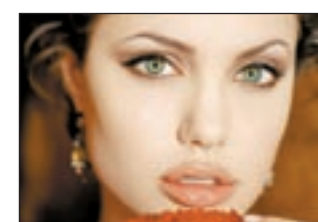
Ricky Martin

Ricky Martin, '30 Rock' Among GLAAD Media Winners <http://bit.ly/hwI95>



Miley Cyrus's

Miley Cyrus's bad-girl bloat: The teen star's on a mission to shed the pounds for an awards show <http://bit.ly/gqILjA>



Angelina Jolie

Angelina Jolie: Angie And The Kids Go Visit Brad In New Orleans! <http://angelina-joliephotos.net/?p=17093>



OMGFacts

Americans have gotten so FAT that many cities are having to build BIGGER ambulances! How much bigger? --> <http://ow.ly/4bcw1>