

'Biodiversity at Sabah Al-Ahmad conservatory a great achievement'



A bird flies over a lake at Sabah Al-Ahmad conservatory on Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010. There are 151 migratory birds in the reserve. (Al Watan)

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KUWAIT: Head of the Sabah Al-Ahmad conservatory Dr. Bahijah Behbehani said Saturday that biodiversity at the conservatory is a great achievement for the team and Kuwaiti society. She pointed out that the conservatory aims to protect threatened plants and animals and maintain the composition of soil and rocks.

Behbehani added that a research laboratory will be built to monitor the impact of climate change and its effects on Kuwait's wildlife and a strategic plan will be designed to prevent the extinction of plants and animals. She stressed on the need for the youth to volunteer and work in the field of environmental conservation.

"151 migratory birds in the reserve including 14 semi-resident species along other 21 species of reptiles and 22 mammals, including seven species that are threatened with extinction," she said. Dr. Behbehani

and her team are supported by the research team at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) that visits the conservatory every morning and evening.

They conducted the first study on wildlife in Kuwait, that was published in a scientific journal worldwide. It included a study of types and behaviors of animals and plants and the reasons for the decline in population of animals as well as a deterioration of the condition of plants.

The research also focused on mammals such as hedgehogs, birds and reptiles, snakes, insects, spiders, beetles and scorpions and revealed that several snake species have become extinct.

Dr. Behbehani praised Kuwait's efforts to establish conservatories to protect threatened animals and plants. She concluded by saying that the Sabah Al-Ahmad, Um Al-Qurain, Sulaiybiya, Shaqaya and Roth'tain conservatories are also observed for changes in wildlife population.

Visiting UK minister discusses cooperation with Kuwait

KUWAIT: Relations between Kuwait and Britain stretch for a period of over 100 years and both states still are keen to further expanding relations, stated UK State Minister Baroness Sayeeda Warsi here Saturday.

Speaking to the press on the sideline of her two-day visit to the country, Warsi noted that she met with top Kuwaiti officials during her visit, discussing with them issues of mutual concern and mechanism to develop cooperation between Kuwait and the UK.

During her meetings, she said, the issue of Kuwait ambitious development plan had been brought to the table of discussions and that Britain is willing to contribute to such plans with all of its resources and expertise.

The UK is increasingly interested in bolstering relations with Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Countries to achieve

total benefits for all involved parties, Warsi said. Touching on the subject of the financial crisis, Baroness Warsi noted that the Britain and Europe as a whole had indeed suffered from the problem but the situation is getting better especially with recent surveys pointing at a better economy and less unemployment.

She also referred to the UK support of the recovering of the Irish economy, saying that Britain's involvement in the EU's batch of financial aid to Ireland was because of the intertwined links between both economies that would help both countries.

Warsi's visit was on an invitation by Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Minister of State for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. -KUNA

UN Agencies thank Kuwait for 'generous' contribution for flood affected areas in Pakistan

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Development Program (UNDP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) expressed their sincere thanks to the Kuwaiti Government for contributing 250,000 US dollars each in response to the international efforts to assist Pakistan cope with the devastating floods that hit the country earlier this year; it was announced on Friday.

In a letter to the Kuwaiti Government, UNDP Executive Director Helen Clark said "this contribution, besides the other contributions Kuwait offered to UNDP following the earthquake in Haiti earlier this year, proves the Kuwaiti government's commitment to the international humanitarian assistance and to the existing partnership between Kuwait and the UN in general and UNDP in particular."

"We in UNDP attach a great impor-

tance to our partnership with Kuwait, and would like to emphasize our commitment to continue this partnership, to strengthen it and expand it in Kuwait, through our regional office there, and beyond, whether within the Arab region or elsewhere," Clark said in her letter.

She added that UNDP is looking forward to holding further discussions with the Kuwaiti Government on ways to deepen this partnership.

UNICEF also announced today that Kuwait contributed \$250,000 to Pakistani flood response and thanked the Kuwaiti Government for it.

"Thanks to the generosity of the people and State of Kuwait, many children and their families will continue to receive necessary life-saving support and ensure a restoration of core basic social services," said acting UNICEF Country Representative for Pakistan

Pascal Villeneuve. UNICEF in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan reach over 2.9 million people every day with safe water and 1.33 million people are benefiting from 24,000 sanitation facilities that have been completed.

"With support from Kuwait and our partners and in close collaboration with the Government of Pakistan, we at UNICEF take this as an opportunity to better what we rebuild. By developing basic infrastructure, we hope to ensure that Pakistanis whose childhoods were affected by the flood have a strong foundation on which to build new lives full of health, well-being and fulfillment," he added.

Kuwait's contributions to both UNDP and UNICEF are part of the larger ten million dollars Kuwait granted to the Government and people of Pakistan in response to the flood. -KUNA

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