

2 Decrees on Establishing Cham Health Insurance Company, Including All Retired State Workers in Health Insurance

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Damascus, (SANA)- President Bashar al-Assad on Sunday issued Legislative Decree No. 45 for 2011 on establishing a Syrian joint-stock company for health insurance, called Cham Health Insurance Company.

According to the decree, the company has a legal personality and all the rights and powers necessary to carry out its work. It also enjoys administrative and financial independence.

The company undertakes all works of individual and collective health insurance for all segments of society.

The total capital of the company, estimated at SYP 500 million (1 USD is equal to about 47 SYP), will be financed by the Syrian General Insurance Company, the Syrian Holding Investment Company and the General Organization for Social Insurance.

President al-Assad also issued Legislative Decree No. 46 for 2011 on including all the state, public sector and popular organizations retirees, involving civil and military workers, in health insurance, at the retirees' option.

The state general budget bears 62, 5 percent of the annual health insurance premium, while the retiree bears the rest, deducted from the pension.

Caretaker Finance Minister Mohammad al-Hussein pointed out Cham Health Insurance Company will kick off soon after the founders agree on the contribution of each of them in the Company's capital and the license and statute are issued.

Al-Hussein said in a statement to SANA that the main task of the new company will be the management of the health insurance project for the state workers and retirees, taking over from the Syrian General Insurance Company, which will be the bigger contributor in the capital of the Cham Company.

He noted that the necessary decisions for implementing Decree No. 46 will be issued in the next few weeks.

R. Raslan/H. Said

Syria among Fastest-Growing Tourist Destinations in Mideast

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Damascus, (SANA) – The Regional Director for the Middle East at the World Tourism Organization (WTO), Amr abdel Ghaffar, said "Syria was among the fastest-growing tourist destinations in the Mideast region over the past decade."

Abdel Ghaffar was speaking at the opening ceremony of a regional workshop on building promotion and marketing capabilities, organized by the Syrian Ministry of Tourism and the WTO.

He added that the number of tourist arrivals to Syria in 2010 has increased by four times to reach 8,5 million tourists, compared with 2 million in 2000.

Abdel Ghaffar pointed out that the past decade has seen an exceptional growth of tourism influx, where the international tourist arrivals reached 935 million tourists in 2010 compared to 687 in 2000 while tourism revenues amounted to USD 900 billion.

He stressed that the Middle East region has recorded an annual growth rate of 11 % compared to 4% on the international level.

For his part, Director of Tourism Marketing and Development Department in the Syrian Ministry of Tourism, Bassam Barsik, attributed the 40% increase in tourism movement to the variety of Syria's tourist attractions.

Barsik said Syria's tourism revenues amounted to SYP 7 billion (1 USD is equal to about 47 SYP) while the tourism sector contribution to the GDP increased to 13,5%, providing 13% of job opportunities in the country.

He added that the number of tourist arrivals to Syria till the end of February 2011 has increased by 6 % compared to the same period in 2010.

Barsik pointed out that new tourism facilities, with total cost of USD 1,3 billion, were introduced into service over the past five years, while the total value of tourism projects under construction amounted to USD 6,5 billion.

The three-day workshop discusses the new tourism promotion and marketing techniques, tourism destination development and branding, in addition to tourist marketing policies in crises and technology.

R. Raslan/ al-Ibrahim

Syria to Benefit form Iranian Experience in Nanotechnology

Apr 04, 2011



Damascus, (SANA)- A Syrian-Iranian workshop on nanotechnology was held on Sunday for the first time to discuss possibility of cooperation in terms of getting information on manufacturing techniques of nanomaterials and the various applications and advantages of this technology.

The participants focused on the to start with in defining the problems of society, such as those of lack of water, desertification, pollution...etc, and finding the appropriate solutions via nanotechnology with the help of the Iranian advanced experience in this field.

Ghassan Assi, Director General of the Higher Commission for Scientific Research, the organizer of the joint workshop in cooperation with the Arab School for Science and Technology, spoke of the benefit and the efficiency of nanotechnology which have been proved in various domains of energy, environment, health and industry despite being at its first phases.

He pointed out that the Commission has actively contributed to promoting this promising technology particularly through cooperation with the Iranian researchers, who have started to sharing expertise and with the Syrian side.

Assi said the Syrian participants are looking forward to making use of the Iranian experience in the areas of science and technology with the aim of reaching a plan and a program that draws up the prospects of cooperation between the two sides in the field of nanotechnology and investing its researches and applications in the service of the development sectors facing problems.

Saeed Sarker, Secretary General of Iran Nanotechnology Initiative Council, expressed the Iranian side's readiness to cooperate with Syria in developing and investing in the fields of sciences and technologies to serve the joint interest.

H. SaidThe 3-day workshop includes lectures on the components and characteristics of nanotechnology, with the participation of representatives from a number of Syrian research centers and commissions, in addition to experts and lecturers from Iran.

Archeological Discoveries in Hasaka, Aleppo

Apr 04, 2011



Hasaka-Aleppo, (SANA)-20 archeological finds were unearthed at Tell Brak site in Hasaka, the oldest of which date back to 3800 years B.C.

Director of the Archeology Department in Hasaka Abdul Maseih Baghdu said the finds included a gigantic building with tools and earthenware pieces inside, bearing digital symbols which signify peculiar traditions and mores prevalent at that time.

He said the discoveries shed light on the oldest human settlements at the site which date back to the 6th millennium B.C., adding that this inhabitation reached its peak in the 4th millennium B.C. by establishing Uruk settlement.

Furthermore, Directorate of Aleppo Ruins and Museums Department unearthed a 185-cm-long funereal statue in the shape of a woman wearing a long rope and covered with a veil. It dates back to the Roman era.

"The statue is one of the most important archeological finds discovered lately as it enriches the findings of the classical eras at Aleppo National Museum," Director of Aleppo Excavation Department Youssef Kanjo said.

M. Ismael

E-Trade, Active Domain for World Business Growth

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Damascus, (SANA)-Founding a web site for companies has become a very important issue to reach to

local and foreign customers in today's economy.

The Electronic -Trade (e-trade) has become a domain for world business growth because of the wide presence of internet services that help millions of individuals around the world realize their purposes through the web.

"That led to finding virtual marketing shops... 60% of the Syrian web sites are for merchants and industrials; reaching at more than 3000 sites," Rashad Kamel, Manager of E-Syria project to enrich the Syrian National Content said in a statement.

He called on all economic activities to possess an e-site which is carefully designed, managed and updated, adding that the cost of one site for 18 months may reach 50 million SYP.

Kamel said the e-trade which is beyond borders provides an active way for information exchange among the partners. It also supplies a good opportunity for the companies to make use of the goods and services offered by other companies.

A lot of applications like banks, marketing, and shares, searching for jobs, dealings, auctions and transactions benefit from the e-trading.

E-Syria is a national initiative launched by Syrian Computer Society for Informatics in Syria, this in initiative aimed to enrich the Syrian national content on the internet and raise the level of electronic services, also, provided to citizens in Syria with the changing needs of information and useful for all events and activities in all provinces of the country.

MAZEN EYON

High Security Armored Doors and Chests Industry in Syria... Well-known Throughout the Middle East Apr 03, 2011

Damascus, (SANA) – High security armored doors and chests industry in Syria has been well-known throughout the Middle East since 1940s.

Since the beginning of this industry, the Syrians have been able to expand its production outside the country for several decades due to its high quality and originality.

After the foreign products entered the local markets, the national products were directly affected. Yet, the great experience of the Syrians enabled them to stay in the market amid an intense competition with the goods imported from China, Malaysia and other countries.

Khaled Kalash, a factory owner, told SANA that his products has gained a wide-spread popularity since the outbreak of fire in al-Harika, Damascus downtown, as most of the chests and their contents were damaged except for some local chests.

He added "after that incident, two branches were opened in Lebanon and Egypt. Yet with the entrance of private banks and insurance companies to the local markets, local manufacturers should provide quality certificates against fire and theft."

Kalash pointed out that he coordinated with Head of Syrian Standards and Specifications Department to create Syrian standard specifications adopted by official or unofficial local bodies.

He added that the local products of this industry compete with foreign ones with regard to the prices and the quality. / R. Milhem / R. al-Jazaeri