

Kuwaiti MP banned from entering Egypt

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A Kuwaiti MP was taken by surprise when he arrived at Cairo Airport only to find out that he is on a list of people banned from entering the country for security reasons, according to alarabiya.net

A Salafi member of Majlis al-Umma (The National Assembly), Kuwait's parliament, Waleed al-Tabtabaei did not know he was banned and had already been to Cairo just three months ago.

"Last time, I came in response to an official invitation from al-Azhar University to take part in the graduation ceremony and I entered the country with no problems," he told Al Arabiya.

This time Tabtabaei had received a personal invitation from an Egyptian MP, whose name he declined to mention.

However, upon his arrival he was detained at the airport for two hours.

"Then a security officer came to me and told me I am banned from entering Egypt, but he did not explain the reasons."

Tabtabaei contacted several Egyptian officials, but they told him that the ban was imposed for "security reasons" and that there was nothing they could do.

"I don't think the ban is related to the political stance of the MP who invited me since his name was not mentioned."

Tabtabaei finds it more likely that denying him entry into Egypt is related to a trip he made to Gaza in the aftermath of the last Israeli aggression.

"At that time, I entered the Gaza Strip through the tunnels."

The tunnels, which connect the Egyptian city of Rafah and the Palestinian refugee camp of Rafah, are at times used for smuggling weapons to Hamas in the Gaza Strip. They are also used to smuggle several types of goods into the besieged strip, especially medicine, fuel, automobile spare parts, clothes and food items.

Israel has been trying to convince the International Community that all the tunnels are used for terrorist activities and has been demanding the Egyptian government exercise more control on the cross-border pockets.

Tabtabaei said he plans to officially notify the Kuwaiti parliament of the incident.

“I want an explanation. I need to know the reasons for preventing me from entering so that this incident does not affect bilateral relations between Egypt and Kuwait,” he concluded.

It is estimated that there are currently about 900 tunnels that cross into the Gaza Strip.

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