

Local

British Royal Navy warship ends 6-month stay in ME

HMS Dragon seized 15 tons of illegal drugs



KUWAIT: The British Royal Navy warship 'HMS Dragon' docked at Shuaikh Port. — KUNA photos

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: HMS Dragon, a British Royal Navy warship stationed in the Middle East for the last six months, is on a goodwill visit to Kuwait. HMS Dragon is currently deployed in the region to support counter narcotics operations. In fact throughout her six months' stay, the royal navy has seized more than 15 tons of illegal drugs according to her captain Commander Michael Carter Quinn.

"We are in the region since September providing support to our allies. We are currently in Kuwait to celebrate our maritime friendship - this is the last leg of our visit before returning to the UK. We were part of combined forces

providing maritime security in the region with the navies of countries in the Middle East, now being headed by the Kuwaiti navy," said Quinn.

"In the last six months, we conducted six operations where we seized various types of drugs (mostly hashish and heroin) smuggled from the coast of Iran down to Yemen and Africa. The street value of the drugs could reach up to £250 million," he said. According to Quinn, the drug money, if not seized, can ultimately end up in the hands of terrorist and other criminal networks, which could affect the economy of the region and other parts of the world including the UK.

From Kuwait, HMS Dragon will be heading back home and will be replaced by another



British Ambassador Michael Davenport (left) and Commander Michael Carter Quinn.

frigate - HMS Monroe. "HMS Monroe will be deployed permanently in the region over the next three years. HMS Monroe is a bit smaller but with the same capabilities," Quinn added.

British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport thanked HMS Dragon's captain and his team for successfully completing its counter narcotics operations in the region. "This is yet another proof of how our bilateral relations are growing year after year and from strength to strength across all areas of cooperation. We are pleased to complete the mission with the successful seizures of narcotics. This is part of our commitment to the safety and security of the Middle Eastern region. We are grateful to Kuwait as the host for the two-day visit of HMS

Dragon," he said.

HMS Dragon is the fourth ship of the Type 45 or Daring-class air-defense destroyers built for the Royal Navy. She was launched in Nov 2008 and commissioned on April 20, 2012. Dragon's construction began at the then BAE Systems Naval Ships (later BAE Systems Surface Fleet Solutions) yard at Scotstoun on the River Clyde in Dec 2005, and by Dec 2007 the bow section was in place on the Govan slipway for mating with the other modules. On April 27, 2012, she made her maiden visit to Liverpool, staying for three days. She was opened to the public on April 28, with visitors able to see the inside of the ship, including the operations room.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Russian Minister of North Caucasus Affairs Sergey Chebotarev. — KUNA

Premier receives Russian Minister

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace yesterday, in the presence of Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel, Russian Minister of North Caucasus Affairs Sergey Chebotarev and his ac-

companying delegation. The Russian group is participating in the Kuwaiti-Russian Joint Committee meeting for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation. Yesterday's meeting was also attended by Kuwait's Ambassador to Russia Abdulaziz Al-Adwani. — KUNA

Kuwait Airways sends pilots to train in UK

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Embassy of the United Kingdom in Kuwait held a farewell ceremony for pilots who will be sent to the UK by Kuwait Airways in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and the L3 Aviation Academy under the patronage of British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport. Davenport expressed his pleasure on sending the pilots to Britain to be trained at the best aviation academies, noting that sending those student pilots to the UK emphasizes the strength of the ties that bind Kuwait and the UK.

"The United Kingdom welcomes the training of student pilots, as there will be cooperation between Kuwait Airways and the L3 Aviation Academy over the next three years, so that 180 students will be flown to the UK to study aviation science," he said.

Assistant Chief Operating Officer Captain Abdul Halim Zaidan said Kuwait Airways is happy to deal with the best aviation academies of the aviation industry in the world - the L3 Aviation Academy - to teach Kuwait Airways pilots the latest aviation technology and information.

"Kuwait Airways is confident of this academy and will receive the largest batch of student pilots - consisting of 45 students - five of them at their own expense under the supervision of Kuwait Airways starting next week. They will be sent to Southampton in the UK in three groups - a batch of 14 students will be sent in three stages every three weeks. The academy has a good reputation in aviation training and all modern equipment and technology in training the pilots well, qualifying them and preparing them to be ready to join Kuwait Airways Company. As we work with the ministry of higher education, we thank them for this cooperation," Zaidan noted. Wafaa Hussain, scholarship director at the ministry of higher education, said the ministry signed a protocol with Kuwait Airways to send 180 pilots, whose expenses are fully covered. The new scholarship plan will provide the number of pilots and assistants Kuwait Airways needs over the next three years. She revealed 5,559 students are studying in the UK and more than 16,000 in the US.