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## KRCS praises hotel owners' donation to Lebanon

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society praised yesterday the donation by Hotel Owners Association to support KRCS' efforts to help the Lebanese people recover in the wake of the Beirut Port huge explosion. In a press statement, KRCS secretary general Maha Al-Barjas said that all institutions in Kuwait support the society efforts to help the Lebanese government and people in the aftermath the deadly explosion of Beirut port. She added that KRCS received many generous donations from citizens, residents, and the private sector, expressing gratitude for this "unsurprising donation" from the people in Kuwait. She referred to a campaign initiated by KRCS that "aims to collect all donation from Kuwait society to brothers in Lebanon."

These donations included urgent aid supplies, health and food supplies, and other means of assistance, noting that most of these relief supplies have reached the Lebanese people. Barjas explained that the intervention plan undertaken by the KRCS was divided into several stages in which urgent food and medical supplies were offered. The KRCS field team worked in full capacity to provide aid to the Lebanese people, she noted. Barjas called on all philanthropists to donate everything possible to help the devastated people in Lebanon through the KRCS's website or to visit the society's headquarter. —KUNA

# Public Prosecutor orders impounding high-profile influencers' properties

## KD 500,000 worth of drugs seized in Shuwaikh Port



KUWAIT: Workers remove bags containing drugs from a container in Shuwaikh Port.



The drugs after being removed from a container in Shuwaikh Port.

KUWAIT: Kuwait local daily Al-Rai learnt that Public Prosecutor Derar Al-Assoussi issued a decision to impound the funds and real estate properties owned by two high-profile social media influencers in Kuwait over charges of suspicions related to money laundering. The two new names add to a growing list of several social media influencers in the country who are under investigation for alleged money laundering and corruption.

Meanwhile, informed sources said the public prosecutor rejected all grievances filed by social media celebrities concerning impounding their funds and assets. The sources said the defendants justified their demands by claiming that their money is legitimate and that the impounding decision had caused them considerable harm.

### Smuggling foiled

In a collaboration between drug control detectives and customs inspectors, the latter foiled an attempt to smuggle 12 kilos of the "ice" drug comprising of 101 rolls hidden in 20 fodder sacks shipped in two containers arriving from Iran at Shuwaikh Port. The drugs' market value is estimated at KD 500,000.

A statement issued by the interior ministry's relations and security media department said narcotic detectives were tipped off concerning the activity of someone importing and trading in drugs, who was later arrested red-handed while selling drugs to an undercover agent. On searching his vehicle, detectives found 250 gm of the "chemical" drug. The suspect, who is in his forties and has a criminal record, confessed and told detectives that he had imported two 40-foot containers from Iran via Shuwaikh Port. On searching the containers, detectives found the drugs.

A case was filed and the suspect was referred to relevant authorities.

Meanwhile, customs inspectors foiled two other attempts to smuggle drugs into the country, said security sources. In the first case, customs inspectors suspected three mail parcels arriving from Turkey separately that allegedly contained hair vitamins. On checking them, inspectors found they contained 21,140 Lyrica pills, sent to a Kuwaiti who was later arrested and referred to relevant authorities. In the second case, customs inspectors found 12 parcels containing an anesthetic banned in Kuwait, which was



## COVID-19 patient commits suicide

concealed inside a shipment of garments imported from Italy. A case was filed pending further measures against the importers.

### Suspected suicide

A Nepalese man quarantined after being infected with COVID-19 was found hanging dead inside the quarantine center near Jaber Stadium, said security sources. Preliminary investigations indicate that the man died of suicide. Further investigations are ongoing.

### Fatal crash

A Syrian man was instantly killed and a compatriot sustained several injuries when a truck and crane collided in Wafra, said security sources. The injured person was rushed to hospital for treatment. A case was filed.



Some of the Lyrica pills that arrived in three mail parcels from Turkey.

### Traffic offenders arrested

Two Kuwaitis were arrested after one of them violated traffic rules by over-tinting his vehicle's windows, refused to present his civil ID when a traffic police officer requested it, ran over the police officer and sped away, before his own family handed him over. Case papers indicate that two police officers stopped the suspect's vehicle in Firdous and asked for his ID to file a ticket for shading the windows, but the driver refused and drove off, running over one of the officers. The driver then dropped his companion before escaping. The suspect's family called the police saying that their son had told them what happened and that he was present at home. A police patrol was dispatched to arrest him. A case was filed.

## 65% of Kuwaitis blame expats for spreading COVID

KUWAIT: A field academic study by Kuwait University, which was prepared by the Director of the Gulf and Peninsula Studies Center Dr Faisal Abu Slaib, showed 64.77 percent of those surveyed believed the reason behind the spread of COVID-19 are expatriates, while 76.25 percent agree on deporting these expats from the country. The survey said 39 percent of respondents said expats do not have the right to be treated free of charge in government hospitals, 63.67 percent believe the commerce ministry did not succeed in controlling prices during the crises, 39.12 percent believe the government

responded as required, while 38.12 percent said the curfew had positive results in fighting the coronavirus. The study added 50.10 percent believe the health ministry is transparent. The sample size was 1,000 individuals.

### Teachers stuck in limbo

Separately, the education ministry has stopped renewal of residency permits of teachers stuck abroad in coordination with the interior ministry, reported Al-Qabas daily. Informed sources said the reason behind this action is due to posting links on social media where teachers could pay their visa renewal fees, which forced the ministry to suspend the renewal temporarily out of fears the links might be hacked. The sources said the education and interior ministries are coordinating to find an alternative that allows teachers with expired residency permits to enter the country instead of renewing them online while abroad.

## Govt spokesman confirms gradual plan for expats' return

KUWAIT: Head of the government's communication center and the Cabinet's official spokesperson Tareq Al-Merzam confirmed a report Al-Rai published on Thursday concerning a government plan on the gradual return to Kuwait of expatriates with valid residencies. Speaking to the press after the Cabinet meeting, Merzam said that some state departments have filed requests to the COVID-19 supreme committee to allow their stranded expat employees to return from certain countries.

Merzam linked lifting the ban on receiving returnees from 32 countries to health authorities' instructions, noting that resuming flights from the countries listed on the ban list is primarily up to the health ministry's opinion. Responding to a question about opening land borders, Merzam also referred the matter to health authorities. "We are still waiting for health ministry instructions and how ready it is to reopen land borders," he added, noting that land borders are already open for incoming trade and food imports.

Responding to a question on whether he was optimistic with the approach of lifting the partial curfew from Sunday, Merzam stressed everyone

should remain cautious, especially since global statistics show the virus is still spreading and the number of infections is starting to accelerate once more. "Therefore, we call for total caution and implementing all precautionary measures and urge all citizens and residents to contribute in achieving this," he concluded.

### One week quarantine?

While the total number of countries from which passengers are banned from directly flying to Kuwait increased to 32 after adding commercial flights from Afghanistan, informed health sources told Al-Rai daily that the health ministry is considering cutting the mandatory quarantine period for arriving passengers to one week instead of 14 days. The sources added that the proposal is being studied by the health ministry's relevant bodies and expected the final decision to be made by next week.

Meanwhile, the sources explained that the health ministry's decision to suspend the salaries of some medical staff members stranded abroad only applies to those were deliberately late in returning to Kuwait, and are thus considered absent without due or legal cause. "Therefore, related rules and provisions about employees who fail to show up to work without permission apply to these staff members," the sources added, noting that the health ministry has already started listing staff members abroad and filing for exemptions to allow them to return.

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