

Local

# East Taima residential project 27 percent complete: Minister

## Kuwaiti volunteers help treat Syrian refugees in Jordan

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Jenan Bushehri stressed that 27 percent of the East Taima residential project has been completed, noting that the project is going well ahead of schedule. During a field visit to the project yesterday accompanied by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare's Director Bader Al-Weqayan, his deputies Ali Al-Hubail and Nasser Khoraiot, Bushehri checked a sample housing unit and was briefed about the project in general. The minister also stressed that the contractor must respect the project schedule and finish it by Dec 2020.



Minister Jenan Bushehri

**Syrian refugees**  
Chairman of the GCC Catheterization Society, Kuwaiti cardiac diseases consultant Dr Mohammed Hamdan Al-Mutairi, announced the success of a voluntary medical visit to Syrian refugees in Jordan, where in collaboration with Rahma International and GCC doctors, the society's team examined over 50 patients and successfully conducted 17 catheterizations. In other news, Farwaniya hospital's obstetrics and gynecology department concluded a workshop organized by a visiting doctor from Lebanon, said head of the department Dr Amal Al-Khodir, noting that the visiting doctor Zaki Sulaiman also conducted 15 successful surgeries for critical cases.

**Rumaihiya roads**  
Ministry of Public Works' (MPW) maintenance engineering sector offered a tender to conduct general maintenance on Rumaihiya roads and yards for public bidding, said informed sources, adding that no maintenance had been done in Rumaihiya since 2009.

**Hajj convoys**  
Well-informed sources said that the ministry of awqaf has selected eight hajj convoys for easy hajj performance this year, noting that the convoys with the cheapest prices had been selected to serve 245 Kuwaiti pilgrims and 125 bedoons. The sources added that these convoys will charge KD 1,300 per Kuwaiti pilgrim, while bedoons will pay KD 1,000-1,300.

**Schools suspended**  
The disability authority's deputy director Anwar Al-Ansari announced suspending three special needs schools and withdrawing their licenses for violating the authority's conditions and rules. Ansari added that violating educational facilities are usually warned and given grace periods to remove the violations, and in case they do not, suitable penalties of up to license withdrawal are imposed. Ansari added that the manpower authority also fines private sector companies that do not allocate four percent of the total Kuwaiti manpower working for it for the disabled.



KUWAIT: Egyptian nationals living in Kuwait casted their votes in a referendum on constitutional amendments at the Egyptian embassy on Friday. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

local spotlight

### Licenses not a luxury



By Muna Al-Fuzal

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Local newspapers recently published reports that the interior ministry has withdrawn thousands of driving licenses from expatriates who have changed their profession or obtained the licenses illegally. According to news reports, legal action has been taken against people involved in this issue. So far, the ministry has withdrawn a total of 37,000 driving licenses due to violation of traffic laws and changes in profession from 2015 to 2018.

I think it is a large number, and although the MoI has the right to take back all driving permits that were given to some people without justification, I believe that this is not the end of the matter for several reasons. I must say that I know that getting a driving license is becoming difficult in many countries including the GCC, and Kuwait is no exception. In many countries, the fees are also high because there are many elements involved in getting the licenses related to road capacity and population. Some countries also apply a certain percentage over the number of driving licenses.

In Kuwait, having a car is not a luxury - it is a necessity. Yes, the road capacity is not enough and traffic is hectic, but traffic jams are an issue everywhere around the world and not only in Kuwait. In Kuwait, due to the hot weather and the fact that many employers prefer those with driving licenses as many companies don't provide staff shuttles, it is normal that there will be people who will do anything to get the dream license.

It is known that to obtain a driving license, an expat must go through a process which requires having a minimum salary of KD 600, an accepted profession with MoI regulations, a degree and residency in Kuwait for two years. Some professional categories of expat workers are exempted, such as experts, judges, doctors and some others, but not everyone.

I believe these exemptions are required due to the nature of their work, and their income usually matches with MoI rules. But the ministry found that some expats have been obtaining driving licenses in illegal ways by making false statements about their profession. Thus their salary may not match MoI terms.

According to the general directorate of traffic, any citizen or expat must have a valid and effective driving license, otherwise they will not be allowed to register and renew a vehicle under their name. As for the expatriate, in the event of changing the profession, the driving license will be cancelled if the new profession does not meet MoI requirements, and no vehicle will be registered in their name. I think this move aims to ensure that people will abide by traffic laws and reduce illegal drivers and vehicles.

### Firemen rescue teens off Salmiya beach

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Salmiya sea fire station men heard cries of people on the beach, and when they rushed to the area, they noticed three young men were drowning. Sea rescue teams rushed in their boat and rescued them, although one was in critical condition. A fireman was also injured and taken to hospital. Meanwhile, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate said a call was received about a body floating across a restaurant on the seafront. Firemen recovered the body and handed it over to forensics. In other news, Farwaniya security men arrested five persons in an abnormal condition in Omariya, based on a video on social media. The arrest was made in a public park.



KUWAIT: This handout photo shows three young men after they were rescued from drowning in Salmiya.



Emergency medical personnel help one of the teenagers into an ambulance to be taken to hospital.

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