

Local

Kuwait renews commitment in search of missing Kuwaiti persons in Iraq

Kuwait calls on parties involved in Libya for self-restraint

NEW YORK: Kuwait has affirmed it would continue the search for the missing Kuwaiti persons and POWs in Iraq, hailing Iraq's commitment to the international pledges towards Kuwait. The remarks were made by Kuwait's Permanent Representative at the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, during the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) session on Iraq late Tuesday. Otaibi said Kuwait is willing to provide all support and aid needed for Iraq to fulfill its pledges towards Kuwait.

Otaibi also hailed the efforts of the UN's mission in Iraq to achieve sustainable development in the country and meet the humanitarian needs of people. He noted that it is time for Iraq to recover from all the hardships it had faced, mainly the war against the so-called Islamic State (IS). The Kuwaiti diplomat called on all countries who took part in the Kuwait international conference for reconstruction of Iraq to commit to their pledges on rebuilding the war-torn country.

Meanwhile, the ambassador spoke on the missing Kuwaitis and other countries' nationals in Iraq, saying that there are 369 cases of missing persons in this file, adding that no remains were identified since 2004. Otaibi called on the UN mission in Iraq to continue searching for the missing Kuwaitis and follow on procedures taken for Iraq to return Kuwait's stolen properties and national documents. As part of boosting ties between the two countries, Otaibi noted the meeting of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi supreme joint committee held in Kuwait last week.

Self-restraint

In other news, Kuwait called on all parties involved

in Libya for self-restraint and respect commitment they made to international law on human rights and not to target civilians or civilian facilities, affirming on the importance of peaceful solution through ongoing dialogue. Otaibi made the remarks during a Security Council session on Libya, calling as well on the same parties involved not to resort to military means to end the crisis.

Otaibi highlighted developments in the past years in Libya, ongoing regional and international efforts, including UN exerted efforts to determining the location of hosting a national conference, which was long awaited for and many rounds of talks with all Libyan factions for more than a year. The diplomat added that such efforts was exerted in order to ensure the necessary conditions were met and to find an effective and lasting solution to the crisis that entered its ninth year and led into a political settlement that respects Libyan national principles.

Otaibi pointed out that the international community was anticipating to hold such National Conference after the Security Council reacted positively to invitation through its adoption of press release which welcomed the intention of the Libyan parties to participate actively in the events of this conference, which reflected on UN Secretary General Antonio Gutierrez visits to Tripoli and Benghazi with the goal of creating the appropriate conditions. Otaibi added that the international community urged those parties to ensure participation and acceptance, but was surprised by the outbreak of armed clashes in and around the Libyan capital Tripoli during the first week of last April.

Otaibi pointed out that these confrontations left



NEW YORK: Kuwait's Permanent Representative at the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi speaks during a United Nations Security Council's session on Iraq late Tuesday. — KUNA

around 450 dead and more than 2,100 wounded and led to the displacement of about 70 thousand civilians outside the areas of confrontation, thus endangering the life of citizens and their property to real danger. The diplomat noted that these confrontations contributed in endangering the political process there, which may lead to undermine all efforts made over the past years to end the crisis. Otaibi stressed the need to work in a constructive and concrete manner with the calls and efforts led by the United Nations mission in Libya to immediately stop the fire and reduce the military escalation, as well as the importance of cooperating to provide the necessary guarantees to hold the National Conference. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Firefighters battle a blaze at car repair shops in Shuwaikh Industrial.



Firemen battle the Shuwaikh Industrial blaze.

Shuwaikh car workshops fire under control

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firefighters tackled a blaze that gutted three car repair shops in Shuwaikh Industrial on Tuesday, Kuwait Fire

Service Directorate (KFSD) said. No injuries were reported. Fire engines from stations of Industrial Shuwaikh, Al-Shuhada and Ardhiya rushed to the workshops and succeeded in extinguishing the fire. Meanwhile, KFSD said that firemen fought a fire on the third floor of a building in Farwaniya. The six-storey building was evacuated and the fire was put out.

No congestion

The interior ministry relations and security information department denied claims on social media that there is heavy congestion at the land border outlets in Nuwaiseeb

and Salmi. It said a video clip that went viral recently on social media is actually from 2018. The department said the interior ministry will take legal action against those who published these rumors.

Cultural contest

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's public relations department said the third cultural contest of the prevention sector was launched under the patronage of KFSD Director General Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad in the presence of Deputy Director General for Prevention Maj Gen Khalid Fahd. The event was held at the prevention sector's main building.

200 surgeries performed at Jaber Hospital

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Chairman of Kuwait Association of Surgeons and the head of Jaber Hospital's surgery department Dr Salman Al-Sabah said 200 surgeries had been conducted at the hospital since January. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a ghabqa, he stressed that Jaber Hospital is meant to become the best in the region, adding that all surgical majors had started in the hospital. He warned of the growing rate of obesity in Kuwait, adding that Kuwait in particular and GCC states in general have come a long way in obesity surgeries.

Physiotherapy board membership

Kuwait Physiotherapy Society member Dr Mariam Mansour Al-Mandeel won a four-year membership on the electrotherapy executive board during the recent world physiotherapy conference held and organized in Geneva by the World Confederation for Physical Therapy. Kuwait Physiotherapy Society Chairperson Dr Hana Al-Khamees congratulated Mandeel, pointing out that the executive board plays a significant role in setting comprehensive global plans to improve the use of electrotherapy.

Blood money

Ministry of Social Affairs' acting undersecretary Hana Al-Hajery said the ministry is about to form a special committee to review the regulations and procedures followed on collecting donations to pay blood money and other related compensations. Hajery added that the ministry had made some proposals to the Cabinet to control and regulate collecting donations to pay blood money after the flaws and violations committed recently. Hajery said the committee will be headed by the ministry and include elements from the interior, foreign, justice and awqaf ministries, the financial investigations unit, the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Municipality.

KD 7,535 unlawfully spent on overtime pay

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A recent State Audit Bureau report on the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition showed KD 7,535 had been unlawfully spent on overtime work for some employees. The report also showed that employees working overtime hours had not been using the fingerprint system as instructed by CSC, and instead manual check in and out lists had been used with inaccurate or altered information on them.

Energy management system

Well informed sources said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) finance and planning sector is

about to complete the first phase of a contract with Ernst & Young to build an energy management system by September. The sources added that a study on the best risk finance for the corporation and its subsidiary companies and the results of a study on alternatives in lean gas pricing after Feb 21, 2022 have been approved.

Barayeh Salem

Informed sources at Kuwait Municipality said rent of a kiosk at the Barayeh Salem project for entrepreneurs will not exceed KD 800 a month. The sources added that in order to protect the principle of competitiveness, the contract's value will not be affected by the type of activity. The sources said new activities had been added to the project such as game arcades, recreation, sports equipment, roasteries, dry desserts, sun and prescription glasses, electronics, food products, herbs and stationery.

Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan up for first time in two months

TOKYO: Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan jumped 44.4 percent from a year earlier to JPY 70.9 billion (\$641 million) in April, expanding for the first time in two months buoyed by strong exports, the Finance Ministry said yesterday. Kuwait recorded trade surplus with Japan for 11 years and three months, the ministry said in a preliminary report. Kuwaiti overall exports to Japan surged 31.8 percent to JPY 84.4 billion (\$764 million) for the first rise in two months. Imports from Japan declined 9.6 percent year-on-year to JPY 13.6 billion (\$123 million), down for the second month.

Middle East's trade surplus with Japan grew 9.3 percent to JPY 632.7 billion (\$5.7 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports from the region increasing 3.3 percent from a year earlier. Crude oil, refined products, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other natural resources, which accounted for 95.9 percent of the region's total exports to Japan, went up 3.1 percent. The region's overall imports from Japan slid 14.7 percent, chiefly due to weak demand for automobiles, electric equipment and machinery.

The world's third-biggest economy posted a global surplus of JPY 60.4 billion (\$547 million) in April, marking the third straight month of black ink. But the figure was sharply down 90.3 percent from a year earlier on sluggish exports to China amid US-China trade tensions. Overall exports fell 2.4 percent, as shipments of semiconductor-related equipment and vessels dropped, while imports rose 6.4 percent due to higher crude oil import bill. China remained Japan's biggest trade partner, followed by the US. The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors. — KUNA

In My View

Ramadan, the spiritual bonding

By Nazneen Ali

Each morning the rising sun brings in a new message with its twilight. A new day with a new hope, a new spirit, a new challenge, a new rise or a new fall. In this cycle of life from dawn to dusk, each day is a unique day, a unique story for us where we play our role in this large world making our own small contribution towards its progress, towards its perpetuity, and unfortunately, towards its destruction as well.

This routine bounds our life so much that we get entrapped in a vicious circle where our goal is to just ensure our own success, our sustainability, our ambition, our desires.

We as an individual, move away from the 'We culture' to a more self-centric 'I culture' of me, myself and mine. We are so focused on ourselves that we neither turn towards our fellow beings to extend or seek support nor do we turn to the Almighty, the divine power of Allah to be grateful for what has been bestowed on us. We tend to become indifferent to other humans losing any sympathy and empathy towards each other.

To set us free from the shackles of these worldly affairs, to liberate the humanity from egotistical slavery, mankind has been bequeathed religious beliefs, spiritual books and faith in the divine super power that serve as a path of guidance for us to lead our lives in a virtuous manner. Though these virtues are to be practiced daily, Islam as a religion has a month specified for spirituality, to help us to take a pause, to rethink our activities, to remold ourselves shedding our old selfish skins and growing a more selfless personality, a month to start afresh, to set new goals for the betterment of mankind, a month to become pious again, a month to adopt the righteous path from here and thereon, a month to learn how to make sacrifices, a month to be patient, a month to start caring for the needy, a month to get closer to Allah, a month to revive our spiritual bonding with Allah.

This month, Ramadan, is a month to take a step closer to Allah and then continue there on. The Quranic verse of Surat Al-Baqarah, Ayat 183, mentions "O you, who believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous."

In the same Surah, Ayat 277, Allah says "Indeed those who believe and do righteous deeds and establish prayers and give Zakat will have their rewards from their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."

There are almost 30 verses in the Holy Quran in which Salah and Zakat are explicitly mentioned. So fasting, prayers and Zakat are the cornerstones, the foundations on which the holy month of Ramadan is based. Practicing these three pillars with fidelity confers innumerable benefits to one as an individual and to the society as a whole. A deeper analysis of these pillars reveals that they are not just meant for a specific religion but for the entire mankind. Ramadan is thus, not a holy month for the Muslims alone, but a month to reflect on our character, a month to rebuild our values, and so it is a month to be practiced by everyone, so that the entire society can reap the socio-economic benefits of this month.

Abstaining from food is just the literal meaning of fasting. Fasting in essence is much more than that. Fasting has a lot many inherent sacrifices and self-controls imposed on a person that it can be practiced by all irrespective of their religion. Controlling our hunger during the fast leads us towards the ideology of controlling our inner thrust and anxieties. In today's world, people have a hunger for fame and popularity, success through shortcuts and an urge to be a winner always. This crave for success usually becomes so intense that people get misled on the path of immorality. Fasting helps us to develop a strong will power against such inner drives. We learn to be patient, to wait for the right time, to believe that period of sacrifice will end at a designated time and then we will be given the opportunity to fulfill our desires. Fasting helps us to develop affinity towards each other particularly towards the underprivileged and deprived ones. When we curb our hunger, we realize the pain of the downtrodden, we tend to empathize with them, we understand the importance of the natural resources, we learn to appreciate the blessings that have been granted to us, we become conservative and develop a tendency to avoid any kind of wastage.

In this socio-economic world, we have super powers, developed nations, developing countries and the underdeveloped countries. While the super powers and developed nations are self-sustaining, their underdeveloped counterparts seek economical support for sustainability. There are super rich people who are blessed with much more resources than they need, they have so much that their generations and generations can survive. On the other hand, there are many who lead a hand to mouth life, many who lack even the basic amenities in life. Zakat - paying alms to the poor, is thus a step towards narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor. It is a way to redistribute the wealth between the rich and the poor. It is a way to promote brotherhood between communities; so it is not only for the Muslims to pay Zakat but all individuals and societies should adopt this concept and help their fellow beings lead a better life, contribute in bringing smile on the face of others, feed the hungry, give shelter to the homeless and make the world more balanced financially.

We are leading a stressful life in this competitive world. The entire human race is running behind some invisible goals. All of us are on an unending journey towards some unreachable destination. Since the path is long, not predefined, tough and stressful, we need an eternal support, a support from the Almighty Allah. We need to gain inner strength by developing our bond with Allah, reconnecting ourselves with him and seeking his support. Salah - prayers, especially Qiyam Al-Lail (praying at night) which is widely practiced is Ramadan is a time to refocus on our life, our journey in this world. It is a time to understand the core of our life, the basic purpose of our existence. Recital of the Holy Quran during the prayers is not just reciting, it is for adoption of the teachings of the Holy Quran in our daily lives, it is for us to evaluate our lives against what is expected and accordingly realign ourselves towards the right path - Sirat e Mustaqeem.

So this Ramadan, let us join hands to celebrate humanity, establishing a connection within communities, re-energizing ourselves, becoming more humble, seeking forgiveness and repenting for our sins, practicing goodness, undergoing transformative experience, preventing immorality and wrongdoing, contributing towards tranquility and peace; and together cultivating a conducive environment and creating an amicable world.

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