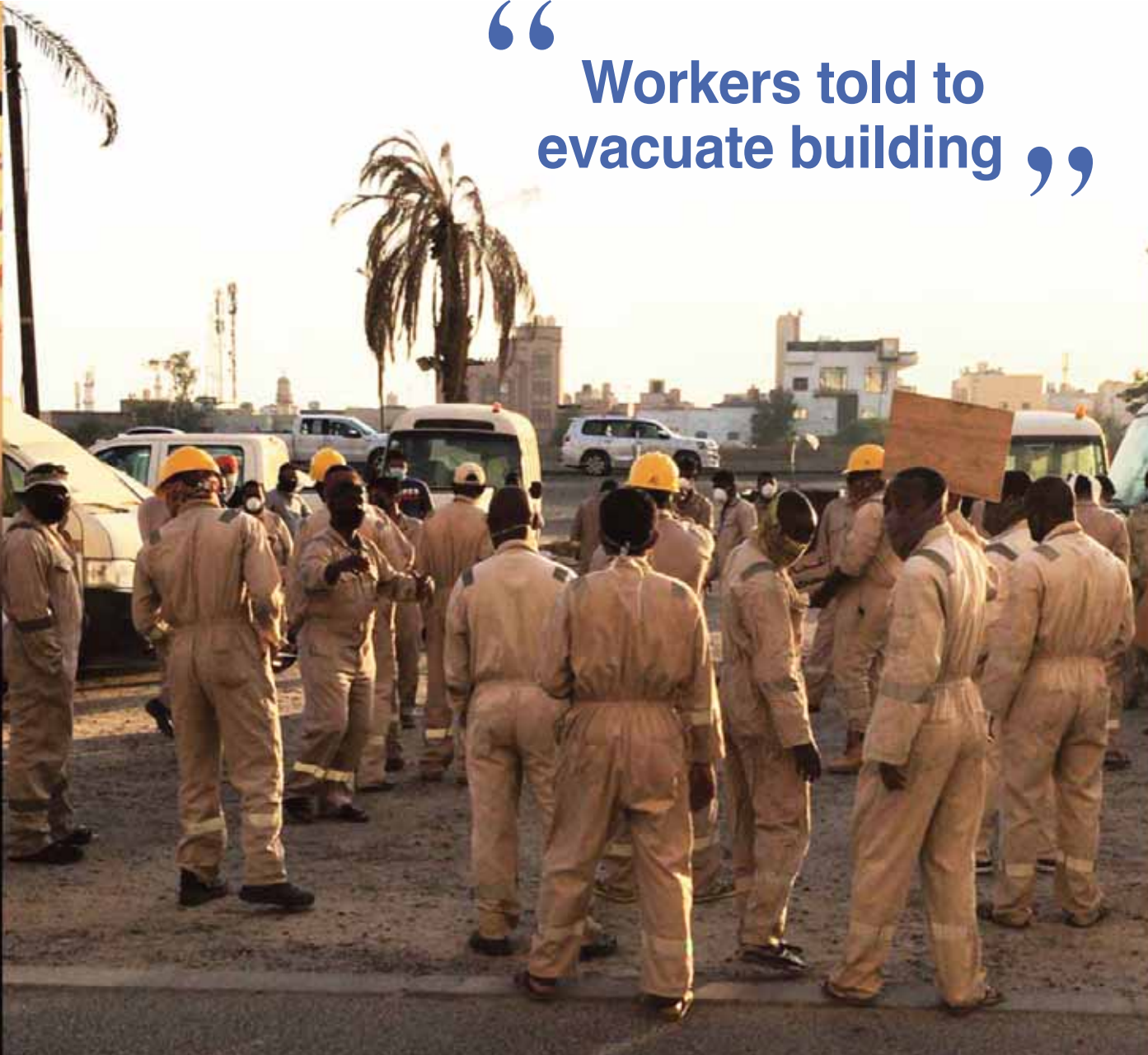


“ Workers told to evacuate building ”



An estimated 500,000 expat employees in Kuwait have lost their jobs, had salaries completely stopped or cut since the pandemic lockdown began in mid-March. More than 100,000 expatriates have left the country on repatriate flights. Hundreds of thousands are stuck in the locked down areas in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Mahboula and Farwaniya without income and are unable to leave the country.

According to the worker, the company has filed absconding cases against him and his colleagues, canceling their civil IDs and visas as a way to force their repatriation without being paid.

“Thanks to Kuwait for extending our visas, otherwise we would be in violation of the country’s law. We have dignity and respect to ourselves. We do not want to be visa violators, at which point we could be accused of breaking the law,” the employee said.

According to the protesting workers, the company’s owner told them that they have to evacuate the building that they are living in. “The haris told us to evacuate our apartments next Sunday. In short notice, they want us to leave our flats to the streets with no money,” the worker said.

“We have been experiencing regular water cuts and elevator cuts by the landlord because our employer hasn’t paid him rent for five months. We have written a letter of complaint to the Ministry of Labor about these issues but we have not received any reply yet,” he noted.

According to the worker, the company informed them that they are on unpaid leave since April 25. The workers told Kuwait Times that they have not received their rights and their passports were taken by the employer.

“They were sending food to some workers but because the food was Asian, it was hard for some to digest. We were buying food from our own pockets while others couldn’t afford it. The fact that they were sending food to our building is proof that we are not absconding as they claim.” Workers asked for intervention by all the relevant authorities to rescue them from these injustices.



KUWAIT: These photos provided by a representative of the protesting workers show them holding signs demanding justice during a peaceful sit-in outside their building on Wednesday.