

Local

# Kuwait reiterates support for Palestinians' rights

## Backing efforts to reach just, comprehensive solution to Palestinian issue

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait has stressed support for all efforts aimed at reaching a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue, a senior official said. The government has reiterated Kuwait's stance calling for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, returning of Palestinian refugees, and the establishment of a Palestinian state on the pre-June 5, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said following the Cabinet's weekly meeting on Monday. The ministers had discussed the political affairs in light of the current developments in the political arena at the Arab and international levels, especially those related to the peace process in the region.

At the onset of the meeting held at Seif Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Cabinet congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah after he was awarded a Legion of Merit, Chief Commander Degree by US President Donald Trump, noting that this prestigious award is in recognition of His Highness's pioneering role in

strengthening the strategic cooperation and bilateral relations with the US. His Highness the Prime Minister also briefed the Cabinet on latest health developments in the country in light of statistics and data related to the numbers of coronavirus cases of infection, recovery, deaths and those receiving treatment. He pointed out that recovery rate has increased whereas fatalities and hospitalizations have went down. In the meantime, the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Saud Hilal Al-Harbi apprised the cabinet of a report on the results of the general secondary examinations for the academic year 2019-2020 for grade 12 students, which came in exceptional circumstances unprecedented due to the coronavirus pandemic. — KUNA

Meanwhile, Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah updated the Cabinet on latest health developments in the country in light of statistics and data related to the numbers of coronavirus cases of infection, recovery, deaths and those receiving treatment. He pointed out that recovery rate has increased whereas fatalities and hospitalizations have went down. In the meantime, the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Saud Hilal Al-Harbi apprised the cabinet of a report on the results of the general secondary examinations for the academic year 2019-2020 for grade 12 students, which came in exceptional circumstances unprecedented due to the coronavirus pandemic. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti citizens demonstrate in Irada Square yesterday to express their rejection of normalization of ties with Israel. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Commerce Ministry clamps down on laptop dealers

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has cracked down on computer dealers who stacked up to 150 laptops in a warehouse with the intention to monopolize the sets and raise prices. The ministry said in a statement yesterday that the warehouse was shut down, following two rounds of inspections by the department personnel of stores selling computers and various electronic parts in the district of Hawally. Having recorded an unjustified and unreasonable hike of sets' prices, the department has referred the case to competent authorities for further legal action. The ministry warned traders that it would not be slack or complacent with respect of any bids by dealers to make customers sustain heavy prices for electronic devices namely computers. It also urged citizens and expatriates to report any "illogical" hike of commodities' prices via the hotline 135, stressing that companies and commercial stores must adhere to the set trading rules. The crackdown coincided with reports that computer sets and parts, namely laptops, have become in great demand due to the adoption of online learning by schools and colleges. The e-learning has been warranted by the novel coronavirus crisis. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** A Ministry of Commerce and Industry inspector examines laptops stacked in a warehouse in Hawally that was closed yesterday for alleged illegal price hiking. — KUNA

## Lockdown could force rethink of overseas treatment program

**KUWAIT:** It has been eight months since Kuwait's confrontation with COVID-19, during which the airport was closed for months and curfews and strict preventive measures were imposed. However, Kuwait has remarkably managed to do without overseas treatment for over six months without any effect on the health system or failure in providing healthcare services to citizens who could not be sent abroad for treatment. Al-Rai reported yesterday.

Notably, the annual budget set for overseas treatment is estimated in the hundreds of millions of Kuwaiti dinars. The issue has been always controversial and suspected to involve corruption and wastage of public funds, especially after a number of scandals at a number of Kuwait health offices abroad, the Arabic daily wrote.

## Rat infestation problem in Hawally?

**KUWAIT:** A local newspaper published a report highlighting what it described as a rats' infestation problem that Hawally, one of Kuwait's most populated areas, is reportedly suffering from. "Hawally seems no different today from various global cities like New Orleans and others, where rats are spreading after many restaurants and eateries, upon which these rodents rely for food, were forced to shut down in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic," Al-Rai Arabic daily wrote yesterday.

Health quarantines, lockdowns and total curfews have reduced the amount of household trash and people's movements, which made rats adapt to the new situation and wander around more often, the

report said that the suspension of overseas treatment without affecting health systems or local patients' treatment strategies raises a number of questions about the feasibility of spending hundreds of millions over the past years on providing medical services that turned out to be doable in Kuwait. Observers said the overseas treatment topic seems to have been an electoral tool for many lawmakers, who have been rewarded by the government with medical trips for their voters, including those that are really sick and others faking sickness.

Further, the observers stressed that the past few months proved that all diseases are locally treatable and that Kuwait can actually do without the entire overseas treatment issue and save hundreds of millions that can be used to develop healthcare services here in Kuwait by building more hospitals or bringing international medical experts to Kuwait instead of going to them.

### 'Mass success'

Meanwhile, the same daily reported that the recent 'mass success' of grade 12 students and their joy of passing with flying colors seems to have

caused a headache for officials at the ministry of higher education in view of the limited number of university seats available. Educational sources warned of a crisis that might last for two years due to what they described as the 'mass success' plan which gave around 38,000 students the right for a university seat, bearing in mind that higher education institutions' annual capacity has always been 25,000.

Further, the sources ruled out that the ministry of higher education will opt to increasing the minimum percentage needed to be accepted in universities, because they had already been raised two years ago. "Moreover, the capacity of private universities and Public Authority for Applied Education and Training is limited and it is too late for scholarships abroad, as study has already started in Europe, US and most other countries," the sources underlined.

They added that whoever set this 'mass success' plan has placed dangerous mines before the new minister of education and higher education in case of a Cabinet reshuffle or change because no criteria has been set to accept successful students in higher education institutions. "The only solution is to immediately open a new government university in Kuwait University's old buildings," the sources advised.

daily argued. "Rats have also become bolder in terms of wandering day and night without fear, and some of them have started to nibble on the cables of parked automobiles," it wrote.

"To probe the matter after receiving many complaints from residents, Al-Rai toured blocks 9 and 10 in Hawally and found rats have started sharing food with cats in various dumpsters," the report reads. Abdul Rahman Amer, a resident, is quoted in the report saying that rats gnawed the computer cable of his friend's vehicle. He added that huge rats are now living in many old abandoned buildings in the area, where many people throw their garbage. Another resident claimed that he once saw a huge rat standing on its hind limbs with its forelimbs on a vehicle's tire. "It was as if it was a mechanic examining the brake pads," he exclaimed.

Abu Fadi, who resides in block 9, said he has noticed a larger numbers of rats in the evening, unusually foraging among cats in various garbage

containers. He hoped all trash containers are tightly sealed, and suggested collecting trash twice a day to prevent the spread of rats. Mohammed Khattab, a block 10 resident, said the gathering point of rats is behind an electrical transformer near Hassan Al-Basri Street, where huge piles of garbage can be found.

"I'm so worried that these rats might someday gnaw the electric cable in the unit," he warned, noting that rats had always existed in the area and that their numbers had significantly dropped after residents reported the matter and rodent fighting teams sprayed the area with pesticides. "But they reappeared massively during the curfew period," Khattab stressed. The Ministry of Health's rodent and insect fighting project manager Dr Samya Al-Tabeeh said rodent fighting teams work regularly and intensively, but mounds of trash in some densely populated areas attract rodents. She also stressed the importance of regular garbage collection.

## Policeman, three others arrested with drugs, guns

**KUWAIT:** A police officer, two Kuwaitis and a bedoon were arrested with drugs and a considerable number of weapons in Salmiya, Al-Rai reported yesterday quoting security sources. Case papers indicate that while on a routine tour in Amman Street, a Hawally police patrol suspected a vehicle with four people inside who seemed nervous on spotting the police. Checking on them, the driver turned out to be a police officer, accompanied by two Kuwaitis and a bedoon. Detectives found drugs and weapons in the vehicle. The weapons included two Kalashnikovs, four magazines, 101 bullets, an old machinegun, a pistol and nine bullets. Detectives also found four pieces of hashish, a number of psychotropic pills, a bag of meth, a cleaver, a scale and KD 1,500. A case was filed and the suspects were referred to relevant authorities pending further legal action and investigations.

Separately, the same daily reported yesterday that police are searching for a Kuwaiti man who allegedly attacked his ex-wife's house in Abbasiya waving a cleaver, which he used to damage the doors and windows before fleeing when the woman called the police. Security sources explained that the woman called the police requesting help and reported her ex-husband broke into her house carrying a cleaver. However, on arriving at the scene, policemen found the suspect had escaped. A case was filed and a search is in progress.

Stay safe. Stay home. Stay informed.

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