

## Local

## The pressure of workplace fashion



JUST KIDDIN', SERIOUSLY

By Sahar Moussa

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The alarm sounds in the morning - you wake up, go to the bathroom, wash your face, brush your teeth and maybe take a quick shower if you have time. Then you drink your coffee and check your phone quickly before going to the wardrobe to make your first decision of the day - what shall I wear?

This daily question might be annoying and hellish for many people in general and employees specifically when selecting their work attire. I am a journalist and love my job for so many reasons -including that I do not really have to stand in front of my closet for two hours to pick what I want to wear.

After changing the diaper and clothes of my 18-month-old baby in the morning (which takes me around 20 minutes amid the nagging, refusal and stubbornness), fixing breakfast and convincing him to eat it, running after him to put on his shoes and jacket, and preparing his bag to drop him to my mother-in-law's place before heading to work - I end up not having energy to even comb my hair. In my work, our dress code is business casual most days and very formal only during interviews or when dealing with the public.

Many women who aren't as lucky as I am. In the Arab world, there is so much pressure on how women dress and present themselves, and in Kuwait the pressure is probably doubled. Working women in Kuwait are pressured to wear luxury brands, put on extremely strong and expensive perfume or bakhour, regularly put on makeup and fix their hair and nails, even if they have 10 children. I do understand some jobs require to be fully dressed, such as bankers, lawyers and managers. These people get used to it as it's part of their daily routine, but it's not easy at all, as it takes so much energy and money each and every morning.

Skirt or pants? Tights or bare legs? Sandals or high heels? These were the questions I used to ask myself every morning when I selected my attire for work or going out. But since I became a mom, I choose to be comfortable in my own skin and wear flexible and casual outfits for my everyday routine - and yes sometimes I'm woefully off-base in my fashion choices, just to suit my son's needs.

I am not saying it is wrong that a woman should take care of herself, but I am sure that there must be compromises. The problem is women pressure other women when they are not looking perfect or do not meet their standards. They will be considered outcasts or not from their pack. Even men amongst themselves in the diwaniya judge other men based on how expensive their dishdasha, watch and shoes are. Unfortunately, sometimes people are judged on appearances, not on their content. I am not saying that someone should neglect or not take care of themselves, but I am saying that appearances should not be based on how we deal with other people.

I refuse to be pressured by society just to meet its high standards that costs so much money and effort. I prefer to expend all these on my family and son. Now it is his time, and I am ready to compromise my manicure/pedicure weekly sessions, my monthly visits to the hairdresser and my elegant looks for him to be well cared for and happy. And I think it's unfair that society puts women in a position where they have to choose between their responsibilities towards their families and the way they look in public.

### Photo of the Day



Photo showing an unusual angle of the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Causeway, highlighting the architectural beauty of the structure. Captured from southern island by photographer Hasan Mahmud Shimul @hasan\_m\_shimul To have your photo featured in the Kuwait Times or Friday Times as photo of the day, send a high resolution image to local@kuwaittimes.com. Photo must be unedited and high resolution and related to Kuwait.

## Confidence in vaccines grow in Kuwait



IN MY VIEW

By Nawara Fattahova

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When the availability of coronavirus vaccines was first announced, many people worried about getting the vaccine. But after almost three months of vaccinations in Kuwait, people have started to slowly change their opinion regarding vaccines. Most people who had doubts thought they will wait to see what happens to those who got vaccinated. After the number of those who have received the vaccine since December reached more than 600,000, more people have started considering getting vaccinated, as no cases of death or serious health complications have been registered.

Many rumors about people who have died or experienced serious side effects after getting vaccinated have spread on social media. These rumors increased the doubts about the safety of the vaccine. It is the role of the government to raise awareness on the importance of getting vaccinated, but no official campaigns have been seen yet.

So the private sector partially took the initiative to encourage people to get the vaccine. Some companies

announced special promotions for vaccinated customers, such as three months of subscription for their services. Another store selling outfits and gift items announced a 20-percent discount for vaccinated customers.

Individuals also played a role in encouraging the public to get vaccinated. Some social media influencers and celebrities took the vaccine and launched a campaign to encourage others to do so. They posted photos of themselves taking the vaccine with captions to not let the vaccinations stop.

The ministry of health announced last month that the number of people registering to get the vaccine is rapidly increasing daily. An MoH statement two weeks ago said one million of the population has registered for vaccination, so the number now is definitely higher.

Also, many people decided to get the vaccination after announcements by airlines and governments that they will only let vaccinated passengers or tourists to enter. This presents a kind of fear for people who are refusing to get vaccinated - that if they decide to travel, they won't be able to do so without the vaccine. Many people expect more restrictions in the future that will force everyone to get vaccinated.

The government also announced letting vaccinated passengers to only stay seven days at home quarantine instead of the additional seven days in institutional quarantine after arriving to Kuwait. This applies for those who got two vaccination and two weeks pass after the last vaccination or those who got one vaccination and five weeks passed after this vaccination.