

Local

# Panelists demand changing social culture of working women to boost empowerment

## WCSS hosts discussion on 'Economic Empowerment of Women in Kuwait'

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** The social culture of working women should change in Arab countries to empower women to reach the same economic level as men, a number of experts have agreed. Specialists in various fields have reached that conclusion during a discussion panel on 'Economic Empowerment of Women in Kuwait', held on Sunday at the Women's Cultural Social Society (WCSS).

Lulwa Al-Mulla, Chairperson of WCSS, said that woman's participation in development will improve the life of both men and women. "The economic empowerment and gender equality promote economic growth. This was also emphasized in the fifth Sustainable Development Goal for 2030," she said.

Farid Belhaj, World Bank Vice President for Middle East and North Africa, noted that the subject of this panel is important not only for Kuwait but also for the Middle East. "Women empowerment is important in all aspects, including economic, social and political. Women's empowerment is one of the priorities on our agenda at the World Bank. We always support women," he pointed out.

### Challenges facing women

Dr Lubna Al-Qadhi, Head of the Women Research Center at Kuwait University, stressed the Kuwaiti woman is well-educated and qualified in all fields, but faces many challenges, so she should be allowed to work in any field. "Economic empowerment will lead to social empowerment. Women only constitute 15

percent of decision-making positions in the public sector and 18 percent in the private sector. We noticed the interest of private companies in this issue, but we need to modify the labor law," she said.

Dr Reem Al-Rdeini, Head of the Feminist and Gender Studies Unit at Kuwait University, explained we need to change the masculine culture in our community. "Vacancies should be filled equally from both genders according to the applicant's qualification and not based on gender. The solution should start with changing the curriculum, which is the beginning of educating the community. Research has shown that only 2 percent of decision-making positions are occupied by women in GCC countries, except Bahrain, where it is 14 percent. Also in self-employed positions, only one percent are women," she explained.

### Discrimination against women

Dr Maha Al-Baghli, member of the Municipal Council and Founder of Safira Company, said: "Based on statistics, there is discrimination against women in the workplace, especially in leading positions. I see the solution in providing awareness programs that start from the school years. I also think that the political leadership should support women in getting an equal chance to be in decision-making positions and political positions, including the parliament and Cabinet."

Dr Mirza Hasan, Executive Director, Gender Policy at the World Bank, said based on experience, women achieved better results in many fields or projects including education, agriculture and water.



**KUWAIT:** Participants attend a panel discussion on 'Economic Empowerment of Women in Kuwait' at the Women's Cultural Social Society on Sunday. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

"At the World Bank, we work on empowering genders. The bank is working on evidence studies in 189 countries on the benefits of empowering women. By empowering women, it returns on the

economy. Developed countries have achieved better growth when enrolling women in the labor market. We share the global experience about women empowerment," he pointed out.

## Kuwait University reveals work for sustainable space sector

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait University announced yesterday that the national satellite project constitutes the start of a sustainable space sector in the country. The long-term venture is aimed at training students on innovation in the space, the university said in a statement. KU is scheduled to launch 'Kuwait Sat-1 satellite' into the orbit in the middle of next year from the United States, it said.



Dr Hala Al-Jassar, a physics teacher at the KU and the director of the national satellite project, said the university has an integrated program in the physics department with BA degrees in engineering physics for long sensing by employing the satellites. The educational project involves several local and government departments namely the ministry of defense and Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research. The project kicked started in October 1999 with aim of setting up infrastructure of the space laboratory at the university - in coordination with Colorado University.

The involved team had held talks with Kuwait's UN Permanent Representative in Vienna Ali Al-Wazzan and the UN representative for space affairs, on prospects of registering the first Kuwaiti satellite. Another meeting held with the general communication authorities addressed registration of its frequency. Jassar has added that the project is being executed with support from KISR with participation of a European research center. —KUNA

## Kuwaiti charities donate 400 oxygen devices to Tunisia

**TUNIS:** Tunisian health authorities received 400 oxygen supply devices donated by Kuwaiti charities in support of Tunisia, amid the difficult COVID-19 health conditions they are facing. The Kuwait Direct Aid Society donated 180 oxygen machines and 220 other from various Kuwait charitable societies and committees. The Kuwaiti charitable societies distributed aid to various municipalities in the Tunisian provinces, which are suffering from severe pressure due to increase number of COVID-19 patients. The Kuwait's Ambassador to Tunisia Ali Al-Dhafiri affirmed in a similar statement to KUNA on the sidelines of Kuwait's solidarity to help Tunisia in this ordeal. —KUNA

## stc honors achieving high school students

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the honoring of the top performing high school students who received the highest achievements in the Arts and Science curriculums.

On this occasion, CEO of stc, engineer Maziad Al-Harbi, shared some words of wisdom and encouragement to the young achievers. Throughout his speech, Harbi highlighted that the students being recognized for their academic excellence serve as role models to their peers, showcasing their abilities to take on challenging tasks and achieving successful results. The path that these students have chosen to reach their goals reflect their focus on channeling their thoughts and behaviors towards achieving their objectives, a skill that will serve them well throughout their studying years and thereafter. Upon concluding his speech, Harbi expressed stc's pride to par-

## Alghanim Industries supports KRCS '#WithYouPalestine' campaign

**KUWAIT:** Spearheaded by Executive Chairman Kutayba Y Alghanim's philanthropic commitment to Palestine, Alghanim Industries continues to support Kuwait's Red Crescent Society's - KRCS - with funding for the #WithYouPalestine campaign. Backed by the company, the initiative aims to extend a helping hand to those affected by the recent Zionist occupation's aggression in Palestinian territories.

Kuwait's Red Crescent Society first established the #WithYouPalestine earlier in May in solidarity with the Palestinian people during the latest episode of aggression by the Zionist occupation. More recently, KRCS flagged both Gaza and the West Bank as top priorities while the organization coordinates with previous philanthropic partners and Palestinian communities alike.

Collaborating with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, the Kuwaiti branch is specifically focused on providing recently affected Palestinian territories with dire need of necessities and medical supplies. Alongside basic emergency provisions, the company's donations make way for an array of more purposeful equipment catering to specific ailments with medical aid and ambulances.

Posing a long and prolific history of philanthropic partnerships with various KRCS initiatives, Executive Chairman Kutayba Y Alghanim expressed special concern to the pains incurred on Palestinians by recent Zionist occupation hostilities. "As always, the Red Crescent Society of Kuwait has our deepest gratitude for their imperative work," the chairman said, adding "we appreciate their grand efforts as we also hope to see a more peaceful reality for Palestinians."

## Kuwait, UN office sign MoU to boost private sector's role

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and the UN's office in Kuwait signed a memorandum of understanding yesterday on cooperation to allow the private sector to engage in its social role and achieve sustainable development.

KCCI Chairman Mohammad Al-Saqer and Representative of the UN Secretary-General

Whether in Kuwait's local communities or across the region at large, the chairman added: "Our long-time partnership with Red Crescent ensures consistent humanitarian support; we're very proud to effectively heed this call and be one of the few first on the scene to aid people."

Domestically, the partnership between KRCS and Alghanim Industries also focuses on philanthropic activities aiming to empower people living with difficult circumstances. In the realm of education, the two have often shared common goals of elevating the youth in hopes of securing a better future for their communities. Alghanim Industries and KRCS hold a joint initiative with the Arab Open University in Kuwait through a scholarship fund for students with less fortunate social backgrounds.

KRCS' Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said the "long-established history and combined efforts between Red Crescent and Alghanim Industries always ensures a fruitful humanitarian effect." "In crucial moments like these, we are proud of this partnership we've grown with Alghanim Industries," Dr Sayer said. "Although we're heartbroken and horrified by the aggression that shocked the world, our partnership with Alghanim helps us provide for as many affected people as possible."

In Palestine, Alghanim Industries use the same principles in providing better access to education for students from underserved communities. The West Bank's Birzeit University is both a longtime recipient of financial support and an institution held dearly by Executive Chairman Kutayba Y Alghanim. In 1985, the chairman, a decorated philanthropist in the region, funded the building of what many con-



Kutayba Y Alghanim



Dr Hilal Al-Sayer



sider an iconic library named in honor of the chairman's father, Yousef Ahmed Alghanim, in the university with over 50,000 books available for Palestinian students to utilize.

and Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Dr Tareq El-Sheikh signed the agreement. The memorandum focuses on promoting sustainable development in the private sector through launching projects in accordance with Kuwait vision 2035, said the two sides in a joint statement.

It also aims to encourage youth for more creativity and innovation to find modern solutions to different issues, they added. The chamber and the UN's office will organize virtual seminars to encourage the private sector to launch projects that contribute to social, economic and environmental sustainable development, they noted. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** KCCI Chairman Mohammad Al-Saqer (right) and Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Dr Tareq El-Sheikh sign the memorandum. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** CEO of stc engineer Maziad Al-Harbi honors Faisal Al-Maqseed, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Development at the Ministry of Education.



Maziad Al-Harbi and Faisal Al-Maqseed honor an outstanding student.

they have placed forth to spread a positive impact in the community."

Jasem added, "On behalf of stc, I would like to once again congratulate all the top students for their outstanding performance and academic achievements, as well as their proud families who stood by them throughout their studies. Their relentless effort is a testament to their character, and I wish them the best of luck as they move on to

their next academic journey. Building on their current academic achievements, we hope that every student selects the major they wish to pursue and feel that would benefit our society the most. Considering their roles as the future leaders of our community and economy, we would like to wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors with more successful achievements to come in their future careers."