

Local

MP targets PAM with questions on rules, property ownership

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Saleh Al-Mutairi yesterday targeted the Public Authority of Manpower and its chairman with a series of questions about regulations and properties owned by its senior employees. In his questions addressed to Commerce and Industry Minister Abdullah Al-Salman, who oversees the authority, Mutairi asked if the minister has recommended to the Cabinet to renew the tenure of the authority director for a fresh term, although he has already spent 38 years in a government job.

Mutairi asked if the reported renewal recommendation is in line with existing laws. The lawmaker asked the minister to furnish him with a list of companies, establishments, farms and factories owned by employees and senior officials of the authority and their close relatives. He also asked for a list including the names of companies whose labor recruitment files have been suspended and companies whose suspension had been lifted by orders signed by the director of the authority between 2014 and 2020. MP Mutairi said these questions will explain the problems in the population structure, heavily tilted in favor of expats, and will shed light on the "forces of corruption" blocking the solution to this problem.

On Wednesday, PAM decided to allow the transfer of workers from six sectors - industry, farming, shepherding, fishing, co-ops and free trade zones - to other jobs in the private sector. Aseel



Al-Mazyad, Official Spokesperson and PR and Media Director at PAM, said the authority has made things easier for business owners and employees amid the coronavirus pandemic, especially during the suspension of air travel, as it issued several decisions allowing the transfer of workers from sectors that were previously banned. The ban had been lifted on March 3 to allow local firms to hire labor from inside Kuwait while outside recruitment remains closed. The ban was then reinstated on July 15, before being lifted again on Wednesday.

Kuwaiti army chief, Australian commander discuss military issues

KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces Lieutenant General Sheikh Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah discussed with the Commander of the Australian Joint Task Force Brigadier General David Paddison important matters and topics of common interest, especially those related to the military. The general staff said in a press statement yesterday that Sheikh Khaled received Paddison along with his accompanying delegation during his official visit to the country.

During the meeting, the important matters and topics of common interest were discussed, where the chief of staff commended the depth of bilateral ties between both sides.

Kuwait, China willing to cement strategic partnership

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Affairs Ambassador Waleed Al-Khubaizi said yesterday Kuwait is eager to bolster bilateral relations with China in all fields. The Kuwaiti official made the remark in a speech he delivered on behalf of Foreign Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah during a virtual reception organized by the Chinese Embassy in Kuwait to mark the 72nd anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Khubaizi said Kuwait cherishes its friendship and deep and distinguished relations with China, which have greatly developed in several areas, culminating in a bilateral strategic partnership, especially in energy, trade, investment and mega development projects. He said he looks forward to seeing more joint cooperation with China in order to serve the higher interests of both friendly nations, while commending fruitful cooperation and exchange of information and expertise be-



KUWAIT: Lieutenant General Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah receives Commander of the Australian Joint Task Force Brigadier General David Paddison. — KUNA

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Army Lt Gen Fahad Al-Nasser, Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Jonathan Gilbert and several senior army commanding officers. — KUNA

tween both sides in the fight against the novel coronavirus pandemic. Khubaizi spoke highly of the amazing development and advancement made by China over the last few decades, gaining it an international status as a major influential country.

Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Li Minggang addressed the reception by regarding the year 2021 as a landmark in the history of Sino-Kuwaiti relations, recalling that bilateral diplomatic ties were forged 50 years ago. He said the relationship between China and Kuwait has ever since stood the test of time, despite international changes and fluctuations. He added that since strategic partnership ties were established between China and Kuwait in 2018, both nations have pushed forward practical cooperation in all fields.

The Chinese ambassador went on to say that both sides have worked together on the basis of team spirit to curb the impact of COVID-19, saying that Chinese companies have actively participated in the execution of over 70 projects in Kuwait. Bilateral trade exchange hit \$9.43 billion in the first half of this year, up 32.4 percent on an annual basis, he said, adding that China imported 14.18 million tons of crude oil from Kuwait, a rise of 5.71 percent, on an annual basis. He concluded by saying that China and Kuwait are willing to maintain close coordination and cooperation, work together to promote regional peace and stability and join international efforts to fight the pandemic. — KUNA

EU adds Kuwait to its safe travel list

BRUSSELS: The European Union (EU) yesterday announced that it had added Kuwait to the list of epidemiologically safe non-EU countries, for which the EU countries should reopen the borders for non-essential travel. The EU Council of Ministers in a press release said following a review under the recommendation on the gradual lifting of the temporary restrictions on non-essential travel into the EU, it updated the list of countries for which travel restrictions should be lifted.

In particular, Chile, Kuwait and Rwanda were added to the list and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Moldova were removed, it said. Based on the criteria and conditions set out in the recommendation, as from Sept 23, 2021, member states should gradually lift travel restrictions at the external borders for residents of the following non-EU countries: Australia, Canada, Chile (new), Jordan, Kuwait (new), New Zealand, Qatar, Rwanda (new), Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Ukraine, Uruguay and China, subject to confirmation of reciprocity.

The criteria to determine countries for which the current travel restrictions should be lifted were updated on May 20, 2021. They cover the epidemiological situation and overall response to COVID-19, as well as the reliability of the available information and data sources, it said. The EU Council of Ministers updates the safe travel list based on criteria relating to coronavirus infection levels every two weeks. —KUNA

News in brief

Man shoots himself

KUWAIT: An Indian resident, 31, was rushed to hospital in stable condition after shooting himself with his sponsor's shotgun. The man, who worked as a driver, had an argument with his wife, who is in India. He then took his sponsor's gun and shot himself. Investigations are being conducted.

Near drowning

A 19-month-old toddler was rushed to Farwaniya Hospital in unstable condition after he fell in a bucket of water at his home in Khaitan.

Melee at shisha cafe

A Kuwaiti man ordered shisha at a cafe, but after his order was rejected for unknown reasons, he got angry and destroyed his table. Employees subdued the man and beat him badly, breaking his foot in the process. Police arrested the employees.

Man threatens mom, aunt

A 33-year-old youth confessed to threatening his mother and maternal aunt. The man was ordered detained. A security source said a 63-year-old woman, accompanied by her 59-year-old sister, told police her son threatened to kill them. The man was contacted and asked to come to the police station, but he did not respond. After detectives arrested him, he confessed to the charges, which he said were due to a family dispute.