

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 353-355-356
ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
Email: info@kuwaittimes.com
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

In my view

Domestic violence a serious concern

By Basma Al-Mutawa

As the world continues to ease COVID-19 restrictions - a pandemic that has destroyed and killed millions of people worldwide - the gendered impact of COVID-19 has been disastrous with consequences that will affect the livelihoods of women for generations to come. Domestic violence has become a serious health concern and an even more concerning human rights violation during the COVID-19 pandemic. In numerous studies, the data proves that over half of the women surveyed experienced a form of domestic violence. The World Health Organization recognizes that 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced and been subjected to domestic violence or intimate partner violence. The reality is harsher for women in the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries. The horrific increase in the MENA area can be explained by numerous factors.

Firstly, countries in the region have had partial or complete lockdowns. The United Nations Special Rapporteur Mary Lawlor has said "the new restrictions of movement mean it's even harder for women to reach places of safety when threatened." In Lebanon, advocates claim that the cases turning up are more violent and more dangerous than the cases that they saw during both the revolution and the financial crisis. A women's inability to leave an abusive household due to COVID-19 restrictions has posed a serious threat to her safety and in some cases, her life.

Secondly, governments being overwhelmed by the pandemic can also explain the serious increase in domestic violence cases across the MENA region. The pressure on government to contain the coronavirus crisis with police resources being taken up to keep people from violating curfew rules and lockdowns, has been a double-edged sword. On one side, containing the pandemic is essential to protecting human life. And on the other side, women children and other vulnerable member of society are no longer receiving any attention. A consultant for Equality Now has said that in the MENA region governments have "completely forgotten the whole issue of the violence against women aspect of coronavirus". It is vital that attention is brought to this dire increase in domestic violence in order to protect the rights of women and to preserve human life.

Cancer patients fund thanks supporters

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Director of the cancer patients fund Jamal Al-Saleh thanked supporters of the fund which he says has been helping cancer patients for more than 15 years. He said the fund, since its founding, helped cancer patients who were dismissed from their jobs due to their illness and gave them monthly aid so that they could continue treatment without interruption. He said the fund helped needy Kuwaiti patients or their companions during treatment. The fund also helps residents who cannot afford radiation treatment, in addition to helping those who wanted to go back home.

Saleh said that the fund helped more than 5,000 patients so far, adding that the average number of cancer patients is over 2,200 patients per year, many of whom lose the source of income because of their illness. "With Allah's blessings, the fund helped hundreds of patients because of the support of benefactors, as patients recovered or improved," he said. The fund designated a special phone number for those who wish to donate and help patients: 69076269.



KUWAIT: Ministry of Commerce and Industry inspectors issued five citations for unjustified price increase during a crackdown on vegetable markets in Kabd.

Truffle on the menu in Ramadan as prices drop



KUWAIT: Pictures showing truffles on display at the main truffles market in Al-Rai. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: As the truffle season comes to an end, demand for the fungus is increasing for the Ramadan table. Desert truffles have a knack for being a tad elusive, perhaps that is why they are a favorite of Kuwaitis, and a great ingredient in Ramadan dishes. This year, the market is reportedly flooded with truffles from Iran and Libya. Kuwait Times met some truffles vendors and buyers to learn more about the truffle season this year.

Mohammad Al-Mnekher, who has bought and sold truffles for more than 15 years, told Kuwait Times the truffle season started late this year. "Usually, the truffle season starts in mid-November, but this year it started in mid-February due to lack of rain, which was behind the scarcity of truffles," he said. "Truffles that are available in the Kuwaiti market are imported from Iran, Libya and Iraq, and this year we got them from Syria. The Iranian truffles will last till the end of Ramadan," he said of his truffle selection. Prices range from KD 7 to KD 30 per kilogram depending on their quality and size, according to Mnekher.

Speaking to Kuwait Times, Yasser Al-Masri affirmed that prices have dropped significantly as the season ends, noting prices range from KD 5 to KD 30 per kilo after reaching KD 70 a few months ago. Most of the truffles in the market are imported from neighboring countries, he added, pointing out that several factors had led to an increase in prices, including high shipping costs.

Vendor Ali Al-Jabali agreed with Masri. "The increase in shipping costs increased the prices of truffles in the Kuwaiti market. Most of the truffles in the market are imported from outside Kuwait. Iranian truffles are available at a reasonable price,



but it is snowing now in Iran, so we expect more truffles to come and more drops in prices in the coming days. I believe the truffle season will last for more months this year," he said.

Early in the morning, a truffle auction is held. On Sunday, 17 kg of medium-sized Iranian truffles sold for KD 9.5, while another box of mixed sizes was sold for 8 KD. Customer Mishaal Al-Ali said prices are reasonable at the end of the truffle season, adding the zubaidi truffle is the finest and the most expensive truffle in the market. "Every season I buy truffles from Al-Rai market because it offers

different sizes. I choose them carefully for my family's Ramadan table," he added.

Another buyer, Um Mohammad, said she loves truffles and buys the smaller-sized fungi. She noted truffles are used in cooking machboos and pasta. She added she prefers Kuwaiti truffles, lamenting that only Iranian and Iraqi truffles are available at the market. Fresh truffles are only available from November to April in Kuwait, but some vendors sell a dried and frozen variation of the delicacy during the scorching summer months in a bid to meet their customers' cravings all year round.

