

Local

Panel discussion highlights importance of raising awareness on women's empowerment

Women's society hosts activists to speak on challenges



KUWAIT: (From left) Reem Al-Eidan, Asrar Hayat and Lulwa Al-Qaoud attend the panel discussion. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



A general view showing part of the audience.

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: The Women's Cultural and Social Society held on Wednesday the second meeting of the Girl's Club, under the title of 'A leader, Empowered and Able to Achieve', in the presence of the counsellor, life coach and society member Reem Al-Eidan, Secretary of Kuwait Transparency Society Asrar Hayat, and Surgeon Lulwa Al-Qaoud.

The meeting's main objective was to raise awareness on the importance of women's role in society and to educate them to be effective members of the community, Hayat told Kuwait Times. She added that the main issue she discussed in the meeting was to explain the challenges that face women in society and the ways to confront them.

She pointed out that anyone who tries to differentiate between men and women is either a person who lacks awareness, or someone who has certain political agendas, citing what is currently happening in the parliament, and saying that those with prejudiced opinions are considered to be dissonant voices that should not be paid attention to. "The Kuwaiti constitution and the Islamic religion do not

differentiate between men and women in terms of rights or duties," she stated.

Hayat stressed the importance of women focusing on achieving their goals and ambitions, and not paying attention to the many obstacles that may stand in front of them as long as their behaviors do not go out of public taste, or do not cause any harm to anyone. She said that women must determine their own future and defend who they want to be someday, because they are the only ones who will live through the challenges that accompany their choices.

"Any change in the world faces resistance," Hayat said. "There are those who resist technology, science and development, and there are those who resist women, while there are those who resist change in general, and not women themselves. Therefore, most men stand by the side of women,

while those who stand against them are a small group who do not represent the majority."

She mentioned that the new generation of girls still needs to be educated about the importance of empowering women in society, especially since information has become easily available with the technological development and social media. She called on girls to stay away from being preoccupied with material temptations on social media and to seek a good education that guarantees them a better future.

Remarkable confidence

Meanwhile, Eidan told us that during the meeting, the girls' confidence in themselves and their awareness of the importance of empowering women was remarkable. She pointed out that she noticed that the participants have a clear idea

about their future goals and an awareness of all political and economic conditions that the world is going through despite their young age.

"This meeting was a track adjustment for the participants' ambitions, and aims to enhance their confidence in their abilities through a dialogue session in which we talked about their rights and duties, as well as empowerment, health and legal awareness," Eidan mentioned. "We made sure to enhance the spirit of citizenship and the importance of their role in the development of the country, as well as confronting corruption through academic empowerment and community participation."

In the meantime, Qaoud talked about her work experience in the medical field and discussed with the participants the challenges she faced as a female surgeon. Qaoud stressed while talking to the participants the importance of being able to deal with the professional pressures they may face in the future, while she told Kuwait Times that the Kuwaiti society has become more open to supporting women's aspirations, calling on girls to insist on achieving all their dreams.



"Any change in the world faces resistance"

Beat your eyes' allergies

By Dr Ahmad Abbadi

KUWAIT: Allergies are the body's immune system reaction to foreign substances, such as dust. The immune system which is your defense system is known to protect the body from anything that might threaten it. As a result, when you come into contact with a foreign substance, your immune system will produce specific materials known as antibodies that will search for those substances and label them as dangerous, even though they are not. Thus, you will get allergies that might irritate your eyes, resulting in allergic conjunctivitis.

Allergic conjunctivitis is a medical term used to describe allergies of the transparent layer that lines the eyelids and eyeball, known as the conjunctiva. The conjunctiva has two main functions, providing protection and lubrication by producing tears and mucus. Thus, preventing foreign substances such as allergens from entering the eye. If the eyes come in contact with something that might initiate an allergic conjunctivitis episode, the function of the conjunctiva will be compromised.

There are many things that might cause allergic conjunctivitis. For example, items that we use on daily basis such as, makeup set, perfume, detergents, contact lenses and hair shampoo. However, some patients might be allergic to pets, for instance cats, dogs and birds. In addition, some patients might experience seasonal allergies resulting in allergic conjunctivitis, especially during the Summer due to dust storms and in Autumn due to pollens. Furthermore, allergic conjunctivitis might be a result of indirect contact with the eyes, through insect bites or pest repellent.

Allergic conjunctivitis have two main types. Firstly, acute allergic conjunctivitis which is a condition that occurs suddenly and for a short period of time. In comparison to, chronic allergic conjunctivitis

that is less common and happens year-round.

Allergic conjunctivitis is relatively common, it effects nearly 40 percent of the general population, especially during hay fever season, however not all patients might experience the same symptoms. Some of the common symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis include, red, itchy or swollen eyes, excessive tearing, swollen eyelids and sensitivity to light.

If allergic conjunctivitis are suspected, patients are advised to visit their near ophthalmologist to get their eyes checked. The doctor will take a detailed history from the patient to figure out the source of allergies. In addition, the doctor will examine the patient's eyes using a device with a light that does not touch the eyes directly. It might also include putting some drops onto the eyes of the patient

to examine them properly, that might sting a bit. In chronic allergic conjunctivitis, doctors might decide to perform some blood tests to determine the source of allergies and treat

them accordingly.

After a thorough examination of the eyes, the doctor will provide the optimal treatment plan that might include keeping a protective distance from the sources of allergies, eye drops or and tablets to resolve the episode of allergic conjunctivitis.

Allergic conjunctivitis like all medical conditions has its complications. Although seasonal and year-round allergies might cause eyes discomfort while preforming your daily activities, they usually clear up completely in a short period of time without complications. Nevertheless, in severe cases of allergic conjunctivitis, patients might develop ulcers or scarring of the eyes due to the excessive itching of the eyeballs, which can lead to long-term damage to vision. Thus, patients are advised to visit their eye doctor if they are experiencing allergic conjunctivitis symptoms for some time, to help them elevate their symptoms and to preserve their eyesight.

- Dr Ahmad Abbadi is an Assistant Registrar Ophthalmologist at Al-Bahar Eye Centre



KUWAIT: A picture showing the difference between a normal eye (left) and an eye with allergic conjunctivitis.



KUWAIT: Shiite Muslims gather to listen to a cleric recite the story of Ashura, in Kuwait City on August 3, 2022. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat