

Local

# Refugees' numbers worldwide doubled in a decade: UNHCR Representative to Kuwait

## UNHCR office in Kuwait hosts 'World Refugee Day' event

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: UNHCR held an event on Monday to commemorate World Refugee Day, which is marked on June 20 every year, under the slogan "Whoever. Wherever. Whenever. Everyone has the right to seek safety." The event was attended by UNHCR partners from the government, private and charitable sectors, and representatives of diplomatic missions and international organizations. It featured a group of artists displaying paintings that reflected this year's theme for World Refugee Day.

UNHCR Representative to Kuwait Nasrin Rabian said the number of refugees and displaced persons worldwide reached a record high by the end of 2021 at 8 percent, more than double the figure 10 years ago. "This year's World Refugee Day is quite different from any other year due to the efforts to provide protection and solutions for refugees," she said.

"In addition to persecution, refugees and displaced persons face extreme poverty, insecurity, more hunger and displacement, severe shortages of health and medical services and a lack of funding for humanitarian operations due to the economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent conflicts and wars that suddenly broke out in Afghanistan, Ukraine and others," Rabian pointed out.

### 42 percent

According to UNHCR's Global Trends report for this month, children account for 42 percent of all refugees and displaced persons. Low- and middle-income countries hosted 83 percent of refugees, while LDCs granted asylum to 27 percent of the total. The report revealed 72 percent of refugees live in countries neighboring their countries of origin, with Turkey hosting nearly 3.8 million refugees, the largest number of refugees worldwide, followed by Uganda (1.5 million), Pakistan (1.5 million) and



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah speaks during the event. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



Nasrin Rabian, UNHCR representative to Kuwait, makes her address.



A general view of guests in attendance.

Germany (1.3 million). Colombia hosts 1.8 million Venezuelans displaced outside their homeland.

The report shows that Lebanon also hosts the largest number of refugees per capita (1 out of 8), followed by Jordan (1 out of 14) and Turkey (1 out of 23), in proportion to the number of their citizens. Aruba hosted the largest number of displaced

Venezuelans (1 in 6), followed by Curacao Island (1 in 10), compared to their populations. Meanwhile the report mentioned that more than two-thirds of refugees (69 percent) come from only five countries - Syria (6.8 million), Venezuela (4.6 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), South Sudan (2.4 million) and Myanmar (1.2 million).

Rabian stressed the importance of joint efforts with all partners from countries, governments, individuals, charities and the private sector to support humanitarian activities in order to alleviate the suffering of people under UNHCR's mandate and to meet their emergency needs in more than 137 countries and regions where UNHCR operates, to build humanitarian relations with these people as well as to secure a future for them.

### Providing support

Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah said: "Since joining the United Nations, Kuwait has been keen to provide all aspects of support and assistance to the activities undertaken and sponsored by the organization and its specialized agencies, especially in the humanitarian, development and relief fields, and it has spared no effort in providing various types of political, material and moral support to refugees and displaced persons around the world."

He added: "The violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that refugees around the world are subjected to, especially in our region, which is riddled with conflicts, and the scarcity of resources and the need for shelter, food, education, health and other basic requirements for human life, calls for a serious stance from the international community to work on the need to address the roots of conflicts."

Jarallah called for supporting political tracks, preventive diplomacy and obligating parties involved in conflicts to assume their duties towards protecting civilians, allowing the entry of humanitarian aid to those who deserve it, and respecting the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and human rights principles. He urged the international community to activate international mechanisms to criminalize all internationally prohibited acts, stressing that impunity from punishment cannot be an option in armed conflict.

## Kuwait's outdoor labor ban: 730 violations in June

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: According to resolution no. 535/2015, workers are prohibited to work in open areas in direct sunlight from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm from June till August to guarantee the health and safety of all workers at worksites and to abide by international work regulations and subsidiary laws. But many companies violate the Public Authority of Manpower's (PAM) decision and continue to force workers to work in open areas and construction sites.

Abdulrazzaq Al-Azazi, Communication Officer at

Kuwait Society for Human Rights (KSHR), told Kuwait Times that the KSHR team goes on field trips to monitor violations. The number of violations has reached 730 in June, with 254 construction workers, 272 delivery workers, 113 cleaners, 27 road construction workers and 64 house security guards found working in the heat.

Azazi said the team observes and reports the violations, both the ones they witness during the field tours or reported by people who record the violations and tag the society. "We have 'The Heat Kills Them' campaign that allows people to tag us and contact the authorities to report



Abdulrazzaq Al-Azazi

the violation," he said.

Azazi noted that the campaign launched by the KSHR to monitor violations is a contribution by the society to support government efforts in addressing violations that workers are exposed to while performing their work, in addition to involving the community in monitoring violations and informing the competent authorities.

"KSHR received today a complaint about a medical test center for expatriate workers in Al-Sabah Health Zone, where people are asked to stand in queues outside the center in the heat of the sun with their children, which is unacceptable," he pointed out.

Since June 1, PAM has been conducting surprise campaigns to round up violators who do not comply with the authority's decision to make sure the law is applied. It enforces the ban on employees working under direct sunlight, and ensures that the work is shifted to the evening, calling on people to contact the hotline 99523590 to report any violations.

## Manpower authority hosts program for Kuwaiti fresh graduates



By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: To encourage young Kuwaitis to work in the private sector, the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) held the 'My Path to Professionalism' (Masari) program for two days in cooperation with INJAZ Kuwait. This program aims to rehabilitate

young Kuwaitis and fresh graduates from both genders to improve their skills through training courses and workshops on various topics including time management, preparing for job interviews, creating a CV to get a job, actively working in a competitive work environment and providing a complete explanation of the private sector and its benefits.



Fifty-four participants attended this program. At the end of the course, all participants received accredited certificates from INJAZ Kuwait. INJAZ is a non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) driven by Kuwait's private sector to deliver educational programs and empower the youth of Kuwait to be able to build a successful future.

## Flour mills company to reduce animal feed production

KUWAIT: Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company informed the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources that it is compelled to reduce the amount of shuwar (wheat bran) used as feed to 4,000 tons per month instead of 6,750 tons starting from July 1 until further notice, informed sources told Kuwait Times. The company justified its decision to a decline in sale of flour, which is linked to the production of shuwar, adding current rates of flour production does not allow the company to supply shuwar at the current rate. Shuwar is a byproduct resulting from grinding wheat, which makes it linked to the production of flour, and it is not a ready product for packing and delivery. PAAAFR sources expected KFMB to increase feed prices, and this will make the authority look for other options to provide feed at suitable prices and prevent a monopoly.

## Ministry reaches agreements with suppliers to maintain food stocks

KUWAIT: A commerce and industry ministry committee is satisfied with the availability of foodstuff and their strategic stocks, ensuring their availability in the Kuwait market at suitable prices, despite current fluctuations around the world that negatively affected food prices, with many countries refraining from exporting important products.

The committee said in a report to Commerce Minister Fahad Al-Shuraian, which will be submitted during the next meeting of the committee on food security at the Council of Ministers, that the ministry succeeded in agreeing with suppliers to direct their shipments to Kuwait, as competition is heated between many countries,

adding frozen chicken is among the products that faced shortages in local markets.

It was also officially agreed with India to supply wheat to Kuwait and make it available for Kuwait Flour Mills, which will increase production when necessary, and it has the capacity to do so, informed sources told Kuwait Times. The committee said most products find their way to Kuwait easily, which means there is no need for a rise in prices and monopolization, as inspection teams continue their work and punish violators. It said the commerce ministry succeeded in convincing suppliers to increase their shipments to Kuwait after guaranteeing payments within one month of delivery of the shipment.

### In my view

## Multinational companies

By Yousuf Awadh Al-Azmi

local@kuwaittimes.com

"If you're changing the world, you're working on important things." - Larry Page

There are gigantic capitalist entities representing a multinational and transcontinental private sector. They are companies that spread around the world due to their efficiency in their fields, and they have capitals that equal countries' budgets if not more - rather there are companies that became a symbol of economic liberalism, which is one of the political and economic doctrines. What are known as multinational transcontinental companies are playing roles that are considered soft power in certain approaches, be they economic, social or cultural.

In the energy sectors, we see an influential global presence of companies whose budgets are equal to that of countries. In the food sector, there are many transcontinental trademarks. Major multinational companies look for certain facilities, without which it will be difficult to enter the local market of a country. Among the most important facilities are political stability and security, the legal and organizational environment (legislations), size of the local market, total economy stability, exchange rates, material infrastructure, competitive and low tax rates, possibility of getting land and real estate assets, presence of attractive financial channels, skilled low-cost labor and other things companies look for.

There are those who are apprehensive towards these types of companies, due to their influence over several things, such as their control of the market in which they operate due to the huge facilities they possess. Also, there are those who believe that the entrance of such companies cannot be without a certain political cover, and in this particular case, it is mostly alluded to bribing influential politicians or a form of administrative and financial corruption, which allows these companies to control the fields they operate in the market. Of course, not all that is said is true, and there must be exceptions. There must be honest parties who lead countries' economies.

There are those who link the spread of gigantic companies with globalization, and that the world has become a small village. There are those who confirm the world has even become a small room. Of course, there is no doubt about the truth and reality of this linkage, yet what are the effects of the penetration of these large capitalist companies with huge resources on the local trade? Will it be motivational and boost the interest of all, or will they take everything, or sway the market according to their moves?

The talk is too much about this, and dealing with these companies is supposed to be professional considering the fluctuations of the world economy and requirements of the local one, by passing legislations that strike a balance between supply and demand, and decide on the investor with what agrees with the country's laws and free competition. We must not be afraid of the investor in a way that is not constructive and does not present any benefit; rather we should deal in a way that preserves the right of all, and the first of these rights is a clean judiciary that deals with people equally, with flexible legislations, and a financial and administrative infrastructure that accepts all.