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Summer means suffering for workers in intense Gulf heat

Last 10 years hottest in Kuwait • Heat unbearable even in the shade



KUWAIT: Cars drive along a highway in low visibility conditions due to a dust storm on June 26, 2022. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: Although summer has only just begun, temperatures have already topped 50 degrees Celsius in parts of the Gulf, one of the world's hottest and driest regions, which is bearing the brunt of climate change. Summer means suffering for anyone working outside, along with risks of dehydration, heat stroke and heart failure, and Gulf countries have banned working outside in the hottest hours of the day.

On the first day of summer last Tuesday, temperatures reached 50 degrees Celsius in many places, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which recorded in May the hottest temperature of the month worldwide, 53.2 degrees Celsius. "The last 10 years have been the hottest seen in Kuwait," said Kuwaiti meteorologist Issa Ramadan, adding: "Summer in Kuwait now extends to September, and sometimes to parts of October."

Last year, a World Health Organization report found the risk of death doubling or tripling on extremely hot days in Kuwait, with a disproportionate effect on expat men, who make up the bulk of outdoor

workers. Workers from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are ubiquitous in the oil-rich Gulf countries, providing cheap labor and filling the jobs shunned by citizens in favor of high-paying government positions.

Like millions of other migrant laborers in the construction worker B Sajay does not welcome summer. "We work in very high temperatures, this is the nature of our work. And yes, we suffer from severe heat," the Indian national told AFP in Muscat, the capital of Oman. "The only thing that relieves us is the period of rest... in the middle of the day," said Sajay, who has been working on building sites for six years.

The imported laborers typically work on construction sites or collect rubbish, sweep the roads or deliver food. Between June and August, the oil-producing Gulf countries - Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman - ban working outside for about four hours starting from noon. Workers return to their dormitories or nestle in any shade they can find.

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18 students score 100%, including first Kuwaiti

KUWAIT: At least 18 students, including Kuwaiti student Joud Abdullah Al-Mutairi, graduated from high school with full marks. The ministry of education announced Sunday the lists of grade 12 achievers from public and private Arabic schools, including an unprecedented 18 science students who notched a GPA of 100 percent. In the arts stream, the top 10 students had a GPA of over 99 percent. Joud is the first Kuwaiti student to graduate with a 100 percent result in Kuwait's history. Education Minister Ali Al-Mudhaf broke the news to Joud, who said she plans to study medicine at Kuwait University. Rawan Hafez Nasser Abdulaziz was first among Kuwaiti students in the arts stream with a GPA of 99.64 percent.

MoH aims to restrict clinics to Kuwaitis

KUWAIT: Senior officials revealed that the government's plan to restrict public hospitals, polyclinics and health centers to Kuwaitis only is still among the main goals of the workplan of the government and health ministry, but practical means to achieve this target are not available yet.

Allies 'won't splinter', Biden vows at G7

ELMAU CASTLE, Germany: World powers on Sunday agreed to ban gold exports from Russia, kicking off a G7 meeting aimed at taking new steps to deplete Moscow's war chest and bolster Ukraine's defenses. US President Joe Biden and his counterparts from the world's most industrialized nations are gathering at Elmau Castle in the German Alps before they continue on to Madrid

for talks with NATO partners. They said the plan aims at treating residents in the private sector, while public hospitals will be for citizens only, after criticisms by Kuwaitis of delays in obtaining appointments due to the large number of residents, whose numbers are double that of citizens, at the expense of services provided to Kuwaitis. This apart from the pressure on the ministry's services and its infrastructure and its increasing budget every year.

The sources said among the reasons for not implementing the plan to treat expats in private clinics is that the health infrastructure of the private

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KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Khaled Al-Saeed inaugurates the fifth expat examination center at Mishref Fairgrounds with a daily capacity of 1,000 cases on June 26, 2022. (See Page 3)



ELMAU CASTLE, Germany: (From left) European Council President Charles Michel, Italy's Prime Minister Mario Draghi, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, France's President Emmanuel Macron, Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz, US President Joe Biden, Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen pose for a family photo during the G7 Summit on June 26, 2022. — AFP

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Egypt tries man over murder of female student

MANSOURA, Egypt: A trial began Sunday for an Egyptian man accused of stabbing a woman to death in a public street after she rejected his advances - a case that has sparked widespread out-

rage. A video went viral last week appearing to show the victim, identified as student Nayera Ashraf, being stabbed by a young man outside her university. The crime has triggered widespread anger both in Egypt and beyond, having been followed a few days later by a similar incident in which Jordanian student Iman Irshaid was shot dead on a university campus.

Social media users immediately drew comparisons between the two murders, decrying cases of femicide in the Arab world. At the Mansoura Criminal Court, 130 km north of Cairo, Mohamed

Adel was accused of "premeditated murder", after confessing to intentionally killing the victim, an AFP correspondent said. Ashraf had previously reported the alleged perpetrator to the authorities, fearing that he would attack her, according to her father and witnesses.

The maximum penalty for murder is death in Egypt, which carried out the third highest number of executions in the world in 2021, according to Amnesty International. "He stabbed her several times," said the prosecution, which found "messages"

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News in brief

Apple Pay to launch soon

KUWAIT: The ministry of finance and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority have reached an agreement to launch Apple Pay in Kuwait soon. The two sides are currently working on removing obstacles that had prevented launching the service in Kuwait. (See Page 3)

Iraqi PM visits Saudi, Iran

RIYADH: Iraq's prime minister met Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the kingdom Sunday as part of Baghdad's efforts to mediate between Riyadh and Tehran. Mustafa Al-Kadhemi visited Iran later Sunday. Prince Mohammed and Kadhemi addressed "bilateral relations and opportunities for joint cooperation", reported the official Saudi Press Agency. — AFP