

Local

Kuwait restaurants hike prices as Russia-Ukraine war rages

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Some restaurants in Kuwait hiked their prices recently, claiming that prices of commodities have increased amid the war in Ukraine, especially of wheat and cooking oil. But according to the Consumer Protection Association (CPA), a restaurant is only allowed to increase prices equivalent to the increase in the price of a commodity.

"Restaurants are allowed to increase prices of certain dishes in case the prices of raw materials they use in this dish have increased. So for instance if the price of oil rises by 20 percent, they can only increase the price of fries by 20 percent (from say 500 fils to 600 fils). But if the restaurant hikes prices higher than this rate, they can be penalized," President of CPA Mishal Al-Manea told Kuwait Times.

The exception is for sandwiches whose prices have been fixed since the 1980s. These include falafel (100 fils) and omelet (120 fils) sandwiches. "These sandwiches should maintain their price regardless of any increase in the prices of raw materials. But the restaurant is allowed to sell a special form of these sandwiches with more stuffings, such as super falafel or extra omelet, but is obliged to provide the basic sandwich," explained Manea.

The classification of a restaurant's commercial license dictates any changes in its activity or meals. "For instance, a snack restaurant is not allowed to remove the falafel or omelet sandwich from their menu. But if the restaurant's license is a general one, they can stop selling these sandwiches. The restaurant can also change their concept without the ministry's approval, for example, from Arabic to Chinese cuisine," he said.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has a special department for evaluating and inspecting prices at restaurants. "The inspectors working in this department go on regular inspections in all governorates and do price surveys of the menus of restaurants. If the restaurant raises prices based on the increase in prices of commodities, and the price of a commodity drops, then the restaurant is obliged to drop their prices too," stressed Manea. Some restaurants have found a trick to bypass the law. Instead of raising prices, they have changed the meal or sandwich to a smaller size. It's a way to



Mishal Al-Manea



Union of consumer co-operative societies headquarters.

hold on to their customers by showing they haven't increased their prices.

The inspectors also monitor prices at supermarkets and co-ops. "At the co-ops, the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies monitors prices, which should be unified at all co-ops. But traders are demanding liberalization. The ministry has proposed an alternative solution to protect the

consumer against any price hikes - the suppliers will be allowed to display their goods without paying the extra fee they are paying now to the co-ops. They will also be relieved from the obligation of giving freebies to the co-op.

This will relieve the trader of extra expenses and will balance the increase of prices in the countries of origin," Manea told Kuwait Times.

MoH launches new health services for the bedridden

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Khaled Al-Saeed has announced the launch of a new service for the bedridden that includes home visits part of integrated multiple health care services within the framework of achieving goals of the development plan of New Kuwait Vision 2035. Al-Saeed affirmed in a press statement, Thursday, the new service aimed at achieving the objectives of sustainable development, and is based on the ministry's keenness to ensure that everyone leads a healthy life.

The service will include periodic medical assessments to follow up on patients with chronic conditions, review medicines and treatments, provide oral and dental services, physiotherapy, and nutrition, noted Al-Saeed. He praised the role of the Central Administration of Primary Health Care for launching

the new service, noting that health care centers are the first line of defense for the health system.

In a similar statement, Director of the Central Department of Primary Health Care Dr Alia Al-Dhubaib said teams would pay the home visit consisting of a family doctor, dentist, physiotherapist, pharmacist, nurse, laboratory technician and nutrition specialist.

Dr Al-Dhubaib said that obtaining the service is either by applying through the website or by requesting the service through the health center according to the area of residence. The preparations for providing this service are completed, and it is limited to periodic visits and not emergency cases, she added, stressing the ministry's keenness to provide the service with the best quality standards. —KUNA

'Basic course in Environment Information'

KUWAIT: Director of Public Relations and Information Department at the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Sheikha Al-Ibrahim said EPA plans to hold a training course on Environment Information in Cooperation with Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) under the patronage of EPA Chairman and Director General Sheikh Abdallah Al-Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, adding that the environment media in Kuwait and Arab World is in need of development and to move towards professionalism. She said this training course is titled the

"Basic Course in Environment information", and will continue for five days from May 15th until May 19th, at EPA building in Shuwaikh and will include various media subjects such as preparing the news item, journalistic information in service the environment in addition to the art of writing the environmental story.

She said, among the course's goals is to enhance the competence of EPA'S PR employees' government departments and NGOs, by qualifying specialized media journalists in the environmental field, who have enough knowledge of environment science in addition to professionalism in media in general.

Al-Ibrahim said, this training course comes with EPA'S keenness to cooperate with various organizations, including NGOs in order to develop work regarding the protection of environment and develop the environmental issue in various fields. —KUNA



KUWAIT: File photo captures a sudden dust storm that dropped visibility under 500 meters. The Meteorological Department has predicted that the weather would witness active northwesterly winds with dust storm. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Meteorological Department predicts dusty, hot weather

KUWAIT : The Meteorological Department has predicted that the weather would witness active

northwesterly winds, sometimes reaching the edge of the storm, causing dust and significantly reducing horizontal visibility starting in the morning tomorrow, until the day after tomorrow. The sea waves will rise above six feet, and the intensity will gradually decrease, starting from Saturday night. The expected minimum temperature is between 20 and 23 degrees Celsius, and the sea will be light to moderate, rising later, and the wave height between 2 and 6 feet. —KUNA



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Society of Engineers honors the winners of the fourth edition of its photography competition. The ceremony included a special honor for the creative Kuwaiti photographer Majid Al Zaabi, who won the award for the best wildlife picture in the world last year by the British Museum of Nature History, topping the cover of the museum's annual edition with his winning picture of the meditating gorilla (Kapandi). —AFP

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