

Local

'Manpower' refutes accusations of causing gas stations' labor shortage

Labor assessment policy unchanged for years

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: People have been complaining of waiting in long queues at fuel stations around Kuwait. The reason given is that the petrol pumps are not fully operational due to a great shortage of staff. The stations blamed the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) of not allowing them to recruit staff from abroad, claiming the staff available in Kuwait are not trained for this job.

After Kuwait Times contacted PAM, it issued a statement clarifying that reports published in some papers and on social media on importing labor for fuel stations is not accurate. PAM assured its decisions have been consistent since 2015, and that the list of needs assessment issued by the authority since 2016 has not witnessed any fundamental changes, whether related to fuel companies or other employers. All companies and employers are subject to the labor law in the private sector.

In the statement, PAM also clarified that none of these companies have contacted the authority

regarding this problem. Most of these companies have suitable needs assessment for their commercial activities, which was issued based on the demand submitted by the representatives of these companies.

The statement included the exact number of needs assessment of each of the fuel station companies. One had permission to hire 892 workers, but the company only recruited 412 workers from abroad, while the actual number of workers is 530 workers presently. This means their unused needs assessment is of 362 workers.

Another fuel company was given a needs assessment of 710 workers, but the company only recruited 342 workers on work permits from abroad, while their actual number of workers is currently 567. So their unused needs assessment is of 143 workers. PAM concluded the statement by assuring that its doors are open to welcome both employers and employees at its various locations or on its social media channels.

Kuwait Times tried to contact three fuel station



Records show companies can still recruit labor



KUWAIT: Vehicles lined up at a gas station in Jahra on May 29, 2022. —Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

companies for the past two days, but none of them responded or agreed to give a statement or comment on this issue. On Monday, Kuwait National

Petroleum Company issued a statement that no extra changes will be applied for filling up fuel, and that self service will be voluntary.

Kuwait chief lawmaker sees imminent Schengen visa exemption deal

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said on Monday that a number of his fellow lawmakers are heading to Belgium in a bid to finalize a deal on allowing Kuwaitis visa-free travel to Schengen countries. The lawmakers will join a vote in the Belgian capital Brussels, alongside their counterparts from the European Union's (EU) legislative arm, on whether to

greenlight the move, he said in a statement. On the outcome of the vote, he expressed "confidence" that it would pan out in Kuwait's favor, thanks largely to its solid relations with EU member states. The European Commission said last month that it would include Kuwait in its list of nations whose citizens are granted visa-free travel to the EU's Schengen zone. —KUNA



Marzouq Al-Ghanem

Kuwait works with WB to implement national youth policy

KUWAIT: Director General of Kuwait's Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Dr Mishal Al-Shahin said the Authority cooperates with the World Bank to implement the projects listed in the national policy for training and employing the youth. The policy aims also to increase the number of beneficiaries from

the capacity building programs and measure the efficacy of the youth projects, he said in a statement on Sunday. A technical team from the WB attended meetings with PAY to explore areas of cooperation and assess the assistance the Bank could offer to PAY in the framework of Kuwait-WB partnership (2021-2025), he noted. The partnership has two axes - investment in human resources, and empowering the private sector to drive economic growth and create job opportunities, Al-Shahin revealed. He added that the WB team praised the progress made by PAY in supporting the youth and empowering them, and the great efforts being made to implement the youth-oriented programs. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait Aliya Mawani visited Kuwait Times on Monday and met with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Exhibition celebrates 200 years of Kuwait, France friendship

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The French Research Center of the Arabian Peninsula (CEFREPA) organized on Sunday an exhibition titled "France and Kuwait: a Friendship of More Than Two Centuries" in cooperation with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) at the National Library of Kuwait.

In a press statement, French Ambassador to Kuwait Claire Le Flecher praised the excellent and historical relations that unite the two countries in various fields, saying the close relations between Kuwait and France have been manifested among others by the growth in efforts to bring about collaboration in sectors and solid ties.

Le Flecher noted the depth of the joint relations and cooperation between the two countries in military, political and cultural fields, along with strong economic relations since the Kuwaitis' trade in pearls before the discovery of oil. She stressed the exhibition came as part of the 60th anniversary of distinguished diplomatic relations between France and Kuwait, indicating the exhibition showcases the beginning of non-diplomatic relations between the two sides, which was written by several French travelers who roamed the region in the past, in addition to France's early interest in the Arabian Gulf region and Kuwaitis' desire to establish ties with the French.

Director of CEFREPA Makram Abbes said the exhibition sheds light on the history of Kuwaiti-French relations since the 17th century by French

cartographer Nicolas Sanson, where the exhibition aimed to explore available documents and unpublished archives that showcase the depth of relations between the two countries.

"Archived documents, maps, photographs and videos show a memory of moments and historical ties in the past - a lasting friendship that unfolds throughout several contexts and fields, encompassing not only politico-military contacts but also cultural influences, scientific collaborations as well as economic relations," he added.

Sheikh Duaij Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah expressed joy to attend the exhibition, praising the efforts exerted in holding it to present the hidden history of Kuwait. "We hope such exhibitions continue. I wish other countries organize similar exhibitions to showcase the history of the relationship of Kuwait with other countries," he said, stressing that this initiative is a great step in the direction of developing bilateral relations with France.

The exhibition showcases joint relations after the discovery of oil in Kuwait and technological and scientific cooperation, which supported the economic relations between the two countries, in addition to the start of diplomatic relations after Kuwait's independence. It highlights the French-Kuwaiti archaeological mission that carried out excavations on Failaka Island.

The exhibition also highlights certain unpublished documents thematically. It shows the longest first French text written on Kuwait and the Arab Gulf in 1902 by French traveler Gaston Bordat and features French-speaking sources, which like the Cairo magazine Images, address different scenes of life in the country like pearl diving and discovery of oil. Other materials are from the collection of the French National Audiovisual Institute (INA) and photographs and diplomatic documents from French National Archives.



KUWAIT: French Ambassador to Kuwait Claire Le Flecher inaugurates the exhibition. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



The late Yousuf Al-Alyan, founder and former Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times, appears in a documentary film shown at the exhibition.



From the exhibition.

Info Minister meets Tomooh delegation

KUWAIT: Information and Culture Minister Dr Hamad Rouhaddeen received a delegation from Tomooh Sport Club including Deputy Chairwoman Huda Al-Khaldi, Secretary General Sadiqa Al-Ansari, Assistant Secretary Fahad Al-Sahly along with players Sheikha Al-Hindi, Mariam Thiyab, Haidar Al-Demnkhi and Nasser Al-Hashimi.

The two sides discussed several issues related to the activities of the club and means of supporting sports of the disabled. They also discussed local and foreign participations as well as programs and initiatives the club will carry out.

Huda Al-Khaldi thanked Information Minister for his gesture and his affirmation that Information Ministry will spare no effort in extending all types of support and removing all obstacles to enable the club carry out its mission. The players thanked the minister for the distinguished role the ministry is playing to spread awareness about disabilities in general and mental disability in particular.

