

Overspending becoming a habit during Ramadan

30 days of financial and social extravagance

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: Ramadan, which is a holy month for Muslims where they fast from sunrise to sunset for 30 days, has turned over time to a month that has a different purpose, away from Islamic practices. It has become a month that includes various celebrations and cultural events, diverging from the main goal of empathizing with needy people who don't have enough food and provisions to survive.

In Kuwait, several celebrations have started to be highlighted more in the past few years, such as the ghabqa, which is a gathering held between the time of breaking the fast and sunrise; Girgian, mainly a celebration for children, when people distribute candy to them over three days; and iftar gatherings, where people eat their first meal after fasting, not to mention the recent trend of Ramadan home decor.

These gatherings and events give

people a good vibe during the month and help them forget the hardship of fasting, but are becoming a way to show off and cost people too much money, turning into a financial and social extravagance. Kuwait Times asked people for their opinion about the extra expenses and asked them how much Ramadan cost them this year.

Manal Assad, an expat, said she spent almost KD 100 on Ramadan clothes like the daraa, which is a traditional dress in Gulf countries, along with accessories. But probably she will not be able to wear them during next Ramadan, because she will "need to have a different look." Assad explained there is also a weekly iftar gathering, which costs more than KD 200 to invite the family, in addition to expenses of Girgian. She said although she did not spend much this year on it, total expenses reached KD 400 for all events and gatherings this Ramadan.

Abbar Abdullah, a citizen, said she also spent almost KD 400, but only on cele-

brating Girgian this year, noting that her friends spend triple this amount in a day to enjoy Girgian, as they consider it a social obligation that must be held every year, but expenses differ from one year to another. "Unfortunately, this celebration has turned into a competition between grownups away from the basic goal of bringing joy to children," she rued.

Abdullah added that her friends book lounges and pay thousands to celebrate for one day only, pointing out that some celebrations include people distributing one gram of gold as a souvenir for the guests, saying this behavior is only for competition and showing off and is not the core principle of Ramadan and Girgian.

On the other hand, Fatima Hussain, also a Kuwaiti, said she rejects all these behaviors due to the huge waste that remains after events, whether food, candy or drinks. She pointed out that many people prefer simplicity in celebrating, as these gatherings and events are a tra-



ditional habit that have a cultural value, whether for adults or children, stressing it should be far from spending lots of money on useless things. "It's better to give it to needy people or save it to spend it on other useful things," she said.

Sharing household chores sets a good example for kids

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Men helping with household chores is an important aspect of creating a balanced and equitable household environment. In the Middle East, home duties have historically been thought of as "women's work", yet this viewpoint is out of date and discriminatory. Regardless of established gender roles, both men and women should participate in household duties and obligations.

Speaking to Kuwait Times, Omar Daly said a healthy relationship is to share the responsibility with your partner. "It is not a shame for someone to help his wife raise the children, help in chores or prepare milk for the baby. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the best example in his treatment of his family. It is sunnah to help the wife in the housework," he said. "Aisha bint Abu Bakr (RA) used to tell that the Prophet (PBUH) was at the service of his family, mending shoes, sweeping the house, sewing clothes and milking the sheep, meaning he helped his wives in all their household chores," Daly added.

"No matter how long you've been married, it's important that the division of household chores and responsibilities doesn't get neglected. Otherwise, the burden of it all is usually dumped on one person. This cannot be a permanent arrangement because eventually the person doing it all will burn out and stop contributing to the household altogether or live miserably in silence," Ayman Al-Othman said. "Spouses



sharing housework equally shows there is a certain amount of respect in the relationship. Both partners are working nowadays — both should be equally involved in what goes on at home, it is honestly the bare minimum," he pointed out.

On the other hand, some criticized men who share chores, saying such behavior is uncivilized if done in public, and shows a lack of respect for Middle Eastern society. "As a mother, I feel ashamed if I let my husband clean or feed the baby. It is the mother's responsibility and that is what we have learned. But he can help with some housework," Um Abdullah, a mother of a newborn, said. She added the main role of the man is to cover household expenses, while the role of the woman inside her home is to maintain tranquility for her and her family.

Sharing household chores sets a good example for children. Khider Fatafta, a teenager, told Kuwait

Times that seeing his father help his mother proves that men are not 'above' any household work. "Helping is not something to be ashamed about, but is a cause of happiness for your beloved ones."

Meanwhile, Saud Khalid said: "The male ego should hold no importance in this context. Helping with chores can strengthen the relationship between partners, as well as their children. It can demonstrate to their loved ones that they are willing to contribute to the household and help support them. Also, it can improve communication and reduce stress for the other partner, while enhancing the sense of self-worth that gives a sense of accomplishment and purpose. But the concept of division of household chores is completely absent in marriages in Kuwait." Overall, men helping with household chores is a step towards creating a more equal and harmonious home environment, which should be encouraged and celebrated.

Kuwait's envoy to US presents credentials



WASHINGTON: Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States of America Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah presented a copy of her credentials to Chief of Protocol of the United States Rufus Gifford in a meeting in Washington on Monday. "She expressed hopes that Kuwait and the United States remain strong strategic partners, and said she looks forward to developing the deep ties between the two nations," Kuwait's embassy said on its Twitter account. — Agencies

US envoy sends Eid greetings

KUWAIT: On behalf of the Embassy of the United States of America to Kuwait, I would like to express our warmest greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti government, the Kuwaiti people, and all Muslims around the world on the joyous occasion of Eid Al-Fitr. I want to thank the Kuwaiti people for their kindness and hospitality during the holy month of Ramadan. From my family to yours, Eid Mubarak.



US Charge d'Affaires James Holtsnider

Italy, Kuwait explore areas for cooperation in food security

KUWAIT: Acting Director-General of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources Meshaal Al-Qurayfa, discussed with the Ambassador of the Italian Republic to the country, Carlo Balducci, possible areas of cooperation in enhancing food security by improving the agricultural climate in Kuwait and developing plant, animal and fish production.

Qurayfa said: "During the meeting, several topics were discussed that are consistent with Kuwait's vision of preserving and enhancing food security by all means, as Italy has extensive experience in the field of agricultural land reclamation using the latest technologies."

"The Italian ambassador presented the latest technical developments in the field of developing seeds that are resistant to saline and brackish water, in addition to establishing infrastructure for advanced productivity farms, solar pumping



KUWAIT: Acting Director-General of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources, Meshaal Al-Qurayfa (center right) meets with Italian Ambassador Carlo Balducci (center left) in the presence of other senior officials. — KUNA

stations, drip irrigation systems and the supply of agricultural machinery," he added.

Ambassador Balducci, called for enhancing cooperation in the agricultural field through the

exchange of experiences and visits between the two countries, praising the strong relations between the Republic of Italy and the State of Kuwait. — KUNA

AIPU and OIC call for peace in Sudan

BEIRUT: The Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) on Tuesday strongly condemned the violence in Sudan, which led a huge number of casualties and damages to private and public properties. The AIPU called for self-restraint and avoiding all acts that might escalate the situation. It expressed its support to all efforts leading to peace and stability in Sudan, expressing at the same time, the union's sorrow over the victims of violence and those injured in the fray.

Meanwhile, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) stated support to all efforts aiming to reach a humanitarian truce in the raging fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. In a press release on Monday, the organization's Secretary-General Hussein Ibrahim Taha highlighted the need of ensuring evacuation of injured persons and other people trapped in the conflict, and safe delivery of assistance to civilians. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Indian Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika called on Mohammad Abdulla Abulhasan, Advisor, Amiri Diwan on Monday. The ambassador apprised him of great prospects for further strengthening bilateral relations between Kuwait and India. Abulhasan fondly remembered India's strong support to Kuwait in the UN during his tenure as PR of Kuwait to the United Nations.