

## Local

# Kuwait's FM calls for unified stance, policy at OIC meeting

## OIC plays crucial role in fostering solidarity, defending Palestine

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah led Kuwait's delegation participating in the 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), held in Nouakchott, Mauritania (between March 16-17). Addressing the meeting, which focuses on the Palestinian issue, counterterrorism, Islamophobia and solidarity, the foreign minister said the gathering comes at a time when the Islamic world is facing numerous serious challenges amid complicated circumstances, bloody wars, disasters and pandemics across the world.

The minister stressed that these unprecedented challenges, which portend a new stage of hardships, require concerted efforts and Islamic response. "Given the enormity of these hardships and challenges, we need to muster our efforts, harness our energies and unify our stances and policies. Thus, we would raise the hopes of our peoples who have suffered due to despair and oppression amid the absence of a sincere international will to ensure the just solution to their just issues in spite of binding international resolutions which, unfortunately, have mostly become mere ink on paper," he lamented.

Therefore, the Kuwaiti foreign minister called for developing a clear-cut and comprehensive vision for boosting Islamic cooperation, based on setting aside divisions and differences regarding response to these risks and challenges. In this context, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jaber said the Palestinian issue is considered to be the prime issue for both Arab and Muslim worlds, warning that the region would not be stable, secure and

prosperous unless a just and comprehensive solution to this issue was reached.

Regarding Islamophobia and campaigns purposed to undermine the religion of Islam and its values of tolerance and peace, the minister said it is everyone's due responsibility to protect and defend Islam and promote its genuine image. Commending the OIC's great efforts to fight Islamophobia, the minister voiced hope that the meeting would come up with concerted stances and visions for overcoming challenges the Islamic world is facing.

The 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation kicked off on Thursday in Nouakchott, Mauritania, on the theme of "Moderation: Key to Security and Stability". More than 40 Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States are coming together in the Mauritanian capital to discuss an array of political, cultural, social, scientific and humanitarian issues that are of concern to the OIC and its Member States, namely the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, Jammu and Kashmir and Afghanistan, as well Mali and the Sahel countries.

### Defending Palestine

Established upon a decision of the historical summit held in Rabat, Morocco, on September 25, 1969, following the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) plays a prominent role in promoting Islamic solidarity and defending the Palestinian issue. The OIC is the second largest organization after the United Nations (UN) with 57 member states in



Foreign Minister leads a delegation to the 49th session of the (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers.

over four continents; having been the collective voice of the Muslim world.

It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world. In 1970, the first ever meeting of Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister (ICFM) was held in Jeddah; having decided to establish a permanent secretariat in Jeddah headed by the organization's secretary general.

Based in Rabat, the OIC, of which Kuwait is a co-founder and effective member, comprises several bodies, mainly the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization (ISESCO). The 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation kicked off on Thursday in Nouakchott, Mauritania, on the theme of "Moderation: Key to Security and Stability".

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### News in brief

#### Social institution denies foul play

**KUWAIT:** The Public Institution for Social Security on Saturday denied reports claiming that it had disbursed KD 50 million (approximately \$163 million) for deceased citizens. These information are inaccurate, false and exaggerated, it said in a statement adding that its personnel discovered some counterfeiting cases for liable non-Kuwaitis and informed the public prosecution about it. The institution had stopped disbursement of payments for those who had not updated their data, as a precaution against any irregularity, it said, warning that any suspicious account would be suspended. Investigation is proceeding in coordination with the public prosecution, it added. —KUNA

#### Ghazali St to shut down for 5 days

**KUWAIT:** Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport announced it will close two sides of Al-Ghazali street for five days starting from Wednesday morning. The closure will be from 1am to 5am in cooperation with the traffic department at the Interior Ministry.

#### Farwaniya hospital to move pediatric dept

**KUWAIT:** Farwaniya hospital announced that it will transfer the pediatric emergency care to the new building on Sunday. The Health Ministry started (last August) the first operational phase of the new hospital which is considered to be one of the largest medical facilities in Kuwait. The Ministry started the second operational phase last September. The third phase including gynecology and pediatrician departments as well as other services was opened last February.

#### Wanted Egyptians caught with drugs, paraphernalia

**KUWAIT:** The Rescue Department at the Interior Ministry has arrested two Egyptian men who already have arrest warrants. The suspects were caught with drugs and paraphernalia. During an official routine, the rescue police officers suspected two people who tried to run away as soon as they saw the police vehicle. After their arrest, the policemen found they were under the influence of illicit drugs.

## Arab govts urged to tackle poverty

**BEIRUT:** The Arab Forum for Sustainable Development has called on governments of regional states to employ available potentials and human resources to cut mounting poverty and ensure food security and tackle inequality. Organizer of the latest session that had come to an end, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), said in a statement that the conferees called for boosting partnerships between the public and private sectors to attain sustainable development.

They urged the international community to support developing states that suffer from high debts, the ESCWA statement said, adding that there was focus during the deliberations on revising progress that had been made in attaining goals related to clean and hygienic water and making water avail-



The Executive Office of Arab Information Ministers' Council meets. —KUNA photos



Information Minister opens the meeting of Executive Office of Arab Information Ministers' Council.



Cidrat Loulou operetta by Information Ministry and NCCAL.



Creative young men honored

## Kuwait flourishing with festivals and cultural activities

**KUWAIT:** Carrying itself as a cultural cradle catering for creativity, Kuwait has hosted a number of media venues and avenues within the first two weeks of this month. This would only cement; even further, the country's status as Capital for Arab Culture in 2001 and 2022, as well as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2016. It mainly hosted the 16th regular session of the Executive Office of Arab Information Ministers' Council on March 12-16.

This coincided with the 28th edition of Kuwait's Al-Qurain Cultural Festival, inaugurated by Minister of



Information Ministry in Al-Qurain Cultural Festival

Information and Culture, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdurrahman Al-Mutairi. "The festival has enriched the artistic and cultural movement in Kuwait and contributed to the enlightenment in the Arab world," Al-Mutairi, also President of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, pointed out in an earlier statement. The festival honored Ahmad Al-

Sharqawi - a Kuwaiti poet, Dr Saleh Al-Ojairi - late Kuwaiti astronomer and meteorologist, and Prince Badr Bin Abdulmuhsin - a Saudi poet. Its agenda also included symposia, theatrical performances, literary events, and displays of audio-visual arts, which would certainly contribute to the country's cultural and socio-economic development. —KUNA

able at reasonable prices. They also touched on industry and innovation, infrastructures, cities and local sustainable communities and partnerships.

The participants in the latest session revised a host of innovative initiatives that back sustainable development in the Arab region, the statement said. ESCWA predicted that 75 percent of the Arab region population would settle in the cities by 2050 due to regional urban expansion, the largest globally, thus there would be much higher demand for energy.

Based on this forecast, it called for seeking fair and comprehensive availability of the energy resources, with consideration to the prospected goal of achieving zero emissions. The forum urged Arab governments to make water available for all, particularly for the vulnerable segments, considering the fact that 90 percent of the region's population suffers from water scarcity.

Moreover, among the topics that were put on the table and examined were overhauling digitization, boosting industrial developments and creating jobs. Furthermore, the participants proposed various solutions to speed up attaining development goals

and securing funds for facing current challenges. The Arab forum is a regional mechanism tasked with following up on implementation of the 2030 sustainable development plan and reviewing progress that has been made in the Arab region at this level.

It is expected to issue a report including main messages emanating from the regional dialogue on opportunities and challenges related to the implementation of the 2030 strategy; to be submitted to the senior-level political forum concerned with sustainable development, scheduled in New York in July. ESCWA, in coordination with the Arab League, organized the forum between March 14 and 16, with participation of high-ranking delegations, representatives of Arab governments, regional and international organizations, civil societies, the private sector, parliamentarians and academics.

Dr Khaled Mehdi, the Secretary General of Kuwait Supreme Council for Planning and Development, took part in the senior-level dialogue, themed "attaining objectives of the sustainable development in partnership with the private sector," and in the high-rank round table on national volun-

tary works. The forum was also attended by Kuwait's assistant foreign minister for economic affairs, Ambassador Sami Al-Hamad, and Kuwaiti legislators namely MPs Shuaib Shaaban and Usama Al-Zaid.

### Crimes against Palestinians

In another development, the Arab Parliament on Friday called on the international community, mainly the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and international and European parliaments, to move immediately to hold Zionist entity accountable for its nonstop crimes against Palestinians. In a press statement, the parliament underlined that it is necessary for the international community to provide the required protection for the defenseless Palestinian people, and to compel Zionist entity to stop its escalation in occupied Palestinian territories.

It cautioned that this serious escalation would only lead to further deterioration and violence, and would even undermine efforts to achieve tranquility. Four Palestinians, including a young boy, were reportedly killed and 23 others injured in attack on Jenin city and refugee camp. —KUNA