

## Local

# Advocacy movement slams mass teacher layoffs as 'rash' decision

## Education ministry decision elicits mixed reactions on social media

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The hashtag "Education\_Ministry", trended on Twitter this weekend, with thousands of citizens and residents commenting on the recent teacher layoffs announced by the government. The ministry of education had issued a notice Wednesday that it's ending the services of around 1,900 non-Kuwaiti teachers at the end of the current academic year, as part of its efforts in implementing the Kuwaitization policy.

The concerned sectors have given termination letters to those in charge of the matter at the country's various educational districts, who will then give them to the laid-off teachers, informing them that their

employment will be terminated as of June. Kuwait Progressive Movement said in a tweet that terminating 1,900 teachers, including experienced teachers with Kuwaiti mothers and bedoons, was a rash decision by the ministry of education and the Civil Service Bureau.

The movement said it was not against Kuwaitization, but was not pleased with how the ministry's abrupt action didn't give the teachers enough time to sort out their situation. The decision could also lead to a staff shortage, the movement said, putting pressure on working teachers who will have to take on extra teaching hours. The movement called on the government to reverse its decision.

Um Yousef said schools are already suffering from a shortage of staff. "Who makes these hasty

decisions disrupting people's livelihoods? This is not appropriate for someone who has spent their life in this country. Dismissal of teachers, who are children of Kuwaiti women, is shocking and inhumane," she said. Ghanim Al-Tajer said: "This decision upset us as Kuwaiti teachers, especially since most of those who were dismissed are educated and skilled in science subjects."

Adeal Al-Abdullah supported the decision, saying: "We hope the decision will be implemented in other sectors in the country. Kuwaitis should be given priority when hiring for all jobs. Is it reasonable to hire residents before Kuwaitis who graduated from well-known universities and leave them unemployed for more than two years?"

Hamed tweeted that many educational experts said Kuwaitization requires addressing the reluctance of Kuwaitis in joining the teaching profession. "We demand a plan to develop education in Kuwait. About KD 13.6 billion is spent and the return is low in the Gulf and globally, despite the increased spending," he explained.

Despite developments in Kuwait, there are still some challenges facing the education system. One of the main challenges is the lack of resources and funding, which has led to overcrowding in schools and a shortage of qualified teachers. There is also a need to modernize the curriculum and teaching methods to better prepare students for the modern world.



KUWAIT: Consul of the Republic of Armenia to Kuwait Ara Matevosyan takes a group photo with experts and the Armenians in Kuwait.



## Armenian embassy participates in the 'Francophone Bazar'

By Majid Othman

KUWAIT: Consul of the Republic of Armenia to Kuwait Ara Matevosyan told Kuwait Times the Armenian community in Kuwait reached 5,000 people in 2023, adding they enjoy the respect of both Kuwaiti authorities and citizens, who have been supporting the community through the presence of the Armenian Church as well as the school, which was established in 1961.

The consul's statement came on the sidelines of the Francophone Month event "Francophone Bazar" held by the French Embassy on Friday at Shaheed Park. The consul said the Armenian Embassy celebrates Francophone month in cooperation with Francophonie embassies in Kuwait. He explained this event includes each embassy representing its country's culture through cuisine, dances and songs. Armenia had a show of the "Hamazkayin Shakh" dance group, which performed in both French and Armenian languages.

"Armenia since 2012 is a full member of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. We attach great importance to enhancing cooperation with this organization, and Armenia is keen to develop political cooperation within this organization with our friends and partners," Matevosyan said. "The Francophonie Organization plays an important role in Armenian foreign policy, and in this month, more than 100 events were held in Armenia, in addition to the celebration at all Armenian embassies abroad," he added.



Armenian family enjoying the Francophonie Bazaar.



Consul of the Republic of Armenia to Kuwait Ara Matevosyan

"Armenia's relations with France extends since centuries, not to forget the big Armenian community in France, while some of them are famous, such as Charles Aznavour, the French-Armenian singer and lyricist."

### Armenian-Kuwaiti relationship

Matevosyan said Kuwaiti-Armenian relations are developing dynamically. "We have cooperation in the fields of tourism, education and culture, as well as economic cooperation. There are many Kuwaiti travelers and investors who are interested in projects presented by Armenia for

promising and future investments," he said.

"Currently, the Armenian Embassy is working on opening a direct commercial line between Kuwait and Armenia. In addition, there is cooperation in the fields of renewable energy and education, where eight Armenian students come from Armenia to Kuwait to study at Kuwait University annually. Personally, I was one of those students," he revealed. "We are working to develop potential cooperation through joint efforts with the Kuwaiti side to push relations to a new qualitative level for the benefit of the two brotherly peoples," Matevosyan concluded.

## MoH committed to updating healthcare system and protocols

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health has confirmed its commitment to the continuous development of the health system and updating health care policies and protocols in line with the latest global developments. This came in a speech delivered by the assistant undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Foreign Health Services Affairs Dr Yacoub Tamar, during the opening of the first vascular surgery conference on behalf of the Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadi.

He described the conference as an addition to the system of scientific conferences that the Ministry of Health is keen to establish. He explained that the themes of the conference express the conscious vision of the organizing committees, which highlights the most important novelties and developments in the field of vascular specialization in addition to taking advantage of technologies Modern methods in the field of diagnosis, treatment, follow-up and making the right medical decisions.

He said that the conference will contribute effectively to the exchange of various experiences, benefit from various medical experiences and build bridges of scientific knowledge between a distinguished doctors and lecturers from inside Kuwait, Arab countries and various other countries of the world. He pointed out that the goal is to identify the latest achievements of modern science in the field of diagnosis, treatment and prevention of vascular diseases.

This will help in developing and updating programs and strategies aimed at ensuring the development of the health services system in Kuwait. The consultant of blood vessels at Jaber Hospital and the chairman of the conference Dr Hisham Rashid said in his speech that the holding of the first conference at Jaber Hospital confirms the success of the department in developing medical services by attracting experts and consultants from different countries of the world to



KUWAIT: Participants chat during the opening of the first vascular surgery conference. —KUNA

exchange ideas on the latest findings in the field of technologies and methods of treatment.

He added that the participants will discuss various scientific issues in the specialty of blood vessels from the first arterial connections for dialysis to the arterial connections in the diabetic foot, aorta and carotid artery - pointing out that the Ministry of Health has recently witnessed a wide demand in the field of recruitment of consultants to make changes in the field of health services and development.

Dr Rashid pointed out that Jaber Hospital has a team with the highest competencies as well as the possession of the latest devices, advanced medical and technological equipment. Meanwhile, the head of the surgery department at Jaber Hospital Dr Sulaiman Al-Mazidi said in his speech that the conference brings together all vascular units in Kuwait to discuss the latest issues and topics, especially with the increasing prevalence of some diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

Al-Mazidi explained that the conference aims to develop and improve the quality of medical services in Kuwait, especially with the increasing number of cases undergoing treatment abroad, stressing that the conference aims to develop the competence of specialized doctors and the rest of the medical cadres through access to the latest technologies, scientific research and discoveries in this field to prevent diseases.

He pointed out that the conference focused on a number of axes related to modern trends and the latest developments in the field of vascular surgery, including scientific research, studies, awareness programs and guidelines in the new sciences in diabetic foot, carotid artery stenting and others. Dr Al-Mazidi pointed to the importance of cooperation between all surgical doctors in various specialties to ensure the quality of health care provided to patients and to develop the health system in the country. —KUNA



Sapanca huts



Kuwaiti tourist Dalal Al-Mulaifi

## Social media, bloggers boost Kuwaiti, Arab tourism to Turkey

ANKARA: Due to the popularity of Turkish dramas in recent years, the flow of Kuwaiti and Arab tourists has increased in major Turkish cities such as Istanbul and Ankara. Nevertheless, with the advent of social media and online blogs, such tourists had widened their horizons, seeking leisure in other regions of Turkey.

Despite the tragic earthquake, which hit southern Turkey, Kuwaiti and Arab tourists made it a point to venture off usual destinations in the country and sought mostly nature and cultural experiences over the usual travel experience. Speaking to KUNA, several Kuwaiti and Arab tourists said that destinations such as Sapanca, Antalya, Bursa, and others were becoming more interesting to them.

Sara Al-Enizi, a Kuwaiti tourist, said that Kusadasi—a town on the coast of the western Aegean Sea—was heavily featured in social media coverages, which drove her interest to explore. She affirmed that the detailed tour of an account of Snapchat had helped her navigate Kusadasi easily, making her enjoy the experience without a hitch. Similarly, Kuwaiti tourists Ahmad Al-Kanderi and Dalal Al-Mulaifi owned the success of their visits to Sapanca and other cities to a coverage by a Kuwaiti blogger.

They both said that social media play a role in choosing their vacation destinations in Turkey. On his part, Egyptian tourist Al-Ahmed said that he wanted to spend his honeymoon traversing several cities including Antalya. He attributed this decision to social media, saying that it opened his eyes for more possibility to enjoy his time in Turkey.

Lebanese tourists Mariyam Majidi said that she spent her vacation in Turkey at the beach, noting that she had unforgettable experiences in islands such as Buyukada, Marmaris, and Alanya. While the opinions of tourists are worth the mention, the initial seed put by social media account and blog owners are as worthy to explore. Abdulrahman Mousa Mohammad—owner of an Instagram account dedicated to tourism in Turkey—affirmed that his passion for traveling, especially to Turkey, had drove him to document his experiences to benefit other fellow travelers.

He indicated that his account offered all vital information on travel to Turkey from transport, hotels, and various tips and advices. He mentioned that Kuwaiti tourists were attracted to Bursa for tourism as well as buying real estate, adding that Sapanca was also on the top of the list due to its mesmerizing nature in addition to boredom, where most Kuwaitis head there for relaxation.

Mohammad, however, warned of fake media accounts that lure tourists with low prices and great accommodations with the end result being a miserable travel experience. The number of Kuwaiti tourists between January and July of last year had reached 279,000, second place in terms of Arab tourists visiting Turkey. Despite the recent devastating 7.7 and 7.6-magnitude earthquakes, tourists are still flocking to Turkey, but staying clear from disaster areas. —KUNA