

Local

5,400 people from Kuwait apply for asylum abroad

Many asylum seekers prefer Europe

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: A report conducted by Arabian Gulf Center for Studies and Research (CSRGULF) – the first think tank in Kuwait – revealed 5,400 people residing in Kuwait have applied for asylum since 2018 to foreign countries, most notably the United Kingdom, Canada, United States and European countries such as France, Germany and Scandinavian countries, while Iraq and the United Arab Emirates were the top Arab destinations.

The report mentioned the percentage of Kuwaiti citizens out of the total asylum seekers has not been determined, but it is unlikely to be a large number, as most of those seeking asylum are non-Kuwaitis, specifically stateless residents known as bedoons.

Some of them are motivated by the idea of emigration out of desperation to wait for solutions and out of the desire to obtain documents and permanent residence in other countries that grant basic rights.

It is estimated that about half of those seeking asylum from Kuwait prefer European destinations, as the UK alone accounted for more than a third of the applications. However, more than half of these requests are usually rejected, especially by European authorities, unlike Canada and UK, which are more favorable towards humanitarian cases related to people who are exposed to risks and restrictions in expressing freedoms and opinions, or those who do not enjoy full residence rights or are subject to abuse or threats.

In general, the number of asylum seekers from Kuwait decreased to around 565 people in 2022

compared to 2018, when it reached about 1,359. Despite the significant decrease in demand for asylum in 2022, Kuwait remains the top in the Gulf in exporting “refugees”.

Within a classification prepared by CSRGULF on trends in seeking asylum from Arab countries to Europe in 2022, based on European statistics, residents of Kuwait ranked 16th in the ranking of the most Arabs seeking asylum, as about 254 people applied for asylum to the European continent in 2022, and 257 in 2020. The number of asylum seekers decreased significantly compared to 2019, when around 790 applicants sought asylum from Kuwait to Europe.

In recent years, asylum applications have been received from people from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Lebanon residing in Kuwait

with various justifications. However, Syrians and Yemenis are considered among the most fortunate non-Kuwaiti nationalities residing in the country in obtaining asylum, although Kuwait had exempted some Syrian and Yemeni residents from deportation due to the war in their countries of origin. These exemptions stopped in 2018.

In 2021, about 1,029 people from Kuwait applied for asylum, according to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which is approximately 0.024% of the entire population of the country. The most common asylum destinations were the United Kingdom, France and Austria. Overall, 61 percent of asylum applications were rejected, but the most fortunate refugees chose destinations such as Canada and Luxembourg.



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi on Wednesday received the outgoing Brazilian Ambassador to Kuwait Francisco Mauro Brasil de Holanda. The deputy foreign minister, during the meeting, lauded the envoy's role in cementing the Kuwaiti-Brazilian relations and expressed good wishes for the outgoing chief diplomat. — KUNA

Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah visits Camp Arifjan

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United States Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah visited Camp Arifjan accompanied by US Charge d'Affaires James Holtsnider. “Had a great tour of Camp Arifjan today with Sheikha Al-Zain, the newly appointed Kuwait Ambassador to US. Looking forward to further advancement of the longstanding partnership between our two countries,” Holtsnider tweeted.



Minister underscores pharmacists' role in the health system

KUWAIT: The Minister of Health Dr Ahmed Al-Awadi said that pharmacists, through their competencies, are considered key players in the treatment chain and play a key and important role in the health system. The minister of health stressed in his speech during a Ramadan lunch held by the Kuwaiti Pharmacists Association on Tuesday, the role played by workers in the pharmacy sector, indicating that there are ministerial committees dedicated to this sector and this is the greatest evidence of its importance.

He called on those working in this field, whether in the ministry or in the private sector, to submit proposals that can contribute to the issuance of decisions and laws that promote integration between the government and private sectors. And the value of the outstanding efforts of pharmacists in hospitals and centers. He noted the challenges they face in checking medicines, dispensing and many of the tasks they perform.

The director of the medical warehouses department at the Ministry of Health Dr Adel Al-Salem, said that the ministry is concerned with drug pricing and maintaining non-manipulation of prices, pointing out that prices are reviewed periodically within specific controls with care to reduce prices for many drugs.

Al-Salem pointed out that prices in Kuwait are

close to those in the Gulf countries, and even that some medicines in Kuwait may have lower prices than neighboring countries, pointing out that the ministry is always keen to provide various types of medicines and that the issue of shortage of some types. It is not limited to Kuwait only, but it is a global issue and has many reasons, including the lack of availability of raw materials, increased prices and means of transportation.

He pointed out that the ministry is constantly working to provide medicines, but there are things that may be beyond the will, “but the strategic stock is safe and reassuring, and we have been able to solve about 70 percent of the shortage problem in the past period”. On a related note, Dr Al-Salem said that the law on practicing the profession of Pharmacy has reached the final draft stage and will be submitted within the next few days to the undersecretary of the ministry to take the necessary measures.

The president of the association Dr Abdullah Al-Enezi, said that the association continues its projects which is aimed at enhancing the status of the pharmacy profession and pharmacists as they work hard and sincerely to improve the level of distinguished pharmacy performance typical within the evolving health system. He pointed out that there are boundless ambitions to achieve.

He expressed pride and appreciation for the existing positive cooperation and permanent understanding of the Ministry of Health, headed by the minister, undersecretary and assistant undersecretaries - stressing the keenness to push this cooperation in order to benefit the pharmaceutical services of Kuwait, its people and residents. — KUNA

Kuwait partakes in Berlin dialogue on energy transition

BERLIN: Kuwait is partaking in the ninth edition of the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue Conference that addresses plans and methods for cutting usage of fossil fuel in favor of renewable energy resources. Najib Al-Badr, Kuwait Ambassador to Germany and head of the Kuwaiti delegation partaking in the convention that kicked off late on Tuesday and would end later on Wednesday, said in remarks to KUNA that the Kuwaiti delegation took part in debates on various issues such as the quest for a safe environment.

Other topics were addressed in the talks namely solutions for climatic issues, establishing energy partnerships and the green hydrogen economy, ambassador Al-Badr said. He touched on the Kuwaiti-German cooperation namely participation of German companies and scientific institu-



Kuwait's ambassador to Germany Najib Al-Badr

tions in green energy ventures, in line with Kuwait vision 2035, citing in particular Al-Shagaya solar energy project.

He expressed desire to broaden the cooperation with Berlin at this level and affirmed the State of Kuwait's keenness on staying abreast of international efforts regarding the climatic changes and its repercussions on mankind. The conference has lured delegations from more than 130 countries, business leaders, scientists, representatives of international organizations and NGOs. — KUNA

Muslim US soldiers break their fast at Camp Arifjan



KUWAIT: Photos show Muslim US army soldiers breaking their fast and performing the Maghreb prayer at the end of the day's fast during the holy month of Ramadan at the US Camp Arifjan, about 60 kilometers south of Kuwait City, on March 28, 2023. Kuwaiti cleric Mohammad Al-Naqwi gave a sermon before US army soldiers at the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat