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MPs file bill to cancel coed ban law as students protest

Students, teachers reject external interference in Kuwait University affairs



KUWAIT: Kuwait University students protest a decision to impose gender segregation for courses on Sept 18, 2023. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See Page 2)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Three MPs on Monday filed a draft law calling to cancel a 1996 law that bans coeducation at Kuwait University as dozens of students staged a protest outside the administration offices to protest a decision to impose segregation at the College of Law. The draft law submitted by MPs Jenan Bushehri, Dawood Maarafi and Abdulwahab Al-Essa calls for abolishing the 1996 law that bans coeducation at Kuwait University unless it is extremely necessary. The bill also calls on the university to create two options for students: Classes for men or women only or mixed gender classes and let the students choose which type of classes they want to join.

The draft law is not expected to be debated before the opening of the new term, and will require lengthy debates before it is accepted or rejected. The Cabinet on Monday approved an Amiri decree calling for the new term of the National Assembly to start on Oct 31.

Dozens of university students held a demonstration outside the university administration offices to protest against the decision taken by acting director of Kuwait University Fayez Al-Dhafiri last week, enforcing the segregation law at the law college. Students opposed to the decision have said that the decision was taken after pressure by Islamist MPs, describing this as an external interference in the af-

fairs of the university. The protest was called by two liberal groups, but Islamist students also took part.

Coordinator of the Democratic Forum Group Mohammad Al-Qattan said 1,500 students at the law college have been harmed by the decision because of changing their timetables. University registration officials have said that the registration for students had been completed without any problem. Qattan accused the university director of submitting to external pressure by MPs who have no right to interfere.

Member of the law college students board Turki Al-Dhafiri said the decision to halt mixed classes was politically motivated to satisfy a certain political group. He said that issuing the decision so late has negatively affected the students. Fatima Dashti, a professor at the law college, said the decision was only applied at the law college, while there are many mixed classes at other colleges. She protested at the interference of MPs in university affairs.

Dr Sheikhha Al-Jassem, who was among professors who joined the protest, criticized the government over its handling of the issue, adding that the university director did not respect the constitutional court ruling. Jassem said that the constitutional court in a ruling in 2015 interpreted the segregation law by saying that segregation can be done in the same classroom by allowing female and male students to sit on different sides of the room and not necessarily in separate classes.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait slams Aqsa storming

KUWAIT: Kuwait's foreign ministry strongly denounced the storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the holy city of Jerusalem by Zionist extremists under protection of Zionist occupation police. The incursion is a flagrant violation of international laws and norms, the ministry said in a press release on Sunday. The ministry decried the persistence by Zionist occupation authorities of such provocative acts that target Muslim worshippers, urging the international community to shoulder its responsibility in preventing repeated Zionist aggressions, providing protection to Al-Aqsa Mosque and ensuring Muslim worshippers' freedom of belief. — KUNA

Ministry foils hacking attempt

KUWAIT: The finance ministry announced one of its systems was subjected to a hacking attempt on Monday, noting it has activated protection protocols that include disconnecting the affected system while the hacking attempt is evaluated. Public sector salary transfer procedures have not been affected, the ministry reassured, noting it is following up the matter with the National Center for Cybersecurity. Meanwhile, the ministry of commerce and industry denied its website or systems have been hacked, noting it continues to offer its services online as its systems undergo regular maintenance. More than 39,000 transactions were processed through the ministry's digital platforms on Monday, it added. — KUNA

PM meets UN chief, affirms Kuwait support

NEW YORK: Representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah, met Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly. During the meeting, HH the Prime Minister conveyed to the UN chief the greetings of HH the Amir and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, affirming Kuwait's support to UN's efforts to

protect world security and peace.

Kuwait is committed to the principles of its foreign policy prioritizing support to the UN's quest for fair and durable peaceful solutions to regional and international issues, he reaffirmed. HH the Prime Minister, who is leading Kuwait's delegation to the 78th session of the UN General Assembly, noted that Kuwait has been keen over the last decades on active and effective participation in the activities of UN agencies, backing their efforts in various areas. He praised the significant role of the UN secretary general in promoting international cooperation and upgrading the UN. The meeting reviewed the latest developments in regional and international issues and the UN's role in strengthening peace, security and sustainable development. — KUNA



NEW YORK: HH the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah meets UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Sept 17, 2023. — KUNA

GCC FMs urge Iraq to address Khor Abdullah issue

NEW YORK: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers have called on Iraq to take "serious and urgent" steps to deal with the negative developments on the Khor Abdullah maritime agreement, signed with Kuwait, after an

Iraqi court's "inaccurate" ruling on the issue. This came in a statement after a GCC committee meeting held at the Omani permanent delegation's headquarters at the United Nations in New York late Sunday.

During the meeting, Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah informed the attendees on the latest development on the Khor Abdullah situation. The statement affirmed that the current development with Iraq "did not serve the relations between the GCC countries and was against charters, treaties and international agreements, including UNSC resolution 833". —KUNA



NEW YORK: Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers hold a meeting on Sept 17, 2023. — KUNA

20% of people in Kuwait are addicted to food

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Consultant in internal medicine, gastroenterology and liver diseases Dr Wafaa Al-Hashash has affirmed that 20 percent of Kuwait's population is affected by "food addiction", approximately 940,000 individuals, according to a study published in Jan 2022. The study utilized the Yale Food Addiction Scale (YFAS) to determine that the prevalence rate of food addiction is 20 percent globally. She added "food addiction" is characterized



Dr Wafaa Al-Hashash

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