

## LOCAL

# MPs should have say in UN reforms – Kuwaiti lawmaker

'5-nation veto blocks most resolutions'

**NEW YORK, Feb 23, (KUNA):** Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) deputy head of UN affairs committee Safaa Al-Hashem said Friday MPs should have a say in UN Security Council's reforms, and parliament should ultimately endorse plan to reform the UNSC.

"Any reform plans will ultimately be at the table of many national parliaments, and parliamentary committees should examine government's positions regarding UN reforms," Al-Hashem, a Kuwaiti MP, said in a speech before a meeting of IPU's Standing Committee on UN Affairs.

Al-Hashem called on importance of reforming UNSC in order to reflect the "current international reality," citing the rising number of UN members, emergence of oil economic and military powers.

Countries and regions

HH the Amir pardons inmates before Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 23, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has issued an Amiri decree pardoning dozens of prisoners on different charges, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Thursday.

The move comes on the occasion of the 58th anniversary of National Day and the 28th anniversary of Liberation Day, the MoI added in a press statement.

The decree No. 38/2019 included an immediate release of 161 prisoners as of February 25, it said, noting that it also involves the reduction of penalties for 545 others.

The order contains the lifting of judicial exportation against 97 prisoners (illegal residents) and the dropping of fines against 1,074 others, the statement pointed out.

The Amiri decree comes after fruitful cooperation amongst the Amiri Diwan, the Public Prosecution and the MoI to accelerate ending the list of prisoners who are remitted, it made clear.

The aim of this order is to give a chance to those who are released to benefit the society, according to the statement.

The Amiri forgiveness is conditioned, MoI's assistant undersecretary for implementing verdicts Maj Gen Farraj Al-Zokhbi was quoted by the statement as saying.

He explained that any one of the released person commits a criminal case, he will be jailed again.

He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to His Highness the Amir's initiative.

should be better represented at the UNSC, she said, in order to boost the credibility and legitimacy of the council.

Al-Hashem said use of veto by five permanent members resulted, in many cases, in failure of UNSC to restore international peace and security, because those countries would weigh their personal interest on top of the general ones.

Al-Hashem, meanwhile, said the recent IPU assembly called for punishing UN peacekeepers who sexually assaulted local civilians. She cited a proposed solution by South Africa to form a mobile military court to prosecute any peacekeeper convicted of committing crimes.

Al-Hashem noted that coming week would mark the anniversary of the lib-

eration of Kuwait from Iraq, when forces invaded the North Gulf State in August 1990 and occupied the State seven months until they were driven out by an international coalition in February 26, 1991.

She said when the UNSC became united, just like when it was like during the Iraqi invasion, international peace and security would be maintained.

## KUWAIT ENGLISH SCHOOL CELEBRATES IN GREAT STYLE



The occasion of Kuwait's National/Liberation Day presented an opportunity to bring all families of Kuwait English School together sharing memories of joy.

Each department, commencing with the younger children, infants and KG through to Senior High School presented colourful and energetic Kuwaiti and Arabic style dance routines and songs appropriate to the occasion, each performance commencing with the

Kuwait National Anthem.

The lower playground area was transformed into a festive gallery of many dimensions reflecting interesting aspects and elements of Kuwait life both present and past. A diverse variety of delicious sweets were available for everyone present and at every turn. One of the highlights was an exhibition depicting a typical Kuwaiti house of some 50 years or more ago. The interior of the house reflected

many interesting aspects of ordinary Kuwaiti family life of a long ago era – various cooking utensils, a sewing machine and other useful household items were on show.

This unique and memorable day at Kuwait English School fostered in all present, both Kuwaiti and other nationals, a deeper love for this beloved country guided by the wisdom of HH The Emir Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah.



## DIWANIYA ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Bashir reforms fail to show results'

### 'Crises in Sudan aggravating'

"THE situation in the sisterly country of Sudan does not bode well, particularly in the wake of the new austerity actions which have been declared recently by the Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir in addition to the second ministerial major reshuffle of his government, the second of its kind within four months, but in spite of the above, the situation in that country has gone from bad to worse," columnist and attorney *Riyadh Al-Sane* wrote for *Al-Kuwaitiah* daily.

"However, amidst almost daily demonstrations against Al-Bashir and his government, the latter has taken tangible actions to restore the confidence of the Sudanese in the country's banking system, emphasizing his government strives to introduce economic reforms for the sake of providing appropriate life for his people.

"As a matter of fact, Sudan is currently suffering from many crises – difficulties facing the government in terms of monetary liquidity, bread and fuel.

"According to the Sudanese Centre for the Journalistic Services, Al-Bashir has called on his citizens to beware of the attempts exerted to doubt the performance of his government and falling into despair and frustration. Moreover, he urged them to pay no attention to what he called the 'rumor mongers'.

"In this context, the new economic strategy which was declared recently by Al-Bashir includes among other things reducing both the federal and governmental expenditure by as much as 34 percent, curtailing the number of the State ministries from 31 to 21, reducing the volume of the Presidential Council and restructuring the government on federal level.

"Apart from the above, Al-Bashir has undertaken to handle the issue of corruption and has pledged to increase the government subsidies to the poor in the country in addition to increasing the productivity of the country and bring in revenues and finance the agricultural schemes.

"However, in spite of the above reforms which the president has pledged to carry out as swiftly as possible to contain the crisis, people still cast doubts in this area.

"In this context, we give the example of 'The Sudan Call', for instance, which is the major opposition coalition in the country, that has rejected the proposed changes in question and consider the same meaningless, because Al-Bashir has carried out reshuffles of the major posts among the ruling National Congress Party.

"On the other hand, the Coalition in its statement added that reshuffling the leading government posts among the leaders of National Congress Party, is wretched, and hinted this happens, while we are planning country wide demonstrations to bring down the regime and 'end the hunger of our people'.

"Given the above, the pessimism shall rule the attitude which coincides with the fear of aggravating prices of fuel, bread and the monetary crisis and this situation has ended in long queues – a familiar scene all over the country.

"For his part, Al-Bashir has confirmed there will be no reform without lifting the subsidy saying there is no logic in subsidizing fuel in general and the gasoline in particular, because the rich benefit from this subsidy.

"Meanwhile, we have observed how the Sudanese budget has replenished the expenditures allocated for education by nine percent with 9 billion Sudanese pounds while the budget for security and defense has been reduced by 13 percent compared to 16 percent last year, while the subsidy that was allocated for basic commodities has reached 51 billion Sudanese pounds.

"This happens, while some experts have warned of attaching hopes to the 2019 budget, because it represents just first aid measures that will not be implementable, hinting the declaration of such a budget falls only with the media momentum, because the country is currently subjected to a siege and has to do without foreign resources, while the internal resources in spite of its scarcity have been smuggled abroad due to rampant corruption and mismanagement.

"Anyway, the Sudanese crisis is aggravating on a daily basis and this may mean the issue of reform has gone beyond the question of reform to changing the political game and its rules or the founding of a new coalition."

Also:

"The dictatorship as a culture, not only a political method and is practiced by all of us in our homes as well as when dealing with our children although we give various names to these practices to keep in line with our customs and traditions," columnist *Saad Fahd Al-Moejel* wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"But at the end of the day, this culture remains valid to keep abreast with our vision as fathers at the expense of any other vision that is likely to govern the behavior and the belief of the children.

"Hence, we found that this culture is practiced by teachers in the school, the physician at the medical clinic and official at the ministry, that even the children of the neighbors sometimes practice the same against anyone who lives within the narrow circle of opinion within the framework and the periphery of the 'group'.

"Of course, this culture has stretched and affected the relations within our Arab communities and as such it has left behind broken and docile people. However, the philosophers are perplexed looking for the basics of the dictatorial regimes and name those who can be held responsible for the persistence of these regimes in such a manner.

"Take for example, Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, who had talked about two ways of ingraining both dictatorship and despotism, the first based on resorting to curb and terrify his people and persecute his opponents, while the second is based on political cheating through which a dictator depicted himself as fair in all his works.

"But the question which perplexed the thinkers revolved around reasons that resulted in some peoples succumbing to the whims of dictators.

"In this connection, many theories have emerged such as the idea of the German thinker Karl August Wittfogel who says the peoples living along the banks of the rivers do not resort to revolution because the king in past controlled the river stream in addition to organizing floods and the irrigation canals, and as such the people would not revolt against the king irrespective of the extent of his dictatorship.

"While the two European thinkers, Almond and Coleman say the communities in many developing nations are capable of capitulating before the dictatorial regimes and this can be attributed to their existence under a transitional phase during which it has achieved a relative evolution in their political regimes, but it still has to reach the phase of enough political maturity needed to achieve stability for its regimes.

"For their part, some others have talked about the importance of education and the impact of ignorance in terms of persistent dictatorship and its ingraining.

"However, some people hold the dictatorship responsible for all of their defeats in general and the intellectual ones in particular, but they are unable to do anything to exit from such an impasse, where confronting them will first of all require the belief in the values of freedoms, justice, equality and in all of the forms of the civil rights.

"According to these peoples, if the above happened, then renaissance, political and intellectual victory can be realized, although history has recorded that the dictatorial regimes, have achieved some victories, but all of them were to a short period and had little impact, because the real victories were realized only under the atmosphere of the regimes which had adopted democracy as a thought, essence and behavior."



Al-Sane'

Prime Minister Theresa May, on the issue of Britain's exit from the European Union or the so-called 'Brexit' – columnist *Dr Nayef Al-Adwani* wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily.

"Brexit is attacked by the Members of Parliament – the plan to separate from the European Union through the activation of Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon, a two-year deadline to end the exit negotiations in return for a bill paid by Britain to the European Union estimated at 60 billion euros and also pay pensions to the employees of European administrations and called for a clear separation if any (Brexit) hard to regain control of immigration of the single market and also of the International Court of Justice.

"This is done while at the same time retaining the largest possible outlet to the single market through a new free trade agreement and the swap of the rights of about 12 million British citizens residing in European countries in return for the residence of more than three million Europeans on British territory.

"May has resorted to consulting the British Parliament on the agreement to be reached after the negotiations with Brussels before signing, but will not have the power to amend the text and if not approved by the Parliament on the outcome of the negotiations then it will come out without the agreement of the Parliament and will be placed in front of the Prime Minister's plan because it defends the interests of Great Britain and its people and does not favor anyone even if the Prime Minister represents the interests of the whole nation and its members do not have a special agenda, or interests."

"The government negotiates it, as is the case with the Members of Parliament where we agree, in chalets, farms, and in closed rooms in return for payment or promise to pay special interest bills belonging to the member and his party and his sect and tribe and do not return to the country any benefit or good Parliament that can impose its opinion on the government or government's opinion on until the Parliament becomes the Council of our positions and our Parliament the Council of interests."

"Who will foot the blame and solution of the issue of the loans of citizens and the insolvency of thousands of them and their inability to pay? Why has this problem surfaced in the first place? What is the matter with regard to the subject of huge citizens' loans?," columnist and former Director of the Culture Department at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters *Waleed Al-Rujab* wrote for *Al-Rai* daily Monday.

"I remember writing years ago about the demand to drop the loans, which is repeated by some members of the National Assembly, especially date for Parliament elections draw close, where such demands have become popular to tickle people's feelings.

"In recent years, some members of the National Assembly have manipulated the role of the Parliament to adopt major national issues. The reason is the bad electoral system, which has produced MPs who are not at the level of legislative and supervisory responsibility and who do not have programs for political, social and economic reform.

"The issues of accumulated corruption have drained people's money, and some of them through bribes and political donations, appointments associated with political bargaining and electoral interests, and benefiting from tourism treatment for their tribal, sectarian and factional groups, related to national security, the issue of forgery, and other issues which have destroyed the homeland.

"We do not overlook that our economic system, a distorted capitalist system, creates false prosperity by spreading crude consumer behavior and culture.

"This behavior was created by the capitalist system and by the prevailing culture that the authority allowed its existence and control. It is the focus on the manifestations and the imbalance of values of work, seriousness and diligence, whether in study or in the job, to the extent that creativity and production have faded away in life.

"The worst behavior developed by some members of the National Assembly, and some socially and culturally backward forces, is the misleading popular campaigns, trafficking in people's needs, trafficking in the issue of bedouin to such an extent, sometimes we cannot distinguish between the popular and political forces because of the absence of scientific and logical vision."

"Despite the promises and development plans or visions launched by the government in order to transform Kuwait into a global financial and commercial center that brings sources of income other than oil which fluctuates due to economic wars and unstable relations between world powers – United States America and China, – we continue to witness deterioration of services particularly the most important factors of development like transportation system and infrastructure. This shows there is a wide gap between what the government tells us and what it does," columnist *Zayed Al-Zaid* wrote for *Annahar* daily.

"According to the annual development plan report for fiscal 2019/2020, Kuwait's ranking in the quality index of air transport infrastructure in the Global Competitiveness Report fell to 117 with a score of 85 percent. This is a scandal by all international standards. How could a country that aims at becoming an important trading center – import, export and distribution center in the region based on its commercial location – occupy such low ranking?"

"In spite of some air transport projects such as the new terminal, the aesthetic aspect air transport is not enough to improve the country's position in the index and to provide better services for Kuwait to become a global transit hub and make Kuwait International Airport an international tourist landmark which contributes to efforts to promote the country as the case with Doha, Dubai and Abu Dhabi airports.

"It is strange that the estimated cost of the aesthetic aspect, which may contribute to solving simple parts of the problem without finding radical solutions, is KD1.5 billion in the next five years according to governmental reports. This amount is more than enough to establish a new airport for a country like Kuwait only. Actually, the amount is enough for two countries like the size of Kuwait."

"A boy from Florida entered a shop that has a telephone booth, picked up the headset and started to make a phone call. The shop owner noticed the boy and started listening to the conversation. He heard the boy say, 'Madam, can I work for you by mowing the lawn of your garden?' The woman said, 'I have someone doing that work'. The boy then said, 'I will do that work for half of the wage he takes'. The woman replied by saying she was satisfied with that person's work and did not want to replace him," *Abdulrahman Al-Awwad* wrote for *Al-Sabah* daily.

"The boy then said, 'I will also clean the footpath and the sidewalk in front of your house. Your garden will be the most beautiful garden in Palms Beach, Florida'. The woman again rejected his offer. The boy then smiled, thanked her and ended the call.

"The shop owner who was listening to the conversation asked the boy, 'I like your high esteem and I respect your positive sentiment; so I offer you a chance to work for me in the shop'. He replied, 'No, thank you for your offer. I am currently working for that lady who I was talking to. I just wanted to make sure I was doing my job well and that she is satisfied with my work'.

"Lack of self-censorship in our governmental bodies is the reason behind serious shortcomings in the services provided to citizens. There are no better evidences of this fact than the conditions of our roads. The streets of Kuwait were considered as model in the past when there was self-censorship and dedication to work."

"The British Parliament is standing against the British

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb