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Kuwait records 687 new corona cases

Citizens account for 443 cases ... non-Kuwaitis 244

Opinion

Nasrallah ... Witness who saw everything

By **Ahmed Al-Jarallah**
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

A FEW days ago, Hassan Nasrallah emerged proudly to give his speech as though he had achieved a great victory. He revealed what he had been trying to conceal for decades, shifting doubts about his gang's responsibility on the disaster that hit the Beirut Port, and smiling over the bodies of 160 martyrs and thousands of wounded, missing and homeless, with his wooden words. However, if the deceased were Iranians, he would be crying and mourning for a long time.

Nasrallah, who claims to have had no knowledge about the port even though he is the "witness who saw everything", denied having warehouses in that area. He claimed that he did not control this vital port, which is in fact one of the smuggling arteries through which his militias bring in or pass all kinds of contrabands.

The people of Lebanon are refusing to accept the claims made by Hezbollah's leader in this regard.

How is it possible that Nasrallah – the "specialist in the port of Haifa", as he said – have knowledge of the whereabouts of ammonium nitrate in Israel and possess the most accurate details of the Lebanese arena but fail to know anything about the port of Beirut?

How did his gang receive 100,000 missiles, as he claimed in his sermons, that were provided to him by Iran, if he did not control all the ports from the far south to the far north as well as the land crossings along the Lebanese-Syrian borders, in addition to the Beirut airport?

Rather, how can the Lebanese and others believe that Hezbollah, whose elements are present in most state departments and security services, are not aware of the contents inside stowage 12 and other port stowages?

Were these missiles launched by parachutes? Did they grow out of the ground or were they passed through those crossings and ports?

How can his gang know what is in Israel but be ignorant of what is happening right outside the bunker in which their leader takes shelter?

For the sake of argument, let us assume that Hezbollah has no relation with what happened, and its hands are clean in regard to the victims of this "nuclear" explosion.

If that is the case, why is this gang and its leader not accepting an international investigation committee to prove its innocence of this historic crime, especially since it can at least eliminate the possibility of another civil war ignited by the stowage 12?

Doesn't his refusal lead to accusations against his party, as though he already knows that an international investigation will inevitably lead to uncovering the truth? Worst of all, he is expecting indictment of the crime of assassination of martyred prime minister Rafiq Hariri and his companions, so we wonder if Nasrallah will be able to sustain another crime.

Today, a week after this horrible catastrophe, Hezbollah and its leader have been exposed. They are now about to face justice, especially after they began to sweat over the Parliament – the puppet that he and his other ally Nabih Berri (Speaker of the Parliament of Lebanon) used for a long time.

This could be the beginning of the collapse of the government of advisors, as the Lebanese are calling for an international investigation, which leaves nothing for this gang Hezbollah apart from igniting the street, undermining and sabotaging progress, and taking advantage of the Lebanese people's revolution to burn whatever is left of Beirut.

Because Hezbollah is cornered, it seems as though it is ready to bring down the entire structure in the "let it fall on me and my enemies" manner. This can only be avoided if the international community steps in immediately to root out this criminal gang.

Will the United Nations rescue and save Lebanon from entering the Hell that countries like Somalia, Libya, Iraq and Syria are struggling to come out of?

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KUWAIT CITY, Aug 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Health said Monday 687 people tested positive for the coronavirus while four persons died of the disease in the past 24 hours.

MoH Spokesman Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad told KUNA total registered infections reached 72,400 while deaths increased to 482.

He said 443 cases of the new infections were Kuwaiti citizens, or 64.48 percent, and 244 non-Kuwaitis, or 35.52 percent.

Al-Sanad said 168 cases were in Ahmadi medical area, 168 in Jahra, 147 in Farwaniya, 117 in Hawally and 87 in the Capital.

He added 117 patients were in the intensive care units, and that people receiving treatment were 7,890.

Medical workers conducted 3,450 swab tests in the past 24 hours, raising total swabs since outbreak of the virus to 535,803.

Al-Sanad called on the public anew to abide by physical distancing and follow hygienic regulations.

The MoH announced earlier recovery of 509 people from the virus to reach a total of 64,028.

Kuwait Municipality had shut down 10 stores in Hawally Governorate in July, for violating the country's measures to fight the coronavirus, an official said.



Teargas canisters fly during an anti-government protest, following last Tuesday's massive explosion which devastated Beirut, Lebanon, on Aug 9. (AP) – See Page 7

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** sent Sunday a cable of condolences to South Korean President **Moon Jae-in**, over tens of victims of floods caused by heavy rain which led to thousands of displaced people.

His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince wished speedy recovery for the injured and for **South Korea** to overcome impacts of this natural disaster.

His Highness the Prime Minister **Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah** sent a similar cable to the South Korean president. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** received Sunday a cable from **Guinea's** President **Alpha Conde**.

In the cable, the Guinean president asked about the health of His Highness the Amir **Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** and wished him everlasting good health.

The Deputy Amir sent a cable, expressing gratitude for his sincere gesture and wished him well-being and good health. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Cabinet has resigned over last week's devastating blast at the Beirut port, the health minister said, a decision that was made under pressure as several ministers quit or expressed their intention to step down.

The minister, **Hamad Hassan**, spoke with reporters at the end of a Cabinet meeting on Monday, which came after two days of demonstrations over the weekend that saw clashes with security forces firing tear gas at protesters.

"The whole government resigned," Hamad said. He added that Prime Minister **Hassan Diab** will head to the presidential palace to "hand over the resignation in the name of all the ministers."

The massive blast on Aug. 4 which decimated Beirut port and devastated large parts of the city has brought a new wave of public outrage at the government and Lebanon's long entrenched ruling class. Protests were planned outside the government headquarters to coincide with the Cabinet meeting after large demonstrations over the weekend that saw clashes with security forces firing tear gas at protesters. (AP)

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 10, (Agencies): Kuwait stands ready to support Lebanon by any means necessary in the wake of a horrific port explosion that ravaged its capital Beirut, His Highness the Prime Minister **Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah** said on Sunday.

Kuwait's support for the Lebanese people stems from its conviction in the deep camaraderie between the two countries, the Kuwaiti Premier told an international donor conference for Lebanon via video link, co-hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron and UN Chief Antonio Guterres.

The Kuwaiti relief package comprises previous pledges worth nearly \$30 million, in addition to medical supplies and food aid of up to \$11 million, he revealed, citing contributions from local charities as well.

His Highness, speaking on behalf of Kuwait on Sunday, thanked the duo for inviting him, and offered his sincere condolences to the families of the victims in brotherly Lebanon, and "my best wishes for a speedy recovery to the injured."

His Highness the Prime Minister said Kuwait, based on its standing and solidarity with Lebanon and under the directives of HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad**, has taken the initiative to provide relief aid to Lebanon for the victims of the explosion. Meanwhile, taking part in the conference titled, 'The Conference on International Support for Beirut and the Lebanese People', were 36 countries.

Amidst anticipation of what will be discussed by the UN Security Council meeting later Monday, devoted to discussing the implications of the explosion, amidst increasing calls for the formation of an international investigation committee; **Hassan Diab's** government is about to collapse, after Information Minister **Manal Abdel Samad** and Administrative Development Minister **Damianos Kattar** have tendered their resignations.

A daily quoting reliable sources said Minister of Economy and Trade, **Raul Nehme** was also set to resign from the government.

Eager to help amid tragedy: PM

Kuwait donates \$41mn to Lebanon

Gulf backs, Iran hits arms embargo

Seven bills tackle demographics

Ministry plans cut of 360,000 expats

By **Saeed Mahmoud Saleh**
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 10: Chairman of the parliamentary Human Resources Committee MP **Khalil Al-Saleh** disclosed that the committee recently discussed the demographic imbalance, domestic labor and visa trading issues with Minister of Social Affairs and State Minister for Economic Affairs **Mariam Al-Aqeel** and her accompanying team.

According to Al-Saleh, the minister and her team presented solutions to the abovementioned issues during the meeting.

He said the plan adopted by the minister requires special legislation since it is aimed at mitigating the negative security effects of the growing number of expatriates compared to the citizens. He revealed the remedy to the demographic imbalance focuses on the importance of finding solutions to the problem, particularly the exceptionally big number of expatriates of certain nationalities.

He added the committee asked the minister to present a timetable for the implementation of the plan, specify the needed legislation, and submit related reports to the National Assembly for approval.

He affirmed the committee looked into a number of relevant bills submitted by several MPs, indicating these bills are being discussed and the reports on these bills will be released by the end of this week.

Also, Committee Rapporteur MP **Osama Al-Shaheen** said the Ministry of Social Affairs presented short and long term solutions; revealing the ministry laid down a plan to terminate the services of 360,000 expatriate workers.

He said the committee is currently working on seven bills concerning the demographic issue and none of these bills is submitted by the government.

Stressing the importance of finding solutions to this issue, Al-Shaheen asserted the number of citizens increased by 55 percent within 15 years – from 2005 to 2020; while the expatriates increased by 100 percent in the same period.

In another development, Health and Social Affairs Committee Chairman MP **Sa'adoun Hammad** attributed the failure of the bill on addressing the consequences of coronavirus to misunderstanding. He explained most of the MPs did not read the report carefully, so they wrongly concluded that the bill is not in the interest of national labor. He added some MPs thought the reduction of salaries is applicable to Kuwaiti employees in the public and private sectors, indicating these MPs did not read the second article of the bill which states the government will compensate for the deducted salary.

Hammad pointed out the bill could have been an opportunity to eliminate extra expatriate workers in the private sector.

DUBAI, Aug 10, (AP): A six-nation bloc of Gulf Arab nations torn apart by internal strife endorsed an extension of a United Nations arms embargo on Iran, just two months before it is set to expire.

The Gulf Cooperation Council on Sunday sent a letter to the UN Security Council backing an extension of an arms embargo that's kept Iran from purchasing foreign-made weapons like fighter jets, tanks and warships.

The GCC – comprised of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – alleged Iran had "not ceased or desisted from armed interventions in neighboring countries, directly and through organizations and movements armed and trained by Iran."

A Saudi-led coalition continues to battle Yemen's Houthi rebels, whom the UN, the US and armament experts have accused of receiving arms from Iran. Tehran denies arming the Houthis, even as Iranian armaments and components have repeatedly turned up in Yemen.

The letter also said Iran arms Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and Syria and allegedly provides weapons to Shi'ite militias in Iraq and "terrorist groups" in Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

"UN restrictions establish a consensus understanding of the threat to peace and stability Iranian proliferation represents," the GCC said in the letter signed by General-Secretary **Nayef al-Hajraf** on behalf of the bloc.

Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman **Abbas Mousavi** condemned the GCC letter and called it an "irresponsible" statement that serves US interests, Iranian state TV reported.

Mousavi also criticized the Gulf Arab countries for being "among the largest arms buyers in the region and the world," even amid the economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The UN banned Iran from buying major foreign weapon systems in 2010 amid tensions over its nuclear program. That blocked Iran from replacing its aging equipment, much of which had been purchased by the shah before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. An earlier embargo targeted Iranian arms exports.

Iran's 2015 nuclear deal saw the UN agree to sunset the arms embargo this October. President **Donald Trump** unilaterally withdrew America from the deal in 2018, part of a maximum pressure campaign that's hurt Iran's already-ailing economy and led to a series of escalating incidents in the Mideast.