

DIWANIYA ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Govt needs to alter strategy in dealing with pandemic'

'Quarantine, continued lockdowns in some areas fail to end corona crisis'

"A DISTINGUISHED article written by veteran American academic and politician Henry Kissinger, in the 'Washington Post' some time ago, commenting on the changes that will take place in the world as a result of the Corona epidemic," columnist Ahmad Al-Sarraf wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"In his article he mentioned that 'the founding myth of the modern government is that it is a walled city that is protected by powerful rulers, who may sometimes be despots, sometimes good, but it always remains a government strong enough to protect people from an external enemy'.

"During the era of enlightenment, thinkers of that era reformulated this concept, so that the purpose of the legitimate state became to provide the basic needs of people for security, order, economic welfare, and justice, because individuals themselves could not secure these things.

"In this context, we need in Kuwait to think for a moment to reflect on what happened and the procedures that were followed, and what we are required to do in the coming days.

"The Corona epidemic has rocked the whole world, turning our lives upside down, perhaps forever. In other words, the poor and the rich, the learned and the ignorant have been forced to deal with this situation with the same rule.

"But the naked truth is that it will be clear to everyone the fact that the difference in facing the epidemic, from one country to another, is not in the small number of casualties, despite the importance of each person's life, but in the speed of restoring life to its previous era, or something like that, rejecting complete paralysis in most states, and dedicating all forces, from health, food, medicine and security, to fight the epidemic.

"The concerned authorities, particularly the Ministry of Health and its entire medical and nursing staff, and the Defense and Commerce ministries and other concerned authorities, have done a tremendous job to protect the State from its enemies, and this is the role of a strong government.

"And now it is the role of the other important institutions of the strong government to provide the basic needs of people with security, order, economic well-being and justice, because individuals cannot secure these things themselves.

"Therefore, the government must change its strategy in dealing with the epidemic, and accept some sacrifices, and this is much better than the continued survival of the situation unlike what we witnessed for a long time.

"For example, accepting the idea of a

quick death is sometimes better than the idea of slow death. Also, to say that everything can be solved with money is not necessarily true, especially in light of the impossibility of continuing to spend indefinitely.

"In light of this reality, quarantine cannot be understood, or rather, the continued 'imprisonment' of thousands in 'banned areas', or an understanding of the reason for preventing citizens, and even residents from traveling abroad, as the exit of one hundred thousand or more will relieve them, provide them with an opportunity to end their work and contribute to relieving pressure on the roads electricity, water and food, and the rest of the services, other than the unjustified and conflicting decision, with the human right to movement, as long as this does not constitute a danger to society.

"I say this particularly since the countries which they would like to travel to allow them to enter and opened their airports before them."

Also:

"During the period of the Iraqi criminal occupation of the State of Kuwait, all the faults that were represented by impropriety and lack of interest in building the country according to the requirements of the times showed its ugly face," columnist Saud Al-Samaka wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"By this I mean there was lack of creating necessary opportunities for outstanding Kuwaiti youth of both sexes to enable them to keep abreast with the developed nations and march towards a promising future so that the nation can co-exist with every new development related to various aspects of the life.

"Post liberation and the return of the legitimacy, the State had stated resorting its activities, the talks at the country's Diwaniyas had started concentrating on the necessity of creating 'a new Kuwait' that must be void and free of the past faults and sins.

"During the period of the Iraqi criminal occupation, which revealed the size of shortcomings of successive government departments in exploiting the only source of income and relying entirely on it and not using it to open new channels that are auxiliary or even a future that will be a substitute for any emergency life resource for the state?"

"In this period, people started betting on

studying the occupation as the strongest event in the context of their history, and therefore the liberation stage must be a serious and real beginning for the re-establishment of the State with a new philosophy that makes it able to keep pace with the imperatives of global change towards modernity in creating a kind of multi-productive economy and also removes from us the concerns of relying on a single source of income that can end at any moment for any reason.

"After the liberation and the return of legitimacy, as the State started to regain its activity, the conversation started in the diwaniyas in the country that people were keen to begin work on creating a 'new Kuwait' free of the mistakes and adventures of the past.

"However, in the context, of the talks in question, the 'embezzlement of the age', emerged and it represented the first giant embezzlement the State of Kuwait witnessed after the stories of 'barrels' and the light was shed on this by both the National Assembly and media because of its huge volume which ran in billions of dinars.

"But unfortunately, when robe almost reached the neck of the first corruption case the verdict was undated and was considered null and void and this resulted in the more thefts which were traced to 'Ali Baba' until this issue unfortunately became a culture distinguished with cleverness.

"However, today the same scene repeats itself with the beginning of coronavirus epidemic, and we talk the same talk about 'a new Kuwait' post getting rid of this virus emerged, but how to get rid will be the topic of our next article - God willing."

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"The second stage of the return to normality and allowing the government agencies to work provided that the number of employees does not exceed 30 percent to be able to contain the spread of the emergent virus, in my view, is another positive indication of the need to restructure and shrink the huge and ramified government sector," Ahmad Abdul-Hadi Al-Sedhan wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"Before the pandemic, we all observed a strange phenomenon in the emergence of multiple governmental agencies and departments here and there, and it is required to implement a set of goals and future plans, which are supposed to serve the public interest when creating any government agency, authority or administrative organizational name, but to see from time to time the establishment of new bodies with large numbers

of officials and assistant undersecretaries, keeps us wondering.

"The traditional ministries have many chronic obstacles and late plans, as it is said (there are enough of them). The ministries need those who will assist in executing difficult programs, and not to disintegrate this or that ministry to allow the new agency to emerge with many goals. In so doing, some of these bodies take us to a virtual/fantasy world of development and achievement before we discover the reality of situation is different from imagination. Of course, it entails huge budgets looking at the financial deficit and public debt law, and currently, the negative financial implications of the pandemic.

"Establishing the foregoing becomes a fertile field, as usual, for the interference of some representatives and influential people, as if it were a new cake for appointing relatives, associates and children in leadership positions at new promising bodies for more artificial prestige!

"Why wasn't the performance of the new bodies created in the last three years measured publicly to determine what has been accomplished, especially as we haven't heard of some of them and do not find statements issued by any of their officials, as if they're in another world.

"Oh my people, they are agencies and not clothes that are sewn by tailor, so the newly formed agencies must have realistic output, plan and specific goals to be measured and hold those responsible to account to avoid wasting the money and time of the state and its people, and to show the feasibility and benefit of establishing them.

"The most important step is to cancel and merge many of them within the ministries and to take advantage of approximately one third of the size of the workers, as I mentioned, to work towards a government 'diet' - so to speak - to help in losing the excess weight in this sector. I do not mean losing weight in the appointment of our young people, as we strongly support it. I mean to limit the administrative structures that result in the appointment of large number of senior officials leading to wastage of public money without serving the interest of the nation.

"Another important point of necessity is to reduce budgets of the hospitality, foreign missions and luxury cars for officials for the sake of the homeland. May God Almighty help us in all cases."

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"Treachery is not alien to the Muslim Broth-

erhood Group which continues to indulge in conspiracies. Therefore, when their followers in Kuwait wage an attack on the newspaper that exposed them, it frankly means they have been pushed into a corner after being exposed," Sattam Ahmad Al-Jarallah wrote for Al-Seyassah Daily.

"In the past few days, we have seen how the followers of this group waged a fierce attack on the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Qabas daily Abdullah Ghazi Al-Mudhaf with the attempt to intimidate and terrorize him.

"This fierce campaign against our colleague is in fact a dangerous indication of the extent of violence this group perpetuates. People, especially political figures, have been urging for a while to classify it as a terrorist group, and demanding a ban on all its activities similar to what most of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states have done.

"The series of investigation reports published by Al-Qabas daily about the group, its history and its infiltration into state institutions should not go unnoticed; in fact, these documents must be included in any decision taken to ban the group. Everyone involved in the recent scandal of "Gaddafi tent tape" should be probed.

"The exclusion of these people has in fact become a necessity today. For the past decades, this group has remained quiet and calm, despite conspiring with Saddam Hussein for the invasion of Kuwait and playing a role in poisoning the minds of youth in the country, let alone advocating extremism in the country.

"The attack on our colleague is in fact an attack on all journalists and those working in the information media. What our fellow Abdullah Al-Mudhaf did is within the boundaries of the Constitution. His approach was in a scientific and professional manner.

"If there was any response or observations from the group's associates or their supporters, it should have been through legal channels in the spirit of facing an argument with an argument, not the practice of intellectual terrorism in such hideous manner.

"However, since the criminal who is known for his crimes always seeks to impose his opinion on others, he usually opts for all kind of methods to do so, even terrorism. Therefore, we not only stand in solidarity with our colleague Abdullah Al-Mudhaf, but we extend it by touching us all in the Kuwaiti media. There must be a unified media stance against these traitors."

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb

Kuwaitis 'hesitate' to work in various government agencies due to low pay

'Termination of expats to continue, Kuwaitization on track'

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: According to a recent statistic, nine government agencies affiliated to the Ministry of Finance have 563 job vacancies currently. Those agencies have employed about 184 Kuwaiti citizens since the issuance of Resolution No. 11/2017 by the Civil Service Commission (CSC). They also termi-

nated the services of 87 expatriates and offered those vacated positions to Kuwaiti citizens, reports Al-Anba daily.

The statistic explained that many government agencies acknowledge the difficulty in appointing Kuwaiti citizens due to their reluctance to take up such jobs because of low salaries or their lack of preference for such jobs. However, government agencies will not hesitate to raise the level of Kuwaitization and lay off as many expatriates as possible in line with the instructions of the Cabinet and CSC in this regard.

These governmental corridors justified the increase in the number of job vacancies in them for years to the decrease in the monthly salary determined in accordance with the internal regulations for personnel affairs. This resulted in the reluctance among Kuwaiti citizens to take up those jobs, despite more than 34 advertisements posted by these agencies in less than a year. These agencies include the Public Institution for Social Security which has 180 job vacancies.

On the other hand, there are entities that recorded the highest rate of Kuwaitization, such as the Central Bank of Kuwait, which succeeded in registering the highest rate of Kuwaitis in history to reach 91.7 percent. It also succeeded in reducing the number of expatriate employees to below 2.7 percent. During the current fiscal year, it employed about 97 Kuwaiti citizens.

The statistic revealed that the Ministry of Finance is committed to applying the Kuwaitization policy in accordance with the CSC plan. It has terminated the services of employees from several job groups, and sent ten warnings to non-Kuwaiti employees to urge them to complete their end-of-service procedures.



Labourers heading for work as Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh lockdown ends after more than three months. Photo by Mohammad Morsi



Men and women wait as food parcels are distributed in Farwaniya lockdown area. Photo by Bassam Abu Shanab

Top officials review national cybersecurity strategy

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah received at the ministry's general office Tuesday Chairman and CEO of Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Engineer Salem Al-Ozainah, in the presence of Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Khaled Al-Jarallah.

The ministry said in a press statement that during the meeting, Al-Ozainah provided a comprehensive review of the national cybersecurity strategy in Kuwait, the completed implementation programs and the global standards that are applied within this framework.

The meeting showed steps taken by Kuwait towards qualifying professionals that will be trained in this

vital sector and the support services provided by the authority to all government agencies and institutions towards maintaining the security of its digital data, improving its performance in an optimal manner that coincides with the latest technology in this field.

Assistant MoFA for Europe Waleed Al-Khubeizi, Assistant MoFA for the Deputy Foreign Ministers Office Ayham Al-Omar, Acting Assistant Foreign Minister for the Office of the Deputy Minister Saleh Al-Loughani and a number of officials at the ministry attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Director of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) Office in Kuwait Dr. Samer Haddadin, stressed the importance of the measures taken by Kuwait to combat rumors,

false information and what arouses hate speech, especially in light of the current circumstances against COVID-19.

Haddadin said in a press statement Tuesday that the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information previously launched an electronic platform as a tool to investigate the credibility of news, photos and videos, reducing the spread of fake news.

He noted the warning of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, that with the spread of COVID-19, a wave of misinformation and hate speech launched in the world.

The UN launched the electronic platform announced by the UN Secretary General on April 14 to provide information that may contribute to preserving the lives of individuals, scientific advice and success stories.

Minister inaugurates forum

World praises Kuwait media: Al-Jabri

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri stressed on Tuesday the valued role of Kuwaiti media on a global scale.

Al-Jabri made the statement while inaugurating Kuwait's first media forum, saying that developing media is not only the responsibility of the ministry, but also a common responsibility to which all should contribute.

The forum translates this goal so as to make positive and realistic results contributing to the promotion of the steps made by Kuwait's media towards progress and development, he said.

He noted that Kuwait's media has been playing its active role and fulfilling its national responsibilities in supporting the government and evaluating the performance of all State institutions.

The minister cited the words of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, praising the role of Kuwaiti media.

The march of Kuwait's media has been backed by electronic media, he said, describing it as a "key pillar" in bolstering progress in the country. He confirmed that the Ministry of Information is supporting all positive works carried out by various actors of civil society.

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