



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

The Friday Market wears a deserted look as it remains closed to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The market was re-opened last week but had to close it again because of the heavy rush which created a chaos at the gates. The government has yet to make an announcement on re-opening of the same.



Top and above: More than 2,000 displaced families in Yemen benefit from a water project funded by Kuwait. KUNA photos

MPW plans to construct 'cities' for low-paid workers via private sector

Additional solutions for phenomenon of excess labor eyed

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Ministry of Public Works seeks to absorb about 950,000 workers in labor cities, and prefer the construction of cities remain through the private sector, reports Al-Qabas daily.

At meetings attended by several bodies in the state in this regard, the ministry touched on four options for implementing the workers cities project. The first of which to be carried out through the ministry, the second by Public-Private Partnership Projects Authority, the third by the ministry and the partnership authority, and finally to assign the ministry to implement projects in conjunction with a government agency designated by the Council of Ministers.

The ministry concluded that it is necessary to adhere to Cabinet Resolution No. 1568 adopted at its meeting No. 51/2011/2 dated 31/10/2011 regarding companies contracting with government agencies housing their laborers in the labor cities. The technical staff have been assigned to study development projects and initiatives in coordination with both the Ministry of Finance, and the Department of Fatwa and Legislation to take appropriate legal and contractual measures to implement this decision.

Proposed

The ministry has proposed additional solutions for the phenomenon of overstocking labor through adherence to the conditions and regulations contained in the ministerial decisions regulating labor housing and the health conditions set by the competent authorities. This will be subject to periodic inspection, commitment to regulatory decisions regarding building percentages for labor housing in industrial lands, and the possibility of providing permanent housing for oil sector workers on lands belonging to the sector. This is to find a quick solution to the expected labor with the proximity of a number of future projects in the southern region, and to allow non-mega construction projects to build temporary on-site labor accommodation during the project, according to the site conditions.

The proposed solutions also included allocating places in the residential areas for laborers working in public buildings such as "out-posts - schools - cooperative societies - polyclinics." These housing should be managed by consumer cooperative societies in each region with 100,000 employees. The Ministry of Public Works shall repeat the experience of building workers' housing on an area of 10,000 to 100,000 square meters that can accommodate between 1,000 to 10,000 people, in places such as Shadadiyah and Sabhan, provided that these sites are near the vocational industrial areas (Shuwaikh Industrial - Jahra Industrial). Execution of the housing units and their management should be done by the private sector.

It also called for the possibility of specifying one body with the responsibility of implementing the workers' cities, and organizing



KNPC, KIPIC officials during the signing of the cooperation agreement.

KNPC, KIPIC workers' unions sign cooperation deal

The Kuwait National Petroleum Company Workers' Union has signed with the Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) Workers' Union a joint cooperation agreement, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The daily added, the agreement was signed in the pres-

ence of the Secretary General of the Union of Kuwait Workers, Mohammed Al-Arada, the presidents and members of the two unions.

The agreement is signed in the public interest of the employees and exchange experiences and trade union and legal opinions

that would achieve further advancement of trade union action in the oil sector during the coming period.

The agreement was signed by the head of the KNPC Workers Union, Mohamed Al-Hajri, and the head of the KIPIC Workers Union, Musaed Al-Sharid.

and following special requirements in this regard, and linking the civil card address with the residential address, including linking all legal and administrative obligations as it is applied in the "Court - Supply - Cooperative ..."

The ministry's recommendations are sufficient to qualify for offering. 2. The site was chosen, studied and inspected. 3. The project is easy to implement, and the budget spent on it is not equal to the amount of spending resulting from the effects of the delay in completing this project. 4. The cost, even if it seems high, is divided into 7 years, which equals 100 million a year.

Observations

After reviewing the opinions and observations of the concerned authorities, the Ministry of Public Works concluded on the following:

First: The non-establishment of the labor city in the south of Sabah Al-Ahmad, due to the reservation of the Ministry of Interior and the Oil Sector.

Second: Allocating lands for the oil sector KIPIC - KNPC to be close to work sites, and allowing KOC to establish permanent labor housing sites within the limits of their sites, in coordination with the Kuwait Municipality and the Ministry of Electricity and Water.

Third: The need to study and analyze the targeted workers (celibate with a salary of less than 200 dinars per month) and the estimated number of 950,000 workers to determine extent of the need to establish labor cities to accommodate them.

Fourth: Studying building a suitable site from previously approved sites or any other site to accommodate the remaining workers.

Fifth: A number of lands are allocated, which are close to the labor dominant sites (five regions), and

the construction of houses sufficient for a total of 100,000 workers, so that they are close to the services and do not need to implement an infrastructure.

Sixth: It is preferable to build workers' cities through the private sector (the third and fourth model) and not to charge them to the state budget unless there are reasons that could delay implementation (changing laws and legislation).

Seventh: To study the alternatives currently available in the informal labor housing (Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, etc.) in the event of the application of the law prohibiting accommodation of workers in residential areas, and the extent to which this can be implemented immediately or after the implementation of labor cities.

Eighth: Amending the special specifications in government contracts to ensure control of the number of workers assigned to each contract and the application of appropriate housing requirements and a review of the exceptions given in this regard.

Ninth: Commissioning the Public Authority for Housing Welfare to implement the fifth proposal in new cities, and assigning the Kuwait Municipality to secure spaces in inhabited labor areas.

Four options for implementing workers' cities were proposed by the Ministry of Public Works.

The first choice: Ministry of Public Works. The project is fully implemented with all its components. Infrastructure (electricity works, fresh water network, surrounding roads, sewage network, and any other services). Construction components (residential and investment buildings), through the Ministry of Public Works, and the project can be divided into four phases. Positives: Speed of implementation. Technical expertise. Negatives:

High cost. Reallocate.

The second choice: Public Private Partnership Projects Authority. The project is fully implemented with all its components. Infrastructure (electricity works, fresh water network, surrounding roads, sewage network, and any other services). Structural components (residential and investment buildings), through the partnership body. Positives: Budget savings. Available procedures. Negatives: Abandonment due to huge infrastructure costs.

Implemented

The third option: The Ministry of Public Works and the Public Private Partnership Projects Authority. The infrastructure of the project is fully implemented through the Ministry of Public Works as a first stage. The second stage delivers the project to the partnership body for offering to the investors, according to the rules and regulations, taking into account increase in the absorptive capacity and expansion of commercial, recreational and service activities in the project. Positives: Lower cost to the investor. Negatives: The cost of the infrastructure to be borne by the state.

The fourth option: The Ministry of Public Works and a government agency, which the Council of Ministers considers mandated. The first stage: the infrastructure of the project is fully implemented, through the Ministry of Public Works and equipping it as investment lands. The second stage: the lands are given to the authority that the Council of Ministers deems mandated to sell these lands to the beneficiary companies, taking into account the criteria for adequate housing, according to regulations, to be agreed upon. Positives: Encourage the private sector investment opportunities. Negatives: The risk of the investor's reluctance. Cost of infrastructure.

Meeting to be held to discuss issue

Private school owners threaten to sue MoE if tuition fees 'cut'

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Several private school owners have threatened to file cases against the Ministry of Education if the latter reduces tuition fees in the new academic year with online education for all academic levels, reports Al-Anba daily quoting highly reliable sources from the educational sector.

Sources pointed out the new decisions of the ministry regarding the new school year and the mechanism of work might lead to legal disputes with owners of private schools because of the disagreement over tuition fees.

Sources said the ministry verbally informed the private school owners that tuition fees will be reduced if the online learning system is implemented.

Sources added these directives have become sources of concern and inconvenience for the owners of private schools who rejected the decisions.

Sources asserted the ministry presented a solution with the hope that it will be satisfactory for the school owners, especially since the reduction of fees will be offset by exempting them from payment of annual rent (estimated at tens of thousands of Kuwaiti dinars) to the Ministry of Finance. Sources af-

firmed the Ministry of Education vowed to push for approval of the exemption.

Sources disclosed a meeting will be held within this week to discuss ways to deal with private schools in case they refuse to reduce fees, resumption of classes in October and decisions in this regard, hoping the tuition fee issue will not reach the courts as the students will pay the price for such disagreements.

Asked about the tuition fees that parents paid in the second semester, sources revealed both the Ministry of Education and the parents demanded for refund of these fees or carry them over to the next academic year; otherwise, the parents will resort to the courts to fight for their financial rights.

On the resumption of classes, sources confirmed all private schools will strictly comply with the directive of the Private Education Department to implement the plan of Education Ministry to start online classes on Oct 4.

Sources said this date is final unless there are changes in the health conditions in the country, stressing the department and the schools under its supervision are keen on following the instructions of health authorities.