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All this will lead to change in the characteristics and features of Lebanon, which to us Arabs means the end of a country that we have known throughout the past century as the crossroads between religions and civilizations, and a diverse country that constitutes a true model of coexistence.

Furthermore, the Lebanese will lose their distinctive feature of being pioneers in public relations and agents of most of the world's industries, even at the height of the civil war, as their goods were exported overseas.

For 38 years, the gang master of drug smugglers worked on making Lebanon his own farm, disregarding all social, economic and political legacies. The local forces have been fighting this for 17 years and were able to put an end to it, with the help of regional support. Today, Nasrallah fantasizes about achieving his objective despite being under the weight of starvation caused by his gang that rendered Lebanon isolated from its natural surroundings and international relations.

What this dweller of caves and his riffs fail to understand is that threats and rhetoric through the media will not stop the international community from conducting surgical operations to root out this tumor.

Therefore, the United Nations' emphasis on the need to implement international resolutions, while Israel continues to carry out disciplinary operations to weaken it along with the Revolutionary Guard forces and Iraqi militias in Syria, was not random, but rather represent a warning message of a greater upcoming event.

There is no doubt that Nasrallah's latest speech clearly revealed the fateful crisis of Hezbollah. Instead of fighting back at the one who is slapping him, he turns his frustrations towards the Lebanese people.

May Almighty Allah rescue Lebanon and its people from this tribulation which seemingly can only end with the rooting out of this drug smuggling and terrorist group known as Hezbollah.

Six deaths ...

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economy, this situation will certainly harm us more than the coronavirus crisis. There is no choice but to start opening the economy gradually and coexisting with the crisis in a healthy manner."

He further said, "The coronavirus crisis has become a health crisis and a reality that we must coexist with; but this does not mean we have to close the economy. There must be a mechanism and a plan for the gradual reopening and return to normal life, taking into account the sectors that are most affected, as damage is uneven across sectors. The collapse or bankruptcy of these sectors will undoubtedly affect many others including banks, and this is what we do not wish for."

In addition, an opinion poll conducted by "Bensirri Public Relations" on the extent the Kuwaiti companies have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that 56 percent of local companies will not be able to continue covering the fixed costs for another two months due to business disruptions and partial lockdowns in all parts of the country since March 22. This matter is definitely bound to worsen with the implementation of total lockdown from May 11.

The poll, in which 498 business owners and chief executive officers of Kuwaiti companies participated, indicated that covering the fixed costs is the biggest challenge facing their companies. About 56 percent of the companies requested flexibility in paying the rent, and 21 percent imposed unpaid leave for their employees. This measure is in contravention of the labor law but these companies were compelled to take such measures due to their current situation as well as in the absence of stimulating economic decisions.

'Difficult to lay off expat workers'

Some oil companies have informed the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) that it is difficult to reduce the number of non-Kuwaitis who work for companies which have contracts with the oil sector at the present time because these companies are in the process of implementing huge contracts and are almost close to completion and that any change in the work structure will have severe consequences for the operation and completion of projects, reports Al-Anba daily quoting top officials.

The sources stated the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation had addressed the affiliated oil companies in the middle of last week to prepare a study on the numbers of expatriate employees who can be done away with, but some companies have sent official letters to the KPC stating the difficulty in applying this clause because of the many projects implemented by the company, especially the Al-Zour refinery, clean fuel, LNG import facilities, heavy oil and others.

According to the latest statistics approved by the KPC, the number of expatriate workers according to the occupational classification of jobs is more than 3,000 - 1,260 medical specialization jobs, 1,056 engineering specialization jobs, 152 legal, financial and administrative specializations, and 500 professional and service specialization jobs.

Most of the jobs are concentrated in Kuwait Oil Company (2000 jobs), Kuwait National Petroleum Company about 800, Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) 88, the Petrochemicals Industries about 52 jobs, Kuwait Oil Tankers Company 41 jobs, Kuwait Gulf Oil Company 18, and the International Petroleum Company 4 and Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) about 42 jobs.

It is noteworthy to mention the total workforce in the oil sector is 21,300, including 18,200 Kuwaitis.

According to the sources, the number of expatriates in the Kuwait Petroleum Industries Company is about 500 who have worked since the company was established almost 3 years ago, and it is difficult to reduce these numbers based on the decision of the Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation.

The source stated that that expatriate labor has been appointed in the oil sector due to the lack of national employment, as international and accredited employment agencies have been recruited to employ that labor after receiving the CVs from candidates and comparison between them in preparation for choosing the best and their wages have been determined according to the unified salary scale in the oil sector.

The sources said the rate of Kuwaitis in the Ministry of Oil is 100 percent, and the rate of Kuwaitis in the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and many of its subsidiaries exceeded the target of 90 percent as demanded by the Civil Service Commission, indicating that the oil sector worked during the last period on a replacement plan and the jobs occupied by expatriates was to ensure the workflow is not disrupted, especially in the rare technical jobs that require specialized expertise, while ensuring at the same time that these experiences train Kuwaitis in preparation for their replacement in the future.

MPs battle

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totalled KD 752 million. He said 383 or 69 percent of these issues were resolved, while 175 or 31 percent valued at K253 million were dismissed.

He added the issues discussed within the same period in 2019 totalled 443 and all of them were resolved, pointing out the lower number of resolved issues this year implies low expenditures that could be attributed to measures taken to curb the spread of coronavirus such as lockdown.

He said 41 percent of the resolved issues are related to coronavirus and 59 percent on other emergent concerns. He revealed the highest number of issues concerns the Ministry of Health at 55 percent, 31 percent for the Cabinet, 10 percent for the Ministry of Finance and four percent for the Ministry of Defense.

He continued saying that 59 percent of the issues are related to previous contracts, as well as the maintenance of roads, electricity and water facilities, Kuwait International Airport Terminal Two, military equipment, wireless telecommunications company and other ongoing projects.

According to SAB, some details of contract violations spread on mass and social media platforms are true while others are fictitious. The bureau did not approve contracts found to be riddled with irregularities, such as high prices, the speaker added.

He clarified the Cabinet can approve any of the contracts rejected by SAB as per the law on its establishment, but such a step has not been taken so far.

On the other hand, MP Ali Al-Daqbasi expressed fear that the Ministry of Health (MoH) might repeat the hospitality issue involving the Ministry of Interior (MoI), indicating that as per the presentation of SAB, the MoH floated a tender for the supply of sterilizers at wholesale price of KD 2,850 while the retail price is only 800 fils. He warned that anyone who takes advantage of the coronavirus crisis to make illegal gains will be questioned.

In addition, MP Sa'adoun Hammad said the presentation of SAB included the recorded observations on the contracts signed by the government, especially the MoH. The bureau informed the MPs that 13 contracts were rejected and 11 of these contracts are that of MoH, he revealed.

He asked about the contract for supplying equipment valued at KD 5.6 million with a company whose capital is only KD 1,000. The bureau confirmed this, indicating the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) approved the contract earlier. The bureau later rejected the contract and it also cited conflict of interest because a dentist who works at MoH owns the company, he added.

COVID toes,

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In one report, dermatologists evaluated 88 COVID-19 patients in an Italian hospital and found 1 in 5 had some sort of skin symptom, mostly red rashes over the trunk. In another, Spanish doctors reported a series of 375 confirmed virus patients with a range of skin complaints, from hives to chickenpox-like lesions to the toe swellings.

Pictures of reddened toes and rashes all over social media and doctor chat groups have "already enabled the rapid recognition of skin signs by dermatologists. It is now time for rigorous science" to understand the link. Dr. Kanade Shinkai of the University of California, San Francisco wrote in a recent JAMA Dermatology editorial.

Boston's Freeman directs an international COVID-19 registry for doctors to report cases of possibly virus-linked skin symptoms. Of 500 reports since late March, about half are chilblain-like spots on the feet, she said.

Chilblains, what doctors call "pernio," are an inflammatory reaction. When pernio-like reactions appear in coronavirus-infected patients is one of many mysteries. For some people, it's the first or even only symptom they notice. Others see the toe problem at the same time or even a few weeks after experiencing more common and serious COVID-19 symptoms.

It's showing up in young people too, according to Dr. Amy Paller of Northwestern University, who is part of a pediatric dermatology registry also collecting images of patients' toes.

Among the theories: Is it just inflammation triggered by an infection instead of the cold? Is the virus irritating the lining of blood vessels in the skin, or perhaps causing microscopic blood clots?

"The public health message is not to panic," Freeman said, noting that most toe patients she's seen haven't become severely ill.

Are they contagious? "We can't tell just by looking at your toes," she said. Other medical conditions, such as lupus, can cause similar spots - another reason doctors should discuss each patient's overall health and next steps for testing or other needed care.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi

Top and above: People can be seen walking on the roads during the curfew break from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm in Farwaniya area.

Don't spill onto roads in two-hour curfew break, public urged

People are requested not to spill onto the public roads during the two-hour break from total curfew, reports Al-Anba daily quoting security sources.

The daily added, police patrols are spread all over to ensure law and order and people who come out to practice their hobby of jogging or brisk walking must avoid public roads because roads are meant for the movement

of cars, since many people use these roads to go to and come from work especially those working in vital sectors.

People are called to respect the decisions issued by the Council of Ministers including social distancing and wearing masks. The security sources said the public gardens will remain closed until further notice.

On the other hand, a security source said

the video clip that has been posted in the social media of people inside the Farwaniya Garden is old and was taken during the partial ban.

The source added the wall of the Farwaniya Garden is being temporarily repaired and the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) engineer working on the project has been informed of the need to fence the park completely.

Arab expatriate arrested for insulting GCC country, rulers; 'zero tolerance'

Asian trio caught selling items to people in quarantine

KUWAIT CITY, May 18:

The Electronic Crimes Department of the Ministry of Interior has taken into custody an Arab man for posting tweet in the social media to offend a sisterly GCC country and its rulers, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily added, after the tweet was posted police investigations revealed the man is an Arab citizen and working for one of the cleaning companies.

After the arrest, the Ministry of Interior issued a statement saying no one will be allowed to offend any sisterly or friendly country or the rulers and must adhere to the rules and regulations of the country.

She added that by conducting a search and investigation process, it was found that the account holder is an Arab resident in Kuwait and works in a cleaning company.

During interrogation the suspect is said to have admitted to the charge.

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Asian trio nabbed: Security personnel have arrested 3 Asians for selling various goods to people who are housed at the Ministry of Public Works quarantine, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Directorate General of Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Interior Ministry said the arrest came after a video of the three men selling merchandise to the people (infected with the coronavirus) inside the quarantine went viral.

The daily said the trio when confronted with the footage has admitted to the charge. They also said they sold the goods at prices higher than their prices.

They have been referred to the concerned authorities.

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Two mocking curfew: The E-Crimes Department of the Ministry of Interior have taken into custody two Syrian juveniles (females) for posting a video clip which shows them violating and mocking the decision to impose total ban which went into effect from May 10 and lasts until May 30, reports Al-Rai daily.

In the video clip the teenagers are also boasting that they know senior officials including a Public Prosecutor and senior officials in the Interior Ministry.

They have been referred to the Juvenile Prosecution.

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Couple robbing people: Police have arrested an unidentified young woman and her male friend for rob-



The National Guard have taken the task of running Al-Nuzha Cooperative Society to ensure work continuity after its closure due to infections with the COVID-19. The National Guard took charge of operating Al-Nuzha store after succeeding in managing branches of Al-Khaldiya and Al-Mahboula cooperative societies. Above: National Guard contingent at the store.

Hacker caught for penetrating MoCI 20,000 times

KUWAIT CITY, May 18: Personnel from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) working in the Cyber Crime Department have arrested an unidentified Kuwaiti working for a company which is specialized in programming systems for attempting to penetrate more than 20,000 times the Ministry of Commerce and Industry department which is responsible for issuing shopping appointments for cooperative societies and catering branches, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The accused who was seized from an apartment in Al-Shaab Al-Bahari area is said to have admitted to the charge and said he was trying to obtain as much information as possible about people who visit the cooperative societies and use that information for 'other purposes'.

The daily added the suspect was arrested following coordination between the Ministry of Commerce and E-crimes Department of the Ministry of Interior.

The daily added, the Public

Prosecution issued permission to tap some suspicious phones, as well local lines, until the officers reached the identity of the hacker, his residence and workplace, and on that basis a search and arrest warrant was issued from the Public Prosecution office and the hacker was arrested while he was leaving the house during the permissible two-hour break from curfew.

He has been referred to the Public Prosecution.

bing people, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily added, the arrest came after a Lebanese complained to the police that while he was walking along a road in Wafra the couple, who were walking their ferocious dogs robbed him under threat.

When police set out to look for the suspects, they saw the duo riding on bikes each with a dog tied to a leash.

When the suspects saw the police approaching, they got down from their bikes and took refuge into an abandoned chalet.

They were pursued and arrested by the police. Police found with them the items stolen from the Lebanese.

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Detention increased: The Sentences Renewal Judge has decided to

continue the detention for two weeks of an officer working for the Ministry of Interior as Captain based on a complaint filed by three expatriates accusing him of forgery and intimidation, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Public Prosecution had charged the officer of using his authority and power to break up a gathering of a number of the Egyptian community in 2018 with the help of other policemen.

One of the Egyptians allegedly took the picture of the Captain in a civilian dress and several of them accused him of intimidation and providing incorrect information.

The accused has denied the charges against him.

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Kuwaitis fighting in public: Police have detained for interrogation four Kuwaitis - one an employee of the Ministry of Interior, a Kuwaiti working for a private company and two others jobless - for fighting in public, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily added, the arrest came after the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received a information from a passerby who said four men were fighting on a road in Al-Dhaher.

The ministry employee said the three people assaulted while on duty and damaged his cellphone. He also told police one of the suspects was armed with a knife.

Police are looking for yet another person who is said to have escaped from the scene.