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ARAB TIMES

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT
Established in 1977 / www.arabtimesonline.com



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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021 / RABEE'A AL-THANI 27, 1443 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 17857

16 PAGES

150 FILS

SPOKESMAN DENIES RUMORS OF OMICRON IN KUWAIT

Opinion

The Mullah regime, an acoustic phenomenon

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

IT feels like the Iranian nuclear talks in Vienna, Austria, has turned out to be like a boring TV series, as the Iranians are not in the process of making any progress to help build confidence with the international community.

Their intransigence confirms that they are practicing blackmail while trying to compensate on the fronts of the proxies, either in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq or Yemen, under the illusion that this will subdue the countries and break their isolation, in preparation for its reintroduction into the international club.

Therefore, when the spokesman of Iran's Foreign Ministry Saeed Khatibzadeh said his country's delegation in Vienna is focused on lifting sanctions, and asserted that, "We will not accept anything less than this. We will not undertake any commitment more than what was stated in the nuclear agreement. The new commitments have no place in our negotiations", the only explanation for this is that the Mullahs regime is playing on the chord of investing in time until the countries participating in the current negotiations accede.

Tehran may miss the fact that the United States of America is an indirect participant in the "4+1" talks that are taking place between countries, which until recently had good relations with the Mullahs regime, meaning that the problem is not with the United States directly.

Rather, Washington's withdrawal from the previous nuclear agreement was a golden chance for those countries to reformulate it to guarantee international peace and security. Since the unveiling of the military nuclear project, the whole world has confirmed that it will not allow Tehran to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

This firm position did not come out of the blue. It all started when Khomeini took control of the state in 1979. Since then, this regime adopted terrorist and subversive policy and practiced it for four decades. It also launched the war against Iraq one year after the Mullahs came to power, and carried out terrorist operations in Britain and France. It made an assassination attempt on Shahpour Bakhtiar on their soil, and supported Afghan terrorist groups during the war with the Soviet Union.

All of the aforementioned events and situations led these countries to look with suspicion at any Iranian guarantees. They will not accept the return of the terrorist regime without removing its nails and teeth, not only in the region, but in the world.

Therefore, the Iranian intransigence in Vienna is nothing more than an acoustic phenomenon that has been ongoing for four decades about the divine victories achieved by the Mullahs on all fronts, when in fact they are all setbacks and defeats.

It is unreasonable for a regime with such strength globally and regionally, as it claims, to not be able to secure water in a large part of its country. From time to time, it witnesses large-scale uprisings because of the hunger that knocks on the doors of about 80 percent of the people. Hence, how will it be able to subject the world to its delusions?

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UN updated on POWs

NEW YORK, Dec 1, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait has informed the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Secretary-General and UNSC President about the latest developments of the file of Kuwaiti prisoners of war (POWs), missing persons and third country nationals.

This came in a letter addressed by Kuwait's Representative at the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, based on UNSC Resolution 2017/2013 and UNSC Statement dated November 24, 2020.

The letter said that on November 18, 2021, the remains of 19 Kuwaiti martyrs and missing persons were identified according to DNA tests conducted by Kuwait's General Administration of Criminal Evidence.

The POWs had been arrested during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and their remains were then included in the previous batches received in November 2020 as well as January, March and July of 2021, according to the letter.

Intensive efforts were exerted in order to identify the remains in Iraq and the tripartite committee's technical subcommittee decided to allow an Iraqi technical team to check the sites of the remains under the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Kuwait thanked the Iraqi government, the members of the tripartite and technical subcommittee, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for their efforts in this regard, according to the letter.

It is hoped that this human tragedy would come to an end at an early date, it said, adding that Kuwait would pursue efforts to identify the destiny of Kuwaiti POWs and other countries' nationals.

Amir congratulates UAE

Complete vision for next 50

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah addressed on Thursday a congratulatory cable to UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan on his country's 50th national day.

In his cable, His Highness praised the brotherly and historical bonds between the two countries.

Moreover, His Highness also exalted all the great achievements done by UAE in all fields.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the President of UAE Sheikh Khalifa.

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim sent Wednesday a cable of congratulations to UAE's Federal National Council Speaker Saqer Ghobash Saeed Al-Marri on UAE's 50th national day.

UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan said Wednesday in line with the "Principles of the 50th" UAE will continue to steadily pursue a solid ecosystem of well-established values and principles, with human capital lying at the heart of UAE Strategy for the Future."

Day by Day

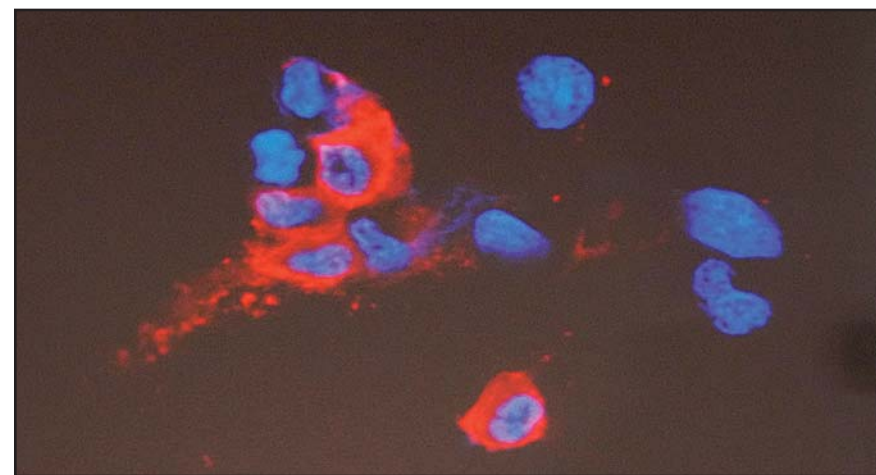
IT IS nice to see the fugitives from Turkey returning to the homeland along with the convicts of the Abdali cell and those who covered up the wanted persons belonging to the Hezbollah cell who were working to undermine the country's security.

Everything is perfect, but the Amiri pardon is not complete because there are hundreds of those who have escaped or were put behind bars because of a two-word tweet they posted on Twitter in the context of freedom of opinion.

The Kuwaiti people want to complete the amnesty so that others too can rejoice.

... Yet, tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



A projector image showing immunofluorescence staining of omicron infected Vero E6 cells in Hong Kong, Dec 1, 2021. Researchers at The University of Hong Kong have succeeded in isolating the omicron coronavirus variant from clinical specimens, making them the first research team in Asia that has succeeded in this regard, the university said. (AP)

Saudis report omicron case

'Stay home'

DUBAI, Dec 1, (Agencies): Saudi Arabia said Wednesday it detected its first case of the new coronavirus variant omicron.

The kingdom's state-run Saudi Press Agency said the case was a citizen coming from what it described as a "North African country."

The report said the infected individual and his close contacts had been quarantined.

The case marks the first known instance of omicron being detected in a Gulf Arab nation.

Much remains unknown about the new variant, which has been identified in more than 20 countries, including whether it is more contagious, whether it makes people more seriously ill, and whether it can thwart the vaccine.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert, said more would be known about the omicron strain in two to four weeks as scientists grow and test lab samples of the virus.

The new Coronavirus variant Omicron is not in Kuwait, the official Spokesman of the Ministry of Health Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad said on Tuesday.

In a press statement, Al-Sanad said rumors about the detection of new cases of Coronavirus variant Omicron in Kuwait is not accurate.

The spokesman urged people to follow and read official reports and trusted information on this matter.

Kuwait has advised its citizens and expatriates against leaving the country at present as part of precautions against the new coronavirus variant Omicron, Gulf News quoting a local newspaper said.

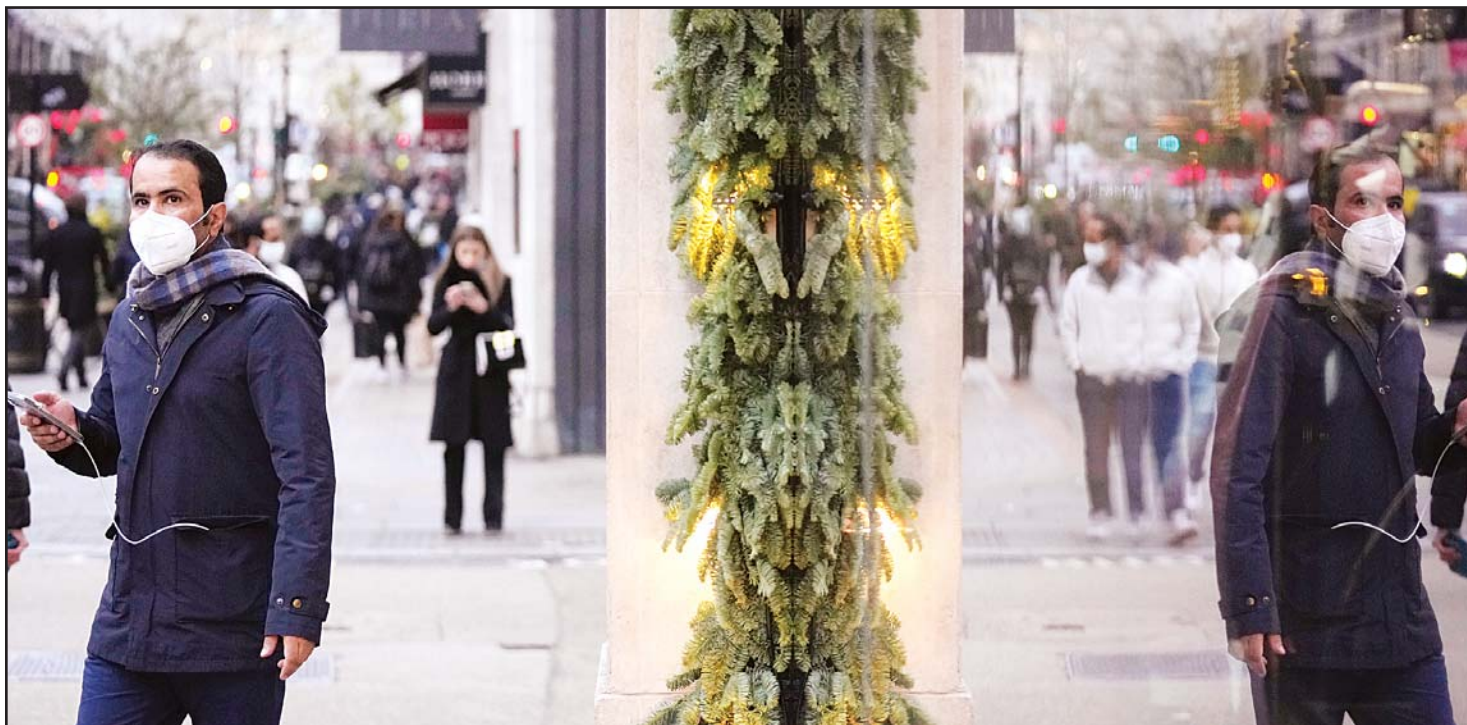
Kuwaiti authorities have said the new strain has not been detected in the country and have suspended flights from nine African nations.

Al Anba newspaper, citing "well-informed" sources, said the Omicron-related developments are still unclear in terms of scale of spread and hotspots. "It may be rife in one country, but there are no clarifications," an unidentified source.

"Taking tougher precautions at the local and foreign levels depends on the spread of the variant," the source added. The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry Tuesday urged citizens against travelling abroad unless necessary to stay safe.

The ministry called on Kuwaitis, who have to travel at present for compulsory reasons, to strictly comply with health standards and measures enforced by several countries to tackle the coronavirus and its mutants.

The General Coordinator of the Home Isolation Protocol for the "Covid-19" centers, Dr. Huda Al-Gharib, announced the closure of all "Covid-19" centers in the health areas that used to receive people infected with the Corona virus, and keeping open the Abu Fatira health center to receive all "Covid-19" cases, after the decline in cases in Kuwait compounded with the increase in the frequency of vaccination, reports Al-Anba daily.



Pedestrians wearing face masks against the coronavirus walk along Regent Street in London, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021. The emergence of the new COVID-19 omicron variant and the world's desperate and likely futile attempts to keep it at bay are reminders of what scientists have warned for months: The coronavirus will thrive as long as vast parts of the world lack vaccines. (AP)

US to toughen testing requirements for travelers

Variant keeps world wary as details dip out

Other Voices

Believe it or not!

By Ali Ahmed Al-Baghli
Former Minister of Oil

WE have been living in our blessed land with the blessing of oil since it was discovered by the British. The best blessing for the oil of our land is purchasing our car fuel at a low price because it is extracted from our land and refined in our land. However, we are now plagued with the current oil leaders such that our conditions have turned into something unbelievable.

I worked as the Minister of Oil for decades and I was greatly shocked when the Al-Qabas newspaper published on Thursday, November 25 an investigation, or rather a terrifying report, on the catastrophic failure of these oil leaders through the import of gasoline from abroad by the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) for domestic consumption.

This is something that have never happened before in our history except when we faced a catastrophe such as the invasion of our country by Saddam and the burning of oil wells in the 1990s.

In 2017, Kuwait faced a real shortage in the gasoline product, which was solved by importing from abroad, a matter that Al-Qabas warned about in its May 1, 2017 issue under the title "Kuwait imports one billion liters of gasoline". The shameful import decision came as a result of the negative consequences of unstudied decisions, foremost of which is the decision to close down Shuaiba Refinery early, as the closure decision was supposed to be simultaneous with the start of the new refinery's work.

This shameful decision to import gasoline was made by the sector's leaders who are fundamentalists and a group of losers. The Minister of Oil and Higher Education - we have no

idea what oil has to do with higher education - recently caused several errors that were mentioned in the report of 2020/2021 by the State Audit Bureau on a number of observations related to the environmental fuel project.

Those who read the seven observations in the report related to the administrative and technical failure of the oil sector will feel ashamed and sorry for these leaders of such a sensitive sector, which is now competing with other government sectors in failure and corruption that has been prevalent lately. This is because these leaders do not fear punishment, and thus went too far in their failure, which in turn affects every Kuwaiti citizen of this country whose leaders put the wrong man in the wrong place.

We hope that the disasters of this sector will end with the termination of the services of some of its leaders soon.

We hope to see the same happen with other leaders in the near future, whose actions are accompanied by catastrophic failure while they sit in their homes, in order to get rid of their chain of failure.

My dear reader, believe it or not, thanks to the failure of these leaders, we are importing fuel for our cars from abroad, and imagine that the borders are closed as a result of strikes, wars or health disasters, as we see now.

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TOKYO, Dec 1, (AP): The Omicron variant kept a jittery world off-kilter Wednesday as Japan further tightened travel restrictions, infections linked to the new version of the coronavirus popped up in more places and new evidence made clear the mutant strain was circulating weeks earlier than thought.

Much is still unknown about the new variant, including how contagious it is and whether it can evade vaccines, and the European Union chief acknowledged that waiting for scientists to tell the world more felt like "an eternity." Meanwhile, many nations in Europe are still dealing with a surge in infections and hospitalizations from their old foe, the delta variant.

Japan continued its aggressive stance, asking international airlines to stop taking new reservations for all flights arriving in the country until the end of December. The move by the world's third-largest economy, coupled with its recent return to a ban on foreign visitors, is among the most severe anywhere, and more in line with cloistered neighbor China than with some other democracies in the region.

Many countries around the world, however, have barred travelers from southern Africa, and the U.S. is moving to toughen testing requirements for international arrivals.

South African researchers alerted the World Health Organization to Omicron last week, but it is not known where or when the variant first emerged, and it's already clear it was circulating in Europe before that alert. But Nigeria stretched the timeline back even further Wednesday, when its national public health institute said it detected the variant in a sample it collected in October - also its first known case of the mutation.

The worry and uncertainty about the new variant and the sometimes haphazard imposition of restrictions recalled the early days of the pandemic, as did the familiar realization that the virus had once again outpaced efforts to contain it.

In a sign of how difficult the

virus is to control in an age of jet travel and economic globalization, Japan confirmed its second case of the variant - in a person who arrived from Peru via Qatar. Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, said Wednesday it had detected its first case of Omicron, a day after Brazil reported cases of the variant, the first known ones in Latin America.

"I listen to my scientists, they all say we do not know enough now. Therefore, it is good that they take their two to three weeks," said European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. "This is, in normal times, a short period. In pandemic times, it's an eternity."

While the world waited impatiently for more information, some countries were already struggling to beat back surges that predated the announcement of Omicron.

The Biden administration is moving to toughen testing requirements for international travelers to the U.S., including both vaccinated and unvaccinated people, amid the spread of the new omicron variant of the coronavirus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a Tuesday statement that it was working toward requiring that all air travelers to the U.S. be tested for COVID-19 within a day before boarding their flight. Currently those who are fully vaccinated may present a test taken within three days of boarding.

"CDC is working to modify the current Global Testing Order for travel as we learn more about the Omicron variant; a revised order would shorten the timeline for required testing for all international air travelers to one day before departure to the United States," the agency said.

The precise testing protocols were still being finalized ahead of a speech by President Joe Biden planned for Thursday on the nation's plans to control the COVID-19 pandemic during the winter season, according to a senior administration official who said some details could still change.

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