

## 'Kuwait at bottom of Gulf list'

"THE Arabian Gulf includes six neighboring and contiguous Arab countries, separated by borders only by necessity. In an hour and a quarter, you will find yourself on the land of Muscat Airport, the capital of Oman, which is the farthest point to the capitals of the Gulf states," columnist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"As for reaching the rest of the capitals, it is a 'crack of a stick'. Despite that, all five countries have advanced, and perhaps have made great strides in renaissance and progress, except for Kuwait, which is still like a lame duck, or as if it lives in another world, a world pardoned by others, and only Kuwait remained lamenting as a result, where do we put Kuwait compared to its five sisters?"



Hassan Karam

"Kuwait took giant steps in reform and development at a time when these people were absent or did not care and did not believe in development and renaissance, not even by laying bricks for the sake of reconstruction. Pride and glee, and the majority of the peoples of those countries used to come to Kuwait to get supplies, starting with bread and rice and ending with electrical and electronic appliances, and even fabrics.

"Until recently, Kuwait was considered the equipment of the region, with what God gave it from a nearby location and ports ready to receive all kinds of goods, even cars of the latest model were received by its ports, and from there they were exported to neighboring countries, and this means that they were traveling on the safety track.

"But the oppressors and the envious have persisted in slandering the successful, secure and rising peoples. Some evil maidservants believed that Kuwait, with its size and its people, could be swallowed up as a drink of water, and it was natural for Kuwaitis to make the security concern the most necessary priority.

"Accordingly, development was delayed, and the country's doors were closed tightly. That situation ended with the invasion, and the security of Kuwait has become an international responsibility. International peace will only be achieved by achieving security. The economies of the world are linked to security, and whenever security prevails, the economy will flourish and people will thrive.

"From here, I say that the security concern should not remain a priority, while the guarantees of Kuwait's security have become global. Our relations with the great powers, despite my lack of confidence, remain the surest guarantee for the survival and sustainability of Kuwait, the state, the system and the people. The importance of countries is not measured by area or wealth, and Kuwait would not have been liberated from the clutches of the Iraqi invasion had it not been for its position in global security.

"We should be aware of the importance of Kuwait as a location in the calculation of global security, from here let us open our doors without artificial apprehensions and fears, so the country must open its doors to foreign investors, and this is the news that appeared in newspapers last week, when this decision should have been activated decades ago.

"We are a country with a poor economy, and oil is not a pillar of long-term sustainability. We should not have relied on it as a source of income. Opening the doors to foreign investors, if the news is true, is a late but required step, although the rest of our Gulf brothers preceded us in opening the doors and welcoming investors from all over the world without being sensitive to gender, religion, color, or language, rather they provided them with all the reasons and conditions for survival, work and success.

"The fact that Kuwait remains at the bottom of the Gulf list has no explanation other than that our government is mired in fear, or a loss of self-confidence, and others, so let us separate politics from the rest of economic and commercial activities.

"Let us liberate ourselves from the obsessions of religion and security contracts. Kuwaitis are one of the most eager people on earth to travel and roam in the world, and Kuwait is the least open country in the world. This contradiction is undoubtedly caused by the government and the artificial fear and the invocation of artificial traditions. Kuwait is not an isolated island and is not surrounded by an iron wall, but inside us we made isolation our priority.

"Open the doors of the country, share the world, and abandon the saying 'we are not' like others because we are not, we are not angels.

"His Highness the Prime Minister-designate Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, as he lays down the initial lines of his promised government, should place at the top of its work program the issue of openness, encouragement of investment and abolishing the sponsorship system and demographics. Is this too much for a government if it wants to work seriously?"

Also:

"A special session of the World Health Assembly will be held in Geneva in the next few days," columnist **Dr Hind Al-Choumar** wrote for *Al-Anba*

daily. "The topic of the session is the issuance of a new international agreement or an international instrument to combat epidemics or pandemics and ensure global health security, bearing in mind that in the history of the organization, only two special sessions have been held so far.

"The entire world witnessed various measures during the Corona pandemic, but these measures were not in line with the current international instrument – the International Health Regulations 2005. Many of these regulations were not implemented properly during Corona, so the measures taken throughout the world were not coordinated.

"It seems that the emergency meeting of the organization is an important step to review what has been done and agree on the new international instrument, whose issuance is approaching internationally.

"The issuance of the instrument will not be the end of the road, rather it must turn into a legislation within the national legislation of each country, as well as the commitment of countries before the international community to implement the international agreement in various fields, not only in the Ministry of Health.

"Hence, such international treaties and agreements must be studied by specialists and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before approval and ratification to guarantee the issuance of an appropriate national legislation."

"Without a doubt, Kuwaiti women have assumed important and distinguished positions at all work levels, especially in recent years," columnist **Abdulrahman Al-Awwad** wrote for *Al-Sabah* daily.

"Janneke van der Graaff-Kukler, Deputy Regional Director of the United Nations Women Regional Office for Arab States, has confirmed that the continuous efforts of the Kuwaiti government to empower women socially and economically have gained universal admiration.

"The global appreciation of Kuwait's State-level efforts is the result of its commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women endorsed by the United Nations in 1995.

"The wonderful model that Kuwait presented in terms of empowering women at the governmental and private levels is in the interest of the country and it pushes the wheel of development forward.

"The State of Kuwait is considered one of the pioneers in the field of empowering women in public sector jobs, after developing the capabilities of Kuwaiti women, training and qualifying them to contribute to achieving Kuwait's development goals and their participation in decision-making in the governmental or private sector.

"Therefore, Kuwait deserves appreciation from the institutions concerned with women's rights, as it has been working for a long time to involve women in public jobs, including government, ministerial, judiciary, parliamentary and other high and vital jobs, which Kuwaiti women have been able to reach side by side their male counterparts."

"All five-year plans and laws did not succeed in increasing the percentage of Kuwaitis in the private sector. This increase is the primary goal of such plans. It is also the main goal of the Small and Medium Enterprises Law, Support National Labor in the Private Sector Law and Expatriates Health Insurance Law, but the goal was not achieved even if the number of Kuwaitis working in the private sector increased. This is the key and pivotal issue in the country's economic and financial reform," columnist **Ahmad Baqer** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"In the 1990s, the World Bank suggested that the government should grant bonuses and allowances to Kuwaitis working in the private sector, similar to the privileges granted to workers in the government sector. This is a way of encouraging them to work in the private sector. The same bank also suggested in another report that expatriates contribute part of the value of the services provided to them by the State.

"In the 1992 National Assembly, I submitted a proposal to grant social and children allowances to Kuwaitis working in the private sector.

"In the 1999 Assembly, I submitted a proposal regarding the health insurance for expatriates, such that business owners contribute to the value of the health service provided by the State to their expatriate workers. In this manner, the cost for the expatriates increases, while the cost for Kuwait decreases.

"These two bills were approved in 1999. The next assemblies approved the proposal that workers in the private sector receive the same salary increments approved for government sector workers, such as the KD120 and KD50 dinars increments, while those with rare fields of specialization like Medicine, Pharmacy, Accounting and Engineering received additional increment, so the government pays about two-thirds of the employee's salary in the private sector."

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb

# PART shuns responsibility over Kuwait Metro Project

'We were informed after nearly 3 years'

**KUWAIT CITY, Dec 1: Correspondence, official books, meetings and requests for amendments to the Kuwait Metro Project between the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) and Kuwait Municipality have been going on for more than three years; until the authority sent a 'shocking' letter last Sunday, dodging its responsibility for the project, reports Al-Rai daily.**

In the letter, the authority said its only function is to take decisions regarding the requests related to conflicts and obstacles to the right of way.

The authority's letter was dated Nov 28, 2021 in response to the letter of the Municipality dated April 18, 2019. It justified its position by pointing out there are many conflicts regarding the project, and that it was not officially instructed to start the project.

### Returned

Also, the authority returned to the Municipality a CD containing the path and stations of the metro; in addition to the feasibility studies prepared by the Partnership Authority in 2012 and 2016.

An official from the Municipality expressed dissatisfaction over the authority's behavior, indicating that it is surprising the authority responded to the municipality's letter after two years and eight months. He explained that even if the project is under the Council of Ministers, the authority must carry out certain tasks as per the government's instruction on Oct 11, 2020 that it should follow up and implement the railway project.

According to the source, the authority's disclaimer about its responsibility surprised the Municipality whose Director General, Engineer Ahmed Al-Manfouhi, contacted PART on April 18, 2019 regarding the request for data about the metro project mentioned in the feasibility studies; in addition to the file of the



KUNA photo Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah in talks with the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Belinda Lewis.

### Boost in ties discussed

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah held talks on Wednesday with the Ambassador of the friendly United Kingdom to the State of Kuwait, Belinda Lewis, addressing issues of joint interest and means of cementing bilateral relations as well as a host of regional and international issues.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense said in a statement that Minister Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali received at his office ambassador Lewis and held with her talks on topics of common concern and

means of boosting cooperation. Moreover, the two sides explored latest developments on the regional and international arenas.

The meeting was attended by the Kuwaiti Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah, the UK Chief of Defense Staff's Senior Advisor to Middle East and North Africa Air Marshal Martin Sampson, the Defence Attaché at the British Embassy in Kuwait, Captain Paul Mulvaney, and the Second Secretary at the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry's Europe Department, Omar Al-Duwaisan. (KUNA)

geographical coordinate system of the right-of-way.

Meanwhile, the only way to fill up vacant leadership positions (department managers) in the Municipal Council is to lift the ban on the delegation and transfer of employees, reports Al-Rai daily quoting an official source from the council.

The source revealed that "the Secretariat General had earlier asked the executive body at Kuwait Municipality to provide the appointment slots allocated for the council in its budget, but there has been no response so far."

The source confirmed that the Secretariat will continue to replace ex-

patriates with national workers in all sectors and departments, but the process of Kuwaitization of jobs must start in the council members' offices. He clarified that according to the Civil Service Commission Law, each council member has the right to delegate five Kuwaiti employees from any external government agency to work at the Secretariat.

He added the unceasing demand of some council members to increase the number of expatriate secretaries in their offices is unjustified; especially since the expatriate employees are affiliated with the Secretariat, not the members.

## Expat dies in mishap

### Man found dead in toilet

**KUWAIT CITY, Dec 1:** The corpse of an unidentified 42-year-old Egyptian, which was found inside the bathroom of a private clinic in Maidan Hawally where he worked as an anesthesia technician, have been referred to Forensics, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily quoting security sources said a needle with traces of an unknown substance was found next to the body. The Public Prosecution has been informed of the incident.

**Expat killed:** The remains of an expatriate who died in a road accident in Abu Halifa have been referred to Forensics, reports Al-Rai daily.

The operations of the Ministry of Interior said after it received a report on the accident, traffic police and paramedics went to deal with it and upon arrival found the owner of the vehicle who had collided with a parked vehicle was seriously injured and moved him out of the vehicle but before he could be rushed to a hospital he succumbed to his injuries.

**Dejected 'lover':** The security authorities in the suburb of Mubarak Al-Kabeer have arrested a Kuwaiti and seized his vehicle for deliberately ramming into his neighbors' cars and damaging just because the neighbor turned down the proposal from the man to marry his daughter, reports Al-Rai daily.

The man is believed to be a 'demobilized' high-ranking official in the Kuwaiti Army. The cost of damage caused to the vehicles is being identified.

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