

LOCAL

MoSA acts to stop unjustified waste of public money – Sari

Ministry said saved for state treasury approximately KD 1.2m



Indian Ambassador George, Madam Joice and Dean of Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador of Tajikistan Dr Zabidullah Zabidov pose with Kuwait Chamber Chorale group members.

Indian Embassy celebrates 'An evening of Carols' ... to rekindle spirit of festival

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 22: The Indian Embassy team, led by Ambassador Sibi George and Madam Joice Sibi, was joined by ambassadors, diplomatic spouses and family, the diplomatic and the Indian communities in Kuwait for a unique and joyful celebration of India's eclectic diversity of cultural traditions and festivals.

To celebrate the festivities of Xmas and the New Year, the embassy organized an Evening of Carols, presented by Kuwait Chamber Chorale, a musical ensemble of Indians in Kuwait. The synchronous notes of much-loved carols from around the world and Indian patriotic songs filled the air with joy and cheer, emblematic of this festive time.

In his opening remarks, the Indian envoy said, "In Kuwait, like every other part of the world, one comes across

a large number of Indians – symbols of India's unity in diversity. We come from different parts of India, we speak several hundred languages, we worship different deities, we celebrate different festivals, we eat different foods, we wear different clothes, but there is a feeling of oneness and common consciousness, a civilizational bond, that keeps us together, make us all proud as Indians.

"In fact, in India, we celebrate all festivals, celebrated by one and all. This unity in diversity is something very few countries in the world can be proud of.

"As I welcome you today to this carol evening I proudly bring to you greetings from that ancient land of India, an ancient but continuous civilization where all major religions and cultures thrive and flourish.

The ambassador recalled the words of greetings from president of India who in his message wish everyone a happy feast. I hope this festival nurtures peace and prosperity, and helps strengthen harmony in society. Let us follow the Prophet's teachings of love, compassion, and charity, committing ourselves to the welfare of our society and nation."

He quoted Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi who on this occasion, said, "We remember, with immense joy, the noble thoughts of the Prophet. He epitomized spirit of service and compassion, devoting his life towards alleviating human suffering. His teachings inspire millions across the world."

The event was also live streamed on social media and watched by large number of viewers.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 22: Assistant Under-secretary for Planning and Administrative Development Affairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Abdulaziz Sari, said based on the ministry's keenness on public money and stopping unjustified waste, which may affect its projects in general and the projects related to computers in particular, it was able to reduce the estimated value of some projects and cancel others saved for the state treasury approximately 1.2 million dinars without affecting the services, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Sari told the daily, "A committee was formed recently comprising technicians from the Computer Department after reviewing the contracts related to services of civil and charity associations and studying the terms showed the enormity of the estimated value and reduced the value from 400,000 dinars to 73,000 dinars."

Canceling

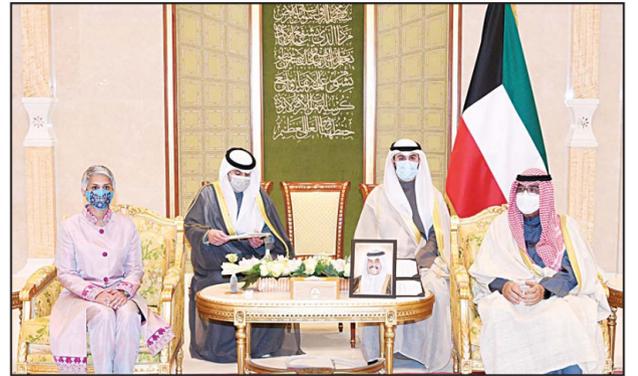
He explained the committee also succeeded in canceling a project related to the mechanization of social welfare services in the ministry, with an estimated value of 600,000 dinars, due to its lack of feasibility compared to the services that it would provide, noting that the committee decided to direct this value to benefit from it in the implementation of other more beneficial programs and projects, by merging the project with other similar ones.

He pointed out the committee also canceled a permanent computer contract known as the (VDI) project, which helped make annual savings to the ministry's budget, estimated at about 30,000 dinars, in addition to saving another 36,000 from the project of mechanizing services for the cooperatives sector, stressing that it will continue to review all contracts to find out what is going on from the legal point of view and to ensure concerned parties remain committed to terms and conditions of the contract.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Minister of Social Affairs and Community Development, Dr. Mishaa Al-Otaibi formed a fact-finding committee comprising members from the Kuwait University, the Central Agency for Information Technology, and the Fatwa and Legislation Department, to study all computer contracts, especially those related to automated systems.



HH the Crown Prince receives the Ambassador of Belgium.



HH Crown Prince receives Canadian Ambassador.

HH Crown Prince receives new envoys

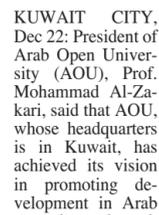
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Wednesday at Bayan Palace the credentials of newly-appointed ambassadors to the State of Kuwait.

In the ceremony, His Highness the Crown Prince received the Belgian

Ambassador, Czech Republic Ambassador, Romanian Ambassador, Canadian Ambassador, Chad Ambassador to the country, and Indonesian Ambassador.

The ceremony was attended by senior state officials. (KUNA)

AOU achieves founder's vision to promote development: Al-Zakari



Prince Talal

Prof Al-Zakari

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 22: President of Arab Open University (AOU), Prof. Mohammad Al-Zakari, said that AOU, whose headquarters is in Kuwait, has achieved its vision in promoting development in Arab countries through empowering tens of thousands of students to access education regardless of their gender, age, or economic and social circumstances, thereby realizing the vision of its founder, the late HRH Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz.

On the third anniversary of the loss of HRH Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz, Prof. Al-Zakari stressed that AOU would remain faithful to its principles set by its founder in providing high-quality and flexible learning opportunities while ensuring the accessibility to education for all learning seekers without any discrimination.

Al-Zakari said, "The late Prince Talal read the changes to be witnessed by the higher education in the region and the world before others, and recognized the need to adopt new educational models to accommodate the increasing number of high-school graduates in the Arab world, in addition to the importance of providing educational opportunities to all. He believed that the real developmental changes start with good-quality education."

Al-Zakari emphasized that AOU takes pride in sharing in improving the lives of thousands of students as providing them with new opportunities to improve their living conditions and their families, and making them effective in achieving development for themselves and their communities.

News in Brief

Dr Al-Sabti chosen: Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanim has sent congratulations to Dr. Khaled Al-Sabti, consultant ophthalmologist, who has been chosen from among 25 surgeons from around the world to perform two minute surgeries via live broadcast during an international conference on retinal diseases in Italy, reports Al-Rai daily.

Kuwaiti woman honored: Food and

Agriculture Organization (FAO) honored for the first time a Kuwaiti woman amongst its best young employees for the year 2021 during an annual recognition awards ceremony.

In a statement to KUNA, Kuwait's permanent mission at the FAO said the Director-General of the organization, Qu Dongy, awarded the human resources regional manager, Nouf Al-Ayadhi, a certificate of recognition during a ceremony attended by more than 1,600 of her colleagues. (KUNA)

'Value of active projects in MENA down to \$93.4b'

Kuwait records lowest drop among GCC in active oil refining projects from Feb 2020: MEED report

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 21: According to a report of MEED magazine, the value of active refining projects in the Middle East and North Africa has declined amid the shift of ongoing global energy away from fossil fuels, in addition to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region since mid-February 2020 until now, reports Al-Anba daily.

An analysis of the refining projects in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Egypt, Libya, Algeria and Iraq revealed that Kuwait witnessed the largest drop in active oil refining projects during the analyzed period, according to data released by MEED Projects, which tracks regional project activity.

MEED explained that in February 2019, the total value of the country's active refining projects amounted to \$35.3 billion. However, it is currently less than \$100 million. This decline is partly attributed to the completion of several major giant refining projects

in the country.

These projects include environmental fuel projects at a cost of \$16 billion, the final units of which began operating in September this year. They also include the Al-Zour refinery project worth USD 16 billion, which was mechanically completed and is currently in operation.

There were no new projects worth mentioning or being talked about in the refining sector, or any other sector of the oil and gas sectors in Kuwait over the past few years.

It should be noted that the ongoing issues related to the local political situation in Kuwait have increased the dual impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global shift towards clean energy.

As a result, the decision-making process, including the necessary reforms to support the Kuwait economy, faltered, at a time when the opposition in the National Assembly prevented the implementation of the

Cabinet's decisions.

There will be a need to increase political stability to see any significant improvement in terms of refining projects in Kuwait during 2022.

Meanwhile, MEED magazine stated that the value of active projects in the MENA region currently stands at \$93.4 billion, down from its peak of \$189.7 billion in February 2019. The last time the refining project activity in this group of countries in the region was evaluated at such a low level was in September 2016.

MEED magazine concluded by stating that the collapse in demand for refined oil derivatives during the pandemic forced many refineries around the world to either reduce the production of refined products or even stop operations completely. However, the recent recovery in global demand has been a catalyst for reviving operations in many of these facilities, but the project activity in the MENA region remains at low levels.

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