

# REMEMBER WHEN

Photograph courtesy of The Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait and the work of Dr Yacoub Al-Hijji in the book *Old Kuwait: Memories in Photographs* first published in 1996.



Courtesy of The Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait

## DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

Colonel Harold Dickson and his wife Violet are two British friends of Kuwait who loved the tiny country as much as they loved their own. So deep and genuine was their love of the Kuwaiti people that they preferred to die and be buried in Kuwait. Colonel Dickson died in 1959 and his wife died in

England a few months after her escape in 1990 from Iraqi-occupied Kuwait. These two friends of Kuwait are shown here with some of their Kuwaiti friends at a desert picnic. Mr Dickson is sitting in a chair due to some knee trouble. (From the book *'Old Kuwait: Memories in Photographs'*)

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Reputation of Kuwait, dignity of citizen, expat is at stake'

"ON WEDNESDAY, October 29, 2008, I wrote an article under the title that read 'Have young people lost their minds?' When you go to a mall, you are surprised by a strange phenomenon that we have not seen before in the Kuwaiti markets, and by that I mean the phenomenon of young people hanging around in groups inside malls. In each group there are between five to 20 youths walking 'hand in hand' and behave in an uncivilized, immoral and inhuman manner," columnist **Dr Ali Al-Zuabi** wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily.

"As soon as a young woman or a group of girls pass by, you see more than thirty young men walking behind them, each of them trying to pass on the cell phone number. This issue has become very controversial because if any girl refuses to take the phone number or snubs the person, she may be verbally or physically abused.

"The misfortune is that this reckless group of youngsters is dangerous as recent incidents that occurred in commercial centers, cooperative societies, public parks, etc. have shown they always carry in their pockets sharp objects such as knives and steel knuckles and they do not hesitate to use them during a fight over a girl or even if by mistake 'eyes meet' and each other is accused of staring.

"What makes these reckless youth go about their disgraceful behavior is that they know the security guards manning commercial centers such as the bedoun, Arab, Indian or Filipino expatriates are helpless, so they demonstrate their power over them because they are Kuwaitis and cannot be held accountable for misbehavior or they have the notion they are above the law, so the poor security guards are humiliated and insulted whereas those who abused them verbally or physically go unpunished.

"The reputation of Kuwait, and the dignity of the citizen and resident, is at stake. Either this stray youth group is subjected to the force of law, or it is said with a full mouth that the government is incapable to take action against them, thus people rest in their homes and refrain from going to shopping centers. So will the government move in this matter or we are lost in the fights and chaos of this legally, morally and socially deviant group?

"I wrote this article 13 years ago, yet the phenomenon of violence and harassment continues to grow in our society until it has become dangerous phenomena, in which many lives were lost, and the reputation of many girls was soiled, which means that successive governments and successive parliaments have failed miserably in an attempt, at least to limit the aggravation of these

problems, which have become phenomena that threaten the security of the individual and society."

### Also:

"Yes, I am with all the measures taken by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with all concerned authorities at the beginning of the Corona crisis ... and I personally thanked the Minister of Health for continuing this policy, which was difficult for all of us, especially the owners of large and small projects and people in general," columnist **Iqbal Al-Ahmad** wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"After life continued to be beautiful, and the numbers of corona-infected people began to decrease, we were surprised by new measures taken by the Ministry of Health after the number of infections began to spike. Here, allow me to stop at a part that must be clarified regarding some measures such as closing shops in the evening until 5:00 in the morning, including shopping malls and closing women and men salons, clubs and resorts.

"Everyone knows and it is very clear that most if not all the visitors to the malls, shops and restaurants are committed to wearing masks and continuous sterilization and women's and men's salons where all of them adhere to all that is required of them, with the continued monitoring by the Municipality and the Ministry of Commerce whose efforts are highly appreciated in this regard despite the ease on other aspects.

"These authorities know very well that when people go to malls, they will not enter if they are not wearing the mask in addition to the presence of constant monitoring inside these complexes.

"The monitoring role of concerned authorities is almost absent and this is the main reason behind the rise in infections, add to this people not adhering to instructions but continue to hold wedding parties and gather in diwanias.

"Everyone knows, and the concerned authorities know that the cause of the outbreak of any disease or rise in the rate of infection happens primarily due to the traffic movement to and from the country, especially from the high risk counties that are considered to be the source of the epidemic, namely the airport, land and sea borders, and if all these ports are dealt with continuous firmness, then we are safe.

"As for leaving the main joints without checking and monitoring while focusing on the harm and damage of closing them more than their benefits, this needs to be reviewed.

"If the new ban forced everyone to stay at home for only a whole week, it would have been much better than paralyzing life and sources of livelihood for

months. Unfortunately, I will not repeat and add to what everyone says.

"The concerned authorities allowed gatherings during the elections, before and after, and in front of the public and in front of the press cameras, the media, means of communication, pictures of gatherings, and the crowd of people at the opening of the National Assembly, gatherings of visitors to diwanias to enjoy dinner after the restaurants were closed without oversight and without adhering to wearing the masks.

"Impose tough penalties on non-commitment to wearing the mask and apply the conditions of physical distancing and cleanliness and leave the other things that people depend on for their livelihood to go.

"Do not hurry with decisions, study them and look at all the possibilities of their implementation and their implications and benefits and what are their alternatives. Discuss with the concerned authorities and parties, and then announce them."

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"Electricity, water and gas ... rent ... salaries ... materials for consumption and sale," columnist **Dr Naji Saoud Al-Zaid** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"The owner of a coffee shop or a small or even a large restaurant, a seller of popular clothes or even food or household supplies, anywhere in Kuwait from Mubarakiya Market to Khairan and Abdally.

"These people are on the verge of bankruptcy, people need them and they suffer when affected by lack of customers ... Since the beginning of the crisis, their income has been small and fluctuating. A few months ago, most of them began to lay off most of their workers due to the inability to pay their salaries. They are threatened by closure completely. Those who think that they do not perform basic and sensitive tasks are absolutely wrong.

"There are also baby nurseries, sports clubs, hairdressers and more. Who will compensate them and others? Please find solutions for these places and others, as their conditions are difficult and bad.

"Scientific evidence so far confirms that this dreaded virus has rise and fall curves. It is correct that partial or total curfew limits its spread, but does not eliminate it completely. Perhaps in the future, it will adapt and become seasonal, and in some period it will be like influenza and the majority will need annual vaccination. Everyone must be prepared for that, but face masks are mandatory, as well as social distancing and cleanliness (hygiene)."

— Compiled by Ahmad Al-Shazli



Dr Al-Zuabi

# Bid to curb power theft

MEW launches campaign in stables area

By Muhammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Feb 8:** The deputy head of the 'judicial seizures' team at the Ministry of Electricity and Water **Ahmed Al-Shimmari** announced the launch of a campaign at the Jahra Stables in cooperation and coordination with the power distribution networks sector, and explained a comprehensive inventory of the number of stables in the area is currently underway to determine the exact number.

Al-Shimmari said in a statement to Al-Seyassah that these campaigns launched by the Ministry of Electricity and Water come within the framework of the ministry's efforts to implement the law and remove all violations including direct power supply without a meter, tampering with fuses, illegal wiring and changing the size of the cables.

He stressed these campaigns are carried out with the support of the Minister of Oil, Minister of Electricity and Water **Dr. Muhammad Al-Faris**, the Undersecretary of the Ministry, **Engineer Jassem Al-Nouri**, and the Assistant Undersecretary for the Distribution Networks Sector at the Ministry, who spare no effort to provide the necessary support for the campaigns to play their role in implementing the law.

Al-Shimmari stated the team's campaign in the Camel Area con-



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Trucks parked in open areas.

cluded successfully thanks to the cooperation and coordination of all the parties to the campaign, including the Ministry of the Interior, the Public Authority for Sports.

Meanwhile, the exploitation of open areas by trailer trucks and other heavy vehicles have aroused the anger of a crowd of tweeters who launched the hashtag "# Kuwait Municipality," calling on its General Manager, **Ahmed Al-Manfouhi**, to immediately intervene to put an end to the reluctance of some truckers and large transport vehicle owners who use open areas to park their vehicles which lead to soil erosion, raises dust and damage the walkways, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The tweeters who participated in this hashtag appealed to His Highness the Prime Minister **Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled** and Minister of Municipality and Public Works **Dr Rana Al-Faris** to deal with this im-

mediately in order to avoid what they called 'complications'.

In this regard, singer **Wael Al-Ali** said, "In Dubai there are special parking lots for trucks on the outskirts of the city, but we have trucks in **Khaitan, Al-Jleeb, Mahboula, Farwaniya, Salmiya** and all over the place."

Lawyer, **Hamad Al-Namshan**, said the trucks are parked on the sidewalks and tiles and inside the residential and investment areas, while another tweeter said, those who drive small cars have to park their vehicles hundreds of meters away for two reasons — one for the safety of self and the other the safety of his vehicle.

Yet another tweeter said there is a government, there is the parliament and the municipality but everyone is a silent spectator.

Meanwhile, the Building Violations Removal Campaign in the

Capital Governorate led to the removal of 11 investment properties found to have violated building regulations, in addition to the issuance of 27 warnings to those who violated the real estate regulations in Sharq, as per the directive of Capital Governor **Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled**, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

In a press statement yesterday, the governorate confirmed that the workers residing in the properties where the violations were uncovered have vacated the buildings. This is in addition to the removal of unlicensed rooms and toilets in these properties, as well as cutting off electricity.

Sources pointed out that while the campaign is proceeding as planned to eliminate irregularities which have accumulated for years, it takes time to completely end the problem of old and dilapidated real estate properties in the governorate.

## Other Voices

### Crying over ruins of Arhiya

By Ahmad alsarraf

Almost all countries in the world, including developed ones, suffer, albeit to varying degrees, from the problem of dealing with waste, especially the dangerous ones. Usually waste is disposed off in one of the following ways:

Burying it, for certain period of time or for many years, let's say for until next generation. It is the least expensive but unethical and environmentally unfriendly; burning it, and the pollution it causes to the environment; exporting it to another country so that it can dispose off it in the way it sees fit, and this is also not ethical as the problem remains on the ground; throwing it into the seas and oceans and this has a devastating effect and recycling as much of it is possible and use it in an economical and appropriate manner.

If we tried to deal with tens of thousands of tons from the used tires which are dumped in Arhiya area, for example, using the last method of recycling, we will find that the issue is not that easy especially in a country where decisions are delayed.

The re-export process often requires the presence of 3 parties — a local authority specialized in dealing with recycling of materials and the solid waste in particular, two, an intermediary trader who sometimes is not necessary and a buyer or importer of the raw material.

The local agency gets the tires lo-

cally, cuts them into small sizes, and ships them to the buyer, often in large vessels or medium-sized ships. The problem is the low price, worldwide, for used rubber. No one is willing to pay more than \$20 per ton, at a time when the cost of shipping is only \$35 per ton, let alone the cost of collecting, storing, cutting, and delivering it to the port, consequently it requires the intervention of a third party, the state, to either pay the difference to the local manufacturer, in addition to a small profit rate, so that it can continue the recycling process otherwise it does the job which is often not practical.

The state can cover what it pays to the local manufacturer by collecting a simple tax, which is calculated accurately, on every tire, sold or exchanged, and uses the amount to support the recycling industry and shipping of this material otherwise the mountains of old tires will remain in place with a high probability of the situation worsening. The subsidy principle can be applied to other materials, especially those requiring large, specialized and expensive machines, labor and large storage areas.

The government can either cooperate with existing successful recycling companies or make a feasibility study of establishing a public joint stock company to undertake this task. Collecting and disposing off waste in general is a matter that is getting more difficult day by day, and the way to bury it under the ground, as is the case now, will bring terrible consequences for future generations.

In fact, I don't know who cares about the fate of future generations if we are indifferent to the health and future of current generation.

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email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



alsarraf