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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Multiple solutions to housing issue available despite crazy land rates'

"THE housing issue may appear to be an intractable problem if we look at the crazy rise in real estate prices in recent years to the extent that a majority of middle-income and limited-income people can no longer think of owning a lifetime home except by waiting in queue to acquire a house," columnist Prof. Faisal Al-Sharifi wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"The successive governments have dealt with the housing issue with the same perspective that it started with in the post-valuation era and did not consider it as one of the elements of social stability until after the aggravation of the crisis which caused the suffocation of model internal residential areas, and led to their transformation into more like investment areas.

"This policy contributed and instilled fear in the hearts of Kuwaiti families which made obtaining a home a crucial issue as the construction of housing units exceeded the actual need of families consisting of father, mother, children and grandchildren as well.

"The solutions are many and multiple and you only need to look at other paths that many countries have preceded us in resolving the housing issue, including, for example, but not limited to liberating more geographical areas and handing them over to the real estate developers, provided that it is not a duplicate of the Khairan Pearl project which exceeded the goal of its establishment.

"Therefore, the goal of the real estate developer must be to provide affordable lands and houses at competitive prices, so that it serves a large segment of small families and not allowing expanding the construction in the future.

"This is in addition to preventing vertical construction in new and demolished plots, and regulating the building list to prevent speculators from entering and transforming homes into investment projects, similar to what happened to most residential areas.

"Add to this the imposition of annual fees on vacant plots of land against those who own more than 5,000 square meters; paying the real value plus 20% for electricity and water bills for those who own more than two residential properties, provided that their area does not exceed two thousand square meters; monitoring and preventing traders from manipulating the value of construction materials by imposing heavy fines on violators.

"This can be attained by providing skilled and licensed expatriate technical workers in the field of building and construction by opening the way for national companies that are subject to monitoring by the concerned authorities and have bank guarantees to preserve the rights of citizens.

"Dealing with the real estate mortgage with caution so that banks are not allowed to exploit legal loopholes, as happened with consumer loans that destroyed the lives of many citizens after the loan interests exceeded the principal amount in light of the silence and negligence of the Central Bank.

"Holding auctions on state-owned lands provided to only citizens who have not previously obtained from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare and

those who do not have a real estate registry are allowed to enter the auction. "Establishing a national, state-owned company tasked with building residential homes to be rented out to citizens at reasonable prices for people with limited and medium incomes.

"Lastly, preventing the sale of homes and residential plots a citizen obtains from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare until at least for ten years."

Also:

"Difference of opinion among people is natural and it is healthy especially if it is in the interest of a group or society, and therefore it should not spoil amity. The difference of opinion of some with the Speaker of the Parliament in some matters should not make them forget his achievements under the dome of Parliament," columnist Dr Issal Al-Omairi wrote for *Al-Rai* daily.

"Some want Marzouq Al-Ghanim to look uninterested in providing the services required of him as a member and Speaker of the National Assembly through attack and criticism, but when we examine his performance more under the dome of Parliament, we see these multiple achievements realized in the past periods, we are actually verifying that this man is putting in the best performance in carrying out his patriotic duty under the dome of Parliament.

"Al-Ghanim has played a remarkable role in putting forward peaceful initiatives, the last of which was at the end of the parliamentary session -- an initiative of great political value, in order to achieve the interests of the voters who chose their representatives.

"Also, the last session of the National Assembly -- which was adjourned early -- indicates that the decision taken by the Speaker of the National Assembly was correct and is similar to the medicine that is suitable for this kind of events, which took place under the dome of Parliament. So, the decision to adjourn the session was the correct one to close the door on sedition and developments with undesirable consequences.

"We may disagree or agree with Marzouq Al-Ghanim, but we fully agree with him when we see his efforts and actions which led to the historic agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

"Yes, we may disagree with Marzouq Al-Ghanim on some issues, but we are proud of him when we talk about his role during the cause of the Arab nation -- the Palestinian cause -- when he exposed on more than one occasion the practices of the Zionist enemy in Palestine and its people, the last of which happened during the IPU meeting that was held in Europe."

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"If Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) is serious about its intention to reward any citizen who seeks to uncover thefts by giving him part of the recovered amount which will be returned to the State treasury ... If it is really serious, then it should look for those who exposed the tanker scandal, insurance thefts and foreign investments," columnist Dr Naji Saoud Al-Zaid wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"It should reward the heirs of Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad -- may God have mercy on him -- by giving them the right to expose the misappropriation

of public money. The Bangladeshi, who exposed bribery in the 'Ministry of Interior', should also be rewarded!

"There are numerous and grave scandals regarding public money including theft. There have been anomalies such as the million-dollar deposits of some lawmakers. Where did the money come from? What is the purpose of obtaining such amount?!"

"This is in addition to the Panama deposits scandal in which billions of dollars were deposited 'offshore'. The question is the same: How did they obtain these billions?!"

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"Kuwait Municipality recently made some amendments to a decision regarding the establishment of parking shades in residential areas and on sidewalks, in terms of space area, the distance from the street, and so on", columnist Iqbal Al-Ahmad wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"These amendments included one-time payment of very low fees of KD 1 per square meter for housing areas and KD 2 per square meter for commercial and investment areas. However, I say it with sadness that none of these amendments or the decisions included some basic demands that would contribute to preserving the environment and increasing the green space in Kuwait.

"We all know that Kuwait suffers from an increase in temperature year after year, as indicated by climate and weather specialists. We have experienced a noticeable rise in heat in Kuwait over the past few days with temperatures exceeding 50 degrees, which is the highest temperature recorded in the world.

"Knowledge in environment culture highlights that afforestation, extension of green spaces and encouragement of agriculture is what mainly contributes to relieving the heat. Also, afforestation helps in the cohesion of the soil, moistening of the atmosphere, and reduction of the heat and dust. There is nothing more beautiful than the natural green color when it surrounds us.

"However, it seems that none of the municipality geniuses have considered or thought about this. It would have been more useful, like the developed countries, which know how to preserve and support the environment.

"The first item in this decision should have been that an applicant for a car shade must pledge to plant trees in order to provide the necessary shade next to the parking shade after a while.

"He must pledge to remove the car shed within a year or two after the trees provide the necessary shade. This of course needs follow-up from the concerned authority. You can imagine the number of umbrellas that will extend on the sidewalks in their dry, lacking beauty, especially the cheap ones made of chenko and other materials that quickly break and deform after a few years of construction.

"Not to mention some umbrellas are supplied with fabrics that wear out quickly, as many will look for cheap umbrellas according to their ability.

"I hope with all my heart that this proposal will find a sympathetic ear from the stakeholders and the specialists today before tomorrow."

— Compiled by Ahmad Al-Shazli



Dr Faisal Al-Sharifi

## Defense ministry to hire children born to Kuwaiti mothers, bedoun

Bedoun sets himself on fire, dies ; Indian commits suicide



A Municipal Council member presents a memento to Dr Ahmad Al-Khatib during his visit.

### Dr Al-Khatib at Municipal Council

Municipal Council President Osama Al-Otaibi expressed his happiness at the visit of Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib to the Municipal Council, pointing out that Al-Khatib is one of the founders of the Constituent Assembly in the State of Kuwait, and one of the drafters of the Kuwaiti Constitution, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Al-Otaibi added, "In this visit, we see

a mixture of the past and the present in a moment of truth. He said Dr Khatib sincerely contributed to the renaissance of this country. "Dr Khatib deserves all our thanks, praise and appreciation, and we ask God to bless him and give him good health and long life," Al-Otaibi said.

As a token of appreciation, Dr Khatib was presented with a memento.

By Munif Nayef

Al-Seyassah Staff and Agencies

### KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Ministry of Defense has said it will open the door for Kuwaitis and children born to Kuwaiti mothers to join the military service as a professional soldier starting next Sunday.

The applications will be accepted over two weeks and must be submitted through the electronic link [www.vc.kuwaitarmy.gov.kw](http://www.vc.kuwaitarmy.gov.kw).

Sources told the Al-Seyassah that the registration will initially be for Kuwaitis and the bedoun sons born to Kuwaiti mothers, while the second stage will be for children of military personnel and sons of those included in the 1965 census.

The sources explained the applicants must pass the medical test and must be 18 years old and not more than 50 years old.

The sources indicated the Ministry of Defense will appoint those who pass the interview for the position of a professional soldier in all military sectors, each person according to the specialization the person applied for.

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**Bedoun commits suicide:** A 60-year-old bedoun committed suicide by setting himself on fire, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The daily added, the victim allegedly poured petrol over his body and set fire. He was rushed to the Al-Babtain Hospital for Burns but doctors could not save him. His remains have been referred to Forensics.

According to a security source, the incident happened in Al-Sabahiya, Block 3, next to a mosque. The victim allegedly sustained third degree burns but died in the intensive care of the hospital.

The source added, an investigation has been opened to find out the causes of suicide.

On the other hand, an Indian committed suicide by hanging in the suburb of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The victim was found hanging inside his room.

His remains have been referred to Forensics.

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**Two held with drugs:** The Ministry of Interior announced that the Criminal Security Sector represented by the General Administration for Drug Control managed to arrest two residents, an Asian and Arab, in possession of one and a half kilos of heroin, one and a quarter kilos of shabu, one kilo of chemical and half a liter of shabu liquid and tools for the manufacture of illegal drug.

The General Administration of Relations and Security Media at the Interior Ministry said in a press statement Wednesday, that the seizure comes within the framework of the criminal security sector's efforts to confront the scourge of illegal drugs, arrest its promoters and traffickers and dry up its sources in order to protect society.

She explained that information received by the General Administration for Drug Control stated that two residents, an Asian and an Arab, were in possession of a quantity of narcotics and psychotropic substances with the intention of trafficking.

### 'KHFS helps pay medical expenses of expatriates'

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: In the context of achieving its humanitarian goals the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Humanitarian Friendship Society (KHFS), Ahmad Al-Sarraf, said the Society, in cooperation with several parties, bears the cost of treatment or medicines and extends a helping hand to help what he called "insolvent" patients, especially residents, in line with the goals for which the Society was established.

On the other hand, the Director-General of the Society, Khaled bin Sabt, visited the Director-General of Al Salam Hospital Anas Al-Sarhan, and presented him with a check to cover the costs of treating a number of patients and thanked him for the support the Society received from the hospital through the reduced prices for the required treatments, and he also hoped that the rest of the private hospitals will follow suit.

### Other Voices

## Parsi 'Tata's' humane role

By Ahmad alsarraf

There is a difference between sanctifying something and worshipping it. Many people believe that the Indians worship cows, or that the Magi or Zoroastrians worship fire, and the truth is that neither the cow nor the fire is worshipped, but rather for them these things are sacred, for many logical reasons they believe in.

The origin of the word "Magi" is not known, as it is Arabized, but the majority of the peoples of the world know them as "Zoroaster" (or Zarathustra), and their religion is said to be the oldest, and there is no evidence for that.

It is also said that various other religions have taken a lot from it, but there is also nothing to confirm this definitively. However, what is known is that the famous Japanese Mazda cars were given this name by their founder, after the god of the Zoroastrian Magi, Ahura Mazda.

Zoroaster is known as the Parsi who migrated to India to escape the persecution of Muslims after their control of Persia especially during the Safavid era when they were killed if they refused the forced conversion to Islam. They also suffered a lot during the reign of the Qajar dynasty in the nineteenth and early the twentieth centuries, and the last group was called the "Iranians of India," to differentiate between them and those who preceded them for more than four centuries, and also because of their strong ties with the Zoroastrians of Iran, and their adherence to their Iranian nationalism compared to the Parsi who are more closely related to India and Hinduism.

The number of Zoroastrians in the world is estimated at only 120,000,

more than half of them live in India and their most powerful and influential group can be found in Mumbai (Bombay). They benefited from English missionary schools and in the 19th century adapted to the Western style of living during the English colonialism.

Despite the small number the Parsis have played a vital role in India's modern history. For example, they strongly participated in the founding of the Indian National Congress at the end of the nineteenth century, the party that ruled India for a long time after leading the independence movement. Feroze Gandhi, the husband of Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv's father was a Parsi but his sons chose Hinduism later.

The Parsis also led the industrial revolution in India, through the "Tata" and "Godrej" brands. JRD Tata is considered the father of modern Indian industry, founder of the Indian Institute of Science, owner of the Taj Mahal hotel, Tata steel factories, the famous Tata vehicles, and many more.

The occasion of this article is the circular issued by the "Tata Steel Corporation" which was founded in 1907 in which it pledged to take care of the families of all workers in the front lines who have recently died due to Corona pandemic and to provide for their livelihood, treatment and educating their children up to a certain level, for many years to come.

The issue becomes a cause for appreciation when we know that the number of employees in the company, which is a branch of the "Tata Group", exceeds 35,000. The news of the generous donation garnered attention in the Western media. The group also played a major role in donating to the Indian government in its war against Corona, in addition to the hundreds of millions that the Tata family spent on distinguished education and health.

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### News in Brief

**Check on violations:** Kuwait Municipality is issuing a violation for a building and directing 7 warnings to building permits to ensure that the property conforms to the license granted by the municipality.

Head of the Violations Follow-up Department, Hadi Al-Saffar, said in a press statement that the supervisory teams continue their field tours to detect building violations of all kinds by taking all supervisory measures in application of building regulations and rules.

Al-Saffar added that this tour aims to detect building violations and monitor violating properties in all governorates. He added that the campaign comes in cooperation with the supervisory teams of the engineering audit and follow-up departments in the municipality's branches in the governorates to ensure the extent to which real estate owners adhere to engineering licenses and the number of roles allowed according to the licenses granted to them by the municipality.

He pointed out that the building violation that was released came after the expiry of the legal period from the date of placing the warning poster, indicating that the violation will be submitted to the legal department to take the necessary action in it.

He pointed out that field tours are continuing in all areas of the governorate to monitor building violations, stressing that the supervisory team will deal with them by taking all legal measures and not tolerating the violators.

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**Bid to curb price rise:** There has been great coordination between the competent authorities in commercial affairs, to control inflation in the prices of goods in the market, by setting quality controls and mechanisms, reports Annahar daily.

According to reliable sources, specific mechanisms will prevent price fluctuations, especially with regard to foodstuffs, building materials and others.

The sources told the daily the government has moved at the right time to curb the rise in the prices of building materials by taking decisions to increase the supply and prevent any abuse by some unscrupulous traders.

The sources pointed out that the absence of a culture of liquidity management, with the increase in the ceiling for borrowing and the increase in cash, highlights the importance of supervision, as increased levels of liquidity raises the purchasing power, which calls for tighter control and enforcement of the law on violators.

The government aims to increase the supply of goods and services and their availability in the local market sufficiently for citizens and residents.



Al-Saffar

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