



Kuwait welcomes students Sunday



Kuwait pavilion at the Dubai Expo 2021. Inset: Part of the activities at the opening of the Kuwait pavilion at Dubai Expo 2021.

KUNA photos

Traffic tested

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2, (Agencies): The government and private schools across Kuwait will resume welcoming their students in various stages of the schooling year 2021-2022, Sunday, after an 18-month hiatus.

The resumption follows putting in place the necessary health precautions to protect the students against the risks of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Education Dr. Abdulmohsen Al-Howaila said on Saturday.

"At the behest of Minister of Education Dr. Ali Al-Modhaf, the ministry made all arrangements to ensure the high quality and smoothness of the educational process in the new schooling year," Dr. Al-Howaila told KUNA.

"The ministry spares no effort in providing a proper environment for an orderly educational process and worked out a strategy that covers the administrative, technical and operational aspects of the process," he affirmed.

A statistical chart, recently posted on the ministry's website, put the overall number of schools in Kuwait at 1,146, including 985 public schools and 161 private ones; or 85.95 and 14.05 percent, respectively.

The number of school students hit 522,220 - males and females, including 439,365 - or 84.13 percent of the overall, at government schools, and 82,855 - or 15.87 percent, at Arabic private schools.

The past days, which witnessed the start of partial opening of private schools, saw traffic congestion on the streets, and Kuwait will continue to brace for the biggest traffic congestion, Sunday, when about half a million students, or at least half of them will be back in school, reports Al-Rai daily.

The General Traffic Department of the Ministry of Interior will be facing a field test, the first of its kind in more than 18 months, during which period schools had pulled down shutters to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The traffic congestion during the Corona period had decreased a lot, and gradually the bottlenecks increased at the roundabouts, and began to escalate significantly with the private schools resuming classes.

Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education for Special and Qualitative Education, Dr. Abdulmohsen Al-Huwaila, said only in case of 'critical health' situation students of special needs schools will be allowed distance learning if they submit a medical report approved by the Ministry of Health, reports Al-Rai daily.

He indicated the report must clearly state the reasons why the student is unable to attend school in person.

The daily, quoting sources said, this will continue until a student submits a report approved by the Ministry of Health stating that the health of the student permits him/her to attend school in person.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: Dealing with coronavirus repercussions led to the emergence of a persistent demand towards rapid digital transformation in all domains of life, Minister of Oil and Minister of Higher Education **Dr. Mohammad Al-Faris** said Saturday.

The minister made the statement during the 18th meeting of ministers of science and technology via videoconference upon an invitation by **Japan's** Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy **Shinji Inoue**.

Al-Faris said that Kuwait is backing its children to innovate in technology and artificial intelligence, in line with Kuwait's 2035 Vision.

He pointed to pioneering role of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS) that contributes to achieving the goals of the State's sustainable development.

He pointed out also that Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) takes part in applied scientific researches; providing technological, scientific and research consultations.

Pavilion highlights strategic projects

Representative of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said on Friday that Kuwait's pavilion at the Expo aims at showing the country's strategic development projects and humanitarian efforts across the globe.

Kuwait's outstanding participation in the largest exhibition in the world is also meant to enhancing its regional and international status, and alluring foreign investors, the minister told reporters after inaugurating Kuwait's pavilion at the expo.

The slogan "New Kuwait ... a new opportunity for sustainability" was chosen for Kuwait's pavilion because it will shed light on the country's endeavors to achieve sustainability and development.

Kuwait at the expo offers several innovative ideas and showcases its history, he said, adding that Kuwait seeks a distinguished participation to contribute to the success of the global event. The minister said that 255 government and non-government organizations from across a diverse array of sectors are contributing to the booth over the coming six months. The Kuwaiti pavilion, which has been de-

signed to resemble water tower structures commonly found in the country, is constructed on an area of over 5,500 square meters at a height of more than 24 meters.

UAE's hosting of this big event is a source of pride for Kuwait, GCC members states and Arab countries, he stated, referring to sincere efforts made by UAE in organizing this historic event.

This affirms that the Arab youths are able to turn challenges into opportunities and stories of success, he said.

The pandemic-delayed Expo 2020 was opened last night, bringing together 192 countries to show off their cutting-edge products as well as peculiarities of their history, folklore and heritage.

Themed: "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future", the event, which takes place from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, highlights music, architecture, technology and culture from around the globe as part of its packed events calendar.

After eight years of planning and billions of dollars in spending, the Middle East's first world's fair opened Friday in Dubai, with hopes that the months-long extravaganza will draw both visitors and global attention to this desert-turned-dreamscape. (Agencies)

'One minute' to open a Gulf Bank account

- Details Page 9 -

'Kuwait does not negotiate Kuwait'

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 2: MP Obaid Al-Wasmi posted on his official Twitter account: "Kuwait does not negotiate Kuwait" in response to the national dialogue initiative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He intends to present scenarios which reflect the ideas of the people of Kuwait, address all causes of disputes and correct the wrong paths.

Commenting on the same issue, MP Ahmed Al-Hamad said that whoever aims to downplay the national dialogue by limiting it to one topic is totally wrong. He pointed out that the dialogue is comprehensive and any attempt to change it is unacceptable.

Addressing the citizens, MP Fayez Al-Jomhour affirmed the national dialogue will be in favor of the citizens and it will never be aimed at removing any of their rights.

Rapporteur of the parliamentary Public Facilities Committee MP Abdulaziz Al-Saqaabi intends to call for a meeting between

Continued on Page 5

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Health has allotted Jaber Vaccination Center for conducting PCR tests for students, in addition to 12 health centers in various health districts; increasing the number of swab test centers to 13, reports Al-Anba daily.

On Friday, these 13 centers started receiving students 12 to 18 years who booked their PCR test appointment through the Ministry of Health website by clicking this link: <https://eservices.moh.gov.kw/ClinicPCRSys/v1/AppointmentRequestAr.aspx>. The ministry said online booking is mandatory as no student will undergo PCR test without an appointment.

KUWAIT CITY: The Kuwaiti Ministry of Health on Saturday listed 41 more Coronavirus cases, bringing the caseload to 411,731, with a single death case to take the death toll to 2,451. (KUNA)

Opinion

End deficit nightmare or go

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IT did not come as a surprise when the Cabinet officially admitted to "liquidity depletion in the general reserve". This was expected a decade ago despite many warnings of excessive consumption behavior, which did not help, let alone the failure of those concerned in following the advice to take advantage of Kuwait's financial position and work on shifting to productivity. However, the executives gave a deaf ear to all the suggestions given in this regard.

This unfortunate admission has been caused by chronic mismanagement due to diseases that were not treated from the start, and ended up becoming difficult to treat.

Therefore, the government today has no choice but to work seriously towards eradicating the disease if its intention is sincere in terms of getting out of the current impasse, and benefiting from the experiences of the Gulf countries. This is what we have mentioned hundred times before, so as to strengthen the sovereign wealth and diversify its assets both locally and abroad by borrowing from international markets. This is because, despite the decline in the sovereign rating, it is still able to utilize its tools in this regard.

The reasons behind the depletion of the general reserve were not hidden from anyone, especially the constant tension between the National Assembly and the ministers, the dialogue of the deaf, and the struggle over crumbs.

This situation was perpetuated by many concessions made to gluttonous MPs by the current government and its predecessors. From their point of view, these MPs do not bear any responsibility for what the situation has become. Rather, they are taking advantage of the situation to carry out more electoral blackmail. They know that the citizens will not hold them, but instead the executive authority, accountable.

The Public Debt Law expired in 2017 and for four years, the government lacked courage to introduce a new law in this regard in order to avoid further deterioration of the situation.

But the MPs took the issue as their mastery to pass all their demands. Because of that, the new debt law became a summer night's dream, incurring the state to lose over twenty billion dinars, in the past years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a requirement for the new law. This manifests itself in that huge deficit, which exceeded 125 billion dollars.

Day by Day

WHO is responsible for the economic decline in our country? Is it the government performance, the parliamentary shamble, advisory confusion or the multiplicity of agencies and cooks?

Just let's put our finger on the wound.

The countries where the sun rises, the star of one man that history talks about shines, a person whose muscles are in his forearm, not in his stomach.

... Yet, tomorrow is another day.
Zahed Matar

We beg to ask - When will this deterioration stop? And how?

Kuwaiti assets are huge, and its banks have very high ratings. Also, its sovereign investments are manifold and big. All this qualifies the state to borrow from abroad like the way the Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Bahrain did during the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are used in actual projects both internally and abroad, and would ensure exit from the dark financial tunnel if the same methods used by other Gulf countries are utilized.

What is most baffling is the statement made by the official spokesman for the Cabinet about "the necessity of finding radical solutions to confront the deficit in the state's general budget", which suggested that the executive authority does not bear responsibility.

Undoubtedly, whoever caused the problem seems unable to solve it, but should rather "cut to the chase" from oneself with courage, but nonetheless, treating a mistake with a mistake is suicide.

Kuwaitis today are fuming with anger over what their governments have brought them to, especially with their permanent submission to semi-educated MPs, who see in their legislative mission nothing but employment services and intercession for accused persons.

From here, it is likely that the deficit nightmare would turn into a reality if the government does not take the initiative to remedy the dire situation; otherwise it would have no choice but to go without any regrets for its departure.

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See page No. 8