



STATE BODIES TO CUT STAFF ATTENDANCE BY HALF Public transport not to exceed 50 pct

Opinion

Qarmatians distorted faith and committed major sins

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

AFTER the "First Fitna" (Great Sedition), the history of the Muslim world witnessed many political and military movements, each of which sought to seize power, especially at the end of the Abbasid Dynasty when divisions multiplied, and the state's grip on the governors and capitals weakened.

At that time, a group called Qarmatis emerged after Hamdan bin Qarmat, who broke away from the Ismaili Shiite sect, established his state in the tenth century AD, and placed in each region a representative, or what is nowadays called "the deputy guide".

These people worked on establishing gangs in areas where they were found. Their mission was to terrorize the innocent and subjugate them, after they were unable to win over them politically. They imposed a number of measures that were contrary to Islamic rituals such as making prayers twice a day, and fasting two days a year, which are "the day of the festival" and the "Newroz festival".

Among the leaders of the Qarmatians who were famous for their brutality and abuse was Abu Saeed Al-Hasan bin Bahram al-Janabi. He took over the Arabian Peninsula and settled in Qatif. From there, he extended his control over Bahrain using the method of intimidation to stop the opponents from resisting him.

At that time, the people of Syria and Iraq (Levant) canceled Hajj because of the terror of these gangs that looted, killed the men, and raped the women whenever they passed by a village, and then they burned down that village with its children and the elderly.

This terrorist policy was inherited by the sons from the fathers, so when the matter of rule in Bahrain passed to Abu Taher Al-Qarmati Suleiman bin Al-Hasan bin Bahram Al-Janabi after the death of his father, the first thing he did was raid the holy city of Makkah on the 8th day of month of pilgrimage (Hajj) in the year 317 AH. There he plundered the pilgrims' money and killed them.

It is said that the toll of the murdered pilgrims was about thirty thousand, and he was doing so while shouting the following at the threshold of the Kaaba: "I am by God, and by God I am. He creates creation, and I destroy them".

As a result, the Black Stone was stolen as he stripped the Sacred House, took its door, and filled the well of Zamzam with the corpses.

Over the past four decades, the world witnessed a new resurrection of adherents to the Qarmati terrorist ideology through a number of movements that raised the slogan of the Islamic state, revived the caliphate, and worked to stir up creedal and sectarian strife throughout the Islamic world. Many massacres were committed in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, in addition to terrorist operations in many countries around the world.

These gangs, which call themselves by Islamic names as a smokescreen, operate according to a strategic vision that is based on expansion and changing the beliefs of Muslims. It is unfortunate that some countries are still seeking to integrate them into Arab and Muslim societies, either as a resistance or as a political component that has the right to express itself.

Because of these groups, Arabs and Muslims are suffering. These groups must be eliminated in order to liberate the societies that have been held hostage by them, be it the so-called Hezbollah or ISIS or Al-Qaeda and others who are exploited by the Mullahs regime to revive its racist discriminatory expansionist project in the region.

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Cases soar to 3,683 ... Germany puts Kuwait on 'red list'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 10, (Agencies): Kuwait's cabinet on Monday ordered state bodies to slash staff attendance down to 50 percent in response to an exponential rise in COVID-19 cases in the country, driven by the Omicron variant.

Private employers have been told to limit their staff capacity in a manner that would still allow for a smooth workflow, the government's communication center cited spokesman Tareq Al-Mezrem as saying.

In measures to halt the spread of the virus, in effect as of Wednesday, he said conferences and meetings would shift back to video link, while public transport capacity should not exceed 50 percent.

Similarly, sporting venues nationwide, in addition to gyms and salons, would only allow entry to those who have been fully vaccinated, added the spokesman. Kuwait has seen a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases since the Omicron variant took hold.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued a resolution Monday following the cabinet's meeting to announce the limiting of staff capacity, as well as shifting to holding conferences and meetings virtually.

In a statement, the CSC exempts fingerprints from employees who reached 55 years old and above, in addition ordered all government bodies to set their working hours in accordance with the public interest.

It pointed out that the fingerprint attendance system in all government agencies will be suspended.

It indicated that the new temporary measures will be issued as part of the government's efforts to confront the emerging coronavirus (COVID-19).

Vaccines against the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) for persons aged between five and 11 are expected to arrive in Kuwait in the coming few weeks, an official of the Ministry of Health announced on Monday.

Dr. Mustafa Redha, the MoH Undersecretary, said the department had made contracts with vaccination-producing companies to secure the doses for the age categories between five and 11 years.

He was addressing the media at Seif Palace after the weekly Cabinet session.

These vaccines, accredited by international medical organizations, are expected in Kuwait in the coming few weeks, he affirmed.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Health announced on Monday recording 3,683 new infection cases with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 24 hours.

Caseload

With the new contamination cases, Kuwait's caseload climbed to 437,602.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad, the MoH spokesperson, said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the medical authorities recorded 544 new recovery cases, increasing the overall count of the cured to 414,241, noting that the proportion of the healed as compared to the total number of the cases reached 94.6 percent.

Dr. Al-Sanad also revealed that there was a single death due to contamination with COVID-19, during the past 24 hours, thus the whole figure of the deaths settled at 2,472.

As to the number of people still receiving medical treatment at intensive care units, he said that there are patients in these wards.

The whole count of the cases with confirmed infection that continue to receive treatment has reached 20,889 and the number of people that are treated at the COVID-19 wards has stood at 147.

Also in the same duration, the medical staff conducted 36,318 PCR tests with the whole number of these examinations soaring to 6,235,969. Dr. Al-Sanad said, also noting that the proportion of the infection cases to the tests reached 10.1 percent.

Kuwait along, with other Gulf countries, has been battling the coronavirus and its strains with protective measures and vaccinations.

The pandemic was first reported in the heart of China in late 2019. It had soon spilled over to most countries of the globe. Later on, it mutated into various strains, latest of which was the dreaded, fast moving Omicron.

The Republic of Germany has issued a list of 40 countries which make the 'red list', including five Arab countries, reports Al-Rai daily.

The list of red countries include Kuwait, in addition to the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Mauritania, Australia, France, Estonia, Iceland, Sweden and others.

Continued on Page 3



Shoppers are seen at the Avenues on Jan 10. The Ministry of Health announced on Monday 3,683 new COVID-19 infection cases and a single death during the past 24 hours.

Day by Day

WE say to the Minister of the Interior: When one of the state agencies, especially the State Security administration makes a mistake you must correct the mistake before it is too late because the days of courtesy are long gone and what is happening will be recorded against you.

Major-General Faisal Al-Nawaf made a mistake on the issue of driving licenses. He absolved himself of the mistake by issuing a denial, and everything was put back on track.

Now, Major-General Salem Al-Nawaf made another mistake. You have to correct the mistake before you are held accountable, so that people do not live in fear of future mistakes happening.

... Yet, tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

US warns on Tehran threat

WASHINGTON, Jan 10, (Agencies): US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan warned Sunday that Iran "will face severe consequences" if any American citizens are attacked.

"Yesterday, Iran purported to impose sanctions on 52 Americans," Sullivan said in a statement. "They do so as Iran's proxy militias continue to attack American troops in the Middle East, and as Iranian officials threaten to carry out terror operations inside the United States and elsewhere around the world."

He stressed "make no mistake: the United States of America will protect and defend its citizens. This includes those serving the United States now and those who formerly served."

He added "we will work with our allies and partners to deter and respond to any attacks carried out by Iran".

"Should Iran attack any of our nationals, including any of the 52 people named yesterday, it will face severe consequences," he warned.

According to media outlets, Iran on Saturday imposed sanctions on over 50 Americans for the 2020 killing of its top general Qassem Soleimani in a drone strike.

Afghanistan's new Taliban rulers held talks over the weekend with senior leaders of an anti-Taliban alliance, the Taliban said Monday. The meeting, held in Tehran, was the first of its kind, underscoring Taliban efforts to bring their former opponents into the fold.

During the meeting, the alliance leaders were told they could return to Afghanistan and were promised their safety would be guaranteed, Taliban-appointed foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi said in a short video released Monday.

Speaker calls for Jan 12-13 special Assembly sessions

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 10: The National Assembly will be holding sessions next Wednesday and Thursday, on January 12-13, said Speaker of the Parliament Marzuq Al-Ghanim Monday.

He indicated, in a press release, that the sessions were called by several MPs, noting that the sessions could be postponed upon a request to the parliament's leadership.

The session would witness debates and discussions on several proposed legislations, he affirmed.

The cabinet will attend the Thursday session of the National Assembly, said a minister on Monday.

Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Mohammad Al-Rajhi affirmed that the government was keen on cooperating with members of the National Assembly to meet the aspiration and dreams of the Kuwaiti people.

He affirmed that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah directed the cabinet to cooperate with the National Assembly during the session.

Ten MPs had earlier submitted a proposal to hold the special session on Thursday to discuss and vote on a number of urgent bills.

Earlier on Sunday, 10 other MPs proposed holding a special session on Wednesday for the same purpose.

MPs Mehalhal Al-Mudaf, Bader Al-Mullah, Hassan Jawhar, Hamad Al-Matar, Fayeze Al-Jomhour, Muhammad Al-Hewaila, Osama Al-Shaheen, Saleh Zeib Al-Mutairi, Abdulaziz Al-Saqaabi and Al-Saifi Mubarak Al-Saifi signed the proposal to hold a special session on Thursday.

Following are the items in the agenda of the proposed special session:

■ Report No. 10 of the Human Resources Development Committee on amending

the Civil Service Law;

■ Report No. 41 of the Education, Culture and Guidance Affairs Committee on amending Audio Visual Law number 61/2007 and Publishing and Printing Law No. 3/2006.

National Assembly Speaker Marzuq Al-Ghanim has confirmed receiving both proposals, and that he will invite the MPs to the special sessions scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday as per Article 72 of the Assembly Decree.

Regarding the government, Al-Ghanim said he will invite the government to the special sessions; but the decision to attend or not lies in the hands of the latter.

In a related development, MP Khalid Al-Otaibi released a press statement in response to those asking why other urgent bills were excluded from the agenda of the two special sessions like the proposed distribution of a portion of the profits of the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) to the retirees, amending the Housing Affairs Law, waiving citizens' loans, disqualification of those convicted in offending crimes from standing for elections, and expanding the authority of the court to decide on cases concerning nationality.

Al-Otaibi clarified that the special sessions are only for deliberations and voting on bills whose reports have been completed by the concerned parliamentary committees.

He added the Parliamentary Priorities Committee is considered a "grave where the priority bills are buried."

On the other hand, MP Abdulkareem Al-Kandari forwarded queries to Minister of Interior Sheikh Ahmed Mansour Al-Hamad Al-Sabah about the press statement of the Kuwaiti Diwan for Human Rights chairman that they received complaints about the alleged practice of torture in some police stations.

Continued on Page 3



Palestinian amputees play a soccer match while using their crutches during a training session, organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross with the Palestinian Amputee Football Association, at Palestine Stadium in Gaza City, Sunday, Dec. 5, 2021. They are the first Palestinian national soccer team made up entirely of amputees - players drawn from a population of hundreds that has grown in recent years through rounds of fighting between Israel and the territory's militant Hamas rulers. (AP) — See Page 2

Umrah in demand

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 10: According to sources from the travel and tourism sector, the Hajj and Umrah offices are witnessing an increased demand from residents for Umrah trip reservations during the academic mid-year holidays, reports Al-Anba daily.

They explained that specialized companies are offering Umrah packages for a period of nine days at a cost ranging between KD 215 and KD 290. The cost would exceed KD 290 in case of requests for specific hotels or special services or higher class of travel.

The price of KD 219 is for accommodation reservations in specific hotels with a capacity of 4 persons per room. The cost would increase gradually and at varying levels when reducing the number of individuals in each room until it is KD 290 for a single room during the period of stay.

The package price includes the cost of visa, hotels, and round-trip airline tickets, in addition to transportation. The companies do not bear the cost of the PCR test required by the health authorities.



HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulation on Monday to Mohammad Al-Halbousi on his re-election as speaker of Iraqi Council of Representatives.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a condolences cable, Monday, to the US President Joseph Biden.

His Highness the Amir expressed sorrow over the victims of the fire, which erupted in one of New York City's buildings, and wished the injured a fast recovery.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables. (KUNA)

THE HAGUE: The European drug regulator said Monday it has started evaluating an application by Pfizer for its pill to treat the effects of COVID-19.

The v comes as countries in much of the 27-nation bloc are reporting soaring numbers of infections as the highly transmissible omicron variant sweeps across the continent.

The European Medicines Agency said in a statement that it could decide within weeks whether to approve Pfizer's application for a conditional marketing authorization for the drug Paxlovid, "depending on whether the data submitted are sufficiently robust and whether further information is required to support the evaluation." (AP)

KUWAIT CITY: The eminent Kuwaiti writer and poet Dr. Suad Mohammad Al-Sabah has published a new book themed, "The founding of Kuwait during eras of Sabah Al-Awal [the first ruler 1718-1776] and Abdullah Al-Awal [the second ruler 1776-1814]."

Dr. Suad sheds light on the period when bases for establishing the modern State of Kuwait were laid, narrating how some of the ancestors had moved from Najd, Saudi Arabia, to Kuwait where they formed a society different from the Bedouin one in Saudi Arabia and the agricultural community in Iraq.

She tells the story how Al-Otaibi tribe designated Sheikh Sabah Al-Awal for ruling; based on shura and consensus, noting that Kuwait had been born as an independent entity, where the rulers practiced governing without foreign influence. (KUNA)

BEIJING: Foreign ministers from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern states are visiting China this week for meetings with officials from the world's second largest economy, a leading consumer of oil and source of foreign investment.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry on Monday gave no details of the agendas for the visits, but said they were expected to "deepen relations between the two sides."

The meetings running through Friday will include the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain, along with the secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian will also be in China at the end of this week, ministry spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh said in Tehran. It wasn't immediately clear if he would join the meetings with the others. (AP)