

Local

Air pollution behind 10 percent of deaths in Kuwait: US official

Kuwait University center hosts 'Clean Air for Global Health' panel discussion

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: "Air pollution is responsible for 10 percent of deaths in Kuwait," said Dr Sumi Mehta, a US Department of State speaker, during a panel discussion titled 'Clean Air for Global Health' held yesterday at Kuwait University's Health Sciences Center. She spoke about examples of pollution in the US in the past several decades. "In Kuwait, they have a better sense in reading and monitoring emissions and its sources. Providing information is one piece of this, but working together to accurately communicate risk is very important. We know there are solutions available but we should focus on the most effective ones," she added.

Prevention is always the best medicine. "In the short term, we can think of minimizing harm to individuals, but masks are not sustainable solutions for addressing the issue. For the longer term, more policy



Dr Sumi Mehta
—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Dr Mufareh Al-Rashidi



“ Accessible data provides multiple benefits ”

related solutions need to be developed and implemented. Journalists and other key influencers can also be helpful - this includes using data on pollution and its impacts. The data should be clear and easy to interpret. Open and accessible air pollution data provides multiple benefits," Mehta pointed out.

She also mentioned an example of communication that is confusing for the general public to interpret - reports about air quality shared by Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) and the US embassy website are different. Mehta advised joining the global network of health practitioners. "This allows a group of clinicians to work together for clean air policies, access data, receive news, engage in peer-to-peer contacts and participate in training and workshops," she concluded.

Dr Mufareh Al-Rashidi from the Kuwait Institute

for Scientific Research (KISR) addressed a presentation on air pollution in Um Al-Haiman. "This area was rebuilt in 1991 and was renamed Ali Sabah Al-Salem. There are many industrial activities there including three refineries with high oil production, Burgan oilfield and a sewage station. It was panic for the people and the government," he stated.

"The study started in 2011 and we submitted the final report in 2014. During these three years, we studied this area and surrounding areas. It was our mandate as an institution and it was a part of our strategy. We collected 705 samples from 47 locations. We used three mobile laboratories to collect the data for 18 months," explained Rashidi.

The results of analyses of air quality in Ali Sabah Al-Salem done in eight years showed a decrease in pollution concentration in this area. "We insisted to shut down a cement factory in this area and the government did so as it was a source of pollution. Regarding inhalation, we found it is not a health problem," Rashidi concluded by mentioning recommendations. "These include stopping issuing licenses for new industrial activities in this area, do a complete emissions inventory, set a clear strategy for limitation of emissions and reduce emissions from cars through catalytic converters. We also need to move these industrial activities far from the residential area," he concluded.

VIVA launches breast cancer awareness campaign

KUWAIT: VIVA, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and a subsidiary of STC Group, launched its Breast Cancer Awareness campaign under the 'Because We Care' umbrella to run during the month of October in line with the international health campaign.



Danah Al-Jasem

In support of this cause, VIVA has changed the profile picture of its social media platforms by adding the pink ribbon to its logo, representing the international symbol of breast cancer awareness month. In addition, tips from specialized consultants will be displayed during the month of October to raise awareness about the importance of prevention and early screening, and educate women about the risks of breast cancer by increasing their knowledge of its signs and symptoms and enabling them to maintain breast health also knowing that it could be treatable.

Danah Faisal Al-Jasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at VIVA commented: "We will take the extra mile and utilize our resources in providing our employees with valuable information and lifestyle tips that will encourage early detection and hopefully mitigate the likelihood of being diagnosed with the disease. Breast cancer awareness, as well as other health awareness events, fall in line with our corporate social responsibility agenda at VIVA that strives to support different initiatives in the fields of health, education, sports, environment and entrepreneurship, all in benefit of our society. We look forward to more informative and interactive events that will spread awareness and are highly beneficial to both our employees and the community."



KUWAIT: Speaking as part of the activities of the dermatology diseases conference held in Kuwait, consultant doctor Ghanima Al-Omar held a workshop on the latest developments in non-surgical eyelid lifting. Speaking at the workshop, Omar stressed that non-surgical solutions are safer and more accepted by patients, adding this depends on patients' age, case severity, and other factors. —By A Saleh



Kuwait middle schoolers set for robotics contest

KUWAIT: Middle school students from 35 schools across Kuwait will be competing in an annual robotics competition, an official said yesterday. This year's contest, which is the 14th installment of the event, revolves around the concept of assembling a self-powered robot capable of carrying out every-day tasks, said the director of Milsetasia in Kuwait, a body advocating increased use of technology on leisure time. He revealed that a series of workshops and lectures would precede the contest, which is scheduled to end in early December, saying the yearly event is part of efforts to encourage young students to spend their spare time more productively. — KUNA

Gathering in Kuwait to espouse moderation

KUWAIT: A forum extolling the virtues of moderation due in Kuwait on Monday is an opportunity to mold nascent minds to build responsible citizens, said an official yesterday. The talks, sponsored by Kuwait's Awqaf Minister and Minister of State for Islamic Affairs Fahad Al-Shoula, were set in motion by the warm greetings His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah conveyed to his fellow compatriots while on a recent trip to the US, said Dr Abdullah Al-Sharika, who is in charge of a moderation center affiliated with the Awqaf Ministry. The festivities will mainly take place in schools nationwide, featuring a vast array of activities including an expo where young students will express their admiration for His Highness the Amir, added the official. — KUNA

KNG officially joins FIEP: Official

PARIS: Kuwait National Guard (KNG) has officially joined the International Association of Gendarmeries and Police Forces with Military Statutes (FIEP), senior military official announced yesterday. Kuwait's membership at FIEP, alongside 19 other nations from all around the world, is of great significance due for the benefits that come along with it, particularly exchange of expertise with countries such as France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Turkey in preserving security, combating terrorism, and managing crises, KNG's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hashem Al-Rifaie said. Rifaie made his remarks on the sidelines of his participation at FIEP's regular meeting in the Netherlands, and attending the announce-

ment ceremony of Kuwait's induction into the international body. Kuwait had applied for FIEP's membership more than five years ago, he noted, adding that his country's endeavors were ultimately successful due for strategic directions of KNG's Chief Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and his Deputy Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, Rifaie indicated that KNG's 2020 Strategic Plan includes enhancing all active sectors in the institution, particularly the human element, in addition to acquiring latest modern security systems, drawing professional operational schemes in managing any military or security crisis, and organizing procedures in fast response to natural and industrial disasters. —KUNA

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