

Assembly panel mulls dropping social security loans' interest

MPs threaten to grill finance minister over 'religiously prohibited' interests

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The parliamentary economic and financial affairs committee is scheduled to hold a meeting today, to be attended by the Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf, to discuss proposals to drop the social security loans' interest. The meeting, headed by MP Salah Khorsheed, will be held amidst parliamentary threats to grill Hajraf unless the government passes the proposals on grounds that interests are religiously prohibited.

Meanwhile, informed source stressed that the government is totally against the proposal on grounds that the loans are part of a financial and economic process followed in all financial establishments, and that they do not overburden retirees as claimed by lawmakers. "The loans are very suitable to retirees' pensions," the sources added, noting that the government has a feeling that lawmakers are starting to interfere in the core of the social security financial operations in a way that hinders its executive procedures and affects its financial status, leading to considerable losses.

With reference to threats to grill minister Hajraf, the sources explained that he had been grilled twice in

vain, and argued that the issue has become too personal for some lawmakers "who seek to achieve more popularity in preparation for the parliamentary elections."

In other news, Kuwait Pharmaceutical Society's Secretary General Ali Hadi urged the minister of social affairs to work on imposing the new law which man-



Loans suitable to retirees' pensions, says govt

dates that pharmacies at co-op societies should be run by Kuwaiti pharmacists, adding that all those pharmacies' licenses had expired by the end of the grace period given by the law on June 30, 2019. Hadi added that



The National Assembly.

the health ministry had warned those pharmacies pending referring them to the penal committee which might close them down and withdraw their licenses until a court order is made.

Local Spotlight

Slavery of kids



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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In the past, childhood meant playing with the neighbors' kids outside, listening to grandma's bedtime stories every evening, going to bed early, dinner meal with parents, good breakfast, as well as reading stories and cartoon magazines when there was no social media or smartphones. Today, we are witnessing a transformation as many parents have forgotten about the presence of their children and assigned the duty of taking care of them to the housemaid as an 'alternative mother'. Even worse, some are abusing their kids' innocence through social media.

When parents exploit a child's innocence by introducing them to the world of social media and reality programs, those children become a source of money to the parents who only want to make money and achieve fame by using their children to be 'creatures for sale' and win large number of viewers.

It is a social and moral felony in the violation of the rights of children, and parents are directly responsible for any psychological harm caused to the child. Every conscientious person, including officials and journalists, must be aware of the seriousness of this matter.

Three different studies, with one going back to 2007, showed that kids just want to be famous. Clearly, the days are over when children wanted to be doctors or policemen. Now, they want to be actors, singers, YouTube personalities, or media influencers.

According to the Daily Mail, a study was conducted in 2009 in the United Kingdom that consisted of a survey completed by children, who were asked about what they wanted to be when they grew up. The top three choices were sports star, pop star or actor, while Jobs like doctor or policeman were much lower down the scale. Sadly, we are now witnessing a phase of replacing ethics and principles of hard work, with achieving fortune and fame without really donning anything to justify that.

According to a new research conducted in 2018, kids are looking at modern technology when they think about future jobs. The study concluded that children's career aspirations are often based on factors such as gender stereotypes or what they have seen in the media, TV and films. That is a big sign that there is a shift in the dreams of kids today, based largely upon new communications methods and the growth of online and gaming. There are many studies in this regard confirming that the aspirations of children have become linked to the love of appearances and achieving success on social media networks like Facebook and YouTube, because the fact that these children do not realize that parents are the ones who drive them towards this fishy road, and it makes no difference whether the child in this case is a boy or girl.

In Kuwait, such manipulations of kids are often highly criticized. Kuwait also has a child rights' law, as in many other countries which have laws that contain deterrent penalties for child cruelty and negligence, as well as holding parents full responsibility for providing child care. More work is needed to prevent the exploitation of children and putting them in the media for the purposes of fame and money. This is based on the Child Protection Act, which stresses that children should not be subject to any physical or mental abuse. Unfortunately, some celebrities on social media are deliberately posting negative images and socially unacceptable things for circulation, especially that these behaviors have psychological and moral effects on the child throughout his life.

The law in Kuwait guarantees the child's protection in the event of any incident of violence and the care and provision of treatment and psychological support as required by Chapter VIII of the law. The law places the custodian in charge of legal accountability in the cases that may occur as a result of his negligence, resulting in dropping the custody of the child and assigning another suitable custodian in the order of legal priorities. I think no laws should allow parents to use their kids by turning them to be slaves for money and false fame.

Kuwait crude tanker firm eyes gas cylinder safety plan

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) has formed a plan to prevent possible hazards caused by the misuse of some three million gas cylinders that abound at the local market. Improper use of these gas cylinders proves not only costly but dangerous as well, which behooves state bodies to work together to address this growing problem, KOTC said in a statement. Around 90 percent of gas cylinders are misused, resulting in tremendous waste accumulation that not only threatens the environment but the oil industry as well, added the statement. The fact that many of these gas cylinders end up in households for residential use only magnifies the problem, the statement highlighted, citing frequent examples of misuse such as hurling the vessels around. Last year alone, the number of gas cylinders reported to have been damaged or tampered with amounted to 14,500, which indicates that the misuse of gas cylinders has become widespread, it revealed. Meanwhile, these gas cylinders can have a shelf life of 24 years if used properly and safely, but neglect and misuse can significantly slash durability, it added. — KUNA



Gas cylinders packed in the factory.

EPA: Gases released from sewage treatment within permissible limits



KUWAIT: EPA and Ministry of Public Works officials during the inspection tour. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) yesterday said the emission level of ammonia and hydrogen sulfide from sewage treatment plants in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City are within the permissible limits. An inspection tour was made by a delegation from the Ministry of Public Works to the residential area of Sabah Al-Ahmad to follow up on the latest developments of sewage treatment plants,

EPA said in a statement. The joint delegation inspected the treatment plants and measured the percentage of the emission of ammonia and hydrogen sulfide gasses, which are within the permissible limits, the statement added. It pointed out that the EPA continues to take samples for analysis and to ensure safety of environmental standards contained in the Environmental Protection Law, as well as pos-

sibility of utilizing this water for irrigation and afforestation purposes. The delegation included the Director of the Inspection and Control Department at the EPA Dr Meshal Al-Ibrahim, the Assistant Undersecretary of the ministry of Public Works Ismail Ahmad and Assistant Undersecretary for Maintenance Engineering affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz Al-Sabah. —KUNA

Councilmember inquires about 'harmful material' dumped in landfills

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Municipal Council member Maha Al-Baghli recently filed a number of inquiries on regulating and monitoring the process of work at the municipality's landfill sites, particularly concerning tips she had received about some companies allegedly dumping hundreds of tons of expired detergents in those sites, in addition to the presence of some electrical devices there as well. Baghli pointed that the dumped materials are extremely dangerous and detrimental to the environment and that the concerned companies' representatives had been entering

the municipality landfill sites without authorization.

In other news, Head of Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at Farwaniya Hospital Dr Amal Khodor announced that 18 bladder lifting surgeries were conducted at Farwaniya Hospital to treat urinary incontinence, in addition to six more done at Adan Hospital, in which Saudi Gynecologist and urinary tracts specialist Dr Ahmad Al-Bader took part. Dr Khodor added that this was Dr Bader's second visit to Kuwait, during which he trained obstetrics and gynecology staffs at Adan and Farwaniya hospitals on the procedure.

KFSD launches project to minimize dangers of fire accidents

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) announced yesterday the launch of its awareness project 'Kuwait Aman' to urge the public to install smoke detectors at home and acquire fire extinguishers and fire blankets for their importance in reducing damage caused by fire accidents. KFSD's department of Public Relations and Media said in a press release that the project includes distribution of flashers and flyers to educate citizens and residents and broadcast awareness messages for motorists in coordination with the General Directorate of Public Relations and Security Information at the Ministry of Interior. It added that the project, which will continue permanently, was launched in the citizen service centers of the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Nationality and Travel Documents, the General Traffic Department, the Public Authority for Civil Information and the Amiri Hospital. It pointed out that is in the process of conducting a comprehensive survey on all public and private bodies with a high number of clients, in addition to the organization of lectures for employees to get them become acquainted with this project. — KUNA