

Local

# Kuwaiti man shot during family dispute in Jahra

## Police abort bid to smuggle drugs via sea

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A man was rushed to Jahra hospital after sustaining a gunshot wound during a family conflict in the Qasr district of Jahra, police said yesterday. The Kuwaiti citizen told officers that his brother-in-law shot him during a dispute at home in the area, and the suspect later turned himself in to Na'em police. He was charged with attempted murder and possession of a fire arm.

### Drug smuggling

In other news, police aborted a bid to smuggle 18 kilograms of narcotics via sea, the Ministry of Interior said in a statement. Drugs Control General Department personnel detained a person after attempting to smuggle 15 kilograms of hashish and three kilograms of 'shabu (methamphetamine). The successful operation to thwart the trafficking bid was coordinated between the Drugs Control General Department and the Directorate General of the Coast Guard, the Interior Ministry said in a statement. The detainee, during interrogations, confessed that he had planned to smuggle the drugs into Kuwait via sea and revealed where the narcotics had been dumped into the waters. He further indicated that he was a member of a network. According to the botched plan, he was supposed to retrieve the drugs after receiving coordinates from his accomplices. Police seized two unlicensed pistols in possession of the detainee, who was referred, along with the seized materials, to the concerned legal authorities.

### Under the influence

Meanwhile, police responded to an emergency



**KUWAIT:** A screenshot taken from a video circulating on social media showing a vehicle jumping the red traffic light.

call reporting a person suspected of being under the influence of drugs inside a vehicle in Sabah Al-Ahmad. When police attempted to pull him over, he hit the patrol vehicle in an attempt to escape. He was chased until he hit a checkpoint barrier, forcing him to stop, and was eventually arrested after attempting to run away on foot. The man and another person who was in the car were arrested and sent to concerned authorities for questioning over a large amount of pills suspected of being drugs found in their vehicle.

## Multiple arrests for reckless driving



### Reckless driving

Police also arrested a driver who appeared in a video that circulated on social media recently, showing him driving recklessly and jumping the red light. The man failed to produce a driver's license at the time of arrest. Separately, Ahmadi police arrested a driver who hit a patrol vehicle before hitting two other vehicles in an attempt to escape. Police searched his car and found three air guns and suspected drugs inside. He was sent to the Drugs Control General Department.

### Registrations renewal

The Interior Ministry said that the vehicles' registrations department will start their gradual partial work today from 8 am to 4 pm in all governorates. Department offices will start welcoming car owners wishing to renew registrations of their vehicles that expired on March 3 and onwards. The renewal can be done without technical inspection provided that insurance papers are in order, it explained. Those who choose not to renew their registrations at this time will not be fined, it warned. It further reminded motorists to comply with health procedures.



A picture released by the Interior Ministry showing the vehicle after being located.

Legalese

## Salary reductions



By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

My heart goes out to everyone right now that has to deal with consequences because of COVID-19. It is truly a hard time for everyone. I just hope we all come out of this as a stronger society and really learn from this situation. Many people in Kuwait are receiving salary cuts; the majority of whom, mostly from my experience, are non-Kuwaitis. Reducing an employee's salary under the Kuwaiti Labor Law has always been illegal, but unfortunately, companies that wanted to provide cuts have always found creative ways to do so.

Since expats are brought into Kuwait on visas and sponsors, being sponsored by Kuwaitis or Kuwaiti companies to come into Kuwait, then shouldn't those sponsors be responsible for the employees' wellbeing while they are in Kuwait? This is really a time for us to reconsider our system and what works best for the wellbeing of not only the individuals, but the society as a whole. Here are some of the most common questions and my answers on salary cuts.

### No work, no pay

**Question:** I am in a lockdown area and I cannot get to work. My employer is saying if there is no work, then there is no pay. Is this legal?

**Fajer:** If you cannot get to work because you are in a lockdown area and then you cannot fulfill your work obligations under your employment agreement because of force majeure, an unprecedented and unpredictable event, that is out of your control. Also, if you are staying in an accommodation provided by your employer, then your employer should really be more understanding.

### Pay cut

**Question:** What can I do if I am getting a salary reduction?

**Fajer:** Right now if it is affecting your life in an essential way, as in you cannot pay rent or groceries, I highly recommend you do not wait to resolve this from a legal point of view, but to ask for assistance from charities. In the future though, you can file a case with the manpower authority. The government is working on setting up many governmental services online, and I truly hope that they reconsider how they are dealing with employment issues and disputes, and use technology to advance their services, making them more efficient and quicker, as these services can be essential for many expats in the country.

I would also suggest you document this, by emailing your employer and saying you are getting a salary reduction. If you do not have an email, you can try texting this to your employer. Also, definitely do not agree to go to the bank and take an amount out of your account and give it to your employer, or give the employer a credit card.

Just to make it clear, it is illegal and has always been illegal for employers to reduce salaries. With that said, we know this is a hard time for many businesses also. If you do agree, and only if you do agree as an employee, then they can reduce your salary with your permission. If you have any questions or if you are dealing with something similar, please email me at [info@ftl-legal.com](mailto:info@ftl-legal.com) as we are now working at the law firm with many volunteers and can try to help.

## Food security

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Whether we are facing a virus, pandemic or a war, people will not stop demanding food, and this includes production and export and import operations of grains such as wheat and rice, other consumables or even water. I believe the topic of food security is a priority for all countries in the world facing the threat of COVID-19.

It is a challenge that must be faced and addressed in light of the spread of the coronavirus. No one knows for sure when it will end, especially lockdown measures in countries that will have a negative effect if this crisis prolongs. In April, the UN Security Council met to discuss the implications of the spread of the pandemic on global food security, and the G20 agreed to tackle food price turmoil. The G20 ministers of agriculture and food said the emergency measures in the coronavirus pandemic should not put unnecessary barriers to trade or hinder global food supply chains.

The extraordinary meeting occurred because isolation measures around the world slowed down global food supply chains, which made some farmers unable to deliver their products to consumers, while producing countries restricted major exports, which is dangerous for many importing countries. Stopping exports will undoubtedly lead to a global food crisis, especially since no one knows exactly when this nightmare will end!

Last month, UN agencies warned that uncertainties about the availability of food amid the coronavirus epidemic could lead to export restrictions, which would increase and fluctuate prices, and called for measures to reduce the potential impacts on the food supply chain.

For example, main grain supplies such as wheat are available globally, but some producing countries want to place restrictions on foreign sales to give priority to domestic supply. Although this appears to be a sound measure because of the priority of countries towards their populations, it can result in economic damage to importing countries in the long term.

So it is not surprising that an international report issued by the United Nations confirms that the world is experiencing an acute and unprecedented food crisis. The report revealed that by the end of 2019, more than 130 million people in 55 countries suffered from food insecurity, while more than 70 million children face health problems due to hunger. Also, political conflicts in the world add a new dimension to the increase in hunger cases, especially in situations of displacement.

International organizations have previously warned of the risk of food shortages in the global market due to the turmoil in international trade due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, so the demand not to place many restrictions on exports is important to prevent a food crisis. The global Food Security Index for the year 2019 measures progress of countries to maintain food security. The 2019 Food Security Index put Kuwait in a good position with an overall score of 74.8 percent. The index is based on three basic criteria: Food availability and affordability, as well as quality and safety.

During the past five years, for example, Kuwait was able to provide products in the local market, in addition to the adequacy of stocks of goods for the population and their validity for use, as well as agriculture and local production of food, the diversity of supply and import lines across several countries and sales outlets throughout the country.

But I believe that the food safety that lasted for several years was not exposed to a global virus like the one we are facing today, so caution in dealing with the issue of food security is required at this time, because the pandemic threatens the food security system and supply chains, with production disrupted by international measures to prevent the virus from spreading.

The countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council are facing a number of important challenges, starting with the increase in demand for food, climate change and the scarcity of freshwater resources. Therefore, working towards finding practical solutions for the food security system in Gulf countries is important, and has become essential in light of the spread of the coronavirus, which is likely to turn into a threat to food security if not eliminated as soon as possible.

I believe that it is imperative to work to stabilize the demand for food and protect supply chains while implementing measures to protect food security, accompanied by the state's tightening of medical procedures to prevent the return of a new wave of the virus, promotion of hygiene measures in the food industry and food safety to reduce the spread of the virus.

Stay safe. Stay home. Stay informed.

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