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EXCLUSIVE

Sri Lankan envoy lauds Kuwait's new domestic labor rules



Sri Lankan Ambassador Lakshitha Ratnayake speaks with Kuwait Times in an exclusive interview.

By Sajeev K Peter

KUWAIT: Sri Lankan Ambassador to Kuwait Lakshitha Ratnayake has praised Kuwait's newly introduced regulations governing the domestic labor sector. In an exclusive interview, Ratnayake highlighted the evolving dimensions of Kuwait-Sri Lanka relations, pointing to opportunities for deeper cooperation in trade, tourism, investment and regional diplomacy. Nearly 175,000 Sri Lankans currently live and work in Kuwait, with the majority employed in the domestic sector - making the Gulf nation one of the most significant overseas destinations for Sri Lankan workers. (See Page 2)

KUWAIT: Kuwait has approved a new long-term residency plan granting foreign investors and their families residence permits valid for up to 15 years. The decision, published in the official gazette Kuwait Al-Youm on Sunday, is aimed at encouraging foreign investments, luring foreign capital and promoting Kuwait's position as a center of direct investment. The new program grants long-term residency to owners of investment entities, business partners, managers and senior executives holding approved job titles, as well as their immediate family members, including parents, spouses and children.

Under the decision, the general department of residency affairs at the interior ministry may grant investor residency permits upon recommendation from Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), provided that applicants meet a set of specified conditions and criteria. To qualify, the investment entity must hold a valid investment license issued by KDIPA.

Applicants are also required to provide a clean

criminal record, possess a passport valid for at least six months and submit documentation verified by the investment entity, which assumes legal responsibility for the accuracy of all submitted information. The decision further stipulates that investment entities sponsoring investor residency permits must meet several technical requirements. These include maintaining a minimum investment value of KD 5 million and a minimum capital of KD 1 million, with proof that the capital has been deposited within Kuwait.

Meanwhile, eight Amiri decrees published in the official gazette Al-Kuwait Al-Youm on Sunday revoked the Kuwaiti citizenship of 2,193 people and an unspecified number of their dependents. Six of the decrees gave no specific reasons for stripping the citizenship of 2,184 people, while the remaining two decrees said the citizenship of nine were revoked because they obtained them through cheating and by providing false information.

Separately, statistics released by the interior ministry show a significant decline in red-light and speed-

ing violations following the implementation of the new traffic law, reflecting a higher level of compliance among motorists with traffic regulations. In figures published on Sunday, the ministry said speeding violations dropped by 65 percent during the period from April 22, 2025 to April 21, 2026, compared with the corresponding period a year earlier.

The number of speeding violations fell to 561,820 after the new law came into force, compared with 1,618,739 violations recorded before its implementation. The ministry added that red-light violations also declined by 63 percent, with 51,732 violations recorded after the new law took effect, compared with 140,539 violations during the corresponding period of 2024-2025.

The new traffic law entered into force on April 22, 2025, introducing a package of key amendments aimed at reducing serious and repeat traffic offenses through tougher penalties for violations such as running red lights, exceeding speed limits and using a mobile phone while driving.

Blood donors exceed 45,500 in five months

KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi said 45,539 people donated blood and platelets between Jan 1 and June 6, an increase of more than 5,000 donors compared to the same period last year. Marking World Blood Donor Day, Dr Al-Awadhi said the rise reflects

growing public awareness and a stronger culture of voluntary donation.

He praised the strong response from citizens and residents during the emergency period following the Iranian attack on Kuwait, when monthly donations rose from about 8,000 to nearly 10,000. Officials said maintaining a safe and sustainable blood supply remains a priority, while this year's donor recognition program honored top donors, young donors, women donors and supporters of blood donation campaigns. — KUNA (See Page 4)



KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi listens to Director of the Central Department of Blood and Cell Therapy Dr Reem Al-Radwan on World Blood Donor Day. — KUNA

NEWS IN BRIEF

New undersecretaries appointed



Awatif Al-Sanad



Dr Khaled Al-Rasheed

KUWAIT: An Amiri decree issued Sunday appointed Awatif Al-Sanad as undersecretary of the justice ministry with the rank of undersecretary. Another Amiri decree appointed Dr Khaled Al-Rasheed as undersecretary of the education ministry with the rank of undersecretary. The appointments were approved by the Cabinet and take effect immediately. — KUNA

Grade 12 exams from June 21

KUWAIT: The education ministry has postponed the start of Grade 12 final exams for the 2025-2026 academic year to June 21 from June 17. The ministry said the change avoids a potential overlap with the Hijri New Year holiday while ensuring students have adequate preparation time. Science students will finish exams on June 29, while arts and religious education students will complete theirs on June 30. — KUNA (See Page 4)



(Left) Akram Afif of Qatar controls the ball under pressure from Brael Embolo and Michel Aebischer of Switzerland at San Francisco Bay Area Stadium on June 13, 2026 in San Francisco. (Right) Brazil forward Matheus Cunha and Morocco forward Soufiane Rahimi fight for the ball at the New York/New Jersey Stadium in East Rutherford on June 13, 2026. — AFP



Trump slams Bibi for Iran deal delay

WASHINGTON/TEHRAN: US President Donald Trump criticized a Zionist strike on Lebanon that could complicate attempts to finalize a framework deal between the United States and Iran on Sunday on ending their war, but said an agreement was nonetheless close. Iranian negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said the Zionist entity's attack on the southern suburbs of Beirut showed the US lacked the will or ability to fulfil its commitments.

Tehran warned of a "strong response", with its top joint military command saying the "finger (is) on the trigger" ready to fire at the "enemy's heart". In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump said: "This morning's attack on Beirut should not have happened, particularly on a special day when we are

so close to a Peace Deal with Iran." "We are very close to a Deal that will bring peace to the region, including to Lebanon, and all sides should stand down," he wrote.

"It shook it up. It delayed the signing by a few hours. It was supposed to be now. Now it is scheduled for a few hours from now," Trump said in a phone call to the Axios news outlet. Trump fumed at Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the attack on Beirut, saying, "it is so bad - I couldn't believe it. An hour before we are supposed to sign the deal."

Using a string of expletives, Trump told Axios he raged at Netanyahu after the Zionist entity struck Beirut's southern suburbs on Sunday, killing three people. "Why did Bibi (Netanyahu) have to do a f***** attack?" Trump told Axios. "I was so pissed off. I let him know. He has no f***** judgement. I let him know that."

Trump and mediator Pakistan said on Saturday they expected the deal would be signed on Sunday, the US president's 80th birthday. — Agencies

Qatar, Morocco make a point as Turkey shocked

LOS ANGELES: Five-time winners Brazil needed a superb Vinicius Junior equalizer to draw 1-1 with Morocco in their opening game at the World Cup on Saturday as Australia conjured a stunning 2-0 upset of Turkey. On the first day to feature four matches at the expanded 48-team tournament, Qatar won the first World Cup point in their history when Miro Muheim's own goal earned the 2022 tournament hosts a 1-1 draw with Switzerland. Scotland meanwhile marked their return to the World Cup after a 28-year absence with a nervy 1-0 win over Caribbean minnows Haiti in Foxborough, outside Boston. — AFP (See Page 16)

Fire contained at scrapyard



KUWAIT: Six Kuwait Fire Force teams brought a fire under control early Sunday at the Al-Na'ayem scrapyard in Salmi. No injuries were reported. — KUNA (See Page 2)

