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KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Electors can bring about change by supporting candidates who sincerely work in the interest of Kuwait, some of the 17 female candidates in the May legislative polls said during a debate organized by Tanami Bloc at the headquarters of Kuwait Teachers Association Monday. Dr Fatma Al-Abdali, Dr Salwa Al-Jassar and Dr Rola Das candidates from the First, Second and Third Constituencies respectively, were among participants in the debate. Promising to focus on development as well as the needs of Kuwait youth and women in case she wins in the elections, Dashti vowed to establish a fund to help Kuwaiti women purchase or rent their own homes. "We are going through a critical phase in our history that necessitates solutions, not exchanging accusations," she asserted. Highlighting the importance of instilling values in the hearts and minds of citizens, Dashti stressed the need to implement public awareness programs to urge citizens to respect the law and assess the performance of legislators. She also emphasized the importance of education for the moral development of Kuwaiti students.

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Meanwhile, Al-Jassar observed the deterioration of democratic practices over the last couple of years, indicating citizens are now aware of the worsening attitude of candidates. "We have seen a lot of loopholes in the way people carry out their national duties," she lamented. Stating that Kuwaitis have become wanton consumers rather than positive contributors to national development, Al-Jassar cited reports from various international organizations that ranked Kuwait as one of the least productive nations in the world. She underscored the need to put more attention on this issue which, she described, as 'threatening'. "We should also concentrate on inculcating values in citizens, in addition to the strict implementation of existing laws and regulations," she added.

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Al-Jassar believes the sudden spurt of wealth amongst Kuwaitis has led to a decline in their understanding of responsibility towards the nation. She said the disgraceful behavior of some people is a reflection of the worsening problem in the Kuwaiti social fabric.

Furthermore, Al-Jassar also underlined the important role played by mainstream media and non-government organizations (NGOs) in raising a productive generation. She then urged the incoming government and Parliament to develop the schools curricula.

On the other hand, Al-Abdali stressed the need to understand the current political dilemma that she attributed to the faulty implementation of the Constitution and its clauses. "This poses a grave threat to democracy," she warned.

Al-Abdali pointed out "we lack understanding of laws. Both authorities should collaborate and come up with a mechanism for the assessment of the performance of legislators."

As for social development, Al-Abdali highlighted the importance of balancing the population structure, combating extremism, and honing the skills of Kuwaiti youths. She mentioned a number of proposals in this regard including the family and job security draft bills, and supporting the handicapped.

Al-Abdali also asked the incoming legislators to analyze all angles of development, particularly the needs of Kuwaiti families, to come up with vital laws. "I will work on a scheme to make volunteer work a prerequisite for admission to colleges or faculties. Under this scheme, students will be required to render voluntary services until completion of their academic degrees," she concluded.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: Former MP and Political Science Professor at Kuwait University (KU) Abdulmohsen Jamal has refuted allegations on the prevalence of sectarian conflicts in the country, reports Al-Shahid daily. In a recent interview with Al-Shahid TV, Jamal accused the media of spreading rumors about the current situation in the country. He attributed the problem to the exaggerated media reports, including the alleged presence of Hezbollah members who are trying to destabilize the nation. He clarified not all Kuwaiti Shiites belong to Iran, lamenting the eulogy case led to dire repercussions that mortified the Popular Law Bloc.

Criticizing the former MPs who used their constitutional tools during the first months of previous Parliament, Jamal pointed out parliamentary unity or maturity is possible through the implementation of the single constituency system. He believes the new Parliament will not last long if the former prime minister will be reappointed and the incoming MPs will insist on using their constitutional tools to grill the government. On the chances for women in Saturday's elections, Jamal said one or two women will win the elections as voters are now willing to give female candidates a chance due to frustration over the dissolution of successive male-dominated parliaments.

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