

Local

Kuwait govt adopts multi-faceted measures to curb COVID-19 spread

Curfew extended, food delivery allowed during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Kuwait's government Monday adopted multi-faceted measures aimed at curbing the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and taking action against people who violated the curfew and home quarantine. During a meeting chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the cabinet assigned Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and affiliate companies to coordinate with Ministry of Health to prepare quarantine facilities in North Ritqa and South KIPC to be used by the Ministry of Health (MoH) as soon as possible. It assigned MoH to rapidly coordinate with Ministries of Interior and Finance to boost strategic stocks of medicine and medical equipment to confront coronavirus. Deputy Premier, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement.



Violators to be named and shamed

will be extended from April 26 until May 28, and work will resume on Sunday, May 31, said Saleh. The cabinet assigned the Ministry of Social Affairs to coordinate with Union of Cooperative Societies to remove all obstacles hindering the build-up of a strategic stock enough for six months. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) shall coordinate with Foreign Ministry, Custom Directorate, Kuwait Ports Authority and Public Authority for Agriculture and Fish Resources to arrange imports of food through sea ports and border crossings. The cabinet, which approved MoH's home quarantine regulations, assigned Kuwait Municipality to make sure food stores abide by health regulations. The ministers extended the curfew hours to start from 4:00 pm until 8:00 am, but allowed restaurants and food stores to make home deliveries from 5:00 pm until 1:00 am. They assigned Ministries of Interior and Information to name and shame people who violated home quarantine and curfew in



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the meeting. — KUNA

Holiday extended

The public and private sectors' holiday

media, newspapers and social media.

Masks' production

The cabinet assigned Kuwait National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development to take appropriate measures to produce fabric-made masks to meet growing needs of people and citizens being repatriated. The cabinet also decided to continue payment of support wages for citizens working in the private sector even if

they did not update their working status or were abroad. Meanwhile, the cabinet expressed gratitude for His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for addressing the nation on the first day of repatriation of citizens. His Highness the Amir urged the citizens to fully comply with health instructions during the time they spent in quarantine. His Highness the Amir also thanked all those working at the frontlines for their dedica-

tion. The cabinet, said Saleh, would comply with His Highness the Amir's instructions for the sake of the well-being of citizens. The government, in the meantime, mourned former Minister Jassem Khaled Al-Marzouq and paid tribute to his service. It strongly condemned a shooting attack in Nova Scotia, Canada, which killed a number of people, and asserted Kuwait's rejection to these criminal attacks. — KUNA

Kuwait govt reviews COVID-19 economic, social repercussions



Kuwait Central Bank Governor Mohammad Al-Hashel

KUWAIT: Kuwait's government discussed Monday a briefing of economic and social repercussions of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and steps taken by the supreme committee for economic stimulus, presented by its head, Kuwait Central Bank Governor Mohammad Al-Hashel. The review urged an early intervention to contain a crisis characterized by uncertainty, due to its negative impacts on global oil prices as a result of dwindling supply and demand and the halt in a large proportion of global economic activity. The results of the global pandemic were described as being of "unparalleled proportions," far exceeding initial estimates compared to each and every crisis that has emerged since World War II.

The need to secure public funds was another topic of discussion, along with the importance of protecting the national economy, particularly the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) sector, which is the most vulnerable to these effects. The need to protect the national workforce, burden sharing amongst all parties to overcome the crisis and to assist strongly-performing economic entity, which have been known to contribute to the national economy, in order to maintain their production levels upon a return to normal life. The commit-

tee said the 11-article proposed solutions are based on current statistics, leaving the door open for a different approach in the event of the lengthening of the crisis' duration.

In particular, ministers discussed article six and seven of the draft proposals, related to providing individuals, SMEs and economic entities with soft loans - a role which banks could positively contribute through providing liquidity. The discussions paid homage to the efforts of the Central Bank over the past decade to strengthen the banking sector, leading to strong buffers and a high level of financial safety indicators which the nation can now bear the fruit of at this point in time. The proposals, which received cabinet approval, handed out to virus-impacted individuals, SMEs and economic entities. In order to protect social security, the committee also recommended that state charity, Bait Al-Zakat (Zakat House), provide assistance to marginally-employed and financially-affected labor, estimated at around 500,000 individuals, for food aid over a 100-day period. The need to closely pay attention to applying appropriate policies in relation to maintaining social security, and to strengthening the role of civil society bodies in supporting these institutions was also approved. — KUNA

Kuwait's Amir receives call from Iranian President

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Monday received a phone call from the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. During the call, His Highness the Amir and the Iranian President discussed bilateral ties between the two countries and the latest regional and global developments as well as the precautionary measures taken by the two countries to limit the spread of the coronavirus. His Highness the Amir expressed appreciation for the call, wishing the Iranian President full wellbeing and for his country and friendly people further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent yesterday a cable to Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms, congratulating her majesty on her birthday. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

In other news, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Monday a cable of condolences to the Governor General of Canada Julie Payette over the deadliest mass shooting that took place in Nova Scotia, which resulted in killing many innocent people. His Highness the Amir expressed sorrow and wishes speedy recovery to the injured. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Canadian leadership. On Sunday, 16 people were killed in a shooting in Nova Scotia, Canada, including a police officer and the gunman, according to local reports. The police identified the gunman as a 51-year-old male and that the shooting seemed "random in nature." — KUNA

Wellbeing Amidst Pandemic

Reframing perception

By Sadie Hussain

Concerns about the pandemic are perfectly normal. However, to those that experience intense anxiety or unhelpful thoughts that impact their day to day lives, try to focus on issues that are in your control, such as how you act, who you speak to and where you get information from.

It is fine to acknowledge that some things are outside of your control, but if constant thoughts about the pandemic and its effects are leading to overwhelming feelings, try utilizing the coping methods such as praying, meditation, mindful breathing or setting positive affirmations. Be attentive to negative emotions and identify relaxation techniques that best work for you.

During a time of heightened uncertainty and unrest, it is natural to have many questions in mind and in the absence of information, an anxious mind will often consider worst case scenarios (what if's), leading to feelings of helplessness and vulnerability.

We are at a climax of the history of our Earth. Take deep breaths, practice mindful grounding, be grateful for today and for all that you have. Cultivate thoughts of hope and better days ahead.

Consider reframing questions in order to shift thinking to a more constructive mindset. Examples of questions may be:

- What are the things within my control?
- What are the strategies that have helped with challenging situations in the past?
- How can these strategies be tailored to help me cope during this time?
- What are the positive actions that I can take now?

There are certainly some things that you can control such as your attitude, your output and your contribution. When you control your thoughts and emotions, you harness clarity of mind.

Remember the well-known serenity affirmation? "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference."

Do not use your energy to worry. Instead, use your energy to believe and to make a change.

— The above advice should not be considered as a comprehensive report or medical advice concerning issues that may affect physical and mental wellbeing.

Stay safe. Stay home. Stay informed

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