

Local

Kuwait Amir congratulates citizens, residents on near advent of Ramadan

Kuwaiti, Bahraini leaders exchange Ramadan greetings, discuss COVID-19 measures

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed yesterday his sincere greetings to citizens and expatriates on the near advent of the holy month of Ramadan, said the Amiri Diwan in a statement. The Amiri diwan added that His Highness the Amir would not be able to receive Ramadan well-wishers this year in line with the health guidelines set to counter the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The Diwan expressed wishes of welfare and prosperity to the leadership and people of Kuwait as well as the Arab and Muslim countries.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Tuesday a call from Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa and exchanged greetings on advent of holy month of Ramadan. His Highness the Amir and King Hamad also exchanged views over the preventive measures in the two countries against the spread of coronavirus. His Highness the Amir thanked King Hamad for his phone call, which reflected deep-rooted relationship between the two countries, wishing the Kingdom progress and prosperity under the leadership of the Monarch. His Highness the Amir also received a call from Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa and exchanged greetings on advent of Ramadan. Prince Khalifa wished His Highness the Amir enjoyed good health. His Highness the Amir thanked Prince Khalifa for his phone call which mirrored the deep relations between the two countries, wishing Bahrain prosperity and development under leadership of King Hamad.

In the meantime, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a call from Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa and exchanged greetings on advent of holy month of Ramadan. His



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Highness the Crown Prince and Prince Khalifa also exchanged views over the preventive measures in the two countries against the spread of coronavirus. Prince Khalifa prayed to

Allah the Almighty to eliminate this pandemic on the State of Kuwait and the rest of the world. His Highness the Crown Prince thanked Prince Khalifa for his phone call, and prayed to Allah the Almighty to bestow blessing upon Prince Khalifa and the people of Bahrain. His

Highness the Crown Prince prayed to Allah to exterminate this pandemic on the Kingdom of Bahrain and its people, as well as the rest of the world. — KUNA

Amir won't receive well-wishers



Speakers partake in IPU meetings via video conference

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem participated, through a video conference on Tuesday, in the third preparatory committee meeting, for the fifth conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), scheduled to be held next August in Vienna, Austria. Ghanem participated as a representative of the Arab Parliamentary Group, as he had previously participated in the last two meetings in Geneva. During the meeting, Ghanem made several remarks in which he affirmed the position of the Arab group towards many of the issues presented at the meeting, including climate change, refugee issues, and demographic changes in many countries around the world, in addition to discussing the developments of coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, which was later included in the meeting's agenda. Parliamentarians from more than 14 countries representing the geopolitical groups in the world participated in the meeting, in addition to the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Gabriela Cuevas Barron and the Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Martin Chungong.

Meanwhile, Finance Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries discussed Tuesday preemptive and preventive measures they were implementing to address ramification of the coronavirus. The finance ministers, in a virtual meeting, discussed means of boosting confidence in economies of the six GCC countries and achieving sustainability in their finances. Saudi Press Agency reported. The ministers also discussed recommendations by their committees.

In the meantime, UN Secretary-General representative and the Resident Coordinator in Kuwait, Dr Tariq Al-Sheikh, and the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, Dr Khaled Mahdi, discussed online the continuous joint cooperation and global development opportunities and challenges related to the coronavirus spread. Both sides discussed the priorities for planning, future forecasting and different



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali-Ghanem participates, through a video conference, in the third preparatory committee meeting for the fifth conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. —KUNA

scenarios to reduce the epidemic effects on the economy, society, demography and dealing with the crisis as an opportunity for Kuwait to introduce and amend policies, said the representative' office in a press release Tuesday.

The statement noted that the meeting witnessed a presentation of a cooperation draft proposal between the UN and the Kuwaiti government in a risk management plan and a rapid development response in the areas of community health awareness, safety, economic and social resilience and education. The two sides stressed the continuous cooperation in studying the risk management resulting from the slowdown in achieving the sustainable development goals in view of the reality of this pandemic, it added.

Furthermore, the statement quoted Dr Tariq as saying that the UN with all its institutions undertakes to provide and submit recommendations, plans, response programs, international guides and directives for countries to cooperate in dealing with the current emergency and its effects on various sectors in Kuwait and the rest of the countries. Dr Khaled emphasized that the current policies that resulted from the current situation and in which focus will be demonstrated showed that the post-COVID-19 world will be completely different and that the interests will focus on health problems, volunteer management, online education, major economic issues and food security. — KUNA

Local spotlight

Fasting helps



By Abdellatif Sharaa

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Many people are not aware of the significant health benefits of fasting, which is really an effective healthy practice when it is done the right way. Fasting helps the body to get rid of toxins, reduce blood sugar levels and lowers fat storage, while at the same time helps the immune system. As for removing toxins, we all know that foods prepared in advance contain many additives and preservatives which turn into toxins inside the body, and most of them are stored in body fat. Fasting prompts the body to burn such fats, and this in turn helps in expelling the toxins through the liver and kidneys, in addition to other organs.

We should remember that our digestive system takes a break while fasting. The natural physiological functions continue, particularly the secretion of digestive juices at a lower rate, and this helps keep the fluid balance in the body, while food digestion takes place at a steady rate, and this produces energy at a gradual rate. Yet fasting does not prevent secretion of gastric acids, so patients with ulcers must be careful when fasting.

There are studies that show fasting helps in some medical issues, including allergies. Fasting increases the breakup of glucose and energy production, which in turn reduces the production of insulin, giving the pancreas a break. Blood pressure or hypertension can be reduced by fasting, as it helps the reduction of arteriosclerosis. Fats are burned and glucose is broken to produce the necessary energy for the body. The metabolism rates also slow down, reducing hormones such as adrenaline, and this in turn helps in lowering hypertension.

When one follows a balanced diet between fasting periods, it helps the immune system. Eating fruits helps increase the nutritional content of vitamins A and E - both are excellent antioxidants and augment the immune system. It is good to remember that fasting can suppress the appetite for ready-made foods, and instead of that fasting increases the desire to eat healthy food. Finally, regardless of the mentioned benefits, one should seek medical advice any time before starting the fast in case of any medical condition.

Coronavirus in Kuwait: What we know so far

KUWAIT: Kuwait has so far recorded 2,248 cases infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), in addition to 13 deaths. With the exception of 50 cases in intensive care, all infected cases are in stable condition and are recovering in quarantined locations designated by the government for this purpose, while hundreds have been discharged from quarantine after exhibiting no symptoms during their 14-day quarantine period, the Ministry of Health confirmed. Meanwhile, 443 people have recovered completely after previously being infected with the virus, the ministry said. There are 1,792 people receiving treatment and 1,367 quarantined as of yesterday. Kuwait is taking measures to test Kuwaitis coming from infected areas for potential infection, as it has already tested thousands of people. Meanwhile, Kuwait requires all expatriates who arrived from travel on March 1 and beyond to visit Kuwait International Fairground where the Ministry of Health has set up a center to test people for possible infection.

Curfew

Kuwait enforced a country-wide curfew from 5:00 pm to 6:00 am, which was later extended to start from 4:00 pm until 8:00 am during Ramadan, while allowing restaurants and food stores to make home deliveries from 5:00 pm until 1:00 am. The government also locked down Mahboula and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh in a bid to contain the spread of the virus and enable health workers to test inhabitants. Earlier, the government decided to close all shopping malls, beauty salons and barber shops as part of its measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The government also allowed supermarkets, restaurants and shops to host a maximum of five people at a time and in case there are lines, the distance must be at least one meter between people. The Ministry of Commerce launched a website (www.moci.shop) to enable people to book appointments to shop at co-operative societies in their areas. The Public Authority for Industry also announced that companies can apply to evacuate their workers from Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and Mahboula. To do so, they must fill a 'workers evacuation form' available on www.pai.gov.kw, and send the form via email to: Jasiri@moh.gov.kw.

Precautions

Kuwait halted all commercial flights until further notice, and has sent special flights to repatriate Kuwaitis back home from countries affected with the virus' spread. All arrivals to Kuwait from all countries are to be placed under compulsory institutional quarantine for 14 days, during which the person is monitored, and prescribed health procedures are applied, the health ministry said. Meanwhile, the Cabinet announced on April 9 the operation of all airline flights for expats who are wishing to return back to their countries. Authorities also announced a public holiday in the country from March 12 to May 28, with work resuming on May 31, while entities providing vital

services will remain open. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education has suspended classes for March at all public and private schools (for both students and teaching staffs): first from March 1 to March 12, and later extended it until March 29, before eventually suspending schools until August for grade 12 and October for other stages.

Kuwait suspended issuing entry permits and visas unless those issued through diplomatic missions. State departments have been on high alert to take precautions against the potential spread of the virus. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has taken measures to make sure that facial masks, hand sanitizers and other goods remain accessible to the public.

Amnesty

The Interior Ministry issued an amnesty allowing residency violators to leave the country between April 1 and April 30 without paying any fines or airfare with a chance to return to Kuwait later. The amnesty was issued in view of the circumstances the country is currently going through and as part of the precautionary measures taken to fight the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Individuals desiring to procure valid residencies in Kuwait and are willing to pay the fines without being subjected to investigations will be allowed to pay the fines and legalize their status if they meet the required conditions.

Special centers in Farwaniya were allocated to accommodate violators who finalize their papers pending departure. Male violators are received at Al-Muthanna primary school for boys, Farwaniya, block 1, street 122, while female violators are received at Farwaniya primary school for girls in Farwaniya, block 1, street 76. Violators are received from 8 am till 2 pm according to the following dates and nationalities: Philippines (April 1-5, 2020), Egypt (April 6-10), Bangladesh (April 11-15), India (April 16-20), Sri Lanka (April 21-25), other nationalities (April 26-30, 2020).

The Interior Ministry later opened two new locations in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh to receive residency violators from all nationalities: Female violators are received at Roufayda Al-Aslamaya School - Block 4 - Street 200, while male violators are received at Naem bin Masod School - Block 4 - Street 250.

Hotlines

The Ministry of Health has set the following hotlines to receive inquiries about the coronavirus 24/7: 24970967 - 96049698 - 99048619.

The Education Ministry set the following hotlines to receive inquiries on school closures related to the anti-coronavirus measures:

- 24970967 (24/7 hotline)
- 51575591 (Capital Educational Zone)
- 51576117 (Hawally Educational Zone)
- 51576576 (Farwaniya Educational Zone)
- 51577055 (Jahra Educational Zone)
- 51577655 (Ahmadi Educational Zone)
- 51577951 (Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone)
- 51578171 (Religious Studies Department)
- 51588599 (Private Education Department)
- 51592515 (Services Department)
- 51594544 (Public Relations Department)

Medicine delivery

Kuwait's Ministry of Health (MOH) launched a new

medicine delivery service for people in Kuwait, which they can use to order medications to be delivered during curfew hours. The medications will be delivered within 72 hours after the order is submitted. To place an order, patients should send a WhatsApp to the numbers for the hospitals and medical centers as listed below. The patient should include their name, Civil ID number, hospital or clinic file number, mobile phone number and the medicine needed to the following numbers:

- Amiri Hospital: 50880699
- Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital: 50880755
- Farwaniya Hospital: 50880852
- Adan Hospital: 50880908
- Jahra Hospital: 50881066
- Sabah Hospital: 97632660
- Jaber Hospital: 96992079
- Ibn Sina Hospital: 99613948
- Chest Hospital: 99258749
- Razi Hospital: 97633487
- Kuwait Cancer Control Center: 96735242
- Psychiatric Hospital: 97350113
- Physiotherapy Hospital: 99824037
- Maternity Hospital: 98559531
- As'ad Al-Hamad Dermatology Center: 98514508
- Zain Hospital: 97552031
- NBK Hospital: 96931761
- Al-Rashed Allergy Hospital: 94162470
- Infectious Diseases Hospital: 96989164
- Palliative Care Hospital: 94024786
- Sabah Al-Ahmad Urology Center: 90952469
- KFH Addiction Treatment Center: 94169363

Meanwhile, all licensed pharmacies in Kuwait delivering medicine are allowed to continue their services 24 hours a day.

The Ministry of Health is also asking doctors and nurses affiliated with the private medical sector to volunteer in order to contribute to the fight against the virus. Volunteering is available through the link: <http://volunteering.q8-health.com>. The ministry had closed all private clinics and medical centers effective March 22, 2020 until further notice.

Mental health assistance

The Kuwait Psychological Association (KPA) is providing consultation through the phone for people suffering from the psychological impacts of coronavirus. Different doctors are working on the hotline in different timings as follows:

Dr Rashed Al-Sahh: on Monday and Wednesday 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Call 9797-6168.

Dr Fahad Al-Tasha: daily from 8:00 pm - 12:00 am. Call 9904-8258.

Dr Othman Al-Asfour: daily 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm. Call 9938-5350.

Dr Mohammed Al-Khaldi (head of this team): daily 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. Call 9903-6470.

Dr Ahmad Al-Khaldi: daily 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Call 9910-7965.

Dr Muneera Al-Qattan: Monday and Wednesday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Call 9953-3108.

Dr Zainab Al-Saffar: Sunday and Thursday 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Call 9954-9908.

Dr Sameera Al-Kandari: Tuesday 9:00 pm - 12:00 am. Call 6770-9434.

Dr Kawthar Al-Yaqout: Monday and Wednesday 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Call 5521-0088.

For information and other concerns, call 9401-4283.