

## Pandemic Diaries

## Predictions



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Kuwait's COVID-19 crisis will end June 5, according to statistical modeling data published by the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), Data-Driven Innovation Lab.

The SUTD published the predicted date for Kuwait among a series of charts predicting when COVID-19 will end for countries around the world. (<https://ddi.sutd.edu.sg/portfolio/items/444814>)

If it's correct, we can all celebrate, as June is only a month away and by the end of Ramadan, we will have a clear sense of what the summer holds. But is it correct? The charts utilize what is called a "SIR (susceptible-infected-recovered) model, regressed based on the data from different countries to estimate the pandemic life cycle curve and predict when the pandemic might end in different countries and in the world."

The SIR model uses dependent variables - number of susceptible individuals, number of infected individuals and number of recovered individuals - and then fractions of the three within the population as dependent variables. It then makes assumptions about each of these groups.

In the case of susceptible individuals, the SIR model assumes that no one is added to this group since most countries have halted immigration and closed borders. In Kuwait's case however, this assumption will not work out since the government is airlifting home around 50,000+ citizens (several thousands have already arrived) and it's possible that some asymptomatic individuals will be among them.

This is just one aspect of the model that might not apply to Kuwait. There are many different models now designed to try to predict the future trajectory of the crisis and each has its own limitations and challenges and different projections for when we might see the end of the crisis. To learn more about this one, you can read how the model is devised here: <https://www.maa.org/press/periodicals/loci/joma/the-sir-model-for-spread-of-disease-the-differential-equation-model>.

In looking at the model for Kuwait itself, we see that the peak may have already been reached, although the predicted number of cases according to the model is much less than the actual number of cases reported at the 'predicted peak'. Another inconsistency.

That said, the model may have some applicability and still offers a glimpse of the future. If it does hold true, then we should have reached or almost reached the peak and start to see a slow decline in new cases. Only time will tell. The government here expects the crisis to last much longer, though we may begin to see some limited reopening of shops after Ramadan.

We can only hope that we have reached the peak and start to move past this pandemic.

# Chinese medical team arrives in Kuwait to aid in COVID-19 fight

## Kuwaiti citizens' repatriation 4th phase kicks off April 29

**KUWAIT:** A Chinese medical team specialized in prevention and epidemics was set to arrive in Kuwait yesterday, Kuwait's Ambassador to China Sameeh Hayat said. The visit comes as part of China's efforts to extend a helping hand to other countries in a bid to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). In a statement to the press, Ambassador Hayat said that the team will discuss latest developments on the virus with officials of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health. The Chinese team specializes in the fields of preven-

tion and control of infectious diseases, epidemiology, intensive medical treatment and DNA testing, he pointed out. The Ambassador expressed Kuwait's appreciation for the sincere efforts of the Chinese government in providing unlimited support to world countries, especially Kuwait, to contain and combat the pandemic and exchange experiences in the areas of control and prevention.

In other news, Kuwait's Directorate General for Civil Aviation (DGCA) Chairman Sheikh Salman Humoud Al-

Sabah on Sunday said fourth phase of evacuating citizens from abroad would take place on April 29 and proceed until May 6. Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud stated in a press statement that the fourth phase would include Los Angeles, Miami, Dallas, Washington, Montreal, Sidney and Berth. The operation will also cover a number of cities in Europe, Asia, South America and Africa where there are Kuwaiti citizens who booked electronically with international aviation companies in cooperation with Kuwaiti embassies. — KUNA



Kuwait's Ambassador to China Sameeh Hayat



**KUWAIT:** A combination of photos showing large crowds outside the residency affairs department's building in Dajeej Sunday, with lack of adherence to social distancing instructions to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

## Coronavirus in Kuwait: What we know so far

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait has recorded 3,075 cases infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as of Sunday, in addition to 20 deaths. With the exception of 61 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, 1,012 people have recovered completely after previously being infected with the virus, while there are 2,249 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](http://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](http://www.pai.gov.kw), and send the form via email to: [Jasiri@moh.gov.kw](mailto: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-Aslamya 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-ehhealth.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-Sah: 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.