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Kuwait lists 204 new COVID-19 cases, two deaths

KUWAIT: Kuwait yesterday listed 204 new coronavirus infections recorded over the past 24 hours, raising the total to 149,653. Meanwhile, two virus-related deaths were recorded during the same period as the death toll rose to 931, the health ministry said. The ministry had earlier reported that 199 patients recovered during the same period, raising the total number of recoveries to 145,579. The number of patients hospitalized stood yesterday at 3,143, with 36 of them in intensive care units, according to ministry spokesman Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad. He further revealed that 2,158 swab tests were conducted over the same period, bringing the total up to 1,243,422. He went on to urge the public to continue to abide by health precautions, mainly wearing facemasks and maintaining social distancing, which he said are the most effective ways to halt the spread of the virus. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A large number of medical personnel and frontline workers headed yesterday to the Kuwait Vaccination Center, at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref, to receive their vaccines against the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Low-key New Year celebrations amid pandemic

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: 2020 will end for many of us without celebrations and parties. Families will spend the New Year in the comfort of their homes, share food with their loved ones, and take some rest. Kuwait Times spoke to some expats and asked what they have planned for the New Year. "My husband and I will spend New Year at home. It's a tradition for us since when we were newlyweds and younger. Our children have families of their own now, so we see to it that we come home and share the blessings together every New Year," said 55-year-old Patricia, a nurse who is married to an architect.

"I see to it that we are all at home at the advent of every New Year. My two kids have their own lives now - one is in Australia, the other in the Philippines, and they have their own families. We greet each other at the time of our respective New Years since we are in different time zones," she said.

"If not for COVID, we would've been in Australia now. But we opted not to travel, not because of the recent travel lockdown in Kuwait. If we go to Australia, we will not enjoy the holiday because of too many restrictions there, so we preferred to stay



where we are," Patricia said. "I will call some friends to see if they can come over to my house and celebrate with us, otherwise I will celebrate with my husband only," she added.

Family gathering

An Indian family is planning to spend New Year's Eve away from the city. "We have an invitation from a family friend in Kabd. We are planning to go there on New Year's Eve and stay there until the following day. That'll be a change since we cannot go out of the country right now," said Sunil, a father of three. "We want to unwind from the busy days and challenges - it's draining, so we want to begin the year with new ideas and prospects of life."

Sunil owns a restaurant in Salmiya. "I have peo-

ple looking after the business, which will be open even on the New Year. That's the time we get more customers, so I keep the restaurant open and give my workers additional money or bonuses," he said.

Rafiq and his wife have invited their three married children to spend the New Year with them. "It's good that we are all here in Kuwait. I have two other children who are unmarried, and we want all of them to be in one place during the New Year. I thank Allah - because of COVID-19, they were unable to leave Kuwait. We can now gather as one family, unlike previous years, as my kids are scattered across the Middle East and Europe. Now they are all here in Kuwait because of COVID, so we can gather and talk until the morning of January 1," he said.

stc builds on commitment to combat COVID-19 in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that it has distributed hand sanitizers stands, face masks, and other safety supplies to the Ministry of Interior in a gesture of appreciation to ensure their safety while on duty.

The initiative falls under stc's "Stay Safe" campaign, which was launched during the early stages of the pandemic. Additionally, the Company equipped its headquarters and branches with similar safety supplies and disinfection stations to prevent the spread of disease. To ensure the safety of its employees during these unprecedented times, stc carried out yet another awareness campaign focused on preventative guidelines and precautionary measures that must be applied to maintain the health and safety of both employees and stc's valued customers.

In recognition of the Company's critical and vital role in the community, stc's Corporate Communications team, led by Danah Al-Jasem, with the presence of Hadeel Al-Abdullah, Ahmed Al-Shayji and Ahmed Al-Nowaihet, visited the MOI headquarters to distribute the infection preventative items.

Danah Al-Jasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, "In line with our commitment to our society and the social responsibility framework under our "Stay Safe" campaign, we launched a series of humanitarian activities aimed at mitigating the risks impacting the residents of Kuwait during these unprecedented times. It is critical for the private sector to take a strong stand and continue its role in backing the Kuwaiti community, as well as the decisions taken by the country."

She said, "This initiative comes as an additional step in the range of activities launched by stc since the Coronavirus outbreak in support of the relentless efforts made by State officials to overcome current challenges. It goes without saying that stc and other members of the private sector, will continuously support the Kuwaiti society and government institutions during both challenging and prosperous times."

In relation to actions taken by stc during the pandemic, Jasem added, "To better serve its customers, stc upgraded its digital channels to offer



an array of products and services to new and existing customers from the comfort of their homes. stc's online platforms also allow customers to seamlessly execute transactions related to their accounts online and hassle free. Considering the conditions the country is going through, the Company launched a series of online exclusive offers to enrich the customers' experience at home, whether it be online gaming, working remotely from home or enjoying free services to fulfill their entertainment needs."

Jasem thanked the frontline heroes, including ranking officials and police officers at the Ministry of Interior for placing their lives on the line to serve and protect the residents of Kuwait. Even though curfew restrictions have been lifted, their critical role in preserving the health and safety measures in Kuwait does not go unnoticed.

Colonel Abdullillah Abdulrazzaq Al-Abdulsalam, Assistant Director General of the General Administration of Security Relations and Media in the Ministry of Interior, praised the efforts made by stc to provide a helping hand

during the Coronavirus pandemic, extending his appreciation to the Company's employees for this kind gesture.

Abdulsalam added, "The Ministry of Interior acknowledges and highly values the cooperation placed forth by companies and civil society institutions. Through this belief, this collaboration was formed by stc to distribute sanitizer stands in the Ministry of Interior building to be used by both visitors and employees."

It is worth mentioning that stc launched several internal and community-based activities in the past period, including distributing face masks and hand sanitizers to several key areas around Kuwait. This comes in addition to the awareness campaigns carried out on the Company's social media platforms. stc also distributed 5,000 vouchers to returning citizens and at Ambulance Centers to front-liners during the Company's field visits to welcome back citizens and as a token of appreciation to paramedics. The initiatives were held under the framework of stc's "Stay Safe" campaign, also including the distribution of 25,000 free prepaid lines to travelers returning to Kuwait.



Danah Al-Jasem

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