

## Local

# Zain Group joins Hedera Governing Council to create safer, fairer, more secure internet

## Kharafi: Membership provides Zain exposure to cutting-edge, secure technologies

KUWAIT: Zain Group [Kuwait Bourse, stock ticker: ZAIN], a leading mobile telecom innovator serving 49.5 million customers in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa today announces it is joining the highly innovative Hedera Governing Council.

Zain is the first company from the Middle East region to participate on the Council, joining a list of prestigious global innovators including Boeing, Deutsche Telekom, DLA Piper, FIS (World-Pay), Google, IBM, LG Electronics, Magalu, Nomura, Swirls, Swisscom Blockchain, Tata Communications, University College London, and Wipro.

Hedera Hashgraph provides a next-generation form of distributed consensus that is faster, fairer and more secure than traditional blockchains. It offers a new way for people or organizations who do not know or trust each other to securely collaborate and transact online without the need for a trusted intermediary. Through its participation on the Hedera Council, Zain Group will gain extensive early insights into the trends and applications in the distributed ledger technology (DLT) space and will be able to assess opportunities to develop services within its own field of operation.

Hedera's vision is to create a safer, fairer, more secure internet - one in which online communities can collectively create and evolve shared worlds in cyberspace, and on which developers can build trusted applications that enable people to play games and work together. End-users will also be empowered to buy and sell goods and services safely and securely, without entrusting a central organization with their data and privacy.

As a leading regional digital lifestyle operator, Zain consistently looks to ways technology can provide new solutions to its individual and business customers while also improving its own operating efficiency. Furthermore, the Hedera Hashgraph patented technology platform addresses the universally important issue of the environment as its power usage is super-efficient, utilizing a fraction of the electricity that blockchain platforms use. This is in line with Zain Group's membership of and commitment to the Carbon Disclosure Project, which provides a reporting framework and guidance to address climate change.

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi commented, "We feel a sense of purpose in joining the Hedera Governing Council, which has

numerous blue chip, innovation-driven organizations all interested in driving the development of blockchains and the wider DLT space, which we have already noted has phenomenal potential. Council membership provides Zain first-hand exposure to cutting-edge and secure technologies that drive innovation, e-commerce and B2B across the region."

Kharafi continued, "From our own perspective, the growing list of new services and applications we have and continue to develop in areas such as the Group API platform; mobile money and fintech; e-health; drones; the Internet of Things; and 5G all lend themselves to further enhancement through blockchain and other distributed ledger technologies. Our participation in the Council also speaks to another pillar of Zain's corporate strategy, which is to collaborate with leading industry players to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes and thereby improve the products and services we can deliver to our customers."

Hedera aims to realize its vision to create a safer, fairer, more secure internet through a focus on addressing four fundamental challenges to the adoption of public DLT - technology, security, stability, and governance. For the vision to deliver impactful results, the network needs to be governed by representatives from a broad range of market sectors and geographies, each with world-class expertise in their respective industries.

Mance Harmon, CEO of Hedera commented, "We are delighted to have Zain Group join the



Council, given the company's sound track record of innovation, and professionalism in the development and delivery of cutting-edge mobile services and applications. We believe the Council will be enriched greatly by this first organization to join us from the Middle East region, given Zain Group's eight country footprint. We hope Zain will take full advantage of the opportunity to immerse itself in hashgraph and distributed ledger technologies and gain first-hand knowledge of new technologies and use cases developed on the Hedera network."

The Hedera Governing Council's members contribute technical expertise to manage the technical roadmap, business expertise to advise on business operations, and legal expertise to help navigate the evolving regulatory environment.



### Joining Fortune 1,000 Council members

## In my view Only us to blame



By Abdellatif Sharaa

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It seems that we will be dealing with COVID-19 for some time, longer than what we thought. The virus itself was very frank and straightforward from day one and warned us not to get in touch with it, and this is where its lengthy stay will be.

Countries, people and economies became tired of the situation, precautions and curfews, and authorities started to take alternative approaches as they attempted to restore normal daily life despite the presence of this very obnoxious visitor.

They started by easing curfew hours and movement and opened certain businesses though with measures and steps dictated by health authorities, while at the same time virus infections seemed to stabilize and were on the downswing. The scary part is that authorities in many countries became excited and opened up more when they saw less than 10 cases a day.

People who were virtually locked up or restricted like caged birds were released all of a sudden and could be seen everywhere with little or no protection, no social distancing and no masks - nothing to keep the virus away, and now the virus is on the upswing again. Countries that had few, mostly imported cases, now are seeing an average of 30 cases per day, many of which are domestic.

It is very important to remind that this is not the complete fault of authorities at all - maybe they bear some, but the major part falls on the public who turned a deaf ear to the instructions of the authorities and the measures they must follow once they are free to move.

So, we all must realize that it is our responsibility - we the public - to control the pandemic by heeding warnings and following what experts have told us to get a grip on the matter. Please stop blaming others and ignoring what we have done to ourselves. Authorities are responsible for providing the tools and means and we are supposed to use them and follow what we are told.

Please let us get back to our senses and resume the fight vigorously against this attack because winning a battle or two does not mean the war is won. This war is unfortunately a long and protracted one and I am afraid that it can become an ugly war of attrition if we are not careful. Please do not blame the authorities if the measures became tougher once again. It is only us to blame. May God bless us all.

## Coronavirus in Kuwait: What we know so far

KUWAIT: Kuwait has recorded 35,920 cases infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as of yesterday, in addition to 296 deaths. With the exception of 171 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 thousands have been discharged from quarantine after exhibiting no symptoms during their 14-day quarantine period, the Ministry of Health confirmed. Meanwhile, 26,759 people have recovered completely after previously being infected with the virus, while there are 8,865 people receiving treatment and 23 quarantined.

### Curfew

Kuwait imposed a three-week partial curfew starting May 31, as part of a five-phase plan for a gradual return to normal life, brought to a standstill by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The first phase also includes a total lockdown on Farwaniya, Khaitan, and Hawally, joining Mahboula and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh which were put under lockdown earlier.

Activities to resume in first phase included home deliveries of restaurants, telecommunication companies, food retailers, companies' transportation of employees, gas stations, private clinics and car workshops. The second phase will see the curfew shortened to be between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am, while resuming work in the government and private sectors with the workforce being less than 30 percent, in addition to resumption of constructions, banking sector, malls opening for eight hours and according to special instructions, parks and pickups from restaurants.

The third phase would see an end of curfew, and health authorities would be assessing situation of areas under lockdown. It would see increase of workforce to less than 50 percent. Visits for social care homes would be allowed, reopening of hotels, resorts and hotel apartments. Taxis will be allowed to operate with only one passenger, and mosques would be allowed to perform Friday prayers.

Phase four would see an increase in workforce, restaurants would be receiving customers but with restrictions, and public transportation resumed but with distancing. All activities would resume in phase five, government and private sector returned to normal, families could gather, weddings and graduation ceremonies, health clubs and gyms to reopen, as well as cinemas and theaters.

Mosques in the so-called 'model residential areas' reopened their doors for worshippers on June 10 amid strict health precautionary measures. Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Afasi said that mosques in commercial, markets and heavily-populated areas will remain closed for the time being. Worshippers must wear face masks, keep social distancing between queues and between worshippers must be strictly observed. Worshippers must bring their own mats so they do not get in contact with mosque carpets. Mosques will reopen five minutes before prayer time and close 10 minutes after prayer.

Earlier, Kuwait imposed a total curfew from May 10 to May 30, allowing room for people to walk out for daily exercise between 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm, and to shop at co-ops and supermarkets once every six days during the curfew hours by making an appointment through www.moci.shop. Before that, Kuwait enforced a country-wide partial 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. Kuwait took all measures to test Kuwaitis repatriated from infected areas for potential infection. Kuwait had required 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. 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. 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.

Kuwait suspended issuing entry permits and visas unless those issued through diplomatic missions. 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). During the amnesty period, individuals desiring to procure valid residencies in Kuwait and were willing to pay the fines without being subjected to investigations were allowed to pay the fines and legalize their status if they meet the required conditions.

### 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-Sahl: 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.