

Local

# First phase of Kuwaitis' repatriation from COVID-19-hit countries concludes

Amir followed up repatriation on daily basis: FM



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Mohammad Al-Sabah.— KUNA photo



KUWAIT: Health ministry workers, wearing protective outfits, wait on the tarmac of the Kuwait international Airport to receive Kuwaitis returning from Frankfurt on March 26, 2020, to be taken to a hospital for novel coronavirus checkups.— AFP photo

KUWAIT: A plane carrying Kuwaiti citizens from London arrived in Kuwait International Airport Sunday, the last aircraft of the first phase of a plan to repatriate nationals from countries hit by the coronavirus (COVID-19). The repatriation is part of an operation conducted jointly by the foreign, health and interior ministries, custom and fire departments and in coordination with Kuwait Airways, Directorate General for Civil Aviation said on its Twitter account. Three planes - two from Tehran and one from Paris - returned home earlier Sunday. Two planes returned Saturday; one from New York and another from London. Three aircrafts from Spain,

Britain and Italy repatriated citizens on Friday; a day after nationals were brought back from Frankfurt, London and Abu Dhabi. The first repatriation day started last Wednesday when Kuwait Airways operated flights from Lebanon, Egypt and Bahrain. The first phase of the repatriation plan, which meets criteria of the health authorities and the World Health Organization (WHO), ended Sunday.

Daily follow up

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Mohammad Al-Sabah said that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah followed up the repatriation of Kuwaiti citizens on a daily basis. He made the remarks after a meeting with parliament speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and more than 20 MPs at the speaker's office, to discuss latest developments related to coron-

avirus. "I conveyed to the speaker and members of parliament that His Highness the Amir was closely and daily following up the conditions of our sons abroad, as well as follow up of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah," Sheikh Ahmad said in a statement. He said they discussed conditions of Kuwaiti citizens and the repatriation process, as well as explaining the short and medium-term repatriation plans. Sheikh Dr Ahmad commended the "national and responsible" role of the speaker and members of parliament in supporting the government's measures to confront spread of coronavirus as well as ensuring safety of the citizens.— KUNA

In line with WHO criteria



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## \$30 million raised to back efforts against COVID-19

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Social Affairs said that a campaign launched by 41 Kuwaiti charities has raised a total of KD 9.169 million (about \$30 million) in one day with a view to supporting the government efforts and help people who were affected by the novel coronavirus outbreak. In a press statement on Sunday, Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development Hanaa Al-Hajri said the campaign was conducted under the supervision of the ministry and through a digital link it had created for this purpose. She estimated the number of peoples who contributed to the campaign, which lasted only one day, at 198,227.

Hajri indicated that the campaign was launched by the ministry to allow charities to contribute to the government efforts to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The diversity of the participating charities has given an opportunity to all segments of the society to donate for the campaign aiming to help in the logistical support to health centers and quarantine facilities as well as to support those affected outbreak ramifications especially low-income people and workers. Separately, the ministry denied news about allocating a specific online link to coronavirus outbreak affected people to register for aid.

## Banks offer 6-month loan repayment relief



KUWAIT: Major banks in Kuwait announced that they are postponing repayment of loan and credit card installments for six months of all clients due to the current circumstances in Kuwait in light of the exceptional government procedures to curb the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Interest and fees accrued during this period will also be waived, a number of banks including Gulf Bank, the National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Finance House, Warba Bank and others said in statements posted on their social media accounts.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Banks Association (KBA) urged all bank clients to ignore calls or text messages asking them to reveal any information or data related to their personal bank accounts, such as the account number, pin code, OTP, etc. This comes after many clients reportedly received scam calls from people asking them for their personal information to allegedly process transactions for postponement of installment payments. Banks have not made any such calls or sent similar messages to clients, nor do they plan to do so, KBA said in a statement.

## Barcodes replace ID cards for curfew waiving

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry announced Sunday that tomorrow will be last day for accepting the recently issued cards for moving during curfew time for eligible people, a move aimed at preventing misuse. Instead, the ministry will use a digital barcode system to grant waivers to those meeting the conditions, it clarified in a press statement. It stated that a barcode will be sent to mobile phones of the eligible people to use during the

curfew time as of Thursday. The ministry said the move aims to stop rigging and misuse of the permits. On March 21, the Kuwaiti government imposed an indefinite curfew from 5:00 pm until 4:00 am as part of the efforts to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19). It has also warned that anyone caught breaching the curfew will be jailed for up to three years and fined KD 10,000 in pursuant to Civil Defense Law.— KUNA

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