



**12** Coronavirus lockdowns may spark rise in HIV infections



**16** In one Beirut hospital, COVID warriors through their own eyes



**19** Like death: 'Thrilla in Manila' changed Ali, Frazier forever



## Ramadan KAREEM

Fajr	03:28
Dhuhr	11:44
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# Kuwait reports 10 deaths, 991 new virus infections

Assembly session could be postponed • Audit Bureau asked to review spending

## Stranded Indians finally accepted under amnesty

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** The plight of around 80 Indians living on the streets for nearly two weeks in Farwaniya after failing to register for the government

amnesty finally ended on Monday, after they were accepted under the amnesty and taken to a shelter for repatriation back home. A volunteer working with a charity group that distributes meals to needy people had posted about their suffering on social media. Kuwait Times had also contacted the interior ministry to take action in this regard, while another Indian group also tried to help.

Their reasons for not registering for the amnesty were varied - some didn't have passports, others didn't meet the condition of expired visas before March 1, 2020, some had debts to

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**KUWAIT:** Indians who were living on the streets are moved to a shelter in Abdaly on Monday.

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The ministry of health announced yesterday that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) claimed the lives of 10 more people in the past 24 hours, raising the death toll to 75. In his daily coronavirus update, Health Ministry Spokesperson Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad said 991 more people tested positive for the highly contagious virus, increasing the overall number of infections in the country to 10,277. He pointed out that 158 patients are in intensive care, including 74 in critical condition.

The new cases include 300 Indians, 222 Egyptians, 138 Kuwaitis, 118 Bangladeshis and the rest of other nationalities. Farwaniya governorate recorded 356 cases, Ahmadi 237 cases, Hawally 219, Capital governorate 116 cases and Jahra 63. Earlier, the health ministry announced the recovery of 194 COVID-19 patients, bringing the total to 3,101 recoveries.

The National Assembly's emergency session scheduled for tomorrow appears to be headed for postponement after the prime minister and the Council of Ministers requested the Assembly to delay the session until after May 30 due to health considerations. Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday the Assembly bureau will review the government's request later yesterday and will decide whether to go ahead with the session or delay it.

The Cabinet said in a statement after its virtual meeting yesterday that health authorities have concluded that holding the session with more than 100 people present in the chamber may not be safe. But MP Mohammad Al-Dallal regretted that the government has asked for the postponement, saying MPs realize the importance of the health situation but the supervisory role of the Assembly at this time is crucial and must be activated. He called on the government to review its request and stressed that the session



should go ahead.

The session comes amid concerns and questions raised by lawmakers and activists over spending by the government during the coronavirus crisis, which amounted to KD 686 million between March 12 and May 9, according to the latest report of the Audit Bureau. About 37 percent of the contracts signed during the period belong to the health ministry at a cost of KD 206 million. Other contracts belong to a large number of ministries and are not directly linked to the coronavirus crisis.

A statement by the Cabinet issued yesterday following a virtual meeting said the Audit Bureau has been asked to review and study all direct contracts made in connection with the coronavirus since the start of March. It also called on all citizens to perform

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## Indian trains to roll amid surge in virus cases

**NEW DELHI:** India's enormous railway network was grinding back to life yesterday as a gradual lifting of the world's biggest coronavirus lockdown gathered pace even as new cases surged. The country of 1.3 billion imposed a strict shutdown in late March, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has credited with keeping cases to a modest 70,000, with around 2,000 deaths.

But the lockdown, which enters its 50th day tomorrow, has torpedoed the economy, snatching the livelihoods of tens of millions of people and hitting the poor the hard-

est. Whole industries have been devastated and there are fears of food shortages, while a ban on flights has left hundreds of thousands of Indians stranded abroad. Restrictions have been steadily eased, however, particularly in rural areas, and some Indian trains - on a network which normally carries over 20 million passengers a day - were scheduled to resume yesterday.

More than 54,000 tickets for an initial 30 services sold out online within three hours on Monday, reports said. The first train was to leave New Delhi at 4:00 pm (1030 GMT), followed by others from Kolkata, Bangalore and Mumbai. The government has not set out a program for when more services will resume. There were limited special services laid on after the lockdown was imposed to ferry home some of the millions of poor migrant workers left jobless and destitute by the shutdown. Many people, however, were forced to walk

hundreds of kilometers to get home.

Passengers for yesterday's mostly inter-city services were told to arrive at stations 90 minutes before departure for health screening, and to bring their own food for the journey. Ajay Dewani, a photographer stranded in Ghaziabad with a ticket for Chattisgarh state said he walked for four hours to get to Delhi station. "I haven't been paid for two months and my landlord was hassling us for rent," he told AFP, carrying a backpack and pulling a wheeled suitcase.

Usha, a labourer from Madhya Pradesh state, said she and husband and their two children walked for two days to get to the station, only to be turned away because they had no ticket. "We came here to the railway station as we were told that the trains will start working from May 12," she told AFP. "Where do we go now? We have no money to buy something to eat."

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**MUMBAI:** Migrant workers gather outside Dharavi slum to board a bus to take them to the railway terminus for boarding a special train back home during a nationwide lockdown yesterday. — AFP

## Zinc-HCQ found effective in some COVID patients

**WASHINGTON:** The antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine has shown mixed results against the coronavirus in early studies, but a new paper out of New York suggests combining it with the dietary supplement zinc sulfate could create a more effective treatment.

The research by the NYU Grossman School of Medicine was posted on a medical preprint site on Monday, meaning it hasn't yet been peer reviewed. Records of about 900 COVID-19

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## Burj turned into charity box: Gulf cases pass 100K

**DUBAI:** The world's tallest building, Dubai's 828-metre Burj Khalifa, has become a glowing charity donation box, raising money for food for United Arab Emirates residents suffering the economic impact of the new coronavirus pandemic. Each of the tower's 1.2 million external lights was 'sold' for 10 dirhams (\$2.70), enough to buy one meal. As donations came in, the tower 'filled up', and people could also bid to claim the light at the very top.

As the region's tourism and business hub with the world's busiest international airport, Dubai's economy has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic. Many people have lost jobs

or had incomes reduced. Tens of thousands of migrant workers, who often live in crowded shared accommodation where the virus spreads more easily, have registered to be repatriated.

"Hope you have a good solid meal. We take things for granted but life has a way of teaching us how to wake up," said donor Shereen Harris in a public comment on the campaign's website. The UAE has recorded 19,661 cases of infection with COVID-19 and 203 deaths, the second highest death toll after Saudi Arabia of the six Gulf states.

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**DUBAI:** A handout image made available yesterday shows Burj Khalifa during a light show to mark the '10 million meals' COVID-19 campaign. — AFP