

Local

Kuwait continues delivering aid to those in need during Ramadan

Humanitarian aid reaches Yemen, Palestine

KUWAIT: The first week of Ramadan witnessed intense Kuwaiti activity in providing aid to the needy, as part of the continuous efforts of Kuwait on the humanitarian level. The Kuwait Food Bank launched a charity campaign, which aims to distribute about 23,000 meals to the needy in Ramadan, in cooperation with the General Secretariat of Awqaf. In a statement, the Food Bank Vice Chairman Mishal Al-Ansari said that this campaign comes within a group of charitable initiatives that will be launched in the holy month, adding that the campaign comes under the framework of the bank's strategy for social responsibility to secure the requirements of needy families in the country.

On the other hand, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced that it will distribute daily iftar meals to about 2,000 workers and security guards. KRCS Deputy Chairman Anwar Al-Hasawi affirmed that this campaign is part of a group of activities that reflect the social responsibility of the association in the holy month of Ramadan. He also stressed the association's keenness to provide the best services to the workers, while observing health requirements in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and also provide them with the necessary meals. Hasawi praised the volunteers' role in this holy month despite the summer heat.

Within the 'Kuwait by Your Side' campaign that has been going on for six years in Yemen, the Yemeni

Ministry of Education and the Kuwait Relief Society signed an agreement to restore, rehabilitate and furnish four schools in the governorates of Lahj in the south of Yemen. In a press statement during the signing ceremony, Yemeni Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Dr Mohammad Basleem praised the unlimited support of Kuwait for the education sector in Yemen. He also expressed thanks and appreciation to Kuwait leadership, government and people, for this continuous help to the Yemeni people through the 'Kuwait by Your Side' campaign.

In Palestine, the 'Wafa Association for Development and Capacity Building' started the iftar project in Al-Aqsa Mosque, funded by the Kuwaiti General Secretariat of Awqaf and supervised by the Kuwaiti Embassy in Jordan. In a statement, the association said that the distribution of iftar meals at Al-Aqsa Mosque has started and will continue throughout the month of Ramadan, noting that Kuwait is one of the biggest supporters to the Palestinian charitable societies and institutions. Kuwait Ambassador to Jordan Aziz Al-Daihani said that this work is a fraternal duty that Kuwaitis are keen to perform for their steadfast brothers in Palestine.

Daihani stressed that the leadership in Kuwait attaches "exceptional" care to the Palestinian cause, and one of its aspects is to support the basic needs of the Palestinian people. In a statement to KUNA, the head of



Iftar meals donated by Kuwait to be distributed in Palestine. — KUNA photo

the Voluntary Work Center, Sheikha Amthal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, praised the role of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad

Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in supporting the national strategy for voluntary work in Kuwait. She affirmed that this strategy comes as an affirmation of Kuwait's bright history in voluntary and humanitarian work. — KUNA

COVID death toll passes...

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have stoked speculation that the Olympic Games-postponed last year due to the pandemic-could be cancelled.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, in his first meeting with US President Joe Biden, said his government was listening to experts and doing its "utmost" to prepare for the Tokyo games in July. The virus continues to impact events elsewhere in the world.

In Brazil, the country with the third-highest death toll in the world, night shifts have been added to several cemeteries as diggers work around the clock to bury the dead. One of these is Vila Formosa, the largest cemetery in Latin America and a showcase for the lethal cost of the pandemic in Brazil, where more than 365,000 people have died from COVID-19. "We try not to get upset in our work, but it is sad, it is a lot of people," one of the gravediggers there said after a long shift.

Prince Philip laid to...

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The last high-profile funeral of a senior royal was for the Queen's mother, who died in 2002, aged 101. But unlike then, when more than one million people thronged outside Westminster Abbey in central London to watch the somber pageant, the public was noticeably absent from yesterday's ceremony. The coronavirus pandemic forced hasty revisions to the well-rehearsed plans for the duke's death, code-named "Operation Forth Bridge", stripping back public elements to prevent large crowds from gathering. Government guidelines limited the number of mourners and a quartet performed hymns the duke chose himself in a barren nave stripped of seating.

The ceremonial funeral from behind the stately castle walls was broadcast live on television to millions across Britain and the world. Beforehand, a military gun fired to signal a minute's silence, when his coffin, draped in his standard and topped by a wreath of white roses and lilies from the Queen, his naval cap and ceremonial sword was borne by a bespoke Land Rover hearse he designed himself, arrived at the chapel. Across Britain — on the streets, in shops, railway stations and at sporting events — people bowed their heads with respect.

Flights in an out of nearby Heathrow Airport were stopped for the duration of the ceremony.

Ieuan Jones, 37, travelled to Windsor from his home in the Welsh capital, Cardiff, and called Philip "a strong man, a true hero (who) did so much for this country and the royal family". "It's really a shame that because of the pandemic we can't pay a wider tribute to the exceptional man he was," he

Despite the high infection rate, the government of Brazil's most populous state Sao Paulo announced it will allow businesses and places of worship to reopen from today.

But there was better news in Europe, where some countries are easing their lockdowns in response to not only fatigue, but falling infection numbers and progress with vaccinations. Italy announced Friday it will ease coronavirus restrictions for schools and restaurants from April 26. Expressing "cautious optimism", Prime Minister Mario Draghi said his government was taking a "calculated risk".

Italy will also allow up to a thousand spectators at outdoor events from May 1, when it eases its stadium fan ban in regions less affected by the coronavirus. In more good news for Britons after the partial reopening of society this week, Germany on Friday removed the United Kingdom from the list of risk zones for coronavirus infections, meaning that travellers will no longer need to quarantine upon arrival. Spain meanwhile extended the mandatory quarantine of passengers arriving from 12 countries in South America and Africa, including Brazil and South Africa, over concerns about more transmissible variants. — AFP

told AFP. Despite the restrictions, the stripped-down sendoff for the former Royal Navy commander still combined centuries of royal protocol with pomp, pageantry — and military precision. Members of the British armed forces, in formal dress, lined the procession route, heads bowed, as the cortege passed, as a minute gun rang out across the grounds and a bell tolled. Philip's grandsons William, 38, and Harry, 36, joined the procession, in their first public meeting since a reported falling out about Harry's shock move to California, and his stinging criticism of royal life, including racism in the family.

Harry had to quarantine when he arrived back in Britain for the first time since his move to the United States with his wife, Meghan, last year. The pair, who as young boys walked behind the coffin of their mother, princess Diana, in 1997, were separated by their cousin, Anne's son Peter Phillips, 43.

The religious service was a simple affair, reflecting the wishes of the straight-talking duke, who was known for his aversion to "fuss". In keeping with his wishes, there was no sermon, but the service reflected his love of the sea, and long association with the Royal Navy, including hymns and Bible readings.

The Dean of Windsor, David Conner, paid tribute to his "kindness, humor and humanity", and devotion to the Queen, who turns 95 next week and is in the twilight of her reign. "We have been inspired by his unwavering loyalty to our Queen, by his service to the nation and the Commonwealth, by his courage, fortitude and faith," he said. The Queen, who had been escorted to the chapel by a lady-in-waiting in the royal Bentley, watched from the chapel choir as her husband's was lowered steadily into the Royal Vault by electric motor.

The Pipe Major of the Royal Regiment of Scotland played a lament, and buglers of the Royal Marines sounded The Last Post. — AFP

The Muslim prayers on the first Friday of this year's Ramadan followed tensions in the city. Israeli police spokesman Shimon Cohen said seven people were arrested overnight in Palestinian neighborhoods near east Jerusalem's Old City, home of the mosque.

Those arrested had attacked a police officer, who required medical attention for a head injury, and thrown stones and glass bottles, he said. Video posted online showed assailants kicking in the windows of a police vehicle in east Jerusalem, and officers firing stun grenades.

Earlier this week, Palestinians accused Israel of breaking into four mosque minarets and cutting wires to prevent the call for prayers from being broadcast on loudspeakers. Abu Sway of the Waqf said the action came after Islamic officials refused to turn off loudspeakers Wednesday during a memorial for fallen Israelis at the adjacent Western Wall. Israeli police did not comment on the accusation.

Jordan, custodian of Islamic sites in Jerusalem, condemned what it called Israel's "blatant" violation of the status quo and accused it of provocation. — AFP

Charity in different forms

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except that two angels descend. One says, 'O Allah, give him who spends compensation.' The other says, 'O Allah, give him who withholds destruction.'" (Al-Bukhari # 1, 442 and Muslim # 1, 010)

Various ways of giving charity: Abu Musa Al-Ash'arey (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said what can be translated as: "Every Muslim must give charity." It was said, "What if he cannot find (anything to give)?" He replied, "Let him work with his hands to benefit himself and give charity." It was said, "What if he cannot do that?" He replied, "Let him help someone who is in desperate need." It was said, "What if he cannot do that?" He replied, "Let him enjoin good." It was said, "What if he cannot do that?" He replied, "Let him refrain from evil: for that is an act of charity." (Al-Bukhari # 6, 022 and Muslim # 1, 008)

In another Hadeeth (prophetic tradition), Abu Huraira (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said what can be translated as: "For every joint (in the body) there is due charity, for every day the sun rises. To judge fairly between two people is charity, to help a man mount his riding animal or to lift his luggage onto it is charity, a good word is charity, every step one takes to perform a compulsory prayer is charity, and to remove a harmful object from the road is charity." (Al-Bukhari # 2, 989 and Muslim # 1, 009)

Other forms of charity:
a. Picking up a harmful object from the road or path: Abu Huraira (ra) narrated that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said what can be translated as: "I saw a person enjoying himself in Paradise because of the tree that he cut from a path (and disposed of it), which was a source of inconvenience to the people." (Muslim # 1, 914)

In another Hadeeth, Abu Dharr narrated that

Ex-employee kills 8 at US FedEx...

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Komal Chohan, whose grandmother was killed, described being "heartbroken" over the loss, adding that "our families should not feel unsafe at work, at their place of worship, or anywhere. Enough is enough."

FBI special agent Paul Keenan said Hole was interviewed by the FBI in April 2020 and had a shotgun seized by authorities, the Indianapolis Star reported. It was not immediately clear whether Hole had been fired or left his job voluntarily, or if he knew the victims.

"He got out of his car and pretty quickly started some random shooting outside the facility. There was no confrontation with anyone that was there. There was no disturbance. There was no argument," McCarrt said. The shooting "began in the parking lot and then he did go into the building... for a brief period of time before he took his own life." McCarrt said the gunman was armed with a rifle. "This is a devastating day and words are hard to describe the emotion we feel," said FedEx chairman Frederick Smith in a letter to employees, adding that the company was working with law enforcement.

Four people with gunshot wounds were transported by ambulance, including one in critical condition, while five people suffered other injuries, police said. One man who was working a twilight shift at the FedEx Ground station, which reportedly employs more than 4,000 people, told local broadcaster WISH he saw the gunman start shooting and heard more than 10 shots.

"I saw a man with a sub-machine gun of some sort, an automatic rifle, and he was firing in the open. I immediately ducked down and got scared," Jeremiah Miller said.

The Indianapolis carnage follows a spate of mass

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said what can be translated as: "Smiling at your brother, enjoining good and forbidding evil, directing someone who has lost his way, helping a blind man, and removing stones, thorns and bones from the road or path, or pouring water from your bucket into your brother's—all of those are acts of charity." (Al-Albani rated it as Saheeh (authentic) in Saheeh At-Tirmidhi # 1, 956)

b. Giving interest free loans: Loans given and then forgiven become a meritorious type of charity. In order for the lender to get a unique reward for charity in this regard, two things must be considered:

- The first is that neither interest nor any other benefit in terms of advantages or gifts, should be expected.

- The second is that at no time should the creditor show any signs of arrogance or pride, disturbing the debtor by his constant reminder of his favor to him. Abu Huraira (ra) narrate that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, "A man who used give loans would instruct his servant thus: 'When you come to one who is in straitened circumstances (unable to pay the debt) forgive him, for perhaps God may forgive us.' He (the Prophet) said, 'When he (the lender) met Allah, He forgave him.'" (Al-Bukhari # 3, 480. Al-Albani also rated it as Saheeh (authentic) in Saheeh At-Targheeb # 905)

Finally, give charity before it is too late. Ha'ritha bin Wahb Al-Khuz'a'ey (ra) said what can be translated as, "I heard the Prophet (PBUH) say, '(O people), give in charity before a time comes when a person will wander about with his object of charity and someone (to whom it is offered) will say, 'If you had brought it yesterday, I would have taken it from you, but today I don't need it.'" (Al-Bukhari # 1, 411, in English translation, it is Hadeeh # 1, 424)

Courtesy of TIES: TIES is among the projects funded and managed by Kuwaiti Society for Cultural Dialogue. TIES aims at empowering Kuwait's expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, please call 25231015/6 or 94079426 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.



INDIANAPOLIS, IN: Mary Carol Weisert displays a picture of her husband, John Weisert, near his workplace at a FedEx ground facility Friday in Indianapolis, Indiana. — AFP

shootings across the US in recent weeks, including at an office building in southern California, a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado and at several spas in Atlanta, Georgia where eight people, including six women of Asian descent, were killed.

Thursday's rampage was the third mass shooting in Indianapolis this year. Nearly 40,000 people in the United States die each year from guns, more than half of those being suicides. Biden this month announced six executive measures aimed at stemming gun violence.

The move was immediately attacked by Republicans, with House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy warning of "unconstitutional overreach." In a statement Friday after the new shooting Biden said "we must act" to end the scourge of violence killing too many Americans. "It stains our character and pierces the very soul of our nation," Biden said.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer vowed to bring gun violence prevention legislation to the Senate floor. "We must break this cycle of suffering in America," he tweeted. — AFP

Palestinians hold prayers...

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Another Jerusalem resident, Majd Abu Myyaly, 27, said he had received the vaccine against COVID-19 that has helped drive down infection rates in Israel.

However, his aunt in nearby Ramallah on the West Bank was refused an Israeli permit to enter Jerusalem to pray. "It's been difficult," he said. "Every Ramadan, she gets permission, but not this year." Mustafa Abu Sway of the Waqf council said this year's gathering was the largest since the COVID pandemic, but still far smaller than in previous years. Worshippers were kept apart by social distancing measures on the sprawling plaza of the Al-Aqsa mosque compound. Inside, "we were able to pray shoulder-to-shoulder", said Mohammed, a 34-year-old doctor.