



Random PCR virus tests on arrivals

472 diagnosed with COVID in Kuwait in past 24 hours

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 8, (Agencies): General Supervisor for Health Services at the Kuwait International Airport, Dr Talal Al-Fadhala, said between Aug 1 and Aug 5, a total of 2,563 passengers arrived in Kuwait aboard 53 flights from different destinations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He pointed out, 405 PCR tests were conducted randomly and on persons who were suspected of being infected with the virus.

He added the public health sector has provided health employees and equipped clinics with all the needed material to examine incoming passengers since the announcement of the resumption of flights at Kuwait International Airport, adding

the Ministry of Health has held many successive meetings in cooperation with civil aviation and the relevant ministries in the area of logistical needs.

He explained the meetings resulted in the development of a guideline for the return of commercial operation at Kuwait International Airport for the first stage, and the public health sector provided trained specialized health personnel and introduced them to (know-how) the work mechanism.

This is in addition to preparing many clinics for PCR examination at all airport terminals in proportion to the expected number of arrivals according to the approved work plan, and using the thermal cameras to check all passengers, providing offices for health registration, placing instruction signs, and adherence to physical distancing.

Al-Fadhala said mechanism includes the activation of the 'Shlonak' application to oblige and ensure the in-coming passengers adhere to quarantine period

472 diagnosed with COVID

Up to 472 people tested positive for the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Kuwait in past 24 hours, official spokesperson of the Ministry of Health (MoH) Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad announced.

Dr Al-Sanad said the caseload of infections rose to 71,199. Meanwhile, there were three new deaths with the mortality toll reaching 474.

The infection cases included 320 Kuwaiti citizens and 152 expatriates.

The new infections were recorded in the health zones as following: 112 in Al-Jahraa, 104 in Al-Ahmadi, 96 in Al-Farwaniya, 87 in Al-Assimah and 73 in Hawally.

Number of patients who continue to receive medical care in intensive care units stands at 125 with the whole count of those who continue to receive conventional medical care stands at 7,919.



The Air India Express flight that skidded off a runway while landing at the airport in Kozhikode, Kerala state, India on Aug 7. (AP)

Deputy Amir condolences over accident

Amir condolences on Scowcroft

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 8, (KUNA): His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday sent a cable of condolences, including the sympathies of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, to US President Donald Trump over the death of former national security advisor Brent Scowcroft.

His Highness the Deputy Amir and the Crown Prince recalled Scowcroft's honorable role during the war of liberating Kuwait in 1991.

His Highness the Deputy Amir and the Crown Prince sent a similar cable to Scowcroft's family as well.

In addition, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent two similar cables.

Also: **KUWAIT CITY:** The United States of America commemorated Friday the 30th anniversary of Operation Desert Shield, recognising Kuwait as "a proud and indispensable ally."

"Today marks 30 years since the United States led a coalition of 35 nations to launch Operation Desert Shield and stand against the occupation of Kuwait," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement.

He added "we remember and honor those who fought side by side, and we recognize Kuwait as a proud and indispensable ally."

He affirmed "the liberation of Kuwait is an important reminder of what countries can achieve when they come together during times of crisis and fight for freedom and justice."

"The US-Kuwait friendship has never been stronger and our partnership is helping shape a more peaceful, and prosperous Middle East," he remarked.

The US top diplomat concluded saying "on behalf of the American people, I join Kuwait in commemorating the leadership, courage and sacrifices of our people 30 years ago."

India plane from Dubai skids off runway, cracks, killing 18

Fault found in money transfers

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 8: The government's statement that Kuwait has nothing to do with the issue of the Malaysian sovereign fund is an early judgment, says MP Dr Adel Al-Damkhi.

He wondered how Kuwait has nothing to do with the issue despite the fact that a number of countries called Kuwaiti banks about the suspicious money transfers.

He disclosed that on Oct 4, 2016; Kuwait Financial Investigations Unit (KFIU) received information from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) about suspicious banking operations in relation to one of the accused - a sheikh and his Syrian partner. He said the relevant local bank informed KFIU that the suspicion may not be related to money laundering, but it could be about a dispute between these two accused.

He added that on Nov 30, 2016; KFIU received a call from a local bank about the same individuals, stating the deposits in the bank accounts of the company of the two accused witnessed unjustified growth. KFIU also received a similar call on Dec 11, 2016 about the same issue.

He also confirmed that on July 24, 2017; KFIU submitted a report on all the abovementioned calls to the Ministry of Interior as the latter is one of the concerned authorities. The KFIU then received the response of the ministry, which revealed no money laundering crimes were found and the entire issue is about a financial dispute between the two accused, he said.

He went on to say that on Sept 10, 2017; KFIU received a call from ICBC about the money laundering suspicion as a large amount was transferred to the account of a company, which is owned by one of the accused (sheikh) and the money was later transferred to an account outside Kuwait. After this, the unit received another call from ICBC about the money that the aforementioned company transferred to MCAL Company in Bahamas Island. It was found later that the money was payment for a shipment of items purchased by the sheikh on behalf of another party. The deal was cancelled but the money was not returned to the bank account of the company, he narrated.

He revealed that on July 12, 2018; KFIU submitted a report to the ministry which responded on July 24, 2018 saying the accused owns the Silk Road Company and the ministry did not take any action. He said the unit

later received a call from another local bank about the suspicious transaction, indicating a large amount of money was transferred by the Syrian partner to yet another accused without justification. He added the KFIU submitted its report in this regard to the ministry; which responded on Jan 7, 2019 stating that the money is part of a law firm's charges.

He affirmed that the banks performed their duties but KFIU did not do its job properly; because the unit informed only the ministry, not the other concerned authorities such as the Public Prosecution. He said the unit should have informed all the relevant authorities regardless of the response of the ministry. He called for questioning those responsible at KFIU and the ministry for their failure to refer the files to the Public Prosecution, indicating the files were referred to the prosecution only during the tenure of Finance Minister Barrak Al-Shitan.

In another development, MP Ahmed Al-Fadl expressed satisfaction over the National Assembly's decision to reject the governmental bill that allows private sector employers to reduce salaries by 50 percent during the compulsory lockdown.

He said the government, represented by Minister of Social Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel, did not consider the gradual procedures adopted by the whole world under such circumstances. He asserted that salary reduction is the last resort, pointing out the first step should be for companies to rationalize expenditures such as canceling the privileges granted to the board of directors including first class air tickets and rental of luxury vehicles for the senior staff. He added these companies should also cancel celebrations and unimportant activities before reducing salaries.

He emphasized the need for the government to quickly inject cash into companies affected by the crisis, in addition to granting them other forms of support like loans. He stressed that supporting companies will bear fruits such as boosting the market as this step will reflect positively on the workers. He claimed Al-Aqeel goes against the direction of her press statements and decisions.

Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani disclosed some MPs are claiming that Minister of Finance Barrak Al-Shitan is not responsible for the economic document as it consists of negative points concerning other ministries. He argued the minister is responsible for laying down the financial strategy, final account and budget of the State.

KOCHI, India, Aug 8, (Agencies): The plane swooned violently as it approached a hilltop runway drenched in monsoon rain, and moments later the special return flight for Indians stranded abroad by the pandemic skidded off, nosedived and cracked in two, leaving 18 dead and more than 120 injured.

Among the injured on Friday night, at least 15 were in critical condition, said Abdul Karim, a senior police officer in southern Kerala state. The dead included both pilots of the Air India Express flight, the airline said in a statement, adding that the four cabin crew were safe.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Saturday cabled Indian President Ram Nath Kovind expressing heartfelt condolences over victims of the plane accident that left a number of passengers dead or wounded.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah addressed a cable with identical content to the Indian president.

The 2-year-old Boeing 737-800 flew from Dubai to Kozhikode, also called Calicut, in Kerala. There were 174 adult passengers, 10 infants, two pilots and four cabin crew on board.

In a telephone interview from his hospital bed, Renjith Panagad, a plumber who was returning home for the first time in three years after losing his job at a construction company in Dubai, said the plane swayed before the crash and everything went dark.

He said he followed other passengers who crawled their way out of the fuselage through the emergency door.

"A lot of passengers were bleeding," said Panagad, who escaped without major injuries. "I still can't comprehend what happened. As I am trying to recall what happened, my body is shivering."

He said the pilot made a regular announcement before landing, and moments after the plane hit the runway, it nosedived.

"There was a big noise during the impact and people started screaming," he said.

Kozhikode's 2,850-meter (9,350-foot) runway is on a flat hilltop with deep gorges on either side ending in a 34-meter (112-foot) drop.

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep S. Puri said in a statement that the flight "overshot the runway in rainy conditions and went down" the slope, breaking into two pieces upon impact.

As the rain stopped Saturday morning, searchers recovered a flight data recorder as the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau started work on the wreckage. Air India Express said its teams also reached Calicut to support and assist families of the victims.

A similar tragedy was narrowly avoided at the same airport a year ago, when an Air India Express flight suffered a tail strike upon landing. None of the 180 passengers of that flight was injured.

Questions dogging investigators would include not only the aircraft, weather and pilots but also the runway itself. Its end safety area was expanded in 2018 to accommodate wide-body aircraft.

The runway end safety area meets United Nations international civil aviation requirements, but the UN agency recommends a buffer that is 150 meters (492 feet) longer than that at Kozhikode airport, according to Harro Ranter, chief executive of the Aviation Safety Network online database.

The Press Trust of India news agency reported that the country's aviation regulator had sought an explanation from the director of the Kozhikode airport in 2019 on finding "various critical safety lapses," which included cracks on the runway, water stagnation and excessive rubber deposits.

Dubai-based aviation consultant Mark Martin said that while it was too early to determine the cause of the crash, annual monsoon conditions appeared to be a factor.

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) announced Saturday that it has won a Getty Foundation grant to study the sustainable protection of art designing and implementing metal plates that cover the spherical structures of the Kuwait Towers, designed by the Danish architect Malene Bjorn in 1968.

The council stated in a press release that this grant comes through "Keeping It Modern" program, which preserve the urban heritage of the twentieth century, especially buildings of exceptional global value, to witness an opportunity for scientific progress. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Information terminated the services of 23 expatriate employees in the News and Television Sector under the second contract item, reports Al-Rai daily.

This is the first batch of expatriate dismissals and another batch will be announced on Sunday, consisting of a large number of expatriate employees.

KUWAIT CITY: Two workers died "in a painful accident" at dawn on Saturday at a project site for imported natural gas in Al-Zour, approximately 95 kms south of Al-Assimah (Kuwait Capital), Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Company (KIPIC) announced.

Mahmoud Abul, KIPIC's deputy chief executive officer and official spokesperson, said in a statement the two workers died at the site of constructing facilities for importing liquefied natural gas in Al-Zour. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Friday a cable to President of Cote D'Ivoire Alassane Ouattara.

In the cable, His Highness the Deputy Amir conveyed congratulations from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Ouattara on his country's national day. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Several secondary schools announced a mechanism to facilitate procedures for parents who want to visit them - booking appointments online or through WhatsApp, reports Al-Anba daily.

Some schools allocated a phone number for the parents to communicate with them without the need to visit the schools, while others provided a link for parents to book appointments.