

Employee of Ministry of Awqaf tests positive for coronavirus

'Risk of bubonic plague outbreak in Kuwait is low'

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: According to a health official specialized in infectious diseases, the risk or threat of Kuwait encountering an outbreak of the plague that appeared in China is low, as it is difficult to transfer from one person to another, and there is a proven and effective treatment to fight this plague, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a press statement, he explained that bubonic plague is not widespread, despite the seriousness of this disease, and can be treated quickly and effectively with early diagnosis. Antibiotics have proven their effectiveness in curing it in the past.

It is an infection that causes severe and sudden symptoms to hu-

mans such as fever, joint pain, and inflamed lymph nodes in the body.

The cause is a bacteria called *Yersinia pestis*, which shows up from time to time. The infection is transmitted by some fleas carrying the disease, or some animals. It will also be transmitted via the spit of an infected human.

*Yersinia pestis* bacteria that caus-

es the plague can transmit to humans from infected rats via fleas. The highly pathogenic plague remains rare in China, and is treatable. Just five people have died of this disease since 2014, according to the National Health Commission of China.

Meanwhile, an employee at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs was found to be infected with

coronavirus on Monday; hence, the ministry's announcement on the closure of its main building at the Twin Towers, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting sources.

Sources affirmed that after the employee's infection was confirmed through the swab test result, the assistant undersecretaries and directors of departments in various sec-

tors were instructed not to report for work for one day only and they resumed work on Wednesday.

Sources said the ministry announced Monday evening the closure of its main building for sterilization as per the health regulations in place in view of the exceptional health conditions brought about by the corona pandemic.

Health minister vows to look into requests of SMEs owners

Assembly, people against the idea of imposing tax: MP

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The parliamentary Business Environment Improvement Committee recently held its sixth meeting on the coronavirus crisis with Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah in attendance, says Chairman of the committee MP Yusef Al-Fadalah.



Plenty of fruits and vegetables available at Kabad Chabra.

Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Al-Fadalah disclosed that the committee presented the complaints of the owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) regarding the closure of their businesses.

He informed the minister that the owners of SMEs are ready to comply with the health regulations and they are willing to bear responsibility as per the specified penalties in case they violate any of these regulations. He affirmed the minister promised to look into the requests and reduce the period of each stage of the gradual return to normal life plan.

On the other hand, Rapporteur of the Health and Social Affairs Com-

mittee MP Sa'adoun Hammad said the committee on Tuesday met with representatives of the campaign, "Kuwaitis whose salaries are suspended due to the lockdown imposed by the government to curb the spread of coronavirus."

Hammad revealed the total number of citizens without salaries reached 3,000 including many categories such as the newly appointed employees and newly retired who did not complete the necessary procedures due to the closure of public institutions. This is in addition to fresh graduates who were unable to apply for graduation allowance and families entitled to the social allowance but could not update their data within the specified period for the same reason, the lawmaker explained.

He went on to say that the representatives of citizens without salaries suggested the establishment of a special fund to cover the suspended salaries.

Suggested

The committee suggested adding the citizens without salaries to the beneficiaries of the Social Allowance Bill, which has been included in the agenda of the National Assembly. The committee will meet on Wednesday with Minister of Social Affairs and State Minister for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel and State Audit Bureau (SAB) to discuss the issue and define solutions, the lawmaker disclosed.

Meanwhile, head of the campaign Khalid Al-Mutairi urged the government to quickly establish a fund in order to end the suffering of citizens without salaries whose number continues to increase day after day.

Legal representative of the campaign Noura Al-Mutairi recommended solutions such as the allocation of a special fund or including citizens without salaries to the beneficiaries on law number 12/2011 that secures salaries of citizens during exceptional times such as the compulsory lockdown.

In another development, MP Muhammad Al-Dallal stressed that both the Assembly and the people are against the idea of imposing tax. If the government is serious in dealing with the budget deficit, it should start in itself and rationalize public expenditures. The government must look for other sources of revenues like increasing the rent of public buildings and industrial plots and combating corruption, instead of imposing tax which intensifies the suffering of citizens, he asserted.



Photos by Mahmoud Jadeed

Top: Some of the boys playing football, and (above) food being distributed for expats one day before the easing of lockdown in Mahboula area.

Number of factors cited as reason for action

'Al-Hashel's resignation from panel natural'

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The resignation of the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Muhammad Al-Hashel from the presidency of the Higher Committee for Economic Stimulus was natural and inevitable because of a number of factors, most notably the slow government decisions in the face of the economic and financial repercussions of COVID-19 and the absence of harmony between the members of the committee, reports Al-Seyassah daily quoting well-informed sources.

The same sources commenting on its causes and fate wonder if the government will accept the resignation of Al-Hashel or rush to address its causes and justifications.

However, the economic experts stressed that the move revealed the depth of the crisis and the government's failure to deal with it because many ideas and proposals are still ink on paper.

The role of the Projects Fund in activating the soft loans initiative for the initiators, and the delay in issuing the laws proposed by the committee to recycle the private sector, which in turn caused the grumbling of the business sector.

The experts pointed out that the committee played a good role led by Al-Hashel during the first three months of the outbreak of the crisis, which included putting forward several initiatives and measures that alleviate the crisis, the most important of which were a draft law to support soft loans, a proposal to amend the rents law in commercial real estate, and amend the labor law in addition to

'Advertisement application' 'Info' inaugurates new digital services

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri inaugurated on Thursday electronic services for advertisement application at Kuwait Television and Radio as well for issuing licenses in sectors such as the press and publications. These new services are being provided in line with the government program to digitize work tasks to save time and relieve applicants of physical show-up, Minister Al-Jabri said. He expressed gratitude to the commission tasked with digital transformation noting its members' sincere efforts that made this national project successful.

a number of proposals to support companies and small and medium enterprises and support for national employment in the private sector and soft loans. However, these initiatives were unsuccessful and did not find a way towards implementation.

The experts affirmed that despite the committee's multiple initiatives, the government performance has been slow in responding to the implementation of the initiatives, which has increased the suffering of the private sector and the tendency of many companies to go bankrupt.

The experts called on the government to speed up the opening of the economy and return to full normalcy so that the crisis that paralyzes the economy does not exacerbate, especially that most sectors were affected by the crisis, most notably shops and contracting companies, which are sectors characterized by labor intensity but the committee focused to support banks and neglected vital eco-

conomic sectors.

Sources told the daily that reshaping the stimulus committee has become a necessity, but in a new way, in which the private sector, entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises are represented, with new initiatives and solutions to address the crisis.

In the context, economist Mohamed Ramadan criticized the closure of the economy for long periods without achieving a clear health benefit.

He pointed out that the measures that were taken did not occur in any of the countries of the world, especially the countries of the region that dealt more professionally with the crisis in a way that did not affect their economies, which is the opposite of what happened in Kuwait.

He explained that the committee took care of the banks and supported them, but it did not provide anything clear to the rest of the sectors that were badly affected.



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

File photo of Egyptian Coptic Church during one of the services.

'Greek Orthodox Church ready to receive worshippers'

Churches awaiting resumption of Friday Mass, says Bishop Hazim

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Bishop Ghatas Hazim, the Priest of the Greek Orthodox Church in Kuwait and Diocese of Kuwait and Baghdad with their affiliations, revealed that the church along with a number of churches in Kuwait has started daily prayers from last Sunday and are awaiting approval of the official authorities to hold Friday Mass in the presence of church members, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, Bishop Hazim said, "Following the decision of the esteemed Cabinet to restart Friday prayers in the mosques from July 17, we are awaiting the decision of the concerned authorities to launch prayers in the churches on Fridays in the presence of the masses of worshippers according to health procedures and requirements."

He explained that the Greek Orthodox Church is ready to receive worshippers. It has taken all necessary health measures, completed the sterilization of the premises and implemented various measures to ensure social distancing and wearing of masks and gloves, etc. The concerned authorities in the Ministry of Interior represented by Hawally Security Directorate had visited the church and praised the efforts in this regard.

Bishop Hazim affirmed that a portion of the daily prayers is dedicated to praying for Kuwait, for the protection

of His Highness the Amir, and the government and people of Kuwait from all evil and harm, and for perpetuating the blessing of security, safety, tranquility and prosperity, as well as for the removal of the COVID-19 pandemic from the country and the rest of the world.

In this regard, Head of the National Evangelical Church of Kuwait (NECK) Pastor Emmanuel Gharib affirmed that his church has launched daily prayers last Monday, which will continue until Thursday, while waiting for issuance of new instructions.

In a press statement, Pastor Emmanuel said, "There is a great coordination with the Ministry of Interior in terms of conducting various prayers. I anticipate that after the Cabinet has issued a decision to allow mosques to restart Friday prayers, we will also be allowed to resume our usual daily prayers, especially on Fridays during which services are held from morning until evening."

He thanked the Kuwait Red Crescent Society as "they contacted us to find out when will we restart the prayers in order to provide sterilizers, masks, gloves and other means of protection". Pastor Emmanuel concluded by saying, "This is Kuwait, and this is the love and harmony upon which the Kuwaiti society is built."

45,500 protective masks donated

'KRCS backs State agencies against COVID-19'

By Arwa Al-Wugayyan

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Dr Hilal Al-Sayer affirmed recently the society's support for the State and civil efforts for combating the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Dr Al-Sayer was speaking to KUNA after the assistant undersecretary for social affairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Musallam Al-Subaiee, handed over 45,500 protective masks, donated by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN HABITAT) to the Kuwaiti Social Care Homes Complex.

The KRCS chairman affirmed special concern for occupants of the care houses, namely those of special challenges and the elderly, noting that the association had provided medical utensils to many State institutions.

The current emergency situation in Kuwait warrants collaborated efforts by the official and private institutions to secure all the resources for combating the pandemic, Dr Al-Sayer noted further.

For his part, Al-Subaiee affirmed that the complex management has enforced all necessary protective measures in the face of the pandemic, safeguarding the occupants and the serving staff.

SJC okays 'appointment' of new female judges

Lawsuit filed to prove authenticity of marriage

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Jafari Family Court ruled that the Ministry of Justice must prove the marriage contract issued by the Kingdom of Denmark to a citizen over his foreign wife, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The lawsuit filed by attorney Israa Bahman, said her client, the plaintiff, married the first defendant under a marriage contract from outside Kuwait issued by the Kingdom of Denmark and since the plaintiff wanted to prove his marriage to the first defendant and document it the matter prompted him to file his lawsuit to register and document it with the Depart-

ment of Legal Documentation at the Ministry of Justice.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Judicial Council, headed by Judge Yusuf Al-Mutawa, approved the statement of acceptance of the appointment of new female judges to join the judicial corps and work in the First Instance Court starting from the new judicial season by the end of September, reports Al-Rai daily.

The new female judges will serve as members of the First Instance Court and they will be assigned to various sections in the court to hear the corresponding cases.

In the meantime, sources confirmed the adoption of the recent

list of promotions from prosecutors to members of the First Instance Court; including 54 presidents, directors and prosecutors as well as eight female judges for the first time in the country's history.

Sources pointed out this is the first time that a large number of prosecutors were chosen to become members of the First Instance Court. Sources said the decision was taken after the corona pandemic, taking into consideration the need for a bigger number of Kuwaitis to enter the judiciary in order to ensure that the court proceedings will not be disrupted.



Dr Bassel Al-Sabah