



# Kuwaitis 383 of 641 new cases in day

## Four deaths reported

**KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA):** Kuwaiti Ministry of Health announced on Monday that 641 people in the country were infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) during past 24 hours putting whole figure of contamination cases at 40,291.

Official Spokesperson of the ministry Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad said in his daily briefing about the pandemic at the local level that the virus took lives of four people during the same period, with the total number of deaths from the infectious disease amounting to 330 since its outbreak in the country months ago.

Among these cases were individuals who contracted the virus due to mingling; others remained under tracing to examine whom they had mingled with.

The total caseload of the infections included 383 Kuwaiti citizens and 258 non-Kuwaitis, Dr Al-Sanad added.

Dr Al-Sanad said 195 of the cases were recorded in Al-Jahra district, 180 in Al-Ahmadi, 120 in Al-Farwaniya, 81 in Hawally and 64 in Al-Assimah (the capital).

There are currently 181 critical cases at intensive care wards, where overall count of cases that continue to receive medical care amounts to 8,191.

Up to 75 patients were discharged from quarantines, in past 24 hours, however they would sequester themselves at their houses.

Dr Al-Sanad put number of swab tests, conducted during the past 24 hours, at 3,216, with overall figure of these examinations standing at 357,594.

He appealed anew upon citizens and expatriates to abide by precautionary measures against the contagion, such as maintaining social distancing.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Health declared, earlier Monday, that 530 people contaminated with the germ recovered, during the past 24 hours, putting the whole count of those who recuperated at 31,770.



Huge rush seen as patients wait outside in the hot sun to get medicines at the Hawalli polyclinic.

Photo by Bassam Abu Shanab

## KU in administrative vacuum

# MoE getting prepared for next scholastic year

**KUWAIT CITY, June 22:** The Director of the Supplies and Stores Department at the Ministry of Education (MoE), Matrouk Al-Mutairi said 4,400 pieces of school furniture have been stored at the ministry's warehouses in Sabhan as the ministry prepares for the next academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Mutairi told the daily, great efforts are being made during these days to complete the needs of the school and follow up on the contracts and tenders signed by the ministry to provide it all the requirements.

This includes various devices, such as cameras, and the different kindergarten and orientation needs in the context of preparing the necessary equipment at the beginning of the next academic year.

He added since the decision to suspend work in the ministries and government agencies on March 12, 2020, because of the Corona pandemic, the administration is making great efforts by forming work teams whose task is to follow up all the work of the ministry that is of urgent importance in preparation for return to work.

motely like the public schools.

Kuwait University has been living in an administrative vacuum for nearly 8 months following the end of the tenure of its former rector Dr Hussein Al-Ansari. The academic community is now awaiting the appointment of a new rector based on the new law on public universities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The executive regulations of the new law, which was issued in August 2019, was supposed to be issued six months after the issuance of the law. In February, Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Saud Al-Harbi had issued a direct decision to task Dr Fayez Al-Dhafiri with the functions of the university's rector.

According to the new law on public universities, appointment of the university's rector requires the Supreme Council of Public Universities to meet, determine in accordance with Article 9 the conditions that must be met to vie for the position of university rectorship and its vice-deans and colleges deans and others, announce the vacancy of the position of the university rector, and open the door for receiving applications.

In accordance with Article 12, the vacancy for the rector position must be advertised in order to open the door for candidacy at least four months before the end of the incumbent's tenure.

### Also:

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) announced the launching of a platform for measuring Internet speed through the website - speed.ix.kw - as part of its efforts to evaluate the performance of telecommunications companies and service providers, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency, CITRA disclosed the platform will provide users with information about the quality of the services provided by all networks in a transparent and clear manner; as well as developing the principle of transparency and the Kuwaiti technological scene.

Sources pointed out that to ensure fairness for all service providers, the basic evaluation system will be placed in the Kuwait Internet Exchange and all suppliers will have direct contact with the exchange, in addition to conducting speed tests on the basic system to measure the performance of the local network.

Sources affirmed this will improve the performance of service providers and the experience of users, indicating that similar initiatives have been successfully implemented by government agencies around the world in order to advance competition in the market and improve services.

Sources added CITRA intends to take more initiatives as planned, confirming that it will continue to develop platforms and tools to help users and service providers develop the market and perform better.

## Societies hit hate speech

**KUWAIT CITY, June 22:** A total of 24 civil society organizations in Kuwait, led by the Kuwait Society for Human Rights, announced the launch of "a civil society declaration to confront hate speech and incitement to hatred during the COVID-19 pandemic period in Kuwait", reports Al-Seyassah daily.

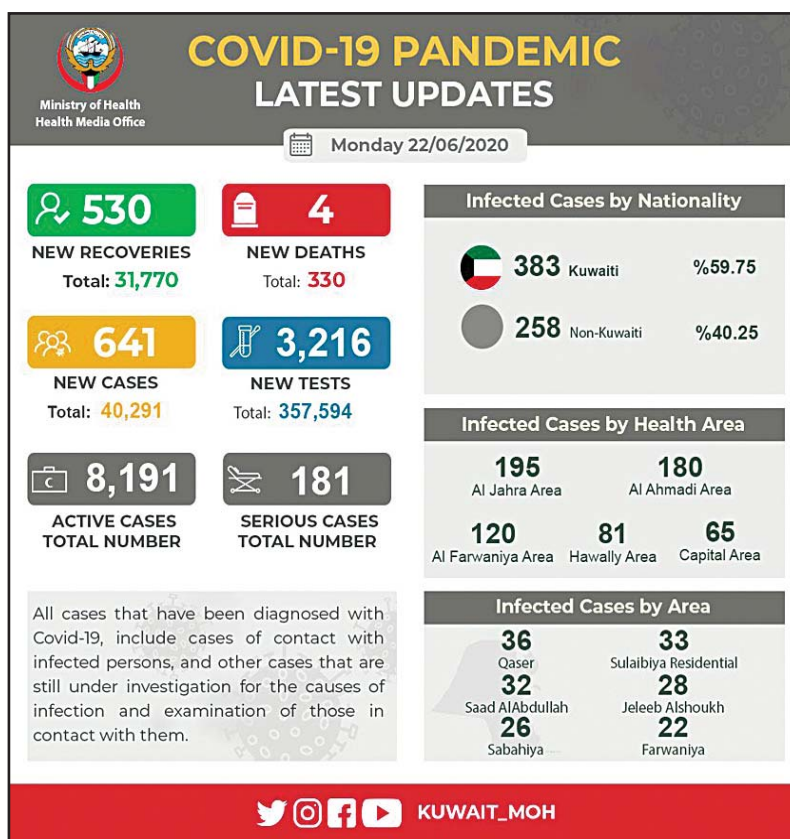
In a press statement, the society said the world is facing an unprecedented crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which renders safeguarding of human rights a challenge for every country.

It stressed that, "This is not the time to neglect human rights, but the time that we need them more than ever to get past and overcome this crisis with dignity and respect".

It explained that the Kuwait Society for Human Rights, based on its belief in Kuwait's role in supporting peace, justice and equality in the whole world and its commitment to a culture of tolerance and non-violence, has proposed the articles and items of the declaration and presented it to a number of experts and public utility societies for consultation. Everyone agreed to them and expressed their desire to announce their commitment to human rights and publicly denounce all forms of violence, hate speech and incitement to hatred.

Board Chairman of the society Khaled Al-Ajmi said the issuance of the declaration is a sense of responsibility for civil society organizations in Kuwait to face the threat of widespread hate speech and incitement to hatred during the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that social media is infested with such speech which feeds more divisions.

He revealed that the declaration includes seven articles, all of which emphasize the rejection of hate speech and incitement to hatred, and the fact that everyone stands against societal division.



## MP queries questioning of doctors for disagreements

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh  
Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 22:** MP Dr Adel Al-Damkhi forwarded queries to Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah about the report published in a local daily newspaper that a number of doctors were interrogated and then reshuffled after criticizing the measures taken by the ministry to deal with the coronavirus crisis.

On the other hand, MP Khalid Al-Otaibi forwarded queries to Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalid Al-Rawdan about the increasing prices of commodities and lack of control despite the minister's promises to do so.

Al-Otaibi said the coronavirus crisis exposed the weakness of the ministry's price monitoring system, particularly the absence of price control in foodstuff markets. He wants to know if the ministry has records of inflation that these markets witnessed in the last few months and steps taken by the ministry to activate Consumer Protection Law No. 39/2015.

He pointed out the Ministry of Commerce and Industry surprisingly issued Decision No. 79/2020 on increasing meat prices without giving any justification. He disclosed the markets increased the prices further at a time the ministry's monitoring is absent.

He also asked about the reasons behind the dramatic increase in the prices of imported fish, number of violations registered by the inspectors of the ministry, and number of price manipulation cases referred to the Public Prosecution.

He added the ministry should have expanded the list of subsidized foodstuff to include the most needed commodities.

Instead, the ministry included unnecessary commodities like burger and skinned shrimps, so he wants to know the rationale behind such step.

He requested for copies of the relevant contracts signed by the ministry and the suppliers, as well as the lists of prices of commodities added to the subsidized foodstuff before and after being subsidized.

He also forwarded the complaint of Kuwaiti farmers about the negative response of the ministry to their proposals to supply cooperative societies with their produce. He said the farmers were forced to sell their produce at prices lower than the amount that consumers usually pay.

In another development, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani revealed that he pointed out the negative impact of Malaysian fund - IMDB - on the national economy during the grilling of Finance Minister Barrak Al-Shitan.

He added the response of Al-Shitan to his question about the reason for referring an incomplete IMDB file to the Public Prosecution entails the minister should be held responsible. He disclosed the minister justified such step, stating that he did not see the file referred to the prosecution because the relevant institution is autonomous. He asserted this answer is unacceptable as Al-Shitan bears political responsibility considering the institution is affiliated to the Ministry of Finance. He intends to include this issue in the next grilling motion that he will submit against Al-Shitan.

He asked about the number of doctors who were punished, their names and positions, in addition to the legal basis for punishing them.

### News watch

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Monday a telephone call from Sudanese Prime Minister Dr Abdalla Hamdok who invited the premier to partake in the "conference of Sudan's partners" due in Germany on June 25.

The conference will be held in partnership with the European Union and the United Nations.

The two sides during the phone contact discussed means of boosting further the solid bilateral ties, exchanging views on a host of regional and international topics of joint concern.

The two premiers also examined latest developments and measures in the two countries to stem spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Public Authority of the Disabled (PADA) said Sunday it would continue servicing people with disability and responding to their needs through its website as a precaution against the novel coronavirus.

In the light of the decisions of the Cabinet and the health authorities regarding the combat against the pandemic, the authority put together a team for handling the requests of the disabled persons, said Eng Amenah Safar, head of PADA's information systems division.

"The authority has designated an email account through which PADA services will be accessible for applicants as from this Monday," she said in statements to KUNA.

Eng Safar advised applicants to visit PADA's website (onlinepada.gov.kw) and the links (ask.paypada.gov.kw) and (ask.certificatopada.gov.kw) to get more information about the services, guidelines and requirements. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** Health sports clubs or gyms are now preparing for return to normal life as the coronavirus outbreak has started to recede; while some owners are eager to resume their activities, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Like many establishments in the country, health sports clubs suffered due to continuous lockdown as part of measures to curb the spread of the virus which negatively affected the owners and members of these clubs.

The daily observed that these clubs took the necessary precautions and laid down regulations for the members to follow upon resumption of activities.