

Farmers union

How to perform Eid prayer at home ?

Kuwaiti farmers encouraged to grow onions, other vegetables

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Minister of Information and State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri affirmed that the state will provide Kuwaiti farmers with incentives to grow onions and other varieties of vegetables, reports Al-Anba daily.

He stressed that the Kuwait Union of Farmers has arranged electronic ordering services for the cooperative societies via its website due to which the orders come directly.

The minister said this during his tour of the stores of Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and the headquarters of the farmers union in Ardiya area. He was accompanied by the chairperson and members of the Kuwait Union of Farmers. The tour was aimed at inspecting the local produce and the strategic stock in the PAAAFR stores.

In his statement, Al-Jabri reassured all citizens and residents about the level of food security in Kuwait, given the availability of local agricultural products to achieve food security in the country with full local support.

The minister explained that the logistical site in Ardiya area allocated to the union is fully equipped and will be open round the clock. There are 4,000 spare cartons of each type.

The union produces crops of high quality and with excellent production. The produce will be delivered to more than 28 cooperative societies.

He reassured the cooperative societies about the availability of all needed goods at all sales outlets

Al-Jabri indicated there was no delay in the disbursement of fresh produce until the first few days of the total lockdown, praising the government agencies for facilitating procedures to solve the matter.

The minister affirmed that the agri-

cultural stock in Kuwait is sufficient and there is no need for concern, particularly due to the tremendous efforts exerted by the union in this regard and the support given by the state to facilitate matters including the allocation of a site and provision of subsidies to farmers.

He said, "The cooperative societies can request their needs for local agricultural products through the website and directly link these stores to the cooperative societies.

The onion crisis happened due to the lack of support in the past to motivate Kuwaiti farmers to cultivate onions despite its import and availability in large quantities. However, there is no need to worry anymore".

Eid prayer at home: Kuwait's Ministry of Awqaf said Monday evening that Eid al-Fitr prayers are preferably to be performed in their format at home instead of mosques due to coronavirus pandemic.

The ministry surveyed by phone the opinions of several Muslim scholars who agreed that the audible prayers, consisting of "rak'atin" (two prescribed movements), could be performed at home without the post-prayer sermon, according to a statement by the Ministry's fatwa (religious opinion) dept.

In the first rak'a, a worshipper has to utter six "takbirat" (statement of "Allahu Akbar") after "Takbiratul Al-Ihram" (the inaugural part of the prayers) and then start reading Surat Al-Fatiha.

In the second, there should be five takbirat after the standup takbira and then Surat Al-Fatiha, the statement explained.

A worshipper can perform the prayers alone or along with their family members, it added.



Top and above: Security forces have put up checkpoints at various places on the main roads to verify the curfew permits of those moving around with their cars on the roads.

Politicians, experts say govt's plan for return to normal lifestyle not specific

'No clear strategy on how to live with coronavirus'

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Despite their praise and support for calls to ease restrictions of coronavirus crisis and implement gradual return of normal life in line with regulations at the end of this month, a number of MPs, politicians and economists describe the government's views on implementing this approach as "vague" and "not specific", reports Al-Qabas daily.

They said the return of normal life and coexisting with coronavirus require more transparency and seriousness, as the government has not presented a clear plan about what it would be like to live with coronavirus.

They affirmed that Kuwait initially excelled many countries in dealing with the coronavirus crisis, but the government's actions reached a roadblock later whereby its decisions hit hesitation and confusion.

They insisted that decisions to allow activities that were banned with the exacerbation of the epidemic revealed the weakness of the government's decisions and absence of the planning horizon for finding solutions.

They called on the government to use local and international consultants to properly plan the gradual return of normalcy instead of random and confused decisions that could exacerbate the crisis eventually.

In this regard, MP Safaa Al-Hashem said: "I support the return of life to normal if the health authorities give the green signal for this".

She stressed that the return must be deliberate and with great commitment, ensuring adherence to all warnings, measures, precautions and instructions such as social distancing, use of masks and gloves, and continuous sterilization."

Also, MP Muhammad Al-Dalal praised the introduction of the topic towards searching for a mechanism to coexist with the coronavirus crisis in case it persists.

He stressed that the government should lay down a clear scenario for the next stage, irrespective of whether or not there is a cure for the disease.

Al-Dalal said, "It is not reasonable that we remain in total or partial lockdowns. An alternative plan for coexistence and gradual return to normal life must be established. In this regard, I will submit a parliamentary question to the State Minister for Cabinet Affairs about the government's preparations for the next stage and how it will deal with all assumptions that may occur. This is to consider end of the epidemic in case a treatment is found or if the epidemic will continue for a long time, and what visions and strategic plans could be used to deal with the epidemic if it continues, including the topic of coexisting with the epidemic".

Meanwhile, former minister Dr. Ali Al-Omair expressed enthusiasm about the return of normal life and the measures put in place to come out of the total lockdown through

Coronavirus

DDI, MoH study spread of infection

'All can get ill, but older people at high risk'

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Daman Diabetes Institute (DDI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Kuwait University, recently developed a model to study the spread of coronavirus infection in Kuwait. This model is called the Predictive Mathematical Model SARS COV 2.

Dr. Qais Al-Duwairi, Director General of DDI, explained that the Predictive Mathematical Model SARS COV 2 takes into consideration geographic location, or where you live in Kuwait, and demographic information like age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, income, education, and employment.

"We use this information to stimulate the current reality in Kuwait and evaluate a virus containment strategy before its application." Dr. Qais also stated that this model and its capabilities have been offered to the MoH to support their efforts to contain the virus. DDI has also cooperated with the MoH to



Dr. Qais

carry out genetic sequencing of the COVID-19 virus. Dr. Qais continues by stating that: "This is a part of the active support and cooperation between the ministry and DDI that allows us to utilize our scientific expertise to further study COVID-19."

In collaboration with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), DDI sequenced four samples of the coronavirus COVID-19. Dr. Qais highlighted that "while all virus sequences show a slight variation to one another, the genetic sequence gathered from these samples shows a slight similarity to the strain in Wuhan, China and Germany, with some genetic differences. Our researchers have found that the COVID-19 strain

found in other European countries is a diversified and mutated version of the virus."

Dr. Qais continues by stating that everyone is susceptible to the virus. However, older people and those with pre-existing or underlying medical conditions are at a high risk of becoming severely ill with the virus. High risk conditions are dependent on age (65 years or older), diabetes, moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, auto-immune diseases, obesity, liver disease and kidney disease.

"My advice to everyone is to first listen to the information and guidelines given to you by the MoH and the government. Wash your hands regularly. Maintain social distancing. Avoid touching your eyes, face and mouth. Monitor your blood glucose levels to maintain good glucose control. Any infection will raise your glucose levels. Make sure you have a supply of your diabetes medication."

12 steps that can be applied.

He insisted that Kuwait has to learn from the experiences of other countries.

Dr. Al-Omair said, "We are now witnessing gradual resumption of life in countries where the spread of the virus has been more deadly, such as Britain, the Netherlands and Germany. Despite being countries more developed in the health aspect, the infections were fatal and the death rate was high. Nevertheless, they have started returning to normal life. This is because irrespective of the impact of the virus, life has to move on."

He added, "Kuwait will undoubtedly have to coexist with the virus. This was highlighted in the speech of His Highness the Prime Minister when he spoke about the end of this month, a date that seems to have been set in light of what was reported to him by the health authorities that the number of smears by that date will be required to know extent of the spread of the virus".

In addition, Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University Shafiq Al-Ghabra said he believes the return to normal life should be gradual with careful consideration of the opinions of experts, doctors and specialists regarding the next steps, adding that politicians cannot act without taking into account the opinion of experts.

He explained that the country needs an approach through which it is possible to answer many public questions. The first would be to address about the groups that will represent the greatest danger upon return, and how the country will open. At the same time, it is necessary to

protect the groups that can be affected negatively by further spread of the epidemic.

Consideration should be given to whether there will be classes that will continue to work from home for a while. Preparing for this step requires classifying all of the people living in the country into different categories related to safety and production.

Al-Ghabra added, "The most dangerous thing that would happen is that the country opens without a deliberate plan and without listening to experts".

Sept 1 sports begin: The Olympic Committee has proposed September 1 as the date for resumption of local sports activities, in accordance with the agreement made with the Public Authority for Sports. The proposal related to the new date was discussed during a meeting held by the Head of the Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Nasser Al-Sabah with the sports federations and specialized clubs, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The meeting addressed a number of points on the agenda. The attendees negotiated on these points in a bid to reach an agreement that will be in the public interest of Kuwaiti sport. Among the items presented during the meeting was the resumption of training for some of the teams' players in July after coordinating with Ministry of Health and the Public Authority for Sports.

Regarding the possibility of holding the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Games, the discussion led to the pitching of a new date - De-

ember 8, 2020. The federations participating in this event expressed their willingness to work on preparing the sports facilities and ensuring the technical and physical readiness of the players, which requires sufficient time. So it was suggested to start training for the participating teams in the month of July.

However, the approval of the participating countries remains the most important decision concerning whether or not the games will be held.

They also discussed about holding the ordinary general assembly of the Olympic Committee in July 2020, as well as shifting the Olympic Committee to its new temporary headquarters in Jaber Al-Ahmad Youth Center in the month of August.

The Olympic Committee affirmed its real desire for the Kuwaiti sport to exit out of the stalemate it experienced due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Nonetheless, there is a lot to consider despite the positive step taken by Kuwait Olympic Committee in coordination with the Public Authority for Sports to ensure resumption of sports activities on September 1.

For instance, there are a number of clubs - namely Al-Nasr, Khaitan and Tadamon - where the facilities are being used by competent authorities to confront the COVID-19 crisis. So far, no specific timeline has been set to evacuate those facilities, let alone the fact that these facilities will need a lot of maintenance work, and sterilization. Therefore, these three clubs may not manage to start their sports activities at the proposed dates.



An unidentified quarantined person is seen cutting off the 'Shlonik' bracelet after completing his stay in the quarantine.

300 pharmacies have passes

A total of 300 pharmacies throughout the country have been granted security passes to deliver medicines to homes, reports Al-Seyassah daily quoting Secretary General of Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association Ali Hadi.

In a statement to the daily, Hadi praised the Ministry of Interior's efforts, particularly Security Passes Unit Head Colonel Ahmed Al-Azmi, in implementing mechanisms and solutions for the delivery of medicines and medical supplies to citizens and residents during the

total curfew period.

He confirmed the ministry approved the electronic request of the association to provide security passes for the delivery of medicines, indicating the association is the only authorized body to receive requests for passes to deliver medicines from pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies.

He thanked the ministry for facilitating procedures for the issuance of passes, considering the importance of supplying medicines during this period.

Farmers increase production

'Market loaded with local vegetables'

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Chairman of Kuwaiti Farmers Union Abdullah Al-Dimak confirmed the abundant supply of local vegetables in the market, disclosing that production ranges from 700,000 to 1.2 million boxes of various local agricultural products daily, reports Al-Rai daily.

"Despite the lockdown, the local farmers have proven their ability to overcome this crisis without any citizen or resident experiencing the shortage of agricultural products. We asked the farmers to increase production and they increased it to 1.2 million boxes per day," Al-Dimak narrated.

He then urged the Council of Ministers to support the farmers financially, in addition to subsidized electricity and water.

He also praised the decision of Social Affairs Minister Maryam Al-Aqeel to cancel the mediator, as the farmers and consumers fully benefited from this step.

Meanwhile, Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadil confirmed the country's strategic water reserve is safe and it is currently at the highest level, reports Al-Anba daily.

He denied the rumor that the ministry's plan to use the strategic water reserve to narrow the gap between consumption and production is a threat

to the reserve. He pointed out the utilization of strategic reserve is a normal measure taken throughout the year; even during winter for maintenance, cleaning and other purposes.

Bid to prevent waste: The State Audit Bureau (SAB) said it is committed to practicing "effective scrutiny" over public funds and government contracts related to coronavirus measures to prevent any waste of these funds.

Several state bodies have received similar purchase orders, particularly for sterile materials, amid the exceptional circumstances that the country is going through and the preventive measures assumed by these bodies, Acting Director of Advance Oversight for Economic Affairs Khawla Al-Hathran told KUNA.

A Ministry of Defense order for 200,000 (500ml) sanitizer packages, from a company, was worth KD 2,950 per package (USD 9) while a similar order for the Ministry of Health, for one million (500ml) sanitizer packages from a local factory, was valued at KD 0,800 (USD 2.5) per package, she said.

The bureau has informed the defence ministry of the need to coordinate with the Ministry of Health on this matter due to the low price of the offer presented to the health ministry.