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Page 14

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Page 9

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# 'Be mindful' as new cases sit at 777

## NewsWatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** An Amiri decree has been issued appointing Major-General **Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah** to the rank of Undersecretary of the Ministry of the Interior. The decree stipulates the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior must implement this decree and that it shall be enforced from the date of its issuance and publication in the Official Gazette, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

An Amiri decree was also issued appointing **Sheikh Mubarak Al-Faisal** as director of the office of His Highness the Amir **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**.

A decree was also issued to transfer Counselor **Dr Hamoud Muhammad Al-Otaibi** from the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince to the Amiri Diwan in the rank of a minister.

A decree was also issued to transfer **Hana Fayeze Hamad Al-Khamis** Assistant Undersecretary at the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince to the Amiri Diwan, with the same job rank for the remaining period of her tenure.

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** is keen to support and strengthen GCC joint cooperation, said GCC Secretary-General, **Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf** after his reception by His Highness the Amir Monday.

In a press statement, Al-Hajraf and on behalf of the GCC staff congratulated His Highness the Amir on assuming power, wishing His Highness continuing success.

"During the meeting we listened to the directions of His Highness regarding the GCC's important role, recalling the great contributions made by His Highness the late Amir **Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** in supporting and strengthening the Gulf joint cooperation," said Al-Hajraf.

He praised the significant role played by the late Kuwaiti ruler in the legacy of the regional bloc, alongside his relentless and sincere efforts to support its causes, raise its status and support its growth and development. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** sent Monday a cable of congratulations to King of **Spain Felipe VI** on his country's National Day.

He wished him everlasting health, and further progress and prosperity for his country. His Highness the Crown Prince **Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** and His Highness the Prime Minister **Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah** sent similar cables. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** received Monday a letter of Saudi prince **Saud Bin Abdulmohsin Al-Saud** on the passing away of late Amir **Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah**.

In reply, His Highness appreciated the heartfelt sentiments, wishing him well. (KUNA)

**RABAT:** Moroccan Prime Minister **Saad Eddin El-Othmani** said, Monday, that positions of the late Amir **Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** towards Arab and Islamic causes are well respected, especially the Palestinian cause.

In a statement to KUNA, after offering condolences to Kuwait's Embassy members, El-Othmani affirmed that the late Amir had pioneering roles in bringing brothers together and defending just causes.

For his part, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Morocco **Abdulatif Al-Yahya**, appreciated the Moroccan participation in offering condolences, recalling at the same time the role of the late Amir over the past decades and his continuous efforts to restore pan-Arab relations and his efforts to bring bridge points of view closer, in addition to his interest in the file of cooperation and fraternal relations between Kuwait and the Arab nation. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir **Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** sent Monday a cable of congratulations to president of Equatorial Guinea, **Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo**, on his country's National Day.

He wished him everlasting health, and further progress and prosperity for his country.

His Highness the Crown Prince **Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** and His Highness the Prime Minister **Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah** sent similar cables. (KUNA)



HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs Monday's Cabinet meeting.

PM's Diwan photo

## 'Book to eat'

# Cabinet issues guidelines to curb COVID

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (Agencies):** The Kuwaiti Cabinet held its weekly session on Monday at Sief Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister **Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah**.

After the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs **Anas Al-Saleh** stated the following:

The Cabinet congratulated His Highness the Crown Prince **Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah** after taking the oath of office and gaining the Parliament's pledge of allegiance.

Later, Minister of Health, **Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah**, updated the Cabinet on latest health developments in the country in light of statistics and data related to the numbers of coronavirus cases of infection, recovery, deaths and those receiving treatment.

The Cabinet again called on all citizens and residents to seriously adhere to all health instructions and guidelines to reduce the effects and risks of this pandemic.

In this regard, the Cabinet has decided the following:

First, assigning the Ministry of Information to intensify and develop media messages on health requirements to spread awareness and reinforce discipline.

Second, the necessity of booking appointments for having meals in restaurants and cafes halls and attending sports clubs to avoid crowding.

Third, preventing the establishment of camps and temporary tents in residential areas and chalets.

Fourth, assigning the main committee to follow up the implementation of health requirements related to combating the coronavirus to develop its working methods and intensify its efforts in line with the increasing cases and the high infection indicators.

Furthermore, the Cabinet also discussed recent developments in the political arena at the regionally and globally.

The Cabinet strongly condemned the Houthi militia crime by launching a drone towards the Saudi territory last Saturday, affirming Kuwait stands with the Kingdom and supporting all the measures taken by

Saudi Arabia to preserve its security, stability, and territorial integrity.

Health Minister **Dr Basel Al-Sabah** presided over an extensive meeting recently with ministry officials and experts in confronting the corona epidemic in attendance; during which they reviewed the repercussions of the pandemic, epidemiological situation locally and its developments, and health proposals which will be presented to the Cabinet in order to take steps aimed at controlling the hotbeds of infection and reducing infection rates, reports *Al-Qabas* daily quoting sources.

Sources confirmed the inclusion of various perceptions and possibilities in the recommendations, which will be submitted to the Council of Ministers with the aim of preventing the spread of the virus more broadly.

In another context, informed sources from the ministry said vaccinations for seasonal influenza and pneumonia will start on Thursday in some centers. Sources added the ministry has allocated 34 health centers to conduct these vaccinations.

## Cyber-attacks targeting US elections

# Microsoft seeks botnet takedown

**WASHINGTON, Oct 12, (Agencies):** Microsoft announced legal action Monday seeking to disrupt a major cybercrime digital network that uses more than 1 million zombie computers to loot bank accounts and spread ransomware, which experts consider a major threat to the US presidential election.

The operation to knock offline command-and-control servers for a global botnet that uses an infrastructure known as Trickbot to infect computers with malware was initiated with a court order Microsoft obtained in Virginia federal court on Oct 6. Microsoft argued that the crime network is abusing its trademark.

"It is very hard to tell how effective it will be but we are confident it will have a very long-lasting effect," said **Jean-Ian Boutin**, head of threat research at ESET, one of several cybersecurity firms that partnered with Microsoft to map the command-and-control servers. "We're sure that they are going to notice and it will be hard for them to get back to the state that the botnet was in."

Cybersecurity experts said that while Microsoft's use of a US court order to persuade internet providers to take down the botnet servers is laudable, it's not apt to be successful because too many won't comply.

**Paul Vixie** of **Farsight Security** said via email "experience tells me it won't scale - there are too many IP's behind uncooperative national borders."

The announcement follows a Washington Post report Friday of a major - but ultimately unsuccessful - effort by US Cyber Command to dismantle Trickbot



President Donald Trump speaks from the Blue Room Balcony of the White House to a crowd of supporters on Oct 10, in Washington. (AP)

beginning last month with direct attacks rather than asking online services to deny hosting to domains used by command-and-control servers.

A US policy called "persistent engagement" authorizes US cyberwarriors to engage hostile hackers in cyberspace and disrupt their operations with code, something Cybercom did against Russian misinformation jockeys during US midterm elections in 2018.

Created in 2016 and used by a loose consortium of Russian-speaking cybercriminals, Trickbot is a digital superstructure for

sowing malware in the computers of unwitting individuals and websites. In recent months, its operators have been increasingly renting it out to other criminals who have used it to sow ransomware, which encrypts data on target networks - crippling them until the victims pay up.

One of the biggest reported victims of ransomware sowed by Trickbot was the hospital chain **Universal Health Services**, which said all 250 of its US facilities were hobbled in an attack last month that forced doctors and nurses to resort to paper and pencil.

## Extend suspension of loan repayments: MP Sa'adoun

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh  
Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12:** MP Sa'adoun Hammad has asked the government to extend the suspension of collecting loan payments from citizens for another six months.

Hammad disclosed several MPs previously submitted proposals on extending the suspension of collecting loan payments, but the government has not responded until now. He said the decision of the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises to suspend the collection of loan payments from its beneficiaries for another six months has exposed the government and put the latter in an embarrassing situation. He cited the press statements issued by health authorities that the coronavirus pandemic continues and the probability of a second wave is high.

Commenting on the same issue, MP **Osama Al-Shaheen** praised the decision of National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises. He then appealed to other funds, banks and institutions - including the Public Institution for Social Security - to take a similar decision. He added the corona pandemic has affected not only businesses but also individuals and families who are in urgent need of support through the suspension of their loan payments for another six months.

In another development, MP **Mohammad Haif** lauded the decision of the Information Ministry to suspend the airing of news programs on Kuwait TV and Radio Kuwait in order to broadcast the call for prayer (Azan).

Haif revealed he is optimistic about the decision as it conveys a message of commitment to protect the Islamic identity of Kuwait and respect the Islamic concepts.

Also:

**KUWAIT CITY:** Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) and the official spokesperson of PAM **Aseel Al-Mazyad** revealed that the authority, since Sunday this week, has been receiving applications for salary disbursement certificate through the "As-Hal" online service, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

In a press statement, she indicated that the application must be initiated by entering into the "As-Hal" service portal where the employer will provide the information of the salaries that were not paid to the employees, and the reasons for non-payment or delay, accompanied with necessary documents, in addition to disbursing the delayed salaries before the company's file undergoes review and the salary disbursement certificate compliance is issued.

**Al-Mazyad** explained the employer's main files for government projects and other enterprises with more than 50 employees should be submitted to the Central Labor Inspection Department in Egaila.

## Rations controlled

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12, (AGENCIES):** Kuwait, on Monday, reported 777 new COVID-19 infections, taking the total to 111,893, while the death toll surged to 664 after confirming new six fatalities during the last 24 hours, said the health ministry.

The number of people hospitalized with the virus stands at 7,427; 139 of whom are in intensive care units, said the ministry spokesman **Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad**, adding that 6,450 swab tests were conducted in the past day out of a total of 788,705 so far.

Some 534 people recovered from the virus in the last 24 hours to raise the total to 103,802, the ministry had earlier said.

Urging the public to be mindful of health precautions, Al-Sanad said following social distancing rules was the only way to halt the spread of the virus.

Kuwait's Defense Ministry announced on Monday the arrival of a medical evacuation air plane which is affiliated to the air force, carrying several patients who were delegated to receive treatment in Thailand.

The Ministry stated in a press release that the evacuation plane was equipped with the latest medical tools and staff to look after patients during their return trip.

All medical tests were performed to all passengers the minute of departure, the Ministry added.

Furthermore, it also said that all patients have been transported to Jaber Al-Ahmad Armed Forces Hospital and some other hospitals.

This trip was under the supervision and instructions of Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Army Lieutenant General **Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah**, who was on the top of patients receiving team accompanied by Chief of Medical Services Authority in Ministry of Defense, **Dr Abdullah Meshal Al-Sabah** and some ministry officials.

## System accurate

Kuwait's Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) affirmed that the distribution of the monthly food rations is controlled by an accurate electronic system.

The Kuwaiti ration company distributes the ration commodities to cooperative societies which, in turn, delivers the commodities to beneficiaries in their respective branches, the ministry said in a press release late Sunday.

In case there is any shortage in the commodities, the officials of concerned cooperatives face legal action without adding any financial burdens to the state funds.

The Ministry's inspectors verify the accuracy of cooperatives' inventories regularly and referred 51 branches of these cooperatives to the public prosecution recently, the statement pointed out.

There are clear-cut ministerial decrees that ban the sale of subsidized ration commodities to any illegible persons or entities whether inside or outside the country, it reminded.

The ministry added that it works with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor to Kuwaitize the administrative positions at all cooperative societies in keeping with the state policy.

Also:

**KUWAIT CITY:** Public Authority for Manpower has placed 90 employees of the Ministry of Education under scrutiny. These employees have been instructed to provide the ministry with their last academic qualifications, and to visit the authority. They were warned that, if they fail to follow these instructions, the money they received as salary will be considered as a loan and the concerned authorities will file lawsuits against them, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The authority stated that the State Audit Bureau had made observations that the state's general budget was burdened financially as a result of disbursing financial support for national manpower in contradiction to the main objectives of Law No. 19/2000 on support for national labor force and encouraging them to work in non-governmental entities.

According to sources from the educational sector, the number of employees in question is 1,186. The commission in charge of the matter has been given all the necessary information about these employees and was informed to do the needful in relation to the aforementioned issue, or else the authority will take legal actions against these employees.