

Local

Kuwait civil society issues 'declaration on countering hate speech during pandemic'

'Human rights needed to navigate COVID-19 crisis in dignity'

KUWAIT: Twenty four civil authorities in Kuwait, led by the Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights, announced yesterday launching the 'Civil Society Declaration on Countering Hate Speech and Incitement to Hatred during the COVID-19 pandemic - Kuwait.'

The authorities agreed that the world faces an unprecedented crisis of global public health emergency as a result of the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). "Guaranteeing human rights for everyone poses a challenge for every country," they noted, pinpointing that "it is not a time to neglect human rights, rather it is a time when, more than ever, human rights are needed to navigate this crisis in dignity and respect."

"Since the Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights believes in Kuwait's role in supporting peace, justice and equality in the world as a whole, and its commitment to a culture of tolerance and non-violence, it suggested articles of the declaration and presented it to some experts and public benefit associations for discussion and consultation," the society said in a press statement. "All have agreed and expressed their desire and wish to declare their commitments to human rights and speak out against all forms of violence, hate speech and incitement to hatred."

Khaled Al-Humaidi Al-Ajmi, Chairman of Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights, stated that the issuance of the

declaration reflects the sense of responsibility borne by the civil society in Kuwait to face the risk of the spread of hate speech and incitement to hatred during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating that social media tools are bursting with such speech, further causing more divisions amongst people.

The declaration is formed contains seven articles, which all assured rejection of hate speeches and incitement to hatred, in addition to everyone's resistance to societal division. The declaration defines hate speech as "any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, which attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or any other identity factor." Furthermore, the declaration calls upon the government to protect people against hate speech by implementing a program aimed at promoting the principles of tolerance among members of society, guarantee the promotion of the principle of justice and impartiality in legislation and in the enforcement of laws and judicial and administrative procedures and the opportunity for all without any discrimination, and also take all necessary measures to confront the speech of violence, hatred and societal incitement.

Authority	Name of Representative
Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights	Khaled Al Humaidi Al Ajmi - Chairman
Development Entrepreneurship Association	Ghadeer Abdulmohsen Al Juma
Support Advocates & Legal Consultants Law Firm	Lawyer / Atiyab AlShatti
Kuwaiti Society for National Fraternity	Rakan Bin Hatheer - Chairman
Women's Cultural & Social Society	Luluwa Saleh Al Mulla - Chairman
Women Diwan	Dr. Zainab Al Ziady
Union Of Kuwaiti Craftsmen	Lawyer / Mohammad Al Humaidi - Chairman
The Kuwaiti Association of the Basic Evaluators for Human Rights (KABEHR)	Ahmad Abbas Hamad Al Rasheedi
Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR)	
Workers Guild in Kuwait University	Haitham Khaled Al Hajeri - Chairman
Workers Guild in The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training	Eng. Mohammad Al Kandari
Kuwait Association for Deaf Impairment	Mr. Ahmad Mohsen Al Shoushani
Kuwait National Integrity Association	Ahmad Hamad Al Badeih AlSahli
Anti-Vitiligo Association	Nawaf AlNoumas AbuAbdulrahman - Chairman
Kuwait Trade Union Federation	Ahmad Oqla AlAnzi
The Internet of Things Association (Under Proclamation)	Saqar Mefreh AlHarbi
Kuwait Workers Association	Fayez Al Sultani
Kuwait Association for Occupational Health and Safety	Dr. Manal Bu Haimed
Kuwaiti Association for Crisis and Disaster Management	Idris Ibrahim Al Kandari
Bayader Al Salam Women Association	Dalal Abdullah Ghanem Al Othman - Chairman
Kuwait Association for Protecting Public Funds	Saleh Hussain Al Ajmi
Date Palm Friends Society	Dr. Adel Hassan Dashti
Kuwait Society for the Follow up and Evaluation of Parliamentary Performance	Nasser Al Shulaimi
Sustainable Development Center of Bar Association	Lawyer / Abdullah AlDhayan AlAnzi - Chairman of the Center
Social Reform Society (SRS)	Dr. Khalid Mazkour Al-Mazkour

Signatories of the declaration.



KUWAIT: A combination of photos showing a partial solar eclipse seen in Kuwait yesterday morning.— Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and KUNA

In My View

Altruism



By Abdellatif Sharaa

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It is amazing how people of the same community respond to crises and urgent matters. Some people run into their homes and lock the doors behind them, while others go out in the open checking what is going on and see how they can help. We as human beings must be aware that to live, we must cooperate, because each one of us relies on the person next to him!

Can someone build a structure without a plan? Is it not necessary to see an engineer to calculate everything big and small with regards to erecting a building and making it habitable? Do you not need a farmer to cultivate your vegetables and fruits, and raise your animals that you rely on for sustenance? Do you not need someone to stitch your shirts and pants so you can cover your body and look your best?

Don't you need a baker to prepare your bread that you place at the dinner table, and other needs, every day? Don't you need a doctor to see what is bothering you health-wise? Don't you need a mechanic to repair your car when it breaks down? The list can go on and on, yet I will remind you that the majority of those who we need every day became idle all of a sudden when COVID-19 struck.

The government's measures were urgently needed and necessary to fend off the virus and most of us remained home most of the time, including those who were making their living on a daily basis, and their source of daily income dried up and made them worried and anxious.

It was necessary to find something to help. There were those who gave food - both individuals and charity organizations - along with government agencies. We all should be together, and if necessary share with each other, and that is what altruism is.

There is nothing wrong about making sure that my neighbor will not sleep on an empty stomach whenever I can. Mind you there are those who do not express their needs out of shyness and dignity, though sometimes it can be noticed.

Allow me to tell you what happened recently with a person in an Arab country. The man went to six or seven ATMs, and found long lines under the heat of the sun, so he reluctantly decided to wait at one machine. There he saw a man in his mid-50s, who seemed very tired. After finishing their business at the bank, our friend took this man to hospital then gave him a ride home.

The man said the landlord gave him a deadline of today that if he did not pay the rent, he will kick him out. Our friend, who is well-to-do, called the landlord and paid him a full year's rent, making the man very happy and relaxed, before thanking the man for his generosity and kindness.

It is encouraged that members of societies be cooperative and care for each other, as much as they depend on each other.

Finally, Allah Almighty said in the Holy Quran: "And [also for] those who were settled in al-Madinah and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful". [59:9]

Coronavirus in Kuwait: What we know so far

KUWAIT: Kuwait has recorded 39,145 cases infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as of Saturday, in addition to 319 deaths. With the exception of 180 cases in intensive care, all infected cases are in stable condition and are recovering in quarantined locations designated by the government for this purpose, while thousands have been discharged from quarantine after exhibiting no symptoms during their 14-day quarantine period, the Ministry of Health confirmed. Meanwhile, 31,240 people have recovered completely after previously being infected with the virus, while there are 7,586 people receiving treatment and 23 quarantined.

Curfew

Kuwait imposed a three-week partial curfew starting May 31 (from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am), as part of a five-phase plan for a gradual return to normal life, brought to a standstill by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The curfew hours were later reduced to start on 7:00 pm and end at 5:00 am, starting from June 21, 2020. The first phase also includes a total lockdown on Farwaniya, Khaitan, and Hawally, joining Mahboula and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh which were put under lockdown earlier. The lockdown ended in Hawally and Khaitan on June 21, 2020.

Activities to resume in first phase included home deliveries of restaurants, telecommunication companies, food retailers, companies' transportation of employees, gas stations, private clinics and car workshops. The second phase will see the curfew shortened to be between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am, while resuming work in the government and private sectors with the workforce being less than 30 percent, in addition to resumption of constructions, banking sector, malls opening for eight hours and according to special instructions, parks and pickups from restaurants.

The third phase would see an end of curfew, and health authorities would be assessing situation of areas under lockdown. It would see increase of workforce to less than 50 percent. Visits for social care homes would be allowed, reopening of hotels, resorts and hotel apartments. Taxis will be allowed to operate with only one passenger, and mosques would be allowed to perform Friday prayers.

Phase four would see an increase in workforce, restaurants would be receiving customers but with restrictions, and public transportation resumed but with distancing. All activities would resume in phase five, government and private sector returned to normal, families could gather, weddings and graduation ceremonies, health clubs and gyms to reopen, as well as cinemas and theaters.

Mosques in the so-called 'model residential areas' reopened their doors for worshippers on June 10 amid strict health precautionary measures. Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Afasi said that mosques in commercial, markets and heavily-populated areas will remain

closed for the time being. Worshippers must wear face masks, keep social distancing between queues and between worshippers must be strictly observed. Worshippers must bring their own mats so they do not get in contact with mosque carpets. Mosques will reopen five minutes before prayer time and close 10 minutes after prayer.

Earlier, Kuwait imposed a total curfew from May 10 to May 30, allowing room for people to walk out for daily exercise between 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm, and to shop at co-ops and supermarkets once every six days during the curfew hours by making an appointment through www.moci.shop. Before that, Kuwait enforced a country-wide partial curfew from 5:00 pm to 6:00 am, which was later extended to start from 4:00 pm until 8:00 am during Ramadan, while allowing restaurants and food stores to make home deliveries from 5:00 pm until 1:00 am. The government also locked down Mahboula and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh in a bid to contain the spread of the virus and enable health workers to test inhabitants. Earlier, the government decided to close all shopping malls, beauty salons and barber shops as part of its measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The government also allowed supermarkets, restaurants and shops to host a maximum of five people at a time and in case there are lines, the distance must be at least one meter between people. The Ministry of Commerce launched a website (www.moci.shop) to enable people to book appointments to shop at co-operative societies in their areas. The Public Authority for Industry also announced that companies can apply to evacuate their workers from Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and Mahboula. To do so, they must fill a 'workers evacuation form' available on www.pai.gov.kw, and send the form via email to: Jasiri@moh.gov.kw.

Precautions

Kuwait halted all commercial flights until further notice, and has sent special flights to repatriate Kuwaitis back home from countries affected with the virus' spread. Kuwait took all measures to test Kuwaitis repatriated from infected areas for potential infection. Kuwait had required all expatriates who arrived from travel on March 1 and beyond to visit Kuwait International Fairground where the Ministry of Health has set up a center to test people for possible infection. Meanwhile, the Cabinet announced on April 9 the operation of all airline flights for expats who are wishing to return back to their countries. Authorities also announced a public holiday in the country from March 12 to May 28, with work resuming on May 31, while entities providing vital services will remain open. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education has suspended classes for March at all public and private schools (for both students and teaching staff): first from March 1 to March 12, and later extended it until March 29, before eventually suspending schools until August for grade 12 and Oc-

tober for other stages. State departments have been on high alert to take precautions against the potential spread of the virus. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has taken measures to make sure that facial masks, hand sanitizers and other goods remain accessible to the public.

Kuwait suspended issuing entry permits and visas unless those issued through diplomatic missions. The Interior Ministry issued an amnesty allowing residency violators to leave the country between April 1 and April 30 without paying any fines or airfare with a chance to return to Kuwait later. The amnesty was issued in view of the circumstances the country is currently going through and as part of the precautionary measures taken to fight the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). During the amnesty period, individuals desiring to procure valid residencies in Kuwait and were willing to pay the fines without being subjected to investigations were allowed to pay the fines and legalize their status if they meet the required conditions.

Hotlines

The Ministry of Health has set the following hotlines to receive inquiries about the coronavirus 24/7: 24970967 - 96049698 - 99048619.

The Education Ministry set the following hotlines to receive inquiries on school closures related to the anti-coronavirus measures:

- 24970967 (24/7 hotline)
- 51575591 (Capital Educational Zone)
- 51576117 (Hawally Educational Zone)
- 51576576 (Farwaniya Educational Zone)
- 51577055 (Jahra Educational Zone)
- 51577655 (Ahmadi Educational Zone)
- 51577951 (Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone)
- 51578171 (Religious Studies Department)
- 51588599 (Private Education Department)
- 51592515 (Services Department)
- 51594544 (Public Relations Department)

Medicine delivery

Kuwait's Ministry of Health (MOH) launched a new medicine delivery service for people in Kuwait, which they can use to order medications to be delivered during curfew hours. The medications will be delivered within 72 hours after the order is submitted. To place an order, patients should send a WhatsApp to the numbers for the hospitals and medical centers as listed below. The patient should include their name, Civil ID number, hospital or clinic file number, mobile phone number and the medicine needed to the following numbers:

- Amiri Hospital: 50880699
- Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital: 50880755
- Farwaniya Hospital: 50880852

- Adan Hospital: 50880908
- Jahra Hospital: 50881066
- Sabah Hospital: 97632660
- Jaber Hospital: 96992079
- Ibn Sina Hospital: 99613948
- Chest Hospital: 99258749
- Razi Hospital: 97633487
- Kuwait Cancer Control Center: 96735242
- Psychiatric Hospital: 97350113
- Physiotherapy Hospital: 99824037
- Maternity Hospital: 98559531
- As'ad Al-Hamad Dermatology Center: 98514508
- Zain Hospital: 97552031
- NBK Hospital: 96931761
- Al-Rashed Allergy Hospital: 94162470
- Infectious Diseases Hospital: 96989164
- Palliative Care Hospital: 94024786
- Sabah Al-Ahmad Urology Center: 90952469
- KFH Addiction Treatment Center: 94169363

Meanwhile, all licensed pharmacies in Kuwait delivering medicine are allowed to continue their services 24 hours a day. The Ministry of Health is also asking doctors and nurses affiliated with the private medical sector to volunteer in order to contribute to the fight against the virus. Volunteering is available through the link: <http://volunteering.q8-health.com>. The ministry had closed all private clinics and medical centers effective March 22, 2020 until further notice.

Mental health assistance

The Kuwait Psychological Association (KPA) is providing consultation through the phone for people suffering from the psychological impacts of coronavirus. Different doctors are working on the hotline in different timings as follows:

- Dr Rashed Al-Sahl: on Monday and Wednesday 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Call 9797-6168.
 - Dr Fahad Al-Tasha: daily from 8:00 pm - 12:00 am. Call 9904-8258.
 - Dr Othman Al-Asfour: daily 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm. Call 9938-5350.
 - Dr Mohammed Al-Khalidi (head of this team): daily 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. Call 9903-6470.
 - Dr Ahmad Al-Khalidi: daily 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Call 9910-7965.
 - Dr Muneera Al-Qattan: Monday and Wednesday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Call 9953-3108.
 - Dr Zainab Al-Saffar: Sunday and Thursday 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Call 9954-9908.
 - Dr Sameera Al-Kandari: Tuesday 9:00 pm - 12:00 am. Call 6770-9434.
 - Dr Kawthar Al-Yaqout: Monday and Wednesday 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Call 5521-0088.
- For information and other concerns, call 9401-4283.