

## Local

# Kuwait's COVID-19 response rapid, comprehensive: WHO

## Kuwait's donation helped WHO reach segments in need of health care

**KUWAIT:** The State of Kuwait's response against COVID-19 has been "decisive, rapid and comprehensive," and succeeded in assessing risks which thus improved ability to address shortcomings, World Health Organization said. Kuwait, since the start of the coronavirus crisis, formed three high-level committees which boosted monitoring system against pandemic, Dr Abdunnasser Abu Baker, Director of Infectious Hazard Management Program at WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, said. Kuwait, he said in an interview, activated pandemic prevention protocol in hospitals which were equipped to deal with disease, in addition to adopting important measures to establish and manage a database system.

### Active monitoring

Kuwait, said Abu Baker, also strengthened active monitoring in border crossings, hospitals and clinics. The country collected data of all people coming from infected countries, trained health

workers at frontlines, traced people who came into close contact with infected persons to isolate them in quarantine, as well as isolating and treating infectees, and raising public awareness about virus, he said. Abu Baker expressed gratitude for Kuwait for its donation to WHO to help it fight the pandemic. This donation, he said, "helped us reach the segments in need of health care," operate damaged health facilities and plug funding gap.

Asked about the peak of the coronavirus, Abu Baker said it varied among countries and regions around the world depending on course of virus, how fast countries implemented preventive measures and people's compliance with health instructions. "The curve is

rising in most of the world's countries and we cannot predict the time of the peak," he said. He noted coronavirus infections began relatively late in East of the Mediterranean region but the last week witnessed a surge in cases in 19 countries but slightly dropped in three nations. Abu Baker was asked about a drug or a vaccine against the pandemic and said this process would take between 12-18 months. He said there were around 80 vaccines being tested, six of them in clinical trials.

## WHO warns from 'second wave'

### Hasty lifting

He, meanwhile, warned against hasty lifting of restrictions in order to avoid a second wave of the virus. "We warn against lifting preventive measures

before having proper conditions that make us feel safe to lifting the measures or easing them gradually," he said. Abu Baker said physical distancing and isolation have proven successful in preventing the spread of the virus within society. The stay-home rule, partial closure of institutions, schools, places of worship and workplace, as well as curfew and lockdown are effective tools against the virus, he said. "Behaviors of individuals have a great role in addressing the pandemic," said Abu Baker.

The WHO official described the Government of Kuwait's repatriation of around 35,000 citizens as "positive" coupled with a set of measures designed to prevent spread of the disease among the returnees. WHO is keen on knowing how countries carry out accurate risk assessments, he said, and "we recommend placing people being repatriated in quarantine," Abu Baker said technology compensated social distancing, promoted awareness over the virus, connected people thus ended the isolation. — KUNA

## KRCS provides 115 apartments for nursing staff

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society (KRCS), Friday, provided 115 apartments with all the basic living needs for nursing staff in the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health in Jaber Al-Ahmad residential area. KRCS Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said on the sidelines of a visit to the apartments in Jaber Al-Ahmad that residential housing is fully furnished and ready to use by the nursing staff.

Sayer pointed out that this comes as a continuation of the work carried out by the association to help the government agencies to confront the coronavirus pandemic and to support of the ministry of health. He noted that 115 apartments distributed over 23 apartment buildings were furnished with all the basic requirements for living, noting that various food baskets were also provided, which cover the necessary requirements for the nursing staff. Meanwhile, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health, Dr Mustafa Redha, praised KRCS efforts and its continuous support in all fields since the beginning of the crisis. — KUNA



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## Kuwait, Jordan red crescents launch relief campaign

**AMMAN:** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and Jordanian Red Crescent launched a campaign to help more than 2,000 Syrian refugee families and needy families in Jordan. The two-stage campaign, which started at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan and will end after Eid Al-Fitr holiday, includes the distribution of food boxes on the families, said Mahmoud Assoud, the Jordanian Red Crescent official in charge of the campaign. Assoud said the campaign targetted more than 2,000 Syrian refugee families a number of Jordanian families who were in need of help. The campaign was launched amidst tough economic



and health conditions caused by the spread of the novel coronavirus, thus disrupting income of many families. KRCS, he said, is keen on continuing humanitarian programs in Jordan in collaboration with local partners. — KUNA

