

Pandemic must not spark 'digital divide': iGA CE

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The crisis sparked by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has "clearly demonstrated" the need for fast and resilient digital service, said iGA Chief Executive.

He, however, also stressed that this must not lead to a widening of the global "digital divide".

Mohammed Ali Al Qaed was representing Bahrain at a virtual Ministerial Conference on the Digital Response to COVID-19 organised by Estonia and Sin-



iGA CE Mohammed Ali Al Qaed

Singapore.

Highlighting the need to fight

the pandemic safeguarding the health and safety of all without discriminating on race, religion and nationality, the Chief Executive said Bahrain's success in fighting the pandemic rests on this strategy put forward by the leaders of the Kingdom.

On the digital front, our COVID-19 response efforts leveraged the Kingdom's eGovernment strategic framework, which is supported by a strong ICT infrastructure, digital transformation readiness, and compliance with international ICT standards and

best practices.

Al Qaed also explained that Bahrain's contact tracing app BeAware, downloaded 800,000 times was a success in educating, alerting as well as protecting the privacy of users.

He said Bahrain was the first country in the region to implement a 'Cloud First Policy' for our re-engineering of public services. "At the same time, we invested in developing government employees' ICT skills, fully optimising our public service delivery channels."

Coronavirus awareness goes digital

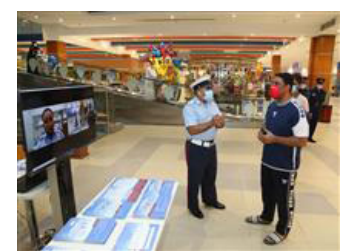
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Muharrag Police deployed electronic platforms, which harnesses direct communication technology, at public places to raise awareness on the Coronavirus outbreak.

The service, the Director-General of the Muharrag Governorate Police Directorate said, will answer the questions of citizens and residents on the pandemic and provide important security and legal instructions.

Answering the questions of the public will be employees at the directorate's operations room. The effort is in cooperation with the General Administration of Information and Security Culture and the Communications Department of the Ministry of Interior.

The directorate is also distributing educational brochures in multiple languages to citizens and residents on COVID-19 precautionary measures. The digital units are currently installed in LuLu Hyper Market in Al Hidd, Art Rotana Hotel, Doha Arad, and Dragon City.



COVID-19 takes two more lives

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The Ministry of Health announced yesterday that the coronavirus (COVID-19) has claimed two more lives in Bahrain.

The deceased were two Bahraini men, aged 90 and 63.

Their passing brought the overall number of coronavirus-related deaths in the Kingdom to 94.

The Health Ministry expressed its heartfelt condolences to the victims' families.

Out of 9740 COVID-19 tests carried out on 2 July 2020, 423 new cases have been detected among 252 expatriate workers, 167 new cases are contacts of active cases, and 4 are travel related. There were 635 recoveries from #COVID19, increasing total recoveries to 22583



Meanwhile, it was announced early this morning that out of 9740 COVID-19 tests conducted yesterday, 423 new cases were detected. From these, 252 were expatriate workers, 167 were contacts of active cases, and four were travel-related.

There were also 635 additional recoveries from the virus

yesterday, the Health Ministry said. After confirming that the patients were free of COVID-19, they were released from their respective isolation and treatment centres, bringing the total number of discharged in Bahrain to 22,583

The total number of currently active cases reached 5,160 of which 82 are receiving treatment, with 51 in critical condition. The remaining 5,109 cases are stable. The total tested increased to 574,105.

GCC round up

Saudi Arabia reported 3,383 cases and 54 deaths yesterday. This brings the total number of coronavirus infections in the country to 197,608. The total number of recoveries in the kingdom is at 137,669. There are 2,287 cases in intensive care out

of 58,187 currently active cases.

Qatar reported 894 new coronavirus cases and three new deaths in the last 24 hours, raising the total number of cases to 97,897. The total number of recovered cases so far in Qatar have risen to 86,597.

Meanwhile, UAE has reported a total of 49,069 coronavirus cases in the country so far and 316 deaths totally.

Kuwait reported 919 new cases, increasing the country's infection tally to 47,859. One more death was reported in a day, bringing the total such fatalities in the country to 359.

With an increase of 1,361 cases in a day, Oman has recorded 42,555 cases of COVID-19 so far. Within only one month, 27,000 new infections were recorded, said Omani health minister Dr Ahmed bin Mohammad Al Saidi.

Harbouring and abetting a fugitive: Appeal court rejects man's appeal

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The First Supreme Criminal Court of Appeal rejected the appeal of a Bahraini man sentenced to three years in jail on charges of harbouring and aiding a wanted fugitive.

The High Criminal Court also slapped the same penalty on the second defendant, his accomplice in the crime, earlier this year.

Public prosecution accused both the suspects of the aiding and assisting the fugitive convict and then concealing him in



Picture courtesy of Al Ayam

their house, with full knowledge of the conviction against him.

Incidents leading the case occurred on 19 January 2020, with law enforcement officers arresting the fugitive convict from the second suspect's home where he was hiding with the help of the first suspect.

The General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science in Interior Ministry was acting on a tip-off received about the hide-out of the fugitive convict.

The fugitive man, wanted in two criminal cases, was sentenced to serve 13 years in jail.

The second suspect, police say, harboured the wanted person in his house and helped him with food supplies and free movement.

The first and second suspects confessed to their crime to investigators of the Public Prosecution during interrogation.

They told investigators that they concealed the person in the house with the knowledge that he is wanted by the law.

Both the men were arrested and referred to public prosecution.

Seven in the dock for breaking quarantine

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Seven people suspected of violating Bahrain's Coronavirus (COVID-19) quarantine rules were removed to an isolating centre, pending further actions.

Legal measures are being taken to refer them a court, said the Public Prosecution in a statement yesterday.

Public Prosecution Chief Adnan A Wadai said the seven people, who had tested positive to the deadly virus, refused to stay in a centre and left for their homes violating health guidelines.

Some of the infected people had an underlying chronic

condition, while two of them were over 60 years of age.

The situation warranted authority to launch an investigation and confine them in an isolation centre for urgent medical treatment, Al Wadai said. The Chief Prosecutor stressed the need for all to follow the instructions and adhere to the health measures strictly to mitigate the deadly virus.

"Stern actions will be taken against whoever violates the health measures," Adnan A Wadai warned.

Violators of the preventive measures will face up to three years in prison and a fine of BD10,000.

Muharrag police arrest one in illegal massage parlour raid

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Muharrag Police raided an illegal massage parlour in the directorate and arrested a 29-year-old man on charges of providing unlicensed services and flouting Health Ministry's guidelines to prevent the pandemic.

Muharrag Governorate Police Directorate, in cooperation with the Public Health Department of the Ministry of Health, jointly conducted the raid based on a tip-off received.

Acting on the tip-off, police forced a team of officers to investigate and identify the suspect.

The suspect was caught red-handed during the opera-



Representative picture (Courtesy of Al Ayam)

tion from centre running from an apartment in the area.

Interior ministry, in a twitter statement, confirmed the arrest



Services such as facials, threading, microblading, massages, semi-permanent eyelashes, and returnable hair extensions are not allowed in salons and barbershops



and said the suspect was offering his services, which is banned by law, in exchange for money.

The Director-General of the Muharrag Governorate Police Directorate said the centre was operating in violation of the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health preventing services like massage amid the outbreak.

The top cop confirmed that

necessary legal procedures are being taken to refer the case to the Public Prosecution.

Barbershops and Salons in the Kingdom are allowed to reopen starting 27 May 2020, after a long hiatus, by following restrictions for staff and customers.

Some of the measures include maintaining a distance of two metres between customers,

limiting the number of staffs inside, and sterilising and disinfecting surfaces after each customer.

Authorities also direct to close waiting areas, prevents sharing of magazines or newspaper and other objects, and do not permit services like facials, threading, microblading, massages and semi-permanent eyelashes.