

COVID-19 contact tracing enhanced

Information and eGovernment Authority begins distribution of electronic bracelets compatible with 'BeAware' app

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The Information and eGovernment Authority (iGA) yesterday began the distribution of electronic bracelets compatible with Bahrain's COVID-19 contact tracing app "BeAware".

The move is in line with the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, to deploy emerging technologies to help mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The distribution began with the support of the Minister of Interior General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

The "BeAware" app complements the efforts of the National Taskforce for Combatting the Coronavirus in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 by advancing contact tracing efforts to swiftly identify and keep track all active cases and their contacts.



An official straps the bracelet on to a patient

iGA Chief Executive Mohammed Ali Al Qaed noted that the app is an example of how Bahrain is leveraging technology to safeguard the well-being of citi-

zens and residents. He explained that the bracelet supports the Ministry of Health's mandate to address public health concerns amidst the global pandemic.

"The decision issued by the Minister of Health, Faeqa bint Saeed Al Saleh, obliges self-isolating individuals to wear the electronic bracelet that will

Self-isolating individuals must wear the electronic bracelet which will notify the monitoring station whenever they are 15 meters away from their phone, in which case a warning will be sent.

IGA CHIEF EXECUTIVE MOHAMMED ALI AL QAED

notify the monitoring station whenever they are 15 meters away from their phone, in which case a warning will be sent," explained Al Qaed.

"Violators will face legal penalties, potentially be sentenced to imprisonment for a period of not less than three months and pay a fine between BD1,000 and BD10,000, or either one of the two penalties."

Al Qaed added that the iGA will guide users through the app and all of its features, which requires

them to ensure their smart devices are charged and that their location services, Bluetooth, GPS and internet connection are on. iPhone users will need to ensure that the "Allow Location Access" is set at "Always".

Self-isolating individuals using the app must identify their isolation location, in most cases their home, by selecting "Set Home Location" upon arrival. Users can correct location information by calling 444.

Ministry of Health officials may randomly send picture requests to which self-isolating individuals must respond with a photo that clearly shows their face and bracelet. Attempting to remove or tamper with the bracelet is a violation and officials confirmed the bracelet is waterproof.

Self-isolating individuals are also required to schedule a COVID-19 test date three days prior to the end of their self-isolation period by calling 444 or visiting the Ministry of Health's website.

Guidelines set for higher education e-learning

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Higher education institutions across the Kingdom must have a clear strategy towards e-learning and distance learning in the circumstances that require it.

This was asserted yesterday by Higher Education Council (HEC) Evaluation and Accreditation assistant secretary general Dr. Muna Al Balushi, who laid out guidelines and standards for e-learning at higher institutions.

Amongst other guidelines, Dr. Al Balushi said that these schools should engage the stakeholders in developing their plans and explain their goals to them.

She added that they must apply the e-learning systems using all available means to achieve the preset goals, and also keep the evidence supporting the academic and administrative activity and train all faculty members to use the available



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HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL DR. MUNA AL BALUSHI

means.

Higher education institutions should also verify the efficiency of the information and communication technology infrastructure, and enhance its ability to meet the requirements of e-learning.

Dr. Al Balushi indicated that these guidelines are in line with the institutional accreditation standards in force in the Kingdom, and to which private high-

er education institutions should be committed.

Dr. Al Balushi added that most higher education schools in Bahrain have already taken the necessary procedures to use electronic education platforms to ensure the continuity of learning amidst the current situation.

She said that it is in line with the directives of the HEC's secretariat general.

Cop attacker loses appeal

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The First Supreme Criminal Court of Appeal upheld the punishment of a man who assaulted a policeman while resisting arrest.

The appellant was earlier sentenced to three years' imprisonment for injuring the victim's eye in the parking lots of Muharaq Police Station.

The details of the case showed that the man approached the police station to report his missing wallet. In the reception, and after entering the man's data in the police system, it was revealed that the man was wanted by Hidd Police Station for his involvement in two criminal cases.

The appellant, who was asked

by the police to wait in the men's waiting area inside the station, felt suspicious and tried to escape.

A policeman noticed the man and chased him until he was eventually able to catch him in the parking area. There, the appellant resisted arrest and hit the cop in the eye.

In the interrogations of the Public Prosecution, the victim told investigators that the defendant hit him in the eye with his elbow.

The prosecution charged the man on November 11 of last year for assault on an on-duty public servant who was performing his duties, and for causing the injuries mentioned in a medical report.

Major shift online of traffic services

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Eighty per cent of traffic services were processed electronically in the second half of March, it was revealed yesterday.

Director-General of Traffic Brigadier Shaikh Abdulrahman bin Abdulwahab Al Khalifa said that the department continues to offer high quality and swift services.

This is as part of the directives of the Interior Minister and in line with the department's long-term strategy.

The Director-General said that the progress shows the awareness of the public to contribute to limiting the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

He noted that the online services are available on bahrain.bh and on the e-traffic application.

House fire trio rescued



A section of the house that caught on fire

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Three individuals were rescued yesterday from a house fire in Bilad Al Qadeem.

The Civil Defence saved the residents and took them to the

hospital while putting out the blaze.

Five vehicles and 16 firefighters were needed to extinguish the fire. Initial details indicate that a short circuit was the reason for the incident.

No further details were available.

Customs Affairs calls on clients to make payments online

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The Customs Affairs yesterday called on all its clients to pay customs taxes and fees through the e-payment system "Fawateer" of the Benefit Company.

This move is part of the dedication to follow the precautionary measures to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and to ensure the health and safety of the public.

The Customs Affairs highlighted that the system is linked to the e-customs clearance system and the payment could be through any local bank.

Random testing, disinfection operations continue



Ministry officials conducting COVID-19 tests

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In cooperation with the Ministry of Interior through the Civil Defence and Community Police, the Ministry of Health is continuing its field visits across the Kingdom. This is in line with precautionary and preventive measures in the coronavirus (COVID-19) fight.

Officials continue to conduct random tests of citizens and residents at all kinds of locations, while disinfection operations are also being carried out at various areas.



Disinfection operations being carried out in a children's playground