

# Interior Minister hails efforts of contact-tracing team

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Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa hailed yesterday the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to increase the national precautionary measures against the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

General Shaikh Rashid praised the follow-up of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, in this regard.

In line with the directives of HRH the Crown Prince to support and develop the contact-tracing team, the Interior Minister visited the team at the operations room of the National Taskforce for Combatting the Coronavirus, located at the Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research.



The Interior Minister with other officials in their visit to the contact-tracing team

The Interior Minister was accompanied by Public Security Chief Major General Tariq Al Hassan and was welcomed upon arrival by the Royal Medical Services Commander.

During the visit, General Shaikh Rashid was briefed on the team's procedures and measures

to ensure the health and safety of citizens and residents.

He highly valued the dedication of HRH the Crown Prince to ensure coordination and performance integration amongst all concerned authorities within the framework of the national team.

The Interior Minister was

also informed about procedures and measures. He expressed his thanks and appreciation to the members of the contact-tracing team for their distinguished round-the-clock efforts to contribute to limiting the spread of the coronavirus and overcoming the crisis.

He also hailed the efforts of the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science to set up the team, in cooperation with concerned authorities.

The Interior Minister wished everyone success in carrying out their duties.

## Blacklisted European woman who re-entered Bahrain using friend's passport loses appeal

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The First Supreme Criminal Court of Appeal upheld the imprisonment of a European woman who re-entered Bahrain using her friend's passport, after she was blacklisted by a court order for her involvement in a prostitution case.

The woman was sentenced by the High Criminal Court last January to three years behind bars and deportation, and was blacklisted from re-entering the Kingdom.

The details of the case showed that the woman was deported on December 5, 2018, after she was convicted of depending on vice for a living. According to her statements in the interrogation, she stayed with a friend in a neighbouring GCC country for less than a month.

The woman also said that she stole her friend's passport and entered Bahrain with it, justifying her action by telling investigators that she wanted to stay with her GCC boyfriend here.

The appellant succeeded in passing the passports and customs checks at Bahrain International Airport. However, she was arrested at a local hotel after police received a tip about the matter.

In a similar scenario to the first case, in which she was convicted, the woman was caught and charged with prostitution.

"I wanted to stay with my boyfriend at the hotel. This is why I came back in Bahrain," she told prosecutors, denying the prostitution charges. She also claimed: "I was in another GCC country and I just wanted to come and be with him for a while."

## Gulf national gets 15 years for smuggling hashish

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A Gulf national was sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined BD5,000 by the First High Criminal Court for attempting to smuggle more than 46kg of hashish into Bahrain through King Fahad Causeway.

The man was also blacklisted by the court from re-entering the Kingdom after completing his sentence.

Court files showed that the man was caught while entering Bahrain through the Causeway on August 26 last year. It was also shown that the investiga-

tions of the Anti-Narcotics Department in the Interior Ministry indicated that the defendant was attempting to smuggle a large quantity of drugs on the aforementioned date.

The man was stopped for intensive inspection by the officers of the Customs Affairs on the Causeway, after they were alerted by the Anti-Narcotics Department. In the inspection, the officers detected five pieces of hashish that weighed 46.6kg.

According to the officers' testimonies, the pieces were professionally stashed in coffee packets and covered with hot sauce to deceive police dogs.

Additionally, the officers stated that the pieces were hidden in the box allocated for the air filter of the engine under the vehicle's hood.

The defendant was immediately arrested and referred to the Anti-Narcotics police.

Furthermore, a blood and urine test showed traces of methamphetamine.

After completing his legal procedures, the man was referred by the Department to the Public Prosecution, which interrogated him and charged him of smuggling drugs with the intent of selling, as well as drug abuse.

## Woman convicted in flesh trade loses final appeal

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A woman, who is serving a three-year prison sentence for her involvement in vice, recently got her final appeal rejected by the Court of Cassation.

This comes after the woman previously got her punishment reduced from five years to three years by the High Criminal Court.

The case surfaced when the defendant's neighbour lodged a complaint against her to the Northern Governorate Police Directorate, claiming that he caught her on the roof of their building in an inappropriate position with an Asian delivery man.

The neighbour told the police that the delivery man, when asked, said he paid the woman an amount in return of having sexual intercourse with her on the rooftop of the building, alleging that he had handed the money to her 10-year-old son.

According to the neighbour's testimony, the woman frequently received strangers at her apartment, offering them sex in return for money. He additionally testified that majority of the men were of Asian nationality and a number of them confirmed to him that they paid the woman for sexual intercourse.

On February 1 of last year, the woman was referred to the Public Prosecution, which interrogated her and referred to the Minor Criminal Court for trial. The woman confessed in the interrogation that she completely relied on vice to make a living.

She was initially sentenced by the court to five years' imprisonment. However, she appealed against the verdict and the High Criminal Court reduced the jail term to three years. The woman appealed once again before the Court of Cassation, which rejected her plea and upheld the imprisonment sentence.

## Coronavirus claims among Jaw inmates denied

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The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) denied yesterday allegations that there are inmates infected with the coronavirus (COVID-19) at the Correction and Rehabilitation Centre at Jaw Prison.

NIHR chairperson Maria Khoury commented: "The visits that NIHR regularly makes to correction and rehabilitation centers and to detention centers are not new, but this time our visit to Jaw was to review the human rights and medical care provided to inmates within the precautionary measures taken by the centre's management to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Bahrain."

"Following our assessment of the measures taken towards inmates and security men, I can say that the center's management is dealing with the situation in accordance with the international standards recommended by the World Health Organisation to prevent the spread of the virus among inmates."

A medical staff is available to provide medical care and neces-



**There is no coronavirus case among the inmates and that everything rumored in this regard has no basis whatsoever on the ground.**

NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIRPERSON MARIA KHOURY

sary services, she added.

"I confirm that there is no coronavirus case among the inmates and that everything rumored in this regard has no basis whatsoever on the ground," she said.

Khoury added that she appreciated the measures taken by the

center's administration to comply with the standards to prevent the spread of the virus among inmates.

"It is being done in a way that does not harm their rights and protects the health and safety of everyone," she explained. "I stress the need to avoid spreading baseless allegations, unsupported rumors and groundless news, especially during such critical times."

NIHR deputy chairperson Khalid Al Shaer said the precautionary measures followed by the center's management were ideal and followed internationally recognised standards.

"The appropriate medical examinations are conducted for the inmates," he said. "Inmates can also make video calls in compensation for the regular visits that had been suspended as a precautionary measure to protect the health of all."

Those who seek information about the situation, need assistance or wish to report complaints, can avail of the hotline provided by the institution, he added.

## Indian man commits suicide



Koshy during happier times

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An Indian father-of-two was found hanging from a ceiling fan at his apartment in Um Al Hassam yesterday morning.

Chacko Koshy, aged 40, was employed at a private printing company.

He hails from Kollam district in Kerala, India. He is survived by his wife and children.

Koshy's funeral will be conducted in Bahrain. The family decided this as his sister's family is also in the Kingdom.

The date and further details are to be determined.

## Traffic e-services reinforce social distancing

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Eighty per cent of applications at the Legal Affairs Division of the General Directorate of Traffic were processed electronically in the second half of March.

This was revealed yesterday by Legal Affairs Division acting head Captain Khalid

Abu Qees.

Captain Abu Qees asserted that the department is continuing to work on promoting social distancing, especially through e-services.

He said that the electronic processing can be attributed to community awareness, in light of measures being taken to combat the coronavirus (COVID-19).