

Iran govt rapped for 'covering up' Corona cases, spreading disease

Gulf Air suspends flights
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Gulf Air, the National Carrier of the Kingdom, has confirmed that it was complying with the Civil Aviation Affairs (CAA) order to temporarily suspend flights to and from Dubai International Airport for 48 hours.

The CAA urged all citizens and residents of Bahrain who are currently in areas affected by the Coronavirus (COVID 19) and who were planning to return to the Kingdom to call the following number +973 17227555.

The Gulf Air Contact Centre will contact all affected passengers and advises passengers to check the airline website before traveling or to call the Gulf Air Contact Centre for more information on +973 17373737.

Gulf Air apologised to its affected passengers for any inconvenience that this may have caused and is working closely with the concerned authorities in the Kingdom and to take all precautionary and preventive measures in order to ensure the safety and security of the citizens and residents of the Kingdom along with its passengers and crew.

All cases of coronavirus reported in the Kingdom involve individuals who have travelled to Iran

● **Iran is one of the five countries that the Kingdom has placed a travel ban.**

● **Iran's Health Ministry yesterday claimed that the total number of infections was 61 with 12 deaths.**

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Iran's covering up of the real number of cases of coronavirus in the country has con-

tributed to the spread of the disease regionally, a Bahraini analyst group said yesterday.

Iran's assertion that it only has less than a 100 cases of coronavirus is misleading and gave pilgrims and visitors from the region a false sense of security, according to Bahraini analyst group Citizens For Bahrain.

"The excessive secrecy and deliberate hiding of data from international health officials has allowed rates of infection to spiral out of control," the group stated.

"Iran's Health Ministry on 24 February claimed that the total number of infections was 61, with 12 deaths. However, a Qom dep-

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CITIZENS FOR BAHRAIN

erty asserted that the death toll was at least 50.

"Experts point out that such a death toll in reality probably means that thousands of people are already affected; hence the

numbers of foreign pilgrims returning from Qom to their home countries and spreading the disease further afield.

"There are reportedly also growing numbers of cases in other cities across Iran, suggesting that the disease is already way out of control," it stated.

Iran's deputy health minister, Iraj Harirchi, who has spearheaded the country's efforts to contain the coronavirus, has contracted the illness, the Health Ministry said on Tuesday, renewing concerns about the spread of the virus in the country.

Iran is one of the five countries that Bahrain has placed a travel ban.

All cases of coronavirus reported in the Kingdom involve individuals who have travelled to Iran.

"One of the early reasons for the regime's cover up was its unsuccessful desire to avoid a terrible turnout in the majlis elections. In the event, most voters didn't bother to vote in a historically low turnout.

"However, this was less to do with Coronavirus and more because the Guardian Council had struck down thousands of non-extremist candidates, meaning that the reformist wing of the regime was annihilated in the vote," Citizens For Bahrain stated.

14 pharmacies warned over increasing face mask prices

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In light of the immensely increasing demand for face masks, and in a bid to curb the manipulation of prices, 14 private pharmacies received warnings from the authorities for raising the prices of face masks.

Industry, Commerce and Tourism Minister Zayed Al Zayani confirmed this in a statement yesterday, clarifying that the move comes within the ministry's efforts to protect consumers.

Mr Al Zayani announced, while addressing the Council of Representatives yesterday, that he has

issued a ministerial resolution yesterday to specify to the price cap of face masks sold in the market.

However, the minister didn't specify the figure in his statement nor he mentioned any of the warned pharmacies he was referring to.

The minister also explained to the MPs that "the move comes within the Consumer Protection Law and is a legal right of the ministry to prohibit any manipulation and misuse of the current circumstances, which is witnessed by Bahrain, the region and the whole world".

Mr Al Zayani affirmed that the



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MR AL ZAYANI

ministry is taking "strong procedures" to deter others from committing such violations, clarifying that "face masks are the most sought after commodity in Bahrain

today".

He also called upon such establishments, pharmacies, to adhere to its responsibility towards the society and added that the issue

is global, while he referred to his recent visit to Italy.

"I was in a big capital of a European country two weeks ago and there were no face masks. Today's world situation and the tragedy it is experiencing is surprising and big," he said.

Tribune yesterday reported that unprecedented demand on face masks has drained its stocks from pharmacies in the Kingdom.

This comes as a result of the increasing fear of the coronavirus aka Covid-19, as the health authorities in Bahrain confirmed the rising number of cases.

'Brave doctors' role hailed in fight against Corona

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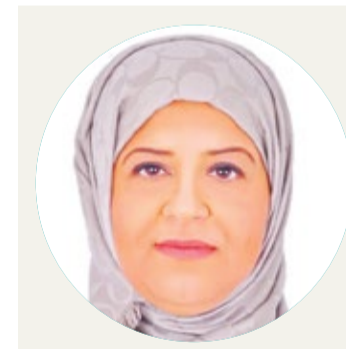
Dr Ghada Al Qassim, Chairman of the Bahrain Medical Society (BMS), has applauded the efforts made by doctors in tackling coronavirus, and their effective role in applying best medical and health practices in examination and treatment.

She pointed out that doctors have shown great prowess in dealing with suspected and infected cases.

Dr Al Qassim noted in this regard the efforts of all medical and health staff, including nurses and lab technicians.

She said that the medical and health teams in the Kingdom have shown great efficiency in assuming their responsibility in such unprecedented emergency.

Dr Al Qassim affirmed the medical society's support for all govern-



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DR AL QASSIM

ment decisions and measures and commended the plans and efforts exerted by the supreme council of health and all governmental and private agencies in combating the virus.

"We value the efforts made to equip the infrastructure in the health sector to deal with cases of coronavirus infection, and the

preparations that included training of medical and health staff, and examination procedures in border entry points, schools and in other places, this is in addition to setting up quarantine areas.

"All of these preparations contributed to dealing with cases of corona infection accurately and smoothly," said Dr Al Qassim.

Induction ceremony



An induction ceremony was held for the new executive committee of Indian Ladies Association at Ramada Wyndham, City Centre. The Second Secretary at the Indian Embassy, Ms Renu Yadav was the chief guest at the function. ILA President Reena Sreedhar and Vice-President Sarada Aiith attended the event.

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