

Pragmatism at core of countering coronavirus: UAE minister

Fri, 2020-04-17 21:38

LONDON: The pragmatism of governments and religious leaders has been at the core of countering the spread of coronavirus, the UAE's assistant minister at the Office of Public and Cultural Diplomacy said at a webinar on Friday.

"A number of prominent and conservative, but very well established, religious leaders have sided with political leaders to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as halting Friday prayers in mosques, which are very important in Islam," Omar Ghobash said.

The webinar, titled "Coronavirus, Reason and Religion," was hosted by the Emirates Society in the UK and moderated by its Chairman Alistair Burt.

Ghobash praised the pragmatism of the UAE and Saudi Arabia during the pandemic, especially with the latter being home of the Two Holy Mosques in Makkah and Madinah.

"Saudi Arabia has shown pragmatism, and took scientific and medical advice as well as opened discussions with consultations of the Hajj," he said.

"The UAE was able to learn from the experiences in China and South Korea in terms of testing," he added.

"Our particular mix of leadership and tradition shows that we're forward looking and have a sense of continuity ... We've always been open to knowledge," Ghobash said.

"The UAE government has always had a technology-first focus, and it was quick to realize that Friday prayers are now a dangerous luxury."

Among those attending the webinar were former UK Ambassador to Saudi Arabia William Patey, Rev. Andy Thompson of St. Andrews Church in Abu Dhabi, global historian and author Peter Frankopan, and the former UK Defense Attaché in Abu Dhabi Jeremy Williams.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[UAE](#)

[Saudi Arabia](#)

[Omar Ghobash](#)

[Coronavirus](#)

UAE ranks among top 10 countries in coronavirus treatment efficacy
Saudi Arabia faces coronavirus crisis from position of strength: finance minister

[Arab coalition: Houthis have violated ceasefire in Yemen 114 times in 24 hours](#)

Fri, 2020-04-17 21:45

RIYADH: The Houthis have violated the ceasefire in Yemen 114 times during last the 24 hours, the Arab coalition said on Friday.

The coalition said it is committed to the ceasefire and supports the efforts of the UN special envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths.

It added that it is exercising the utmost degree of self-restraint but is

reserving its right to self-defence on the front.

On Thursday, the coalition said that it had recorded 100 Houthi violations of the truce.

The Arab coalition fighting to restore the legitimate Yemeni government recently announced a two-week ceasefire in Yemen that came into effect on April 9.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Arab Coalition](#)

[Yemen](#)

[Houthis](#)

Arab Coalition says it has recorded 100 Houthi violations in 24 hours
Houthi militia breach cease-fire 241 times – Arab coalition

[Dubai extends national sterilization](#)

program by one week

Fri, 2020-04-17 19:08

DUBAI: Dubai has announced that it will extend the comprehensive national sterilization program for one week in efforts to curb the outbreak of the coronavirus, Emirates News Agency reported on Friday.

The emirate announced a two-week lockdown starting on April 4 at 8 p.m. to disinfect certain areas and contain the coronavirus.

As it stands, the UAE's total number of coronavirus infections stands at 5,825 cases, with the death toll at 35.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Dubai](#)

[UAE](#)

[Coronavirus](#)

Dubai transforms World Trade Centre into COVID-19 hospital
Dubai issues new movement permit restrictions

Algeria mobilizes prisoners to make coronavirus protection gear

Author:

AFP

ID:

1587135791525763400

Fri, 2020-04-17 14:57

ALGIERS: Inmates at 30 Algerian prisons are being mobilized to make personal protective equipment to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus, official news agency APS reported.

Authorities will "open sewing workshops for the production of 200,000 masks by prisoners in 30 penitentiaries... to meet their own needs and those of the courts," prisons chief Faycal Bourbala told APS on Thursday.

Prisoners will also make clothing and protective suits for medical personnel, he added, with disinfection chambers also being manufactured at three facilities.

Prisoners will take part on a voluntary basis at the sewing workshops, which already exist and mainly attract female detainees who want to become dressmakers.

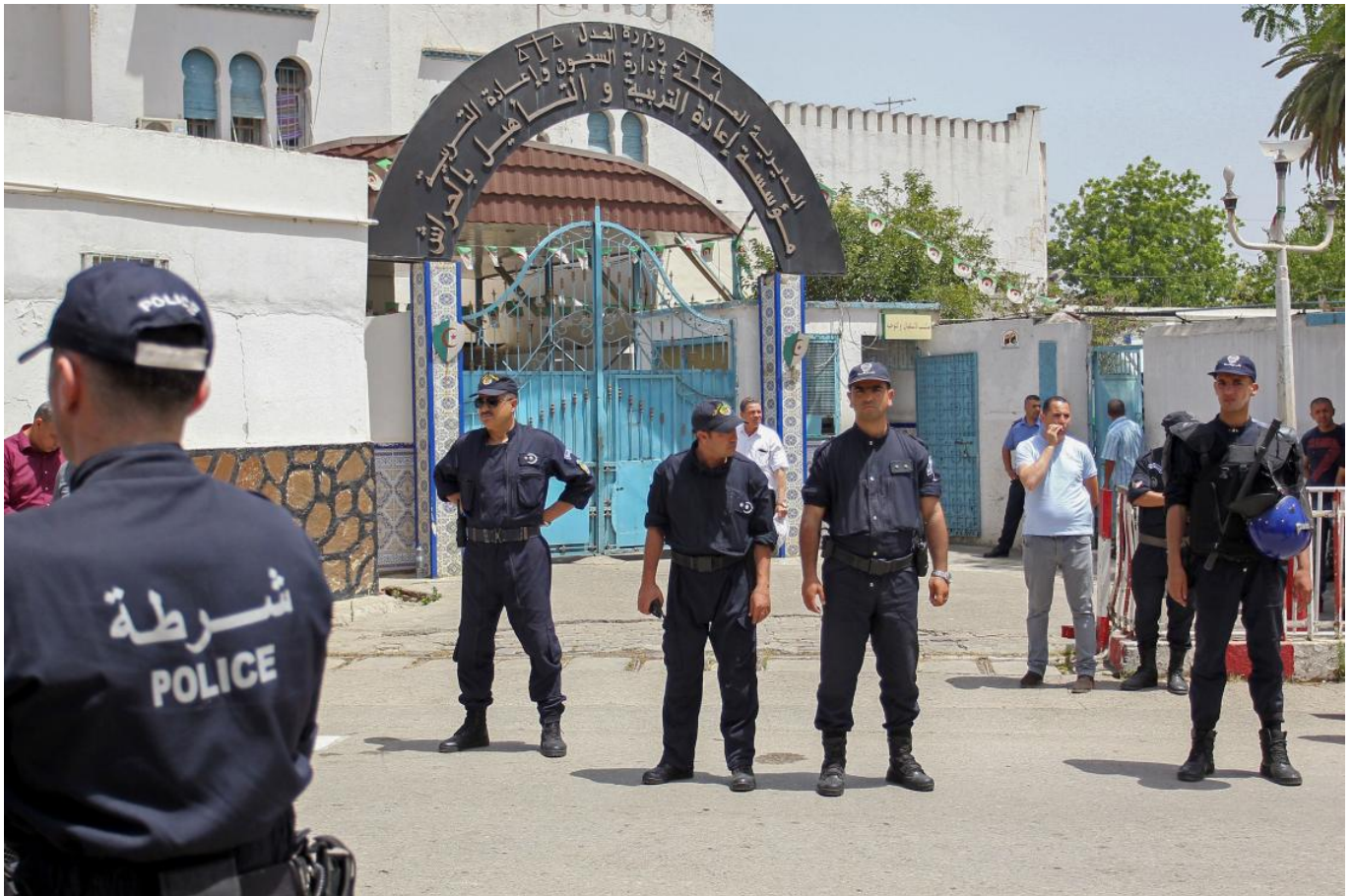
Authorities say no confirmed cases of the COVID-19 illness have been detected among 58,000 inmates at the country's 150 prison facilities.

Since the start of the outbreak, the justice ministry has suspended family visits and ordered new prisoners into 14-day quarantines in isolated rooms.

Inmates are not allowed to leave the prisons except in case of emergency, and all direct contact with their lawyers has been banned.

According to officially declared figures, Algeria has seen Africa's deadliest coronavirus outbreak so far.

It has seen 348 deaths and 2,268 cases since the end of February, from a population of 44 million.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Algeria](#)

[prisons](#)

[Coronavirus](#)

[COVID-19](#)

Human rights groups urge Israel to release virus-vulnerable Palestinian prisoners
Amnesty: Prisoners killed by Iran's security forces during coronavirus protests

[Turkey parliament passes law to mitigate coronavirus impact](#)

Author:

Fri, 2020-04-17 15:45

DUBAI: The Turkish parliament has ratified a bill that would alleviate the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic in the country.

Among the raft of measures in the legislation includes the postponement of rental payments for three months on several types of state-owned immovable

properties. Municipalities and their sub-institutions will also be able to postpone water bills for three months for private homes and companies.

Municipalities will also be able to provide financial support to natural and legal persons who have public transport certificates or postpone several types of payments to provide uninterrupted public transport services, Hurriyet Daily News reported.

Annual advertisement and environment taxes supposed to be collected from enterprises, but were closed due to the coronavirus lockdown measures, will not be collected during this period.

Payments on student loans have also been postponed for three months, while those on some agricultural loans have been postponed until next year, the paper added.

The validity of some commercial licenses has been likewise extended by the newly passed legislations.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Coronavirus](#)

[Turkey](#)

Turkey's new amnesty law excludes dissident journalists and politicians
Turkey's interior minister says resigns over short-notice coronavirus curfew