

## CAPTAINS CORNER

Taking off  
into the world  
of safer travel

CAPT. MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

In the 'nineties, a friend approached me with a business proposal to invest in a security printing press to print air tickets and bank cheques. Although it was well before the internet took over our lives, I did not show interest – later, the friend always said it had been a wise decision because we now hardly need security printing for travel. Whether by bus, rail or air, we can download our travel document on our smartphone and move from one place to another. Although bank cheques are still used widely, digital transactions are slowly gaining ground.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we travel even further. True, the travel industry took a major knock because of governments around the world placing restrictions on travel in a bid to control the pandemic. But far greater has been the implementation of several technological measures to making travel safer healthwise and while airports continue to look to low-tech solutions like masks and social distancing to help reduce the risk of Covid-19, some are also turning to technology to boost safety and promote consumer confidence.

From touchless kiosks to using your face as a passport, thermal cameras to CT scanners that create 3D models of bags to better detect dangerous materials or threats without having to handle the baggage, the technological advances and new safety features in travel are transforming airports across the world.

In our Bahrain of course, we have the spanking new Bahrain Airport and the Kingdom is one of the first governments to participate in the IATA health passport experiment with its national carrier, “to help pave the way for re-establishing global communication with coronavirus risk management.”

Travellers with a biometric passport, bound for London, Athens and Singapore, were able to try the app that helps them manage their travel in line with any government requirements for COVID-19 testing or any information about the vaccine.

Further, Gulf Air passengers are now able to create a “digital passport” that allows them to match their travel routes with the coronavirus health requirements at their destinations, and verify their compliance with them.

All these tech changes will stay with us even after the pandemic and I am sure we can build on our collective progress as we learn to pick up threads in the post-pandemic world.

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

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Police directorates call for full  
adherence to COVID protocols

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Police directorates and Security departments in the Kingdom have urged citizens and residents to adhere strictly to COVID-19 measures to help battle the outbreak effectively.

In a statement, the directorates urged people to continue wearing face masks, restrict gathering to members of the same family, follow COVID-19 protocols at mosques and funerals, ensure social distancing in public places to protect society.

“Violators of COVID-19 protocols will attract stringent penalties and legal actions,” top police officials in the four governorates said.

“There is a need for full commitment to precautionary measures recommended by the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus to address the pandemic effectively.”

Police directorates and security departments said that full compliance and individual awareness is most important for limiting the spread of the virus.

The directorates said they booked 79,034 people for not wearing face masks, pressed 9,188 charges against people not maintaining social distancing measures and carried out 10,261 awareness campaigns.

During the past week, the Northern Governorate Police Directorate carried out 22 awareness campaigns, charged 616 people for not wearing a face mask in public places and shops, and took 13 measures for maintaining social distancing standards. The Capital Governorate Police Directorate carried out 420 awareness campaigns, registered 929 cases of not wearing a face mask, and took 15 measures to maintain social distancing standards.



Police officers during a campaign to check COVID-19 related violations

**Violators of COVID-19 protocols will attract stringent penalties and legal actions**

TOP POLICE OFFICIALS IN THE FOUR GOVERNORATES SAID

In turn, the Muharraq Governorate Police Directorate booked 1,177 people for not wearing a face mask, carried out 21 awareness campaigns, and took 12 measures

to maintain social distancing. The Southern Governorate carried out 27 awareness campaigns, pressed charges against 111 violations for not wearing a face mask, and took 13 measures to maintain social distancing standards.

National Ambulance centre responded to 13,563 calls related to COVID-19 cases. The Ministry of Transportation attended 889 calls which included transporting 1,786 patients during the past week. MoT attended to 97,273 cases since the start of the pandemic.

Meanwhile, Civil Defence officials carried out 294,123 disinfection

and sterilisation operations and supervised several with the participation of volunteers.

They also trained 1,230 volunteers to carry out sterilisation of mosques.

The officials are also continuing to hold training courses on the correct methods of disinfection operations.

The courses organised by the Civil defence had 1,187 people from the private sector and 1,051 people from government agencies. The number of volunteers since March of last year had reached 6,134.

## COVID-19 violations: Five restaurants shut

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The Public Health Administration announced the closure of 5 restaurants for a week and took actions against 53 restaurants for violating Covid-19 precautionary measures.

The Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, and the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority joined hands for the campaign.

The closures were during an inspection campaign that covered 190 restaurants in various provinces.

Restaurants should follow



protective measures outlined by the National Taskforce for combating the COVID-19 pandemic as per Ministerial Resolution No. 51 of 2020.

Accordingly, only those completed 14 days after taking their second Covid-19 jabs, those who had recovered, and above 18-years of age are allowed entry at res-

taurants and cafes.

Restaurants are also required to measure the temperature of visitors and reduce their capacity of permissible percentage.

Parking and customer waiting areas should have marks to ensure social distancing and prevent crowding.

Restaurants should also sterilise and disinfect surfaces and follow-up of all required preventive and precautionary measures.

Officials also ordered shops found not fully adhering to the instructions to correct them immediately.

Twitter account hacked,  
says Health Ministry

● Hackers also posted a tweet

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The Twitter account of the Health Ministry of Bahrain has been hacked briefly by some malicious hackers.

In a tweet, the ministry wrote, “Twitter account had been hacked this evening, Friday.” The hackers

also posted a “wrong and incorrect” tweet, Health Ministry said. That tweet now stands deleted.

The ministry also confirmed launching an investigation into the incident.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

“Competent authorities began the investigation immediately and took the necessary measures,” ministry said.

## Long-term Bahrain resident dies

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A long term resident of Bahrain, Joseph Mathew (65), passed away in Bahrain on Thursday following a cardiac arrest in the Middle East Hospital.

Mathew, the General Manager of Airco Air Conditioning Co., has been in Bahrain for 35



Joseph Mathew

years.

He is survived by his wife Latha and daughters Dr Angelin Mariya Mathew and Angina Joseph Mathew. Sony Varghese is Son-in-law and Reydon grandchild.

The funeral will be in Kottayam in the south Indian state of Kerala.



The Maharashtra Cultural Society, in collaboration with Angel Toastmasters Club, organised a “Speech Craft” programme to help its members develop their leadership and communication skills. The first meeting was held on 18 May 2021.