

Humanitarian First during the New Coronavirus Outbreak in Saudi Arabia

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On March 12, 2020 WHO announces “coronavirus disease 2019” COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic which is a respiratory disease spreading from person-to-person caused by a novel (new) coronavirus [1]. The outbreak of COVID-19 may be stressful for people leading to fear and anxiety about a disease that can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children [2]. On March 7, 2020 the first confirmed case of new COVID-19 was reported in Saudi Arabia and the number of cases increasing [3]. As a result, the Saudi authorities have implemented several measures and policies including restricted time of working hours, holding schools, travel ban, quarantine, and curfew. As the number of infected cases and deaths increasing nationally and internationally and the media started to publicize much about this pandemic the community responses were variable behaviorally, psychologically and physically as reported in previous pandemics or traumatic events [4-7]. Public health emergencies and psychological consequences have been discussed in literature from different perspectives [8-11].

During this crisis, the Government of Saudi Arabia, represented by king Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, issued several orders to ensure the maintenance of the physical and psychological health of both citizens and residents, where it sacrificed everything for human beings as a priority and provided all the material and moral facilities so that the citizen and resident can feel psychologically safe.

My Government has seen that investing in human beings is the biggest profit during COVID-19 pandemic. One of the humanitarian decisions issued by the King is to treat the citizen and the resident as well as the resident illegally free of charge in all hospitals and public and private health facilities. Such decisions taken by my Government during the Corona pandemic make me, as a psychiatrist, feel that my Government has brought human being and man above all, regardless of any religious, ethnic, political or economic considerations. The psychological support provided by my government during this crisis is very professional and has provided electronic platforms to provide everyone with the information they need and those who have psychiatric illnesses by delivering the medicine to their homes and communicating with mental and medical caregivers through the hotline or some applications that provide these services such as the application of “Anat”, which the licensed doctors can prescribe the medicine to patients with stable health through this application without having to go to the clinic. Government and military hospitals have also provided hotlines for communicating with patients and cars transporting medicine to patients’ homes.

In conclusion, we are all responsible for eliminating COVID-19 and together we will be able to apply health and preventive instructions to reduce and stop the spread of this virus.

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