



WHO Representative in Iraq Dr Adham Ismail discusses COVID-19 preventive measures during mass gatherings in the month of Shaban with the Secretary-General of Kadhimain Holy Shrine Dr Haider Hussain Al-Shammari

>Baghdad, Iraq, 3 March 2020 – As millions are expected to visit Iraq in the coming month for religious events, WHO is working with religious leaders and health officials to discuss necessary preventive measures to improve planning for mass gathering events during visits to holy sites to protect visitors from possible coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infections.

“So far, the measures taken by the Government of Iraq to limit the spread of COVID-19 comply with WHO recommendations. Other urgent preparations, however, are critically needed, such as designating proper isolation facilities,” said WHO Representative in Iraq Dr Adham Ismail. “Iraq has conducted a risk assessment and health authorities are calling on clerics to support Iraq’s decision to avoid gatherings as much as possible to prevent the spread of this disease. WHO supports that position,” he added.

Iraq announced the first COVID-19 infection on 25 February 2020. This number has since increased to 26 cases on 3 March, all among nationals coming from Islamic Republic of Iran.

“Strict measures have been taken by religious authorities at Al-Kadhimain Holy Shrine to preserve the safety of workers and visitors alike. These measures include the use of personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, by all shrine workers, in addition to closing the site for sterilization,” said the Secretary-General of Kadhimain Holy Shrine Dr Haider Hussain Al-Shammari.

WHO is providing technical advice and recommendations on visits to holy sites to prevent the spread of disease, including COVID-19. This includes best methods for sterilizing surfaces and equipment, the use of thermal detection devices at entrances and checkpoints, and proper referral and isolation measures for suspected cases.

For more information, please contact:

Ms Baraa Shaba
WHO Communications Officer
+96478000100244
shabab@who.int

Ms Ajyal Sultany
WHO Communications Officer
+964 7740 892 878
sultanya@who.int

Ms Pauline Ajello
WHO Communications Officer
+964 7729 877 288
ajellopa@who.int

Thursday 25th of April 2024 05:07:37 PM