

CONNEXIONBLOG

It sparked an argument in Lebanon ... Inoculating MPs is a “sovereign decision”

February 25,2021



While the world awaits the vaccination campaign against the Corona pandemic that has been launched in a large number of countries, the Lebanese are busy with the news that the President of the Republic, Michel Aoun and 10 of his presidential team, received the vaccine in the Republican Palace, and the day before yesterday, Tuesday, that the vaccine was given to 16 deputies with a number of Parliament employees inside Their parliamentary offices and not officially approved vaccination centers.

The debate did not subside officially and publicly about the background of what happened, so many considered it a reflection of the logic of political clientelism that controls the joints of the country, especially that receiving vaccinations did not take into account the priorities set by the national plan to combat the Corona virus, which prompted the World Bank, which funds the vaccination campaign in Lebanon, to hint at the possibility Stopping his financial support in the event that abuses continue, and there is an anticipation of measures that he can take in this regard in the next stage.

Vaccinate a “sovereign”

Despite the Parliament’s General Secretariat’s announcement that these representatives have exceeded 70 years, the negative reactions continued, and was finally about the position of the Minister of Health in the caretaker government, Hamad Hassan, yesterday, Wednesday, where he said that he “made a sovereign decision and decided that the medical teams go to the House of Representatives for a procedure The process of vaccination of the deputies in appreciation of their efforts, because the parliament met during 7 days in a row and approved the law of emergency use of the vaccine.

Hassan’s position sparked the anger of a large segment of the Lebanese, who denounced the status of vaccinating MPs with the “sovereign decision.”

The head of the National Vaccination Committee, Dr. Abdel-Rahman Al-Bizri, had signaled his resignation in protest against the vaccination of MPs as an act of discrimination among the Lebanese, but he retracted it.

Launched MPs who have received the vaccine series positions illustrations, including Elie Ferzli Vice Chairman of the House of Representatives (71 years), who explained their access mechanism on vaccine-documented manner, expressing his anger at the position of Regional Director of the Department of Mashreq Bank Group Saroj Kumar, who threatened to suspend the financing of vaccines, He accused him of playing a “political role in this field,” and called on the bank to send an alternative representative.



Minister of Health Hamad Hassan inaugurates the vaccination campaign in Lebanon in the middle of this month (European)

Where is the “justice” with the vaccine?

While this country – which is inhabited by about 6 million people – suffers from mismanagement and unprecedented economic, political and social crises that have exacerbated after the explosion of the Beirut port on August 4, 2020, suspicions are raised about the vaccination process, after news leaked about hospital chaos and complaints about non-compliance. The dates specified on the Ministry of Health platform, in which the government requested everyone to register on the Internet, raises the concerns of the Lebanese people about the possibility of being deprived of a “fair distribution of the vaccine.”

Here, the Executive Director of the Lebanese Association for the Promotion of Transparency, Julian Corson considers that what happened against the background of vaccinating officials reflected a structural crisis of trust between the Lebanese and government institutions and their representatives, and between the latter and the international community, which would threaten the health of the Lebanese “if justice and transparency are absent after major lapses are recorded The process of pollination. “

Corson points out to Al-Jazeera Net that the most important challenge is to measure the number of people who came on the platform compared to the number required to reach community immunity.

This point is made by a researcher at Information International, Muhammad Shams El-Din, by pointing out that only about 670,000 Lebanese (so far) have registered through the platform out of the 3,800 people who are supposed to register their names.

Shams El Din added to Al-Jazeera Net that their recent statistics before the arrival of the vaccine showed that 38% of the Lebanese refuse to take it, and that 41% of them want to receive the vaccine, and 31% have not decided yet (64% of them turned out to be due to their fear of its side effects).

And at the beginning of this week, the American University Crisis Observatory published a research report in which it considered that the current slow pace in the vaccination process will not enable Lebanon to reach community immunity before the summer of 2025, because 25,000 people received the vaccine in the first week – according to the Ministry of Health – which is according to the observatory only 0.52% of the target population.

Reflecting on the state of chaos in the vaccination process, the observatory also pointed out that more than 50% of the people who received the vaccine did not register their names on the platform, which raises – according to the observatory – questions about transparency and the approved standards.

But Shams El Din finds an exaggeration in saying that Lebanon takes until the summer of 2025 to reach societal immunity, and is betting on speeding up the vaccination process in the coming months in the event that thousands of additional doses arrive from international companies other than Pfizer.

Media Office in the Presidency: President Aoun and the first Lebanese woman received the vaccine against “Corona”, along with ten members of the close and lieutenant team of the President who registered their names according to the rules on the vaccination platform

— Lebanese Presidency (@LBpresidency) February 23, 2021

So what is needed?

Corson believes that what is required is first: to tighten monitoring and not give the vaccine to those who are not registered on the platform, second: to accelerate the vaccination process by involving municipalities in organizing them in order to ensure a fair distribution to the various regions, and for the Ministry of Health to publish daily the number of people who will be vaccinated, and third: The necessity to update the data with the relevant ministries to ensure transparency, after the emergence of a major conflict in numbers.

The course of the vaccine

This situation is accompanied by an increase in the number of cases in Corona, as the cumulative number reached more than 362 thousand injured, with about 911 critical cases, and the number of deaths reached 4508 cases as of yesterday, Wednesday, according to the Ministry of Health.

Lebanon began the vaccination process on February 14th, after it received the first batch of 28,000 doses of the “Pfizer-BioNTech” vaccine, after the World Bank allocated 34 million dollars for the purchase of vaccines as part of a national vaccination campaign covering two million Person, provided that the remaining doses arrive in the subsequent stages of vaccination.

In mid-January, caretaker Prime Minister Hassan Diab signed a decree providing the necessary funds for 2 million 730 thousand doses of vaccines through the “COVAX” platform. The Minister of Health had previously announced that Lebanon had received other batches of the vaccine. “Oxford-AstraZeneca” (AstraZeneca-Oxford) British in March / March next.

In the first phase of vaccination it was supposed to be limited only to workers in the field of health care and over the age of 75 years, then those who are over the age of 65 years, as well as those over 54 years old and suffering from a special health condition.



Calls in Lebanon to tighten monitoring of the vaccination process against Corona (Reuters)

Doctors and nurses worried

In the context, the head of the Lebanese Doctors Syndicate, Sharaf Abu Sharaf, expresses his lack of confidence in the progress of the vaccination process, pointing out to Al Jazeera Net that less than 50% of the approximately 12,000 doctors received the vaccine, and 31 of them died due to their infection with the virus.

The captain stressed that the violations are still continuing, calling for the need to involve the private sector in securing vaccines by allowing the Syndicate to purchase them through the Ministry of Health, to speed up the process of vaccinating the medical and nursing staff, “because time is no longer on our side.”

For its part, the Syndicate of Nurses in Lebanon, Mirna Doumit, indicated to Al Jazeera Net that less than 5 thousand nurses out of 16 thousand received the vaccine only, despite the death of 5 nurses and infection of more than 1500 of them with the virus.

She expressed her condemnation of securing vaccines for officials, “because any exception – even for a single dose – must be from the share of the nurses who are responsible for the vaccination process.”

Doumit asserts that the national plan was excellent, but the major violations hit justice in the vaccination process, which necessitates reviewing it to correct the course, provided that everyone waits their turn before it is too late.

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