



Four more deaths from COVID-19

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Health reported four more deaths from the coronavirus (COVID-19) yesterday, bringing the total number of virus-related fatalities in the Kingdom to 108.

The deceased included an 80-year-old Bahraini woman, a 68-year-old Bahraini man, and two expatriate men aged 48 and 29.

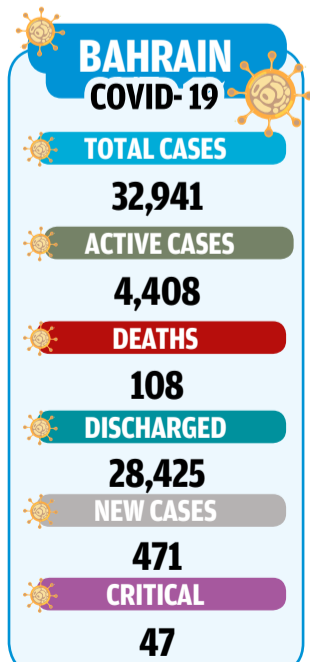
The Health Ministry expressed its condolences to the victims' families.

Meanwhile, the Ministry announced early this morning that out of 9,589 COVID-19 tests conducted yesterday, 471 new cases were detected. These included 274 expatriate workers, 190 contacts of active cases, and seven travel-related cases.

There were also 597 additional recoveries from the virus yesterday, bringing the Kingdom's total number of discharged individuals to 28,425.

The total number of current active cases went to 4,408, with 47 in critical condition and 118 cases receiving treatment. The remaining 4,361 cases are stable.

The total tests conducted increased to 666,248.



210 fils (includes VAT)



HRH the Crown Prince reaffirms strong Bahrain-US ties

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, held a remote meeting yesterday with General Kenneth F McKenzie Jr, commander of US Central Command.

HRH the Crown Prince reaf-



HRH the Crown Prince

Historical ties grow from strength to strength with His Majesty the King's support for expanded relations between Bahrain and the US

firmated that historical ties continue to go from strength to strength with His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's strong

support for expanded relations between Bahrain and the US, and concerted efforts aimed at upholding regional peace and security. HRH the Crown Prince and the General McKenzie also exchanged views on regional and international developments.

Bahrain Defence Force Chief-of-Staff Lt-General Dhiyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi also participated in the video conference.

Airport health checks

Ministry of Health issues COVID-19 guidelines for travellers arriving into Bahrain from July 21

All arriving passengers must shoulder BD30 cost of required COVID-19 test at airport

Travellers who test negative must self-isolate for 10 days, then pay for exit swab at an additional BD30

TDT Manama

The Ministry of Health announced last night that all travellers arriving into Bahrain International Airport (BIA) from 12am on July 21 will be required to shoulder the BD30 cost of mandatory coronavirus (COVID-19) testing.

Travellers who test negative are required to self-isolate for a period of 10 days and test again at the end of their quarantine period. Exit swabs will cost an additional BD30, to be incurred by travellers and paid for through the "BeAware Bahrain" mobile app or at the testing center. In this regard, all self-isolating cases are mandated to register on the app.

The Ministry affirmed that it continues to review screening measures as the global response to COVID-19 continues to evolve with the reopening of borders and resumption of international flights.

The Ministry emphasised that citizens and residents in Bah-



BD60 is the total amount to be shouldered by all incoming travellers, including test on arrival and exit swab following 10-day quarantine

rain will continue to be entitled to free COVID-19 medical treatment in line with international standards, and as outlined by the World Health Organisation.

Swimming pool precautionary measures issued; health centre fee suspension extended

The Minister of Health issued yesterday a set of requirements and detailed procedures that swimming pool facilities must follow once they are allowed to re-open.

These aim to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst pool users.

Facility management are obliged to provide a form to be filled by swimmers before entering, taking note of their personal information, contact details, and health status over the previous 14 days.

Face masks must also be worn when applicable.

Non-compliance of measures will result in the expulsion of violating individuals.

Facility management must also use approved chemicals to sterilise the pool's water, and not to allow use for two hours after the water has been disinfected.

The measures further include social distancing being

practised at all times.

Swimming lessons and groups of swimmers are also forbidden, while anyone with a body temperature of 37.5 degrees Celsius or higher will be barred from entering the facility and must leave immediately.

Meanwhile, the Health Minister issued a decision to extend the suspension of medical consultation fees in government health centers for expatriates, estimated at BD7, for an additional three months.

The Minister had originally announced to suspend the fees last April.

The new decree stipulates that the remaining remuneration for other health services will continue to be collected from institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Health for non-Bahrainis who are not government employees and their families, and who are not involved in the primary health care system.

The Ministry underlined that citizens intending to travel abroad must understand the entry procedures and requirements in place at their chosen destination. They must also sign a declaration form either through the "BeAware" app or handwritten prior to departure, agreeing to bear any medical

costs incurred while abroad as well as mandatory COVID-19 testing, at their own cost, and 10-day self-isolation upon return to Bahrain.

Those experiencing any symptoms associated with COVID-19, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath, must call 444 for medical advice.



HRH the Crown Prince during the virtual meeting

HRH the Crown Prince holds talks with outgoing US Ambassador

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander, and First Deputy Prime Minister, met remotely yesterday with outgoing US Ambassador Justin H. Siberell. HRH the Crown Prince expressed his appreciation for the role Ambassador Siberell has played in further strengthening bilateral ties between the Kingdom and the US during his tenure, and wished him success in his future endeavours.

HRH the Crown Prince noted that advancing these longstanding and multifaceted bilateral ties helped deliver mutually beneficial progress and prosperity. For his part, Ambassador Siberell expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to meet HRH the Crown Prince and for HRH's continued support towards the strengthening of Bahrain-US relations.

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Tourist visas' extended validity agreed

TDT | Manama

Bahrain and the US have reached an agreement to extend the validity of tourist visas granted to citizens of both countries from five to 10 years, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the US Embassy announced yesterday.

The agreement will be implemented at a future date, the statement said.

"This agreement is a reflection of the long and rich history of mutual cooperation, partner-

Together, our governments and citizens have endeavoured side-by-side in academic, industrial, healthcare, business, and social pursuits for over a century. This agreement broadens and enhances those pursuits.

JOINT STATEMENT FROM FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY AND US EMBASSY

ship, and friendship between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the US," the statement added.

"Together, our governments and citizens have endeavoured side-by-side in academic, indus-

trial, healthcare, business, and social pursuits for over a century. "This agreement will serve to broaden and enhance those continued pursuits."

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BAHRAIN, US MILITARY COOPERATION DISCUSSED



Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Shaikha Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa received at the BDF General Commander yesterday General Kenneth F McKenzie Jr, commander of US Central Command, and his accompanying delegation. Defence Affairs Minister Lieutenant-General Abdulla bin Hassan Al Nuaimi and BDF Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Dhiyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi were also present. The officials lauded the depth of the longstanding relations between Bahrain and the US, as well as ways to enhance them. They also praised the steady progress of bilateral military cooperation. Above, the officials during their meeting.

HRH the Crown Prince issues edicts

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, issued yesterday Edict 10 of 2020, re-structuring the National World Trade Organisation (WTO) Committee, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism.

The edict also named the Industry Ministry's Commerce Affairs undersecretary as its deputy chairman, and the Industry Ministry's Domestic and Foreign Trade assistant undersecretary as its secretary general.

It also named as committee members the Industry Ministry's Industrial Development assistant undersecretary, the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications' Ports Affairs assistant undersecretary, the Ministry of Finance and National Economy's Financial Relations and Investment as-

istant undersecretary, the Industry Ministry's Foreign Trade Relations director, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Organisations director, the Ministry of Interior's Customs Planning and Policy Affairs director, the Ministry of Health's Public Health director, the Central Bank of Bahrain's Financial Stability director, the National Oil and Gas Authority's Planning and Development director, the National Bureau for Revenue's Foreign Tax Relations director, the Supreme Council for the Environment's National Ozone officer, the Export Bahrain CEO, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry's first deputy chairman, and the Ministry of Information Affairs' marketing chief.

The edict stated that Edict 33/2013 on naming the members of the National WTO Committee was abrogated.

The edict also stated that all the edicts mentioned above in their respective capacities shall implement its provisions, which takes immediate effect upon publication in the Official

Gazette. Meanwhile, HRH the Crown Prince also issued yesterday Edict 11 of 2020, amending the classification of controlled narcotic or psychotropic substance schedules annexed to Law 15 of 2007 regarding Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The edict adds new substances to the second group (psychotropic substances) of Table II, and to the third group (precursors) of Table I, annexed to Law 15 of 2017 regarding Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, as below.

The second group (psychotropic substances): F-APIN-ACA5, Ethylone, Ethylphenidate, MDMB-CHMICA, Methiopropamine (MPA), Methyleth Cathinone (4-MEC), Pentadrone and XLR-11.

The third group (precursors): Anilino-N-Phenethylpiperidin 4 (ANPP), N-Penethyl-4-Pipenidone (NPP). The Ministers, each in their respective capacities, shall implement the provisions of the edict, which takes immediate effect upon publication in the Official Gazette.

AMH launches Telemedicine for reaching communities

TDT | Manama

American Mission Hospital (AMH) announces its Telemedicine service for all who seek care.

Resilience is the ability to absorb the shock and disruption to what is normal. We are on the brink of a "new normal" that will "witness a dramatic restructuring of the economic and social order in which business and society have traditionally operated". As a healthcare organisation we are in the frontline of this storm and will continue to play an important role in shaping the post COVID recovery.

We are all rethinking how we deliver healthcare, based on lessons learned in these last few months with COVID-19 pandemic. Like many healthcare organisations, AMH turned to Telemedicine to extend care and meet community needs during this time of physical distancing. We realise that Telemedicine is the need of the hour especially when the world is facing un-

precedented challenges with the coronavirus pandemic.

The main features of Telemedicine is allowing the patient to connect with AMH and book virtual consultations with our Doctors. To allow patients to keep a complete digital record of their health on the application and to allow patients to upload any medical records they think are relevant and want to discuss with the doctor. Patients are able to obtain valid medical E-Prescriptions after their appointment is over, which they can use at AMH pharmacy to obtain medicines.

As the COVID-19 contributing higher fatalities among immunocompromised people like chronic diseases and comorbidities, it can be used to avoid virus exposure by the means of reducing hospital visits. In addition to, it can reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among health care professionals those working tirelessly in the frontlines by keeping all the significant infected patients out

of hospital. Telemedicine can be used to triage more patients, screen and diagnose remotely. According to Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), it also supports cost effective care by keeping patients to unlikely visit to emergency department and face to face consultations.

Throughout our history AMH has overcome and adapted to the various challenges of pandemics and economic downturns. Favorable job attitudes have a strong relationship to organizational outcomes in bad economic times than they do in normal or good times. External threats also provide us with opportunities of being innovative in how we deliver care and we have come to appreciate what a valuable tool Telemedicine is for reaching communities.

Please stay healthy and safe as we collectively fight this pandemic alongside our public health officials and health workers who are directly involved in caring for sick COVID patients.

Southern Governorate programmes discussed



The meeting in progress

TDT | Manama

Minister of Interior General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa yesterday received Southern Governor His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa.

HH the Southern Governor presented a report on the progress of work, service projects and programmes that are being implemented in the Southern Governorate, in coordination with concerned authorities, in follow-up to the directives of the Interior Minister to work on the needs of citizens

and strengthen communication channels with all groups of society, as well as enhance activate social partnership through modern technologies, within the framework of enhancing precautionary measures to combat the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Interior Minister expressed his thanks and appreciation for the efforts of HH the Southern Governor and all those in the governorate working to enhance communication with citizens and identify their needs, in order to improve the services provided.

Government projects tackled in ICT meeting



A screen shot of the online meeting

TDT Manama

Project developments and purchase requests of government entities worth an estimated BD4million were among the topics discussed yesterday in the 36th Information and Communication Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) meeting, chaired by Information and eGovernment Authority (IGA) Chief Executive Mohammed Ali Al Qaed.

Al Qaed praising the continued cooperation and coordination between governmental entities, which have allowed for the deployment of advanced technologies and systems that have helped improve the quality of performance.

Among the most important strategic purchase requests discussed during the virtual meeting is the national system to digitize and automate correspondence between government organisations.

The project is expected to reduce printing costs and raise communications efficiency between entities.

The meeting covered improvements to eGovernment channels aimed at raising beneficiary satisfaction levels through the introduction of a virtual assistant system on the national portal bahrain.bh.

The members also addressed the Ministry of Education's requests for public schools to support the technical requirements for remote learning.

The committee further discussed the introduction of a professional licensing system for individuals and healthcare establishments at the National Health Regulatory Authority, and the supply of necessary programmes and devices to a number of government entities to ensure the continuity of providing services.

The committee continues to hold monthly meetings remotely via Microsoft Teams, as such modern platforms have efficiently supported the continuity of business in the government sector, at the same time reducing costs, saving time, and facilitating the sharing of documents between agencies.

Bahrain, Sudan relations hailed

TDT Manama

His Majesty the King's Diplomatic Affairs Advisor Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa received yesterday Sudan Ambassador Ibrahim Mohammed Al Hassan.

The Sudanese diplomat expressed appreciation of the positions of Bahrain, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and its steady keenness on strengthening cooperation between the two countries.

Ambassador Al Hassan wished the Kingdom further progress and prosperity.

Shaikh Khalid stressed the importance of the deep-rooted relations between Bahrain and Sudan, and expressed his



Shaikh Khalid with Ambassador Al Hassan

satisfaction with their bilateral cooperation across all areas.

He reiterated Bahrain's sup-

port to Sudan's security and stability, and its solidarity with all the efforts and measures that

fulfill the aspirations of the Sudanese people for development and prosperity.

Deputy PM issues edict on LMRA fees exemptions

TDT | Manama

Deputy Prime Minister and Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal Balance chairman Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa issued yesterday an edict exempting businesses adversely affected by the repercussions of the coronavirus (COVID-19) from paying some fees imposed by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

The edict is in line with the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to mobilise national efforts to confront the impacts of the pandemic at the local level, and to protect the health and safety of the citizens and residents, along with the continuity of the Kingdom's programmes to enhance development.

It is also in line with the decisions of the government, led by His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and that of His



The Deputy Premier

Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, to slash some fees imposed by LMRA on the issuance and renewal of all kinds of one-year work permits, and

pandemic impact up to now will be exempted from the issuance or renewal of the work permits fees for the first year of the validity of their permits.

They are also exempted from paying their monthly fees for three months, starting from July.

The sectors covered by the edict include travel and aviation, hospitality and restaurants, personal services (salons, gyms and entertainment halls), transportation and communications, rehabilitation and training (including kindergarten), retail (not including food), administrative services (public relations, media, and event organisation), in addition to local newspapers and magazines.

Other sectors that have been affected by the impacts of COVID-19 may benefit from the provisions of the edict, with the exception of financial sector institutions, telecommunications, scientific, technical and professional activities, university education and schools.

The edict requested LMRA to issue a list of exempted commercial activities in accordance with the classifications they have adopted.

The edict aims to maintain sustainable growth, in general, and achieve the stability of the labour market for Bahrain's small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular.

all monthly fees related to them by 50 per cent for three months, starting from July.

HRH the Crown Prince's decision also stipulates that all business owners who are involved in the businesses that have been most affected by the impacts of COVID-19, as will be determined by an edict by the Deputy Premier and Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal Balance chairman, will be exempted from those fees for three months, also beginning from July.

The edict issued by the Deputy Premier stipulates that business owners whose businesses have been stopped completely or partially due to the



The sectors covered by the edict include travel and aviation, hospitality and restaurants, personal services, transportation and communications, rehabilitation and training, retail and administrative services, in addition to local newspapers and magazines

Export ban issued for certain face masks

TDT | Manama

Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism Zayed R Al Zayani issued yesterday a decision banning the export of certain types of medical face masks for a period of three months.

The decision stated that it is forbidden to export N95 and FFP3 face masks without prior

permission from the Industry Ministry, reports our sister paper Al Ayam.

According to the decision, severe punishment will be given to anyone who violates the provisions of this decision.

Last April, the Industry Minister issued a decree banning the export of all types of medical masks for three months.

Thief arrested after stealing prescriptions, stamps from hospital

TDT | Manama

An individual has been arrested for stealing prescriptions and stamps from a local hospital, the Ministry of Interior announced last night.

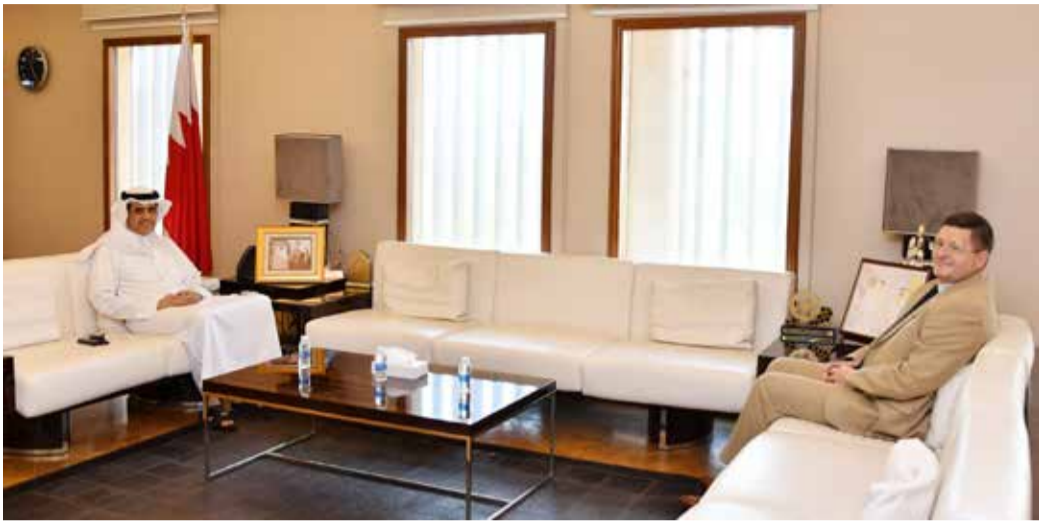
The General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science's director general reported the apprehension of the 30-year-old suspect.

After receiving information on the incident, an investigation was carried out, which resulted in the identification and arrest of the individual, the director general said.

He added that the stolen items were seized.

Necessary legal measures are being taken for the referral of the case to the Public Prosecution, the director general noted.

INFORMATION MINISTER RECEIVES BRITISH AMBASSADOR



Minister of Information Ali bin Mohammed Al Rumaihi received at his office yesterday British Ambassador Roderick Drummond. They reviewed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and ways of enhancing them in various fields. The Information Minister stressed Bahrain's keenness to support these relations and upgrade them in the interest of the two countries and their friendly peoples. The British Ambassador expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Information Minister for the interest in developing cooperation and friendship. Above, Minister Al Rumaihi with Ambassador Drummond.

Medical equipment donated to EWA for COVID-19 fight

TDT Manama

China National Electric Engineering Corporation (CNEEC) donated essential medical equipment used to combat the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to Bahrain's Electricity and Water Authority (EWA).

This came during a recent meeting between CNEEC representative Zhao Hui and Bahrain Ambassador to China Dr Anwar Al Abdullah at the Embassy premises in Beijing.

Also present during the meeting were Embassy third secretary Ali Abdulhameed and CNEEC Middle East, South and South Eastern Asia regional general manager Ge Jian.

The company's delegation expressed their sincere condolences to the families of those who have died because of the virus, and, at the same time, wished those infected a quick recovery. The delegation also praised the measures taken by Bahrain to mitigate the virus'



Ambassador Al Abdullah and Zhao with the CNEEC donations

spread and provide much-needed medical care to patients, as well as raise awareness among citizens and residents.

Furthermore, the CNEEC delegation expressed their readiness to double their medical supplies to the Kingdom as well as support its tireless efforts against the pandemic and reduce the active cases as well as deaths.

The Bahraini Ambassador underlined the deep relations knotting Bahrain with China, and highlighted the growing

bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

He valued the public and private sectors' contributions in China towards backing countries, including Bahrain, to reinforce their abilities against the pandemic.

He also praised the donation made by CNEEC. He conveyed the best wishes of Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, EWA CEO Shaikh Nawaf bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa and all EWA staff.

'Timely intervention' for school teachers

Labour and Education ministries, Supreme Council for Women help 10 Bahraini private school nursery teachers keep jobs

TDT | Manama

A local private school which reportedly informed 10 of its Bahraini teachers that they will be laid off by the end of next month has withdrawn its decision after some "timely intervention" by authorities, TDT has learnt.

This was recently confirmed by MP Fatema Al Qatari a few days after she demanded the Labour and Social Development Ministry to interfere and halt the school's decision to sack the female teachers.

Al Qatari said in a statement issued last week that the teachers received notifications from the school, informing them about its decision to shut down the nursery in the facility and terminate their work contracts by the end of August of this year. "These teachers have more than 14 years of experience in the field," said Al Qatari, who also heads the Woman and Child Committee in the Council of Representatives.

She demanded that the Ministry launch an urgent probe into the matter and to verify the school's justification for resorting to terminating the contract with these teachers, which exposes them to "the risk of unemployment and accumulated financial obligations".

Al Qatari later confirmed in a press statement that "the efforts to halt the school's decision to lay off the 10 female teachers were fruitful, and they will be retained in the nursery department".

"Solving the problem of the teachers reflects a bright picture of positive and fruitful cooperation between members of the Legislative Authority and official institutions. This cooperation pushes for more coordination for the benefit of the country and all citizens."

MP FATEMA AL QATARI



The teachers had originally received notifications from the school, informing them about its decision to shut down its nursery department and terminate their work contracts by the end of August of this year

The lawmaker praised the Labour Ministry, the Supreme Council for Women (SCW), and the Education Ministry for their timely intervention and for finding solutions to solve the matter and assist the teachers, who were at risk of losing their source of income.

Al Qatari added: "Solving the problem of the teachers reflects a bright picture of positive and fruitful cooperation between members of the Legislative Authority and official institutions. This cooperation pushes for more coordination for the benefit of the country and all citizens."

There was no mention in the MP's statements of the name of the school and no comments were available from the Labour Ministry, the Education Ministry or the SCW on the matter.

Housing beneficiaries, applicants urged to register on notification system

TDT Manama

The Ministry of Housing has called on all citizens benefitting from housing services, or those who have filed applications, to register their personal data in the National Notifications System.

The "NotifyMe" service offers Bahrainis, residents, and GCC citizens a central platform to automatically receive official notifications related to their government transactions via SMS and e-mail, instead of through post.

It was launched in line with the objectives of the Executive Committee, chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.

It is among several projects and national initiatives to develop and automate government services and offer them at the highest levels of quality to citizens and residents.

To use the "NotifyMe" service on bahrain.bh, users can select Register Contact Details by the e-key or identity card.

Once the login attempt is successful, the system will request users to enter their mobile numbers and the One-Time Password (OTP) that they receive via SMS for the same mobile number entered.

They can then click on the link that will e-mail a confirmation link, which will complete the registration process.

The Housing Ministry said that people should register their data on services.bahrain.bh/wps/portal/NationalNotifications_ar.



The "NotifyMe" service offers Bahrainis, residents, and GCC citizens a central platform to automatically receive official notifications related to their government transactions via SMS and e-mail, instead of through post

Precautionary sanitisation operations stepped up

TDT | Manama

More than 1,100 precautionary sanitisation operations have been carried out across the Kingdom by over 5,500 volunteers, it was announced yesterday.

The Ministry of Interior reported that the General Directorate of Civil Defence has trained a total of 5,501 individuals, who have carried out 1,118 precautionary sanitisation operations as part of measures taken in the fight against the coronavirus (COVID-19) in each of Bahrain's governorates.

Civil Defence director-general Colonel Ali Mohammed Al Houti said that they have continued the massive sanitising tasks with the assistance of the volunteers, who had responded to the National Taskforce for Combatting COVID-19 campaign.



A group of volunteers are briefed by a Civil Defence official prior to a sanitisation operation

The Civil Defence has held 344 training courses for 1,030 workers from cleaning and private companies, and 858 workers for mosques and other places of worship, he added.

The director-general expressed his gratitude for the efforts made by authorities, companies and volunteers, which reflect society's awareness and which contribute to mitigating the spread of the coronavirus.



Volunteers carrying out a sanitisation operation indoors

5,501

is the number of volunteers who have carried out 1,118 precautionary sanitisation operations across the Kingdom

Invita announces new digital workplace solution

TDT | Manama

Invita, a leading provider of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and Digital Transformation Solutions, has announced the launch of a Digital Workplace Solution that uses Robotic Process Automation to digitize, store and manage customer records.

Invita Chief Executive, Rahul Bhalla said: "Invita Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Suite, is a simple and cost-effective solution for SME's, Corporates and Enterprises that want to digitize customer records and modernize their business processes."

This service is aligned with Invita's strategy to provide a turnkey business solution and is devised to support any organisation that is embarking on a digital transformation journey

RAHUL BHALLA, INVITA CHIEF EXECUTIVE,



Invita said its Customer Digital Record and Storage Management service, which includes archiving all enterprise content, securing and digitizing electronic records, and integrating

applications through a web portal, is designed to elevate productivity, cost efficiency, and, through re-engineering and automating processes, maximize resources and deliver an exceptional customer experience.

"This service is aligned with Invita's strategy to provide a turnkey business solution and is devised to support any organisation that is embarking on a digital transformation journey".

He added, "by having access to customer data at the touch of a button, collaboration and decision making is greatly improved, which is vital if a business wants to compete in today's digital business landscape."

NMC's UAE entity weighing Abu Dhabi option for restructuring

Reuters | Dubai

Troubled hospital operator NMC Health's entity in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), NMC Healthcare LLC, is considering applying for restructuring and insolvency proceedings locally, two sources familiar with the matter said.

The move comes three months after NMC Health Plc, the London-listed holding company for the hospital group, went into administration in April after months of turmoil over its finances.

The two sources told Reuters that NMC Healthcare LLC was looking at options to file under the jurisdiction of Abu Dhabi Global Markets (ADGM), which has promulgated its own laws relating to insolvency and corporate restructuring.

Such a move would help create a framework for recognition of debt claims while the administrators of NMC Health Plc finalise the scheme of arrangement with creditors, one of the sources said.

A scheme of arrangement is a binding agreement about payment of all, or part of, a firm's debts over a period of time.

The administrators for NMC Health declined to comment. ADGM did not respond to a Reuters request for comment.

NMC Health is the largest private healthcare provider in the UAE, operating more than 200 facilities including hospitals, clinics and pharmacies.

NMC's operating entities were unaffected by the appointment of administrators in April and services continued.

That is unlikely to change as UAE authorities are keen to ensure hospital services in the Gulf state are not affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, the second source said.

NMC's implosion this year amid allegations of fraud and the disclosure of more than \$4 billion in hidden debts has left some UAE banks and overseas lenders nursing heavy losses and prompted legal battles to try and recover money owed.

The troubles began in December when short-seller Muddy Waters raised concerns over the company's financial statements and were compounded by doubts over the size of stakes of major shareholders, including founder BR Shetty.

Abu Dhabi fund suspends debt service repayment

Reuters | Dubai

Abu Dhabi Fund for Development has suspended debt service repayments for some countries and companies for the year, the state-financed fund said on Sunday.

The fund provides financial assistance to companies in the United Arab Emirates and to developing countries, which has included Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia.

Debt service repayments would be suspended for eligible countries and individual companies in the developing world from Jan. 1 until Dec. 31, the fund said in a statement.

Countries and companies would need to request to have repayments suspended, it said.

The fund did not say what the criteria would need to be met to be eligible for the scheme.

"At a time when the world is reeling under the effect of the pandemic ... it is imperative for us to support particularly those that need it most, especially the low-income countries," the fund's director general Mohamed Saif al-Suwaidi said.

Saudi Telecom extends Vodafone Egypt stake purchase for second time

Reuters | DUBAI

Saudi Arabia's largest telecoms operator Saudi Telecom Co (STC) said yesterday it would need another two months to complete the purchase of Vodafone Group's 55% stake in Vodafone Egypt.

STC signed a non-binding agreement in January to buy the majority stake for \$2.4 billion, but extended the process in April by 90 days, citing logistical challenges caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In a statement, STC said it was extending this period again until September for the same reasons.

Vodafone Egypt is the country's biggest mobile operator with 44 million subscribers and a 40% market share.

STC is majority owned by Saudi Arabia's state fund the Public Investment Fund (PIF).

Tesla cuts price of Model Y SUV by \$3,000, Electrek says

Reuters

US electric carmaker Tesla Inc reduced the price of its sports utility vehicle Model Y by \$3,000, Electrek reported yesterday.

Tesla's mid-sized SUV, which is sold as a Long Range or Performance version - is now priced at \$49,990, according to the carmaker's website bit.ly/327lz9y.

The Performance version will be updated with a new configuration, the report added.

Tesla did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment.

The Model Y was unveiled on March 14 last year, promising a much-awaited crossover that will face competition from European carmakers rolling out their

own electric rivals.

In April, Tesla had said the Model Y was already profitable, marking the first time in the company's history that one of its new vehicles turned a profit in its first quarter.

Tesla delivered 90,650 vehicles during the second quarter, above estimates for 74,130 vehicles, according to Refinitiv data. It delivered 80,050 units of its new Model Y SUV and Model 3 for the quarter.



Reuters | Vienna

Swiss sports shoe maker On, partly owned by tennis champion Roger Federer, is in the early stages of preparing for a stock exchange listing in summer or autumn of next year, newspaper NZZ am Sonntag reported.

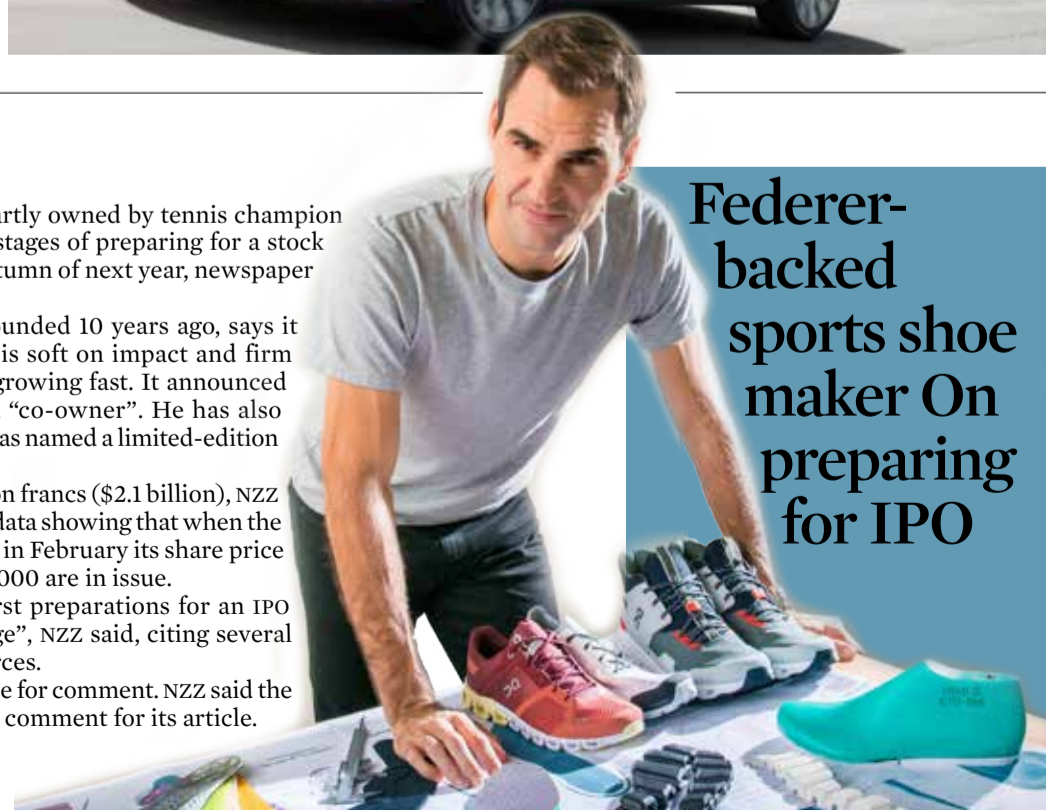
The Zurich-based company, founded 10 years ago, says it has special sole technology that is soft on impact and firm on the rebound, and it has been growing fast. It announced in November that Federer was a "co-owner". He has also helped advertise the brand and it has named a limited-edition sneaker after him.

On values itself at almost 2 billion francs (\$2.1 billion), NZZ said, based on companies registry data showing that when the firm carried out a capital increase in February its share price was 8,884 francs and roughly 217,000 are in issue.

The company has made the first preparations for an IPO and they are still "at an early stage", NZZ said, citing several independent but anonymous sources.

On was not immediately available for comment. NZZ said the company and Federer declined to comment for its article.

Federer-backed sports shoe maker On preparing for IPO



China economy rebounds in Q2 after virus hit: poll



Analysts forecast China will be the only major economy to experience positive growth this year

● **China is expected to post 1.7 pc growth for the full year**

Beijing

China returned to growth in the second quarter after the coronavirus pandemic handed the world's second largest economy its first contraction in decades, according to an AFP poll of analysts.

The survey of analysts from 11 institutions pegged China's growth at 1.3 per cent -- a far cry from the 6.1 pc expansion posted last year but in better shape than other countries still grappling with the contagion.

The coronavirus, which first emerged in China's industrial central province of Hubei late last year, has shut businesses worldwide and destroyed hundreds of millions of jobs.

But analysts forecast China will be the only major economy to experience positive growth this year -- partly because it was first to be hit by COVID-19 and therefore first to recover.

China is expected to post 1.7 pc growth for the full year, according to the economists surveyed by AFP, compared with IMF forecasts of a global contraction. Growth data for

the April to June period will be published on Thursday.

The government essentially shut down the country for months to bring the virus under control, halting factory work, keeping workers at home and limiting travel.

But activity has resumed as China largely brought the epidemic under control and ended the lockdown of Hubei and its capital Wuhan in April.

Authorities were able to rein in an outbreak in Beijing last month with very limited restrictions.



China is expected to post 1.7 percent growth for the full year, according to the economists surveyed by AFP, compared with IMF forecasts of a global contraction.

Vietnam's young invest ideas in Ho Chi Minh

● Although Indonesia remains the leader, the amount pumped into Vietnam start-ups pushed ahead of Singapore for the first time in 2019

AFP | Ho Chi Minh City

A tech-savvy population, a fast-growing economy, and the perks of being first in an emerging market -- Vietnamese entrepreneur Le Thanh saw the potential in booming Ho Chi Minh City for his start-up transforming coffee grounds into masks.

The 35-year-old chemistry graduate worked for two multinationals before stepping out on his own three years ago to launch ShoeX -- a sustainable footwear company which nimbly pivoted to masks as the coronavirus pandemic struck.

When he entered the workforce, Thanh was drawn to the higher salaries and no-nonsense working culture at foreign companies he assumed were a cut above local firms, tangled up in rules imposed by his country's staid Communist rulers.

"But now I see there are more openings in a place where things are a bit murky," Thanh told AFP



Environmental innovation is a priority for many Vietnamese start-ups



Vietnam-based start-ups made up nearly 20 percent of the capital invested in Southeast Asia last year

from his buzzing Ho Chi Minh City co-working space.

He is not alone in believing Vietnam -- and especially its southern commercial centre -- is poised to become an innovation hub thanks to its young, educated and digitally active population.

Vietnamese e-commerce and e-payment companies have been "flooded" with private equity in the past couple of years, said

Eddie Thai, a Ho Chi Minh City-based partner at venture capital firm 500 Startups.

Their rise has been stellar. Vietnam-based start-ups made up 18 per cent -- or \$741 million -- of the capital invested in Southeast Asia in 2019, up from four per cent in 2018, according to a report by Cento Ventures.

Although Indonesia remains the leader, the amount pumped into Vietnam start-ups pushed

ahead of Singapore for the first time in 2019, the venture capital firm said.

The gold rush comes in spite of cumbersome regulations for foreigners, Thai told AFP, making it difficult to invest and repatriate capital.

Last year, popular e-wallet platform VNPAY reportedly snagged the largest deal in Southeast Asia, attracting \$300 million from Softbank's Vision Fund and Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC.

And although Thai said investment had paused due to the coronavirus pandemic, Vietnam is well-placed to bounce back.

Its economy unexpectedly grew in the second quarter and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts a 2.7 percent expansion for the year despite the global downturn.

The country also has a huge pool of software engineers who cost substantially less than their Indian or Chinese peers.

And unlike the tech talent in wealthy start-up hubs such as San Francisco or London, they understand what consumers in the emerging world want, Thai says.

Exciting, young environment

Air pollution -- and then the outbreak of COVID-19 -- prompted Thanh to take a gamble on sourcing Vietnamese coffee

waste material to turn it into masks.

His cutting edge design uses woven fibre made from coffee grounds to make a washable outer layer, with a biodegradable filter inside.

"I took a risk and hoped it would succeed," he said, adding that there had been a surge in orders of his masks from Europe, the US and Japan since they launched in April.

A similar strain of environmental innovation courses through many other smaller start-ups in a country among the most vulnerable to climate change. They exploit the high tech literacy of the population -- 70 percent of which is under 35, according to the World Bank -- to sell new products to a receptive market.

Bui Thi Minh Ngoc wanted to find a sustainable alternative to standard menstrual products, searching for months to find the right organic cloth for her sanitary pad business GreenLady

Vietnam, which she operates largely on Facebook.

"In Vietnam, there are not many specialising in period products and reproductive health," the 26-year-old said as she checked material samples at a tailor in Hanoi.

"But I like to do things which are difficult."

While Vietnam is yet to produce any truly "disruptive technology", said Trung Hoang of local investment platform VinaCapital Ventures, China has shown what is possible.

The Asian giant -- also an autocratic one-party state -- has managed to incubate dynamic tech behemoths like Alibaba and Tencent that have risen to the forefront of the industry.

Back in his Ho Chi Minh City office space, packed with young professionals, Thanh fizzes with enthusiasm for Vietnam's start-up culture.

"I am in this exciting and young environment. It's inspired us all."



Le Thanh worked for two multinationals before stepping out on his own three years ago to launch ShoeX

US town grows money from trees during pandemic downturn

AFP | New York

Tenino had become a ghost town, and small businesses were struggling to survive amid the coronavirus pandemic, so local officials revived an unconventional idea from the last century: printing the town's own currency on thin planks of wood.

"There was no trading, no selling and the city streets were dead. They looked the same at 3 pm as they did at 3 am," said Wayne Fournier, mayor of the town of 1,800 people in Washington state, in the northwestern United States.

"We were getting a lot of calls from businesses saying they were not sure if they would be able to hang on," he told AFP.

The town's museum had a printing press, so it was put to use to make \$10,000 worth of bills on wooden rectangles, each nominally worth \$25.

They feature a portrait of President George Washington and bear a Latin inscription that translates as "We've got it under control."

The money is being given as a grant to locals who demonstrate they have been economically harmed by the pandemic. Each resident is allowed up to \$300 per month.

Known as "Tenino dollars," "COVID dollars" or, sometimes, "Wayne dollars" after the mayor himself,

the bills are traded at almost all shops in the town at a fixed rate equivalent to \$1.

The currency is good only inside the town limits.

Desperate times

The idea is not new: town officials last tried it during an even worse period of economic dev-

Tenino had become a ghost town, and small businesses were struggling to survive amid the coronavirus pandemic, so local officials revived an unconventional idea from the last century: printing the town's own currency on thin planks of wood.

astation, the Great Depression in the 1930s.

A national scarcity of dollars at the time prompted officials in Tenino to print money on spruce bark.

"The concept became 1930s viral," Fournier said, with other communities, businesses and chambers of commerce eager to emulate the town's example.

Media attention piqued the curiosity of investors, and over the years the wooden currency became a collector's item sold on eBay and Amazon.

The contemporary version of wooden currency, like the previous edition, aims to help the town through an economic crisis that forced businesses to close nationwide.

"It's more of an advertisement for the town itself," said Chris Hamilton, the manager of the town's main grocery store. "It brings a lot of people into town that may not even know about Tenino and want to check this place out that makes its own money."

"They might stop off here, buy an ice cream or go down the street and buy a hamburger."

Similar complementary currencies exist elsewhere in the US and Europe, aimed not at replacing the national money but supporting the local economy -- a key distinction since American authorities take a dim view of anyone trying to create a bill to compete with the almighty dollar.

The US Treasury declined to comment on its position regarding local currencies.

Switzerland's WIR system, created in 1934, is considered the oldest local currency in the world, used by thousands of small businesses every day.

Response to globalization



The novelty of wooden money can bring tourists into town, where hopefully they will spend non-wooden money

Facing an unemployment rate of 11.1 percent in June -- one of the highest rates since the Great Depression -- American advocates of complementary currencies say now is the time to consider them as a means to help residents.

"The crisis in municipal funding is pushing creativity. Administrators are exploring this concept of issuing their own currency instead of bonds to finance their COVID response," said Susan Witt, director of the Schumacher Center for a New Economics.

The research center developed BerkShares, a currency in circulation since 2006 in the Berkshires region of western Massachusetts, which is distributed by local banks. Witt is advising several US municipalities interested in similar initiatives.

Advocates of local currencies also see them as a bulwark

against unbridled globalization.

"People are starting to realize that we went too global, too fast and we lost our local skills," said Chris Hewitt, founder of Hudson Valley Current, a currency in upstate New York which operates as a mutual credit system.

Supporters hope to create a nationwide movement.

"If that happens across the country organically, that could be

something that helps save us from a serious recession," Fournier said.

Mayor Wayne Fournier is pictured at a Tenino, Washington museum where an 1890s-era press is being used to print wooden money



Iran says misaligned radar led to Ukrainian jet downing

● First of the two missiles launched at the aircraft was fired by a defence unit operator

Tehran

Iran said that the misalignment of an air defence unit's radar system was the key "human error" that led to the accidental downing of a Ukrainian passenger plane in January.

"A failure occurred due to a human error in following the procedure" for aligning the radar, causing a "107-degree error" in the system, the Iranian Civil Aviation Organisation (CAO) said in a report late Saturday.

This error "initiated a hazard chain" that saw further errors committed in the minutes before the plane was shot down, said the CAO document, presented as a "factual report" and not as the final report on the accident investigation.

Flight 752, a Ukraine International Airlines jetliner, was struck by two missiles and crashed shortly after taking off from Tehran's main airport on January 8, at a time of heightened US-Iranian tensions.

The Islamic republic admitted several days later that its forces accidentally shot down the Kiev-bound plane, killing all 176 people on board.

The CAO said that, despite the erroneous information available to the radar system operator on the aircraft's trajectory, he could have identified his target as an airliner, but instead there was a



Flight 752, an Ukraine International Airlines jetliner, was struck by two missiles and crashed shortly after taking off from Tehran's main airport on January 8

"wrong identification".

The report also noted that the first of the two missiles launched at the aircraft was fired by a defence unit operator who had acted "without receiving any response from the Coordination Center" on which he depended.

The second missile was fired 30 seconds later, "by observing the continuity of trajectory of the detected target," the report added.

Tehran's air defences had been on high alert at the time the jet was shot down in case the US retaliated against Iranian strikes hours earlier on American troops stationed in Iraq.

Those strikes were carried

out in response to the killing of Soleimani, in a US drone strike of a top Iranian general, Qasem near Baghdad airport.

On 8 January 2020, the Boeing 737-800 operating the route was shot down shortly after takeoff from Tehran Imam Khomeini International Airport. All 176 passengers and crew were killed; it was the first fatal air accident involving Ukraine International Airlines.

The shoot down occurred four hours after Iran launched retaliatory missile strikes on U.S. positions in Iraq for the killing of Major General Qasem Soleimani.



Experts have questioned Iran's decision to not close its airspace after launching missiles; General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said a request had been made for a no-fly zone before the incident but this request was rejected



News in brief

China releases professor who criticised President Xi

◆ A Beijing law professor who has been an outspoken critic of China's President Xi Jinping and the ruling Communist Party was released yesterday after six days of detention, his friends said. Xu Zhangrun, a constitutional law professor

at the prestigious Tsinghua University, returned home on Sunday morning but remained under surveillance and was not free to speak publicly about what happened, one of his friends, who declined to be identified, told Reuters.

Kuwait asks parliament to approve debt law to help cover deficit

◆ Kuwait's government formally submitted a public debt law to parliament on Sunday which would allow it to borrow 20 billion dinars (\$65 billion) over 30 years, including 8 billion dinars to help finance the current budget deficit, a legislator said. The government

and parliament have long been at odds over the law which would allow Kuwait to tap international debt, but the issue has gained urgency in recent months as the oil-exporting nation has been hit by low crude prices and the COVID-19 pandemic.



◆ Hong Kong's opposition camp said on Sunday that over 600,000 citizens in the Chinese-ruled city cast ballots over the weekend in primaries it cast as a symbolic protest vote against tough national security laws imposed by Beijing.

The unofficial poll will decide the strongest pro-democracy candidates to contest elections in September to Hong Kong's Legislative Council.

◆ Around 200 people employed to pick crops at a farm near Malvern in England's West Midlands region have been told to self isolate after 73 of them tested positive for COVID-19, Public Health England (PHE) and Herefordshire Council said yesterday. The number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases across Britain each day has been falling from a peak of more than 6,000 in April to 650 in the latest figures released

British pilot to fly home after 4-mth virus battle in Vietnam



A British pilot who spent more than four months in hospital, including two months on life support in Vietnam after contracting COVID-19 is on his way home, astounding doctors who gave him just a ten percent chance of survival.

Pope 'very pained' by decision to turn Hagia Sophia into mosque



The sixth-century edifice -- whose stunning architecture is a magnet for tourists worldwide -- has been a museum since 1935, open to believers of all faiths

Reuters | Vatican City

Pope

Francis said yesterday he was hurt by Turkey's decision to make Istanbul's Hagia Sophia museum a mosque, the latest religious leader to condemn the move.

"My thoughts go to Istanbul. I think of Santa Sophia and I am very pained," he said during

his weekly blessing in St. Peter's Square.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has said the first prayers would be held in Hagia Sophia on July 24, after declaring the ancient monument was once again a mosque following a court ruling revoking its status as a museum.

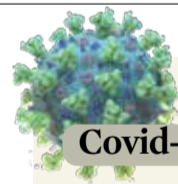
The World Council of Churches has called on Erdogan to reverse his decision and Patriarch Bartholomew, the Istanbul-based spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians, called it disappointing.

Erdogan said the nearly 1,500-year-old Hagia

Sophia, which was once a Christian cathedral, would remain open to Muslims, Christians and foreigners.

He added that Turkey had exercised its sovereign right in converting it to a mosque and would interpret criticism of the move as an attack on its independence.

Greece has condemned the move and UNESCO said its World Heritage Committee would review Hagia Sophia's status and that Turkey's decision raised questions about the impact on its universal value as a site of importance transcending borders and generations.



Global

Covid-19 Cases:

12,946,620

Deaths

569,368

Recovered:

7,543,901

New cases

+113,115

New deaths

+2,334

Middle East

Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	New deaths	Total Deaths
1 USA	3,387,470	+229	137,631
2 Brazil	1,846,249	+92	71,584
3 India	878,593	+499	23,186
4 Russia	727,162	+130	11,335
5 Peru	322,710		11,682
6 Chile	312,029		6,881
7 Spain	300,988		28,403
8 Mexico	295,268	+539	34,730
9 UK	289,603	+21	44,819
10 South Africa	264,184		3,971
11 Iran	257,303	+194	12,829
12 Pakistan	248,872	+74	5,197
13 Italy	243,061	+9	34,954
14 Saudi Arabia	232,259	+42	2,223

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases	Serious, Critical	Tot cases/1m pop
Egypt	81,158		3,769		23,876	53,513	41	793
Saudi Arabia	232,259	+2,779	2,223	+42	167,138	62,898	2,245	6,669
UAE	54,854	+401	333	+2	45,140	9,381	1	5,544
Kuwait	54,894	+836	390	+4	44,610	9,894	151	12,849
Oman	56,015	+1,318	257	+9	36,098	19,660	143	10,964
Qatar	103,598	+470	147	+1	99,743	3,708	140	36,896

Up for grabs: Tokyo art exhibit invites theft

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Would-be robbers were told they could raid the gallery from midnight, but the crowd was so big that the theft started half an hour earlier, and the exhibition that had been billed as running for up to 10 days was emptied of art in less than 10

Would-be robbers were told they could raid the gallery from midnight, but the crowd was so big that the theft started half an hour earlier

● **The event was intended as “an experiment”, to alter the relationship between artists and visitors**

AFP | Tokyo

The Tokyo art exhibit opened to enthusiastic visitors, but many of those circulating weren't just there to soak in some culture -- they were casing the joint for a midnight raid.

Hours after the gallery closed for the night, a crowd had gathered ready to pounce on the artworks. The police station was nearby, but officers only intervened for crowd control, because all the pieces at the Stealable Art Exhibition were up for grabs.

The event was intended as “an experiment”, to alter the relationship between artists and visitors, organiser Tota Hasegawa told AFP.

It was originally conceived

as a low-key event that might attract some covert thievery, but word spread so fast on social media that a crowd of nearly 200 people packed the streets near the gallery hoping for a chance to grab a prize.

Would-be robbers were told they could raid the gallery from midnight, but the crowd was so big that the theft started half an hour earlier, and the exhibition that had been billed as running for up to 10 days was emptied of art in less than 10 minutes.

Yusuke Hasada, 26, was a rare winner, gripping a crumpled 10,000 yen (\$93) banknote in a frame, which was part of the “My Money” installation by Gabin Ito.

He arrived an hour before midnight only to see a crowd had already formed.

Since there was no apparent queue, he manoeuvred himself into a spot right in front of the gallery.

“The moment the staff said they should open early due to the big crowd, people rushed in from behind me. I was in the front, and I almost fell over,” he

said. “It was scary.”

Auction resales

Hasada said he plans to hang the work, among those on display supplied by 10 contemporary artists, in his home.

But not everyone stealing the items appeared to have the same idea, with several artworks appearing on online auction sites within hours with price tags as high as 100,000 yen.

Even after the exhibit was emptied out, would-be thieves continued arriving, forcing a nearby police station to dispatch officers for crowd control.

“You are blocking traffic!” officers shouted.

Yuka Yamauchi, a 35-year-old systems engineer, showed up 15 minutes before midnight but was too late.

“I entered with my husband and it was just packed with so many people... We saw larger artworks taken out by those who came earlier,” she said.

“I haven't seen so many people in a long time as we have been refraining from going out due to the coronavirus.”



Yusuke Hasada poses with artwork “My Money” created by Gabin Ito outside Same gallery

But Yamauchi didn't leave completely empty-handed. “I've got a clip... It must have been one of those used for the cloth installation. I found it dropped, so I picked it up as a souvenir,” she said with a laugh.

‘Well-mannered’ thieves

Yamauchi recognised the clip because she was at a preview of the artwork six hours earlier to “case” the venue.

She said she would happily come back for a similar “par-

ticipatory” art event, where some of the artists showcased work that was purpose-made for those hoping to make off with it.

Naoki “SAND” Yamamoto's work “Midnight Vandalist” was composed of a stack of peelable pages with printed illustrations. Another work was a large cloth printed with lines to be cut along with scissors.

But would-be thieves were responsible for organising their own getaway vehicles. A notice was posted at the entrance: “We do not assist art thieves with packing or transporting art-

works, so you are responsible for everything.”

Organiser Hasegawa told AFP he later met with police -- perhaps not used to such large-scale larceny in Japan, with its ultra-low crime rate -- to clear up any misunderstandings about the event and the crowd it attracted. He said the budding thieves had proved to be “well-mannered.”

They might have been there to stage robberies, but when “someone lost a bag with a wallet in it, it was passed onto a staffer and safely returned to the owner.”

Race to rescue turtles entangled in plastic on Bangladesh beach

Cox's Bazar | Bangladesh

At least 20 turtles were dead and dozens more were rescued Sunday after being entangled in plastic waste washed ashore on one of the world's longest beaches in Bangladesh, officials and conservationists said.

Locals said waves of waste -- mostly plastic bottles, fishing nets and buoys -- floated ashore late Saturday. They spotted turtle carcasses among the sand dunes early Sunday.

Bangladesh's forestry department said it was the first time such a large volume of plastic had washed onto the 120-kilometre (75-mile) beach along the Bay of Bengal.

“Hundreds of locals rushed to the beach since early morning to rescue the wounded turtles,” forestry spokesman Sohail Hossain told AFP.

“We have buried the dead ones



A rescued turtle is released back into the sea at Cox's Bazar. At least 20 were killed and dozens trapped in tonnes of plastic waste washed ashore



At least 20 dead sea turtles were found among piles of plastic waste washed along the Bay of Bengal beach near Cox's Bazar

and are trying to release the rescued turtles back to sea.”

Beach clean-up charity Plastic Bank Bangladesh said their volunteers found and buried at least 20 Olive Ridley turtles

among the estimated 50 tonnes of waste spread out over a 10 kilometre stretch of the beach at Cox's Bazar.

“I haven't seen these many dead turtles lying on the beach

in my life and also haven't seen such a massive pile of waste floating ashore,” fisherman Jashim Uddin told AFP.

Leading Bangladesh turtle and tortoise expert Shahriar Caesar

Rahman of the NGO Creative Conservation Alliance said most of the turtles were at least 30 years old.

“The turtles often get trapped in gigantic waste patches float-

ing in the sea and eventually die of suffocation. This seems to be a similar case,” he told AFP.

About 26 tonnes of waste produced from ships and neighbouring countries float into Bay of Bengal every year, said Moazzem Hossain of local conservation charity Save the Nature Bangladesh.

“This is a unique case of plastic invasion. It sends a great danger signal to our marine biodiversity,” he said.

It was not clear how many turtles were rescued.

Local district administrator Kamal Hossain said authorities were investigating the incident.

Olive Ridges are the most abundant of all sea turtles around the world, according to conservationists.

But their numbers have been declining and the species is recognised as vulnerable by the IUCN Red list.



Trump finally wears a mask

Bethesda | United States

U.S. President Donald Trump wore a face mask in public for the first time Saturday, finally yielding to intense pressure to set a public health example as the coronavirus rampages across America.

Trump had on a dark mask with the presidential seal as he walked through the corridors of Walter Reed military hospital outside Washington to meet wounded veterans.

Trump strode past reporters and did not stop to speak to them about what had become a hotly anticipated moment -- would he have a change of heart on a practice recommended by the government's own medical experts?

"I've never been against masks but I do believe they have a time and a place," Trump said as he left the White House.

News reports this week said aides practically begged the president to relent and wear a mask in public -- and let himself be photographed -- as coronavirus cases soared in some states and as Trump trailed Democrat Joe Biden badly in polls ahead of the November election.

Trump has steadfastly defended his administration's handling of the

demic even though the United States is the hardest-hit country in the world.

The country has recently seen several days of more than 60,000 new cases, nearly 135,000 people have died and states have been left to figure out on their own how to reopen without a clear and coherent strategy from the White House.

'Wasted four months'

To wear a mask or not has become a sort of political fulcrum for a deeply divided America.

Conservatives who back Trump often refuse to don one on grounds it impinges on their freedom, while progressives tend to back the practice as a show of collective responsibility at a time of a life-or-death crisis.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend people wear masks in public when they cannot engage in social distancing.

But Trump -- at political rallies, media briefings and elsewhere -- has repeatedly avoided wearing a mask, even after staffers at the White House tested positive for the virus and as more aides, including Vice President

M i k e

Pence, have taken to wearing them.

In May, Trump even made fun of Biden when the latter started wearing a mask in public, sharing a tweet that featured an unflattering photograph of the former vice president in a black face covering.

The Biden campaign slammed Trump for not wearing a mask earlier.

"Donald Trump spent months ignoring the advice of medical experts and politicizing wearing a mask, one of the most impor-

tant things we can do to prevent the spread of the virus," Biden spokesman Andrew Bates said in a statement, according to NBC News.

"Rather than taking responsibility and leading, he wasted four months that Americans have been making sacrifices by stoking divisions and actively discouraging people from taking a very basic step to protect each other."

Trump has reportedly told aides that wearing a mask would make him look weak and he could not stomach the idea of letting the media photograph him in one.

Even Saturday as he left the White House to head to Walter Reed, Trump made it sound like he would wear a mask only because he would be in a hospital -- not that he had come around and embraced the idea of donning one regularly.

"I think when you're in a hospital, especially in that particular setting, where you're talking to a lot of soldiers and people that, in some cases, just got off the operating tables, I think it's a great thing to wear a mask," Trump told reporters.



In May, Trump even made fun of Biden when the latter started wearing a mask in public, sharing a tweet that featured an unflattering photograph of the former vice president in a black face covering.



US President Donald Trump told reporters before leaving for Walter Reed medical center: 'I've never been against masks but I do believe they have a time and a place'

Trump ally Roger Stone still a criminal: Mueller

Washington

Donald Trump may have commuted Roger Stone's prison sentence but the president's longtime ally remains a convicted criminal, former special counsel Robert Mueller said Saturday.

Stone, 67, had been set to begin serving a 40-month prison term on Tuesday after his conviction on seven felony charges originally brought by Mueller as part of the Russia collusion probe.

The charges include tampering with a witness and obstructing the House investigation into whether the Trump campaign conspired with Russia to help him win the 2016 election.

In an op-ed piece in The Washington Post on Saturday, Mueller defended his probe as being of "paramount importance," dismissing White House claims that he was out to get Trump and those who worked with him.

"Stone was prosecuted and convicted because he committed federal crimes.

He remains a convicted felon, and rightly so," Mueller wrote as Democrats -- and two Republican senators -- piled on Trump for again intervening in the justice system to help an ally.

Senator Mitt Romney, who infuriated Trump when he became the only Republican to vote to convict the president in his impeachment trial, pulled no punches on Saturday.

"Unprecedented, historic corruption: an American president commutes the sentence of a person convicted by a jury of lying to shield that very president," he tweeted.

Another Republican senator, Pat Toomey, also criticized Trump but in milder terms, saying that as Stone has been duly convicted it was "a mistake" to commute his sentence.

Trump defended his Friday night move to commute Stone's sentence, saying Stone and others convicted of crimes in the Russia probe were caught up in a "witch hunt."

"They've all been treated unfairly, and what I did, I will tell you this: people are extremely happy, because in this country, they want justice," Trump told reporters.

Most Republicans have remained largely mute on the matter, while Democratic critics led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi unanimously condemned Trump.

'Staggering corruption'

"President Trump's decision to commute the sentence of top campaign advisor Roger Stone, who could directly implicate him in criminal misconduct, is an act of staggering corruption," she tweeted.

Pelosi called for legislation "to ensure that no president can pardon or commute the sentence of an individual who is engaged in a cover-up campaign to shield that president from criminal prosecution."

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden weighed in without mentioning Stone by name.

"I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Donald Trump is the most corrupt president in modern American history," he tweeted. "Every day that he remains in office, he further threatens the future of our democracy. We have to vote him out this November," Biden wrote.

The flamboyant Stone, a longtime political activist and consultant -- he even sports a tattoo of his former boss president Richard Nixon -- is easily recognized by his trademark dark glasses and bowler hat.

He and Trump were introduced in the 1980s and were said to have hit it off immediately.

Trump's action instantly brought new accusations that the president has intervened freely in the US justice system to help friends and allies, and to punish critics and perceived enemies.

In a highly unusual move in May, the US Justice Department moved to dismiss its own case against Michael Flynn, a former national security advisor to Trump, though he had pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI. A federal judge has demanded a further judicial review of the matter.

Stone was the first person directly involved in Trump's campaign to receive clemency. Indictment papers said a top Trump campaign official had dispatched Stone to get information from the WikiLeaks organization regarding thousands of emails hacked from Democratic accounts -- a leak that fueled Republican attacks on Trump's 2016 opponent, Hillary Clinton.

Trump has denied knowledge of any such outreach to WikiLeaks.



Roger Stone



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi



Anti-Trump protesters held up signs as the motorcade carrying President Donald Trump took him to the Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, Virginia

Jordan king says virus 'under control'

Amman

Jordan's King Abdullah II said yesterday that his country had successfully brought the novel coronavirus "under control" and that it was time to focus on restarting the economy.

"We have successfully dealt with the coronavirus, which today is under control in Jordan," he said during a meeting with prominent Jordanians.

"But like every country in the world we have paid an economic price, and the time has come to focus... on the economic situation," a palace statement quoted him as saying.

The desert kingdom, which has recorded 1,179 cases of the virus including 10 deaths, imposed a tough curfew enforced with drones to curb the spread of COVID-19, before easing poli-



Jordan's King Abdullah II, seen in this June 2020 picture, says the novel coronavirus in his country is "under control" and time has come to focus again on the economic situation

cies in early June.

King Abdullah said that Jordan would "come out stronger

(from the crisis) compared to other countries in the region".

Health authorities have al-

most daily been reporting new cases among Jordanians and foreigners entering the country.

They have also maintained social distancing measures, made face masks compulsory in most public places and required newly-arrived travellers to wear electronic bracelets to ensure that they observe quarantine.

Before the coronavirus struck, Jordan hosted five million tourists a year, including at famous sites like Petra and Wadi Rum, bringing in \$5 billion last year.

But the vital sector, which employed some 100,000 people, has been battered by the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown restrictions.

King Abdullah acknowledged the impact of the crisis but said any decision to reopen would need to be "closely examined".

Pro-Haftar forces say will maintain oil blockade

● Since January, groups loyal to Haftar have been blocking the production and export of oil

● Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) had announced Friday the resumption of crude production and exports

AFP | Tripoli

A blockade of Libya's oil production will continue, forces loyal to strongman Khalifa Haftar have warned, despite the country's National Oil Corporation announcing this week the resumption of production.

Libya, which sits atop Africa's largest proven crude oil reserves, is torn between the rival powers of the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli and eastern-based Haftar.

Since January, groups loyal to Haftar have been blocking



A picture taken on June 3, 2020 shows an oil refinery in Libya's northern town of Ras Lanuf

the production and export of oil from the country's most important fields and terminals, claiming they want a fair distribution of the oil revenues managed by

Tripoli. "The closure of ports and oil fields will be maintained until the demands of the Libyan people are satisfied," said a statement published late Saturday on

Facebook by pro-Haftar forces spokesman Ahmad al-Mismari.

"Only one oil tanker" is authorised to load "a quantity of stored oil", as agreed "with the

international community and brotherly and friendly countries" that have requested it, said the statement without elaborating.

Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) had announced Friday the resumption of crude production and exports after a nearly six-month shutdown due to conflict dividing the country.

A first ship was due to start loading crude from the Al-Sidra oil port in the east of the country, the NOC had said.

But the state oil giant warned it would take time for output to return to previous levels because of major damage to energy infrastructure. Supported by Turkey, pro-GNA forces have scored important victories in recent months, regaining control of the northwest and driving out forces loyal to Haftar, who had launched an abortive offensive in April 2019 to seize Tripoli.

Haftar is backed by Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Russia.

The NOC had invoked force majeure in response to the blockade -- a measure used in exceptional circumstances that



Oil exports are the source of almost all state revenue in Libya, which has been mired in chaos since the ouster and killing of dictator Muammar Gaddafi in a 2011 NATO-backed uprising.

allows it to be exonerated from liability in the event of non-compliance with oil delivery contracts.

The company said Friday that it had "lifted force majeure on all oil exports from Libya".

Earlier this month, the NOC had reported talks, "supervised by the United Nations and the United States", to allow the resumption of production.

UN team to visit 'time bomb' tanker

● The market value of the oil is now estimated at \$40 million, half what it was before crude prices crashed, although experts say poor quality could push it even lower.

AFP | Dubai

Yemen's Huthi militia have given UN inspectors the green light to inspect a decaying oil tanker abandoned off the coast with 1.1 million barrels of crude on board which experts say could rupture at any time.

A breach of the vessel would have disastrous results for Red Sea marine life and tens of thousands of impoverished people who depend on fishing for their livelihood.

The 45-year-old FSO Safer is anchored off the port of Hodeida under the control of the Iran-backed Huthis, who have previously blocked efforts to send inspectors to assess its condition.

The UN Security Council will hold a special meeting on July 15 to discuss the crisis, after water entered the vessel's engine room "which could have led to disaster", UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Friday.

Dujarric said prospects had been revived for an inspection team to conduct light repairs and determine the next steps, and a UN source said Sunday that the Huthis had agreed to the visit.

"They officially approved the visit of the UN assessment and repair team to the tanker," the source said on Sunday.

Effectively a floating storage platform, the Safer has had virtually no maintenance for five years since war broke out in the country where the Huthis have seized much of the north from the internationally recognised government.

The Yemen government has



The 45-year-old FSO Safer is anchored off the port of Hodeida under the control of the Iran-backed Huthis, who have previously blocked efforts to send inspectors to assess its condition

warned the Safer could explode and cause "the largest environmental disaster regionally and globally".

Top Huthi militia leader Mohammed Ali al-Huthi said on Twitter last month that the Huthis want guarantees the vessel will be repaired and that the value of the oil on board is used to pay salaries of their employees.

The market value of the oil is now estimated at \$40 million, half what it was before crude prices crashed, although experts say poor quality could push it even lower.

Like other economic and aid issues in Yemen, the plight of the tanker has become a bargaining chip, with the Huthis accused of using the threat of disaster

to secure control of the value of the cargo.

Yemeni Prime Minister Maen Abdulmalik Saeed on Thursday said the money for the oil should be spent on health and humanitarian projects.

'Ticking time bomb'

Apart from corrosion to the ageing vessel, essential work on reducing explosive gases in the storage tanks has been neglected for years. Experts said the latest problem emerged in May with a leak in a cooling pipe.

"The pipe burst, sending water into the engine room and creating a really dangerous situation," said Ian Ralby, CEO of IR Consilium, a global maritime consultancy which follows the vessel closely.

A team from Yemen's Safer Exploration and Production Operations, a public oil company partly controlled by the Huthis, sent divers in to fix the leak, narrowly avoiding the ship sinking, Ralby said.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned last week that if the tanker ruptures "it will devastate the Red Sea ecosystem" and disrupt key shipping lanes.

"The Huthis must grant access before this ticking time bomb explodes," he said.

Hodeida port is a lifeline for northern Yemen with 90 percent of all supplies coming through it. Any disruption would inflict further hardship on a country which is again on the brink of famine after long years of conflict. If the vessel ruptures "you're going to have two catastrophes", said Lise Grande, the UN's humanitarian coordinator for Yemen.

"There's going to be an environmental catastrophe that's bigger than almost any other similar kind ... and it's going to

be a humanitarian catastrophe because that oil will make the port of Hodeida unusable," she said.

Independent Yemen-based environmental group Holm Akhdar -- Arabic for "Green Dream" -- warned an oil spill could stretch out from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and into the Arabian Sea.

The region's ecology would need over 30 years to recover from an oil spillage of that size, it said in a recent report, adding that about 115 of Yemen's Red Sea islands would lose their biodiversity and natural habitats.

In a country where the majority of people already rely on aid to survive, an estimated 126,000 fishermen, including 68,000 in Hodeida, would lose their only source of income.

IR Consilium said any salvage operation after an oil spill would be greatly hampered by the coronavirus crisis.

"In the midst of a global pandemic and on the edge of a conflict zone, the chances of

Independent Yemen-based environmental group Holm Akhdar -- Arabic for "Green Dream" -- warned an oil spill could stretch out from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and into the Arabian Sea.



Yemen's port city of Hodeida is controlled by the Iran-backed Huthi militia

an early and adequate response are vanishingly small," it said in a report.

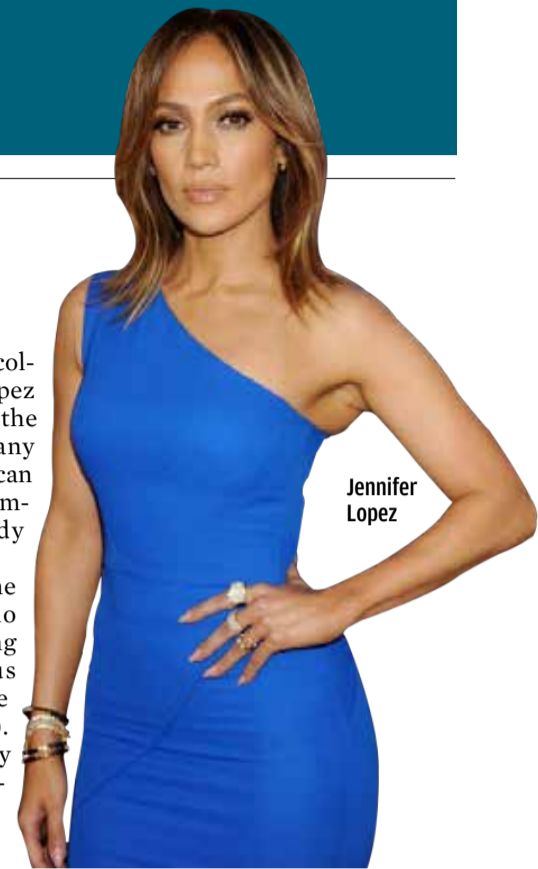
Doug Weir, research and policy director at the UK-based Conflict and Environment Observatory, said that without an independent assessment "it is impossible to determine when an incident might occur, or its form and severity".

"However the risks are clear, and the longer the dispute continues, the greater they become, and the more complex and expensive any salvage operation will be."



A breach of the vessel would have disastrous results for Red Sea marine life and tens of thousands of impoverished people who depend on fishing for their livelihood.

celebs



Jennifer Lopez

Rachel Bilson and Bill Hader split: reports

Fox | Los Angeles

Bill Hader and Rachel Bilson have called it quits, according to multiple reports.

According to People magazine, citing sources, the pair has split amicably. Meanwhile, an insider told E! News that the "Hart of Dixie" actress, 38, is "absolutely devastated."

Reps for Hader did not immediately respond to Fox News' request for comment. A rep for Bilson could not be reached.

In January, the couple made their relationship red carpet official, stepping out at the Golden Globe Awards together after previously sparking romance rumors just before Christmas.

The two Hollywood stars had the Internet buzzing after they were seen grabbing coffee in Hader's hometown of Tulsa, Okla., in December.

Rachel Bilson



Rebel Wilson reveals 'dirty' secret to weight loss

IANs | Sydney

Actress Rebel Wilson has been inspiring many with her weight loss journey over the past six months. Now she has revealed how she got "just in the dirt" to get in shape.

The 40-year-old Australian actress has been showcasing her changing figure after hours of dedicated workouts, and now she has opened up about some of her workout secrets, reports mirror.co.uk.

She said: "Obviously a lot of the TV shows and movies got shut down, so what I was going to do has been delayed so I'm just getting ripped. I'm exercising every day."

Jennifer Lopez teases new music with Maluma

IANs | Los Angeles

Actress-singer Jennifer Lopez has dropped hints about collaborating with singer Maluma on a new song.

The 50-year-old pop star hinted at releasing new music when she posted a series of pictures with Maluma on Instagram, reports dailymail.co.uk.

"Pase lo que pase 'toy pa ti...Are you ready?'" captioned Lopez, who is seen flexing her toned arms for the camera in a pale yellow bodysuit. She teamed up the suit with black

leggings and a pair of bright white sneakers.

The ace 'Selena' star accessorised with large hoop earrings and her engagement ring.

The 26-year-old recording artist wore a white floral jumpsuit and held onto a red bandana in his hand. Each of them appeared to be holding sheet music as they are seen laughing together on a couch.

Maluma also uploaded another picture from the collaborative session on his Instagram page. In the image, they are seen deep in focus. Though each of them



Jennifer Lopez had made a surprise appearance during Maluma's concert in New York City back in October

teased the impending collaboration, neither Lopez or Maluma revealed the song's name. But many fans feel that the song can be for the pair's upcoming romantic comedy film "Marry Me".

In "Marry Me", she plays a pop star who is left at the wedding altar by her famous rocker husband-to-be (essayed by Maluma). She goes on to marry a stranger (Owen Wilson).

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and daughter Aaradhya test Covid-19 positive



Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and daughter Aaradhya

AFP | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Aishwarya Rai has tested positive for the coronavirus, her actor husband Abhishek Bachchan said Sunday just a day after he and his father, screen legend Amitabh Bachchan, were admitted to hospital with the infectious disease.

Their eight-year old daughter Aaradhya was also COVID-19 positive, he tweeted, adding that they were recovering at their home in Mumbai.

"Aishwarya and Aaradhya have also tested COVID-19 positive. They will be self quarantining at home... The rest of the family including my Mother have tested negative," Abhishek Bachchan tweeted.

Abhishek said he and his father were positive but both their cases were mild.

"My father and I remain in hospital till the doctors decide

otherwise. Everyone please remain cautious and safe. Please follow all rules!"

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan took the Miss World crown in 1994 and made her acting debut in the late 1990s.

She went on to become one of the most famous Bollywood faces abroad as well as in India and has been a regular on the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival. She married Abhishek Bachchan in 2007.

The elder Bachchan, 77 -- idolised in India and affectionately known as "Big B" -- has a more than four-decade-long career in the film industry.

He was voted "actor of the millennium" in a BBC online poll in 1999 and became the first Indian actor to gain a lookalike at London's Madame Tussauds waxworks museum.

Brie Larson shares stripped-back cover of Ariana Grande's 'Be Alright'

Fox | Los Angeles

Brie Larson has shared a stripped-back cover of part of Ariana Grande's 'Be Alright' -- watch it below now.

The actor shared a clip of her singing and playing the track on guitar on her Twitter account earlier today (July 10).

In the video, Larson sings the chorus to the 2016 track, which originally appeared on Grande's 'Dangerous Woman' album, while strumming a turquoise electric guitar. Watch it below now.

This isn't the first time that Larson has covered a song by the pop star. Last August, the Captain Marvel star shared an acoustic version of 'God Is A Woman' on her Instagram page, while earlier in the year she posted a cover of 'Needy'.

I'm not in charge of the future of Marvel, but it is something that we're really passionate about and we love and I feel like if enough people out in the world talk about how much they want it, maybe it'll happen

BRIE LARSON

She also sang '7 Rings' with Samuel L. Jackson on James Corden's Carpool Karaoke series.

The actor also revealed last year that "a lot of" Marvel Cinematic Universe stars had

expressed a desire to make an all-female ensemble Marvel movie to studio boss Kevin Feige. "I'm not in charge of the future of Marvel, but it is something that we're really passionate about and we love and I feel like if enough

people out in the world talk about how much they want it, maybe it'll happen," Larson said.

Brie Larson



SUDOKU

9	4		2			5	8	
			6		9			4
		7						
		1					9	2
8			9		7			5
6	9					3		
						2		
7			8		4			
	5	6			3		1	9

Yesterday's solution

1	3	4	9	7	8	5	6	2
7	9	2	5	6	3	4	8	1
8	8	5	1	4	2	7	9	3
4	7	3	6	5	9	2	1	8
5	1	8	2	3	4	9	7	6
2	6	9	7	8	1	3	5	4
3	2	6	8	9	5	1	4	7
8	5	1	4	2	7	6	3	9
9	4	7	3	1	6	8	2	5

How to play
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD

Yesterday's solution

P	A	S	S	D	U	O	M	O	A	B	B	A		
U	L	N	A	S	K	E	W	T	R	A	C			
R	E	A	L	N	A	S	A	L	L	A	S	H		
R	E	G	A	R	D	D	E	L	I	G	H	T		
M	E	R	M	E	T	O								
P	E	D	I	C	U	R	E		O	L	D	E		
L	G	E		F	A	T		N	E	E	D	A		
E	Y	E	L	I	F	T		B	A	Y	O	N	E	T
A	P	R	O	N		T	O	N		I	M	A		
S	T	E	P	S		A	B	N	O	R	M	A	L	
			E	A	R	P		U	R	I				
S	U	M	A	T	R	A		A	R	N	E	S	S	
A	N	O	N	O	F	F	A	L		S	L	A	T	
G	I	S	T		S	T	A	L		L	E	I	R	E
E	T	T	E		E	S	S	A		D	E	A	N	

Across
1- Bushy hairdo; 5- Upper limbs, weapons; 9- Silt deposit; 14- Jump; 15- Have a hunch; 16- Fuming; 17- Take ___ from me; 18- Minstrel's instrument; 19- Chad neighbor; 20- Ladies of Spain; 22- Hayes's Veep; 24- Matching; 25- Crotchety; 26- Harsh; 29- Dadaist Max; 31- Shut; 32- "Peter Pan" pirate; 33- Faulkner's ___; Lay Dying"; 36- Entirely; 37- Causes to remember; 40- Mil. address; 41- Mosquito protection; 42- Push with the head; 43- Fiddlesticks; 45- Sums owing; 47- Middy nap; 48- Poe maiden; 51- Earthbound bird; 52- Pear-shaped fruit; 54- Drilling result; 58- Languishes with longing; 59- Inner drive; 61- Busy as ___; 62- Rock; 63- Actor Julia; 64- Tabula ___; 65- Bridge positions; 66- Discard; 67- Textile worker.

Down
1- Melodramatic cry; 2- Celebration; 3- Drops from the sky; 4- Objects; 5- Blazing; 6- Employ again; 7- Encountered; 8- Move sideways, killed; 9- Passenger ships; 10- Provide bearings; 11- Specimen of genus Aquila; 12- Direct; 13- Crowd together; 21- Less common; 23- Sharpened; 26- Examine, search; 27- Fashion mag; 28- Unit of potential difference; 29- Gives off; 30- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 32- Brown-bag stuff; 33- Contented sighs; 34- Petty quarrel, ejected saliva; 35- Caucus state; 38- Grew less; 39- Long-winded speech; 44- Where sailors go; 45- University lecturer; 46- Rubs out; 47- Protect; 48- Pass into disuse; 49- Patti LuPone role; 50- Taboo; 51- Scoundrel; 53- Yours and mine; 55- Auction site; 56- ___majest0; 57- Regan's dad; 60- Fan sound;

*Waiting game:
Manchester
City will find
out today
if they will
compete in the
Champions
League next
season*



Raheem Sterling of Manchester City scores his team's fifth goal

Man City 'deserve' Champions League return, says Guardiola

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola believes Manchester City deserve their place in the Champions League next season as the club wait to find out whether their two-season ban against playing in European competitions will be overturned.

City were handed the two-season sanction by UEFA in February over alleged breaches of financial fair play rules, but appealed that decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport which will deliver its verdict today.

On the field, City ensured they will finish in the Premier League's top four with Raheem Sterling scoring a hat-trick in a 5-0 win over Brighton on Saturday.

"Today we achieved one incredible challenge, which is qualification for the Champions League mathematically," said Guardiola.

"We deserve to be there because we won it on the pitch. Hopefully today UEFA can allow us to play like this team and these players deserve to."

For the fourth time in their last six league games, City scored four or more goals in another performance that belied the 21-point gap between them and champions Liverpool.

However, they could still end the season with a treble of trophies as they face Arsenal in the semi-finals of the FA Cup next weekend before recommencing their Champions League campaign



Manchester City's Spanish manager Pep Guardiola jokingly takes the match ball from Manchester City's English midfielder Raheem Sterling

in August.

"I have the feeling all the team is ready to play good for what we have ahead of us," added Guardiola.

"The levels we've had since the restart, even the games we lost, have been

really good."

Too often City have been found wanting for failing to take their chances and punished for defensive lapses at the other end.

However, there was never any chance



City made 93 million euros from UEFA prize money and TV rights from last season's Champions League, with gate receipts and extra sponsorship revenue from Europe's premier club competition added to that tally

of Brighton adding to their nine league defeats this season once Sterling curled home his 25th goal of the season with unerring accuracy into the far corner.

"I think the problem we've had this season is we've created a lot of chances and not taken them whereas last season and the season before we'd finish them and bury games early on," said Sterling. "This season we haven't had that slight bit of luck."

Gabriel Jesus could have the responsibility of leading the line when City's bid to win the Champions League for the first time gets back underway with Sergio Aguerro facing a race against time

to be fit after knee surgery.

The Brazilian has not always been the most prolific finisher, but showed striker's instincts to tap Rodrigo's flick-on for a corner to make it 2-0 just before half-time with his 20th goal of the season.

Sterling notched his second of the night in unusual fashion by crashing home a header from Mahrez's teasing cross.

Brighton did themselves no favours for the fourth as Mat Ryan spiled a Bernardo Silva shot he should have held and Jesus teed up the Portuguese midfielder to roll into an unguarded net at the second attempt.

Sterling was left on as Kevin De Bruyne and Jesus made way to give him the chance of securing a hat-trick and he did so with a hint of fortune as the ball ricocheted off his head after he had fallen to the floor inside the area and Dan Burn failed to clear the ball off the line.

Brighton are still not mathematically safe as they remain eight points above the relegation zone, but Graham Potter's men should already have enough points on the board as third-bottom Bournemouth face the daunting task of being City's next opponents on Wednesday.

"We were well beaten by the better team," admitted Potter.

"They beat Liverpool 4-0 at the Etihad so better teams than us will find it difficult."

Confusion as drivers miss knee protest before second Spielberg race

AFP | Spielberg

After a week of debate as to whether Formula One drivers should take a united stance on racism and all kneel before races, several seemed to miss a protest ahead of yesterday's Styrian Grand Prix.

Working out who knelt was made more difficult because the television images from the Red Bull Ring, where spectators are banned and the movement of journalists is restricted, switched from filming the grid to focusing on an overhead para-glider before the protest had finished, but it seemed several

drivers were absent.

As they did last Sunday before the season-opening Grand Prix, 19 of the 20 drivers were wearing black 'End Racism' t-shirts, while Lewis Hamilton wore a 'Black Lives Matter' shirt when six of the paddock did not take a knee.

This time the majority again knelt as Max Verstappen of Red Bull, Charles Leclerc of Ferrari, Kimi Raikkonen of Alfa Romeo and Daniil Kvyat of Alpha Tauri stood.

But two of last week's hold-outs, Antonio Giovinazzi of Alfa Romeo and Carlos Sainz



Some of the F1 drivers take a knee on the grid in support of the Black Lives Matter movement



As they did last Sunday, 19 of the 20 drivers were wearing black 'End Racism' t-shirts, while Lewis Hamilton wore a 'Black Lives Matter' shirt when six of the paddock did not take a knee

of McLaren could not be seen on TV standing, but that might have been because they were not there.

Hamilton had said in advance he understood some of his colleagues might not take a knee, but on Thursday had made clear also Formula One had failed to follow the example of other major sports in demonstrating unity in the global anti-racism campaign.

Formula One's top drivers were divided again yesterday when several chose not to take a knee ahead of the Styrian Grand Prix.

Hamilton zips to 85th career win

Dominant Lewis Hamilton wins Styrian GP from pole after Ferraris collide on first lap

● Hamilton beats Bottas into second, Verstappen finishes third

● Leclerc apologises for hitting Ferrari teammate Vettel at start

AFP | Spielberg

Lewis Hamilton secured his first win of the season and the 85th of his career with a perfectly-judged victory from pole position as Mercedes delivered a one-two finish in yesterday's Styrian Grand Prix.

The six-time world champion bounced back from a disappointing season-opening Austrian Grand Prix on the same Red Bull Ring circuit a week earlier with a consummate display.

His team-mate Valtteri Bottas, who won the curtain-raising race, finished 13.7 seconds adrift in second to deliver a solid Mercedes one-two, their first in Austria since 2015.

Max Verstappen was third for Red Bull, slowed by slight car damage in the final stages, ahead of his team-mate Alex Albon, who defended stoutly to finish fourth.

"It's great to be back up here and thanks to the team," said Hamilton.

"This feels like it has been a long time coming after a difficult weekend last time."

Bottas said he had enjoyed his battle with Verstappen.

"Starting fourth, this was damage limitation for me," he said.

"I tried, but we are just a bit



Winner Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton reacts on the podium after winning the Formula One Styrian Grand Prix

too slow," admitted Verstappen. Bottas leads the embryonic championship ahead of Hamilton with Lando Norris third.

Norris came home a remarkable fifth for McLaren after passing both Racing Points cars during a thrilling final lap, Sergio Perez taking sixth after starting from 17th on the grid, and Lance Stroll seventh.

Daniel Ricciardo was eighth for Renault, Carlos Sainz clocked fastest lap and finished ninth in the second McLaren and Daniil Kvyat 10th for Alpha Tauri.

'I've let team down'

Both Ferraris were eliminated after crashing together at Turn Three on the opening lap, Charles Leclerc apologising to four-time champion Sebastian Vettel, who is in his last season

with the team, for his ill-judged dive down the inside that resulted in a disaster for the Italian team.

"I am disappointed in myself. I'm sorry but being sorry is not enough," tweeted Leclerc.

"Seb hasn't got any faults today. I've let the team down after them working a whole week to bring the updates early. Too eager to gain those places in the first lap. I will learn from it."

Hamilton made a smooth start from his record 89th pole position, pulling clear of Verstappen and an aggressive Sainz.

There was early drama when the two Ferraris collided at Turn Three, Leclerc bouncing off the kerb as he attempted an over-ambitious move to pass Vettel and crashing into the rear of the German's car.

The four-time champion's

machine was badly damaged, the rear wing almost removed, and after limping to the pits he was forced to retire. Leclerc survived, but abandoned the contest soon after the resultant Safety Car had pulled in.

On resumption, Hamilton took control.

Having given a master-class in the wet on Saturday, this was, by comparison, a measured and strategic Sunday stroll.

The sport's only black race winner and champion showed no affects either from another muddled pre-race gesture by the drivers in support of F1's anti-racism stance in which he took a knee again, with at least 10 others, while four stood.

All wore 'End Racism' t-shirts. Hamilton soon built a commanding lead ahead of Verstappen's Red Bull, the Briton reel-



After two rounds of a season likely to run to 15 races, Bottas still leads the championship with 43 points, in front of Hamilton on 37 points

ing off fastest laps at will while Mercedes team-mate Bottas closed in from third.

Verstappen was first to pit and rejoined behind the Finn, but ahead of team-mate Albon shortly before Esteban Ocon became the third retirement in his Renault.

Hamilton pitted from the lead after 28 laps, swapping his softs for a set of mediums, and was soon followed by Bottas, who returned 8.2 seconds adrift of Verstappen.

Behind the leaders, the fastest man on track was Perez, who had carved through the field after starting 17th.

With 15 laps remaining, he was fifth and hounding Albon for fourth.

By this time, Verstappen was hampered by a flapping front-wing footplate and Bottas had closed to within a second.

On lap 66, Bottas passed him on the back straight, but the Dutchman fought back and forced him to try again on lap 67 when, finally, he sealed his spot in an inevitable Mercedes one-two.

Shaikh Khalid calls for organising Strongest Man at Home Competition



HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa

TDT | Manama

HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and Bahrain Olympic Committee President has instructed his media office to prepare for organising the Strongest Man at Home Competition on August 12, 2020. This contest comes as part of HH's initiatives for supporting the sports field in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

"We have instructed for holding this competition in line with the directives issued by the HRH-the-Crown-Prince-Led National Task Force for Combating the Coronavirus COVID-19. This contest goes side by side to achieve the main target we have set out for organising the Strongest Bahraini Man Championship which proved to be a huge success thanks to its uniqueness. The main aim of both events is to support youth and sports and to provide a platform to allow our Bahraini youth to showcase their talents and meaningfully unleash their energies," HH Shaikh Khalid said, inviting everybody in the Kingdom to participate in the competition to make it a tremendous success.

Alderweireld seals Tottenham victory over Arsenal

AFP | London

Toby Alderweireld gave Tottenham a late 2-1 win over Arsenal as Jose Mourinho's men climbed above their north London rivals, while Aston Villa boosted their Premier League survival hopes with a 2-0 victory against Crystal Palace yesterday.

Mourinho had endured a barrage of criticism as Tottenham slipped out of the race to qualify for the Champions League with just one win in three games.

But thanks to Alderweireld's winner with nine minutes left, Tottenham took the local bragging rights and got back in contention for a place in next season's Europa League.

Tottenham are eighth, two points above ninth placed Arsenal and two behind Sheffield United as they try to avoid missing out on European action for the first time since 2009-10.

In the first north London derby at the new Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, Alexandre Lacazette put Arsenal ahead in the 16th minute with a stunning strike.

The French striker dispossessed Serge Aurier outside the Spurs area before unleashing



Heung-Min Son of Tottenham Hotspur scores the equaliser

an unstoppable effort inside the top near corner of the goal.

Arsenal's lead lasted just three minutes as Sead Kolasinac's sloppy pass gifted Son Heung-min the ball.

Son easily eluded David Luiz before chipping over onrushing keeper Emiliano Martinez.

It was the South Korean forward's 17th goal of the season and his first since the coronavirus hiatus.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang forced a fine save from Tottenham keeper Hugo Lloris in the second half, setting the stage for Alderweireld to win the game in the 82nd minute.

The Belgian defender rose above a cluster of Arsenal players to meet Son's corner and plant his header past Martinez.

At Villa Park, Dean Smith's side kicked off languishing seven points from safety, but Egypt winger Trezeguet scored twice to keep them in with a chance of avoiding relegation.

Villa's first win in 11 league games lifted them into 18th, within four points of fourth-from-bottom Watford with three games left.

Villa face Everton, Arsenal and West Ham in their last three matches as they battle to avoid an immediate return to the

“Arsenal had 48 hours more rest than us. So it was hard, but our performance came from the heart and even at the end we had zero problems

JOSE MOURINHO

Championship.

"We said to the players, 'It's like a semi-final today'. It was the first leg of the semi-final we needed to go and win and we have done that with a good performance," Smith said.

"We need to give ourselves a big chance. Watford and West Ham play each other next so they both can't take three points but we have to concentrate on ourselves and hopefully get a result at Everton."

Smith's men got an early stroke of luck when Palace defender Mamadou Sakho had a goal ruled out by VAR for handball.

Villa snatched the lead in first half stoppage-time when Conor Hourihane's free-kick picked out Trezeguet, who side-footed home at the far post.

Griezmann may miss season finale due to thigh injury

AFP | Barcelona

Antoine Griezmann looks set to miss the rest of the season after Barcelona said yesterday the France attacker had a thigh injury.

The World Cup winner went off at half-time of Saturday's 1-0 win over Valladolid after apparently asking to be subbed.

"He came off because he had a problem," Barcelona coach Quique Setien said Saturday. "It was him who asked for the change."

"Tests this morning have shown that first-team player Antoine Griez-

mann has a muscle injury in the quadriceps of his right leg," Barca said on their website.

"He is therefore not available for selection at the present time," a statement said of the

29-year-old who has scored 15 goals in 46 games this season.

It would appear Griez-

mann will miss Barcelona's final La Liga matches with Real Madrid needing five points from their final three games to win the title.

Barca also face a Champions League last-16 second leg on August 8 after drawing 1-1 at Napoli before the lockdown.

Antoine Griezmann