

Amazon could be next virus hot zone: scientist

Sao Paulo

The next pandemic could come from the Amazon rainforest, warns Brazilian ecologist David Lapola, who says human encroachment on animals' habitats -- a likely culprit in the coronavirus outbreak -- is soaring there because of rampant deforestation.

Researchers say the urbanization of once-wild areas contributes to the emergence of zoonotic diseases -- those that pass from animals to humans.

That includes the new coronavirus, which scientists believe originated in bats before passing to humans in China's rapidly urbanizing Hubei province, probably via a third species.

Lapola, 38, who studies how human activity will reshape the future ecosystems of tropical forests, says the same processes are in play in the Amazon.

"The Amazon is a huge reservoir of viruses," he told AFP in an interview.

"We'd better not try our luck."

The world's biggest rainforest is disappearing at an alarming rate.

ICT gets a royal fillip

Brazil, Spain win UNESCO King Hamad bin Isa prize for ICT

TDT, agencies | Manama

The UNESCO King Hamad bin Isa Prize for the Use of ICT in Education has crowned The Letrus Writing Skills Programme from Brazil and the Dyctective dyslexia screening tool from Spain as this year's winners.

Each of the winners will receive an award of \$25,000 in a ceremony whose date will be announced in the coming weeks.

This year's award focuses on the use of artificial intelligence for innovation in teaching and learning, in line with the UNESCO's drive to promote effective and ethical applications of artificial intelligence in education and make it universally available.

The 2020 laureates were selected out of 113 nominations submitted by the Governments of UNESCO's Member States and UNESCO partner organisations on the recommendation of an International Jury of educational experts.

The Letrus Writing Skills



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Spanish in approximately 15 minutes.

The tool, which combines online entertainment experiences linked to predictive machine learning applications, has so far benefited 270,000 children from 43 countries, who underwent free introductory diagnosis of dyslexia. The company has also provided grants to poor families with children who need orthodontic education for dyslexia.

Education Minister Dr Majid bin Ali Al-Nuaimi stressed the importance of the prize, which was launched by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa and adopted by the UNESCO.

He paid tribute to HM the King, hailing the royal initiative to launch the award, which reaches this year its eleventh session, establishing itself as a prestigious global award.

Established in 2005 and supported by Bahrain, the Prize annually rewards individuals and organisations that use digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and overall education performance.

Programme, developed by the Letrus company of Brazil, is an AI-powered programme for automated feedback on students' writing. Letrus aims to reduce functional illiteracy in the Por-

tuguese language by improving practice opportunities for secondary school students and teachers.

Over 65,000 students from the twenty-six states in Brazil have

been using the programme since its launch in 2017.

Dyctective (detective), developed by the Change Dyslexia company of Spain, is a tool designed to detect dyslexia in

HRH Sabeeka directs to pay debts of Bahraini women

TDT Manama

The Supreme Council for Women (SCW) announced it will clear the dues and debts of Bahraini women, whose names are listed in 'Fael Khair' service, to help them tide over the turmoils of Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

'Fael Khair' which translates to "Person of Good Will" was launched recently by the Verdicts Implementation Directorate to help Bahraini women who were sentenced over financial cases as the Kingdom battles to contain the spread of Coronavirus Pandemic.

The latest move also forms part of a national campaign themed "Together for the Safety of Bahrain" launched by SCW last month.

The campaign follows the directive of HRH Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and

President of SCW and the humanitarian stances and generous initiatives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

SCW in cooperation with the National Taskforce for Combating Coronavirus (COVID-19) will coordinate the payment. The task force is spearheaded by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier.

The SCW Secretary-General Hala Al Ansari praised the directives as reflecting the humanitarian face of HRH Princess Sabeeka.

"HRH Princess Sabeeka's directives reflect the ongoing efforts of SCW to ensure utmost stability for Bahraini families as well as health and psychological safety for their members."

She also pointed out that the "Together for the Safety of Bahrain" campaign is



HRH Princess Sabeeka

meant for providing prompt and urgent support to Bahraini women to help them overcome the pandemic.

She noted that the campaign, in coordination with the Interior Ministry and competent authorities, will finalise the payment procedures as soon as possible.

Hala Al Ansari said that SCW will spare no effort in providing the needed assistance to Bahraini women.

New 253 active cases

● Global toll passes 300,000

TDT | Manama

Bahrain yesterday recorded 253 new active Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases bringing the total active cases in the Kingdom to 3839.

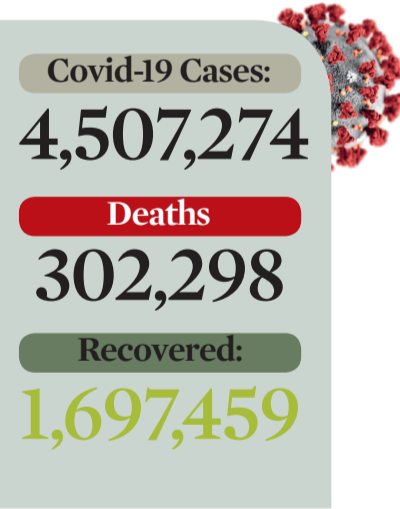
The Ministry of Health, in a statement on its Twitter handle, said that 215 of the new cases are expatriate workers, while 29 are contacts of active cases. Nine are travel related.

The ministry, in the past 24 hours, conducted 8160 new COVID-19 tests, as it continues to increase its testing capacity. The total number of tests conducted till date is 211,127, according to MoH website.

Besides, the authority said, 15 people recovered from the infection yesterday, increasing the total recoveries in Bahrain to 2220.

As of yesterday, the total number of virus cases in the Kingdom is 6069 and a total of 10 people succumbed fighting the virus. Of the 3839 active cases, 3833 are in stable conditions, while 6 people are in critical conditions.

Meanwhile, globally, the virus has claimed over 300,000 people and infected more than 4.4 million, as countries ease curbs.



The World Health Organisation has warned that the coronavirus may never go away and populations will have to learn to live with it just as they have HIV.

"This virus may become just another endemic virus in our communities and this virus may never go away," said Michael Ryan, the global health body's emergencies director in Geneva.

"HIV has not gone away -- but we have come to terms with the virus."

The prospect of the disease hanging around leaves governments across the world facing a delicate balancing act between suppressing the pathogen and getting economies up and running.

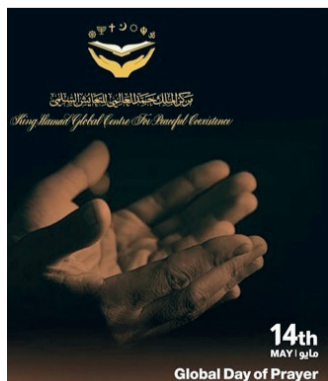
For humanity

Religious leaders laud HM King's support

TDT | Manama

Religious leaders who participated in the 'May 14 World Day of Prayer for Humanity' have praised Bahrain's effective participation in the initiative launched by the Higher Committee of Human Fraternity for the good of all humanity to end the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

They praised His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's



welcoming of the global event, noting that HM the King is the first supporter of the values of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence at the regional and local levels. The participants, who belong to many religions, lauded HM the King's vision and consolidation of the peaceful co-existence spirit in the world, through the launch of "The Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration."

(Continued on page 2)



03 Stop throwing used masks

04 Masks new norm for air travel

210 fils (includes VAT)

