

British PM unveils COVID-19 threat alert system

London

Britain will launch a five-tier alert system that ranks the current threat posed by the coronavirus (COVID-19), Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in an address to the nation.

Johnson said level five is "the most critical" and level one means Covid-19 is "no longer present" in the country, said dpa international.

He said Britain has been at level four throughout the lockdown period and that it could now begin to gradually move down a notch to level three, meaning parts of public life can re-open.

The prime minister said the level would be determined primarily by the infection rate and the total number of coronavirus cases.

Johnson said that the "Covid Alert Level will tell us how tough we have to be in our social distancing measures - the lower the level the fewer the measures. The higher the level, the tougher and stricter we will have to be."

South Korea to conduct COVID-19 antibody tests

Seoul

South Korea will conduct coronavirus antibody tests later this month to determine the true extent of coronavirus (COVID-19) infections in the country, officials said yesterday.

The serology tests on 7,000 people aged 10 or above are also expected to show how many people have immunity against COVID-19, South Korean News Agency (Yonhap) reported.

For the southeastern city of Daegu and the surrounding North Gyeongsang Province, the nation's two worst-hit regions, authorities will conduct serology tests on 1,000 people, officials said.

HM the King hails National Guard efforts to serve Bahrain

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday lauded the National Guard's top officials and servicemen.

HM the King was speaking as he received at Al Safriya Palace National Guard president General His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa and National Security Agency chief Lieutenant General Adel bin Khalifa Al Fadhel, who were accompanied by National Guard director of staff Major-General Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Saud Al Khalifa.

HM the King praised the efforts exerted by the National



HM the King with the National Guard officials

Guard Chief, which contribute to enhancing this military milestone's readiness.

He commended the National Guard's servicemen, hailing their solidarity and joint work with the Bahrain Defence Force,

the Ministry of Interior and the National Security Agency to fulfill their duties in defending the nation and protecting its security, stability and achievements.

HM the King praised the advanced level attained by the Na-

tional Guard's units, regarding training, combat readiness and preparedness to answer the call of duty, wishing servicemen success in serving the nation.

HM the King hailed the dedicated efforts exerted by the Na-

tional Security Agency chief and all its affiliates in serving the nation and protecting its security, stability and achievements on all levels. He took pride in Bahrainis' cohesion, fraternity, solidarity, awareness and collective responsibility in serving the nation.

The National Guard officials congratulated HM the King on the Holy Month of Ramadan, praying to Allah the Almighty to bless him with good health and happiness and the Kingdom of Bahrain and its loyal people with further progress and prosperity.

HM the King exchanged Ramadan greetings, wishing all many happy returns.

Building for the future

HRH the Prime Minister: Bahraini citizens at the core of every development effort

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa affirmed yesterday that Bahraini citizens remain at the core of every development effort undertaken by the government in all fields.

HRH the Premier stressed that the current challenges resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) require everyone to be better aware and more cooperative in order to preserve the Kingdom's developmental achievements.

Awareness of citizens and residents is the basis of the success of all efforts exerted by various sectors in order to overcome this stage, he added.

HRH the Premier made the statements as he received Deputy Prime Minister HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Premier HH Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, and Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, in the presence of HH Shaikh Ibrahim bin Hamad Al Khalifa, to follow up on the progress of work in the various government sectors and



HRH the Prime Minister during the meeting

ensure the smooth flow of services to fulfill the citizens' needs and aspirations.

HRH Prince Khalifa stressed that commitment to the preventive instructions and precautionary guidelines is a national duty that everyone should assume responsibly in order to preserve the safety and health of society, and stem the spread of the virus to avoid the stages reached by some other countries.

HRH the Premier praised the positive results achieved by Bahrain in fighting the pandemic, saying that the Kingdom presented to the world an outstanding model in levels of awareness, solidarity and speed of responding to the challenge, which reflects the strength of its preparedness and efficiency and the capabilities of Bahraini citizens in various fields.

HRH the Prime Minister expressed his appreciation of the

"The sons and daughters of Bahrain invariably prove that they are the real wealth of this homeland, and the successes achieved by the medical and health sector in dealing with this crisis is the result of sound institutional work and planning for the future to which all patriotic forces have contributed."

HRH THE PRIME MINISTER

health sector in dealing with this crisis is the result of sound institutional work and planning for the future to which all patriotic forces have contributed," HRH the Premier said.

HRH the Premier pointed out that the government is working at full energy to maintain the stability of the citizens' living conditions and to meet their needs, including providing a safe stock of food and basic commodities.

HRH the Prime Minister stressed the importance of the preparedness for the future and the anticipation of needs, saying that Bahrainis are inspired by the spirit of solidarity demonstrated during the coronavirus, to strengthen their determination and fortitude to complete the nation-building process and boost progress in various areas.

HRH Prince Khalifa also discussed major regional and international issues, especially with regard to the global economic effects of COVID-19, and the importance of concerted efforts by the international community to overcome the crisis with minimal losses at all levels.

#UNITEDAGAINSTCOVID19

Bahraini family of 16 contract coronavirus

Health Ministry announces 167 new active COVID-19 cases, 15 recoveries

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Health announced yesterday that it has registered 16 active cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19) among a single Bahraini family, therefore stressing the importance of following all official health guidelines and social distancing measures intended to mitigate the spread of the disease during the Holy Month of Ramadan.

The family members included the parents, siblings and infants,

who were exposed to the virus by one of their family members (case no. 2,930 under the contact-tracing mechanism).

The Health Ministry underlined that the family member was experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and had not called the designated hotline 444 or self-isolated.

Furthermore, the individual failed to comply with government-issued social-distancing measures, which include limiting social gatherings during Iftar and wearing masks whilst out in public.

The ministry underscored that strictly adhering to official social-distancing guidelines is the responsibility of every individual, and doing so helps to safeguard the wider community.

Furthermore, the Ministry noted that it has increased its testing capacity to ensure the early detection and treatment of active cases.

The Health Ministry emphasised that the virus is still in its transmission phase globally, adding that there is currently no cure or vaccination for the illness. In

this regard, the ministry noted that, while the Kingdom's treatment protocol has been highly successful in mitigating the effects of the virus, halting community transmission is the most effective means to safeguard public health.

The Ministry of Health concluded by stressing the adoption of a "prevention is better than cure" approach, underlining the importance of following all COVID-19 precautionary guidelines issued by the government.

Meanwhile, the Health Min-

istry announced yesterday that it had registered 167 new active cases of COVID-19 in the Kingdom. Of these, 132 are expatriate workers and 35 are contacts of active cases.

The total number of active COVID-19 cases reached 2,863, as of last night. All, except for two of them, are stable.

Meanwhile, the Health Ministry also announced yesterday 15 new recoveries. That brings the total number of discharged to 2,070.

The total tested rose to 184,029.



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HM the King issues decrees

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued yesterday Royal Decree 25/2020, appointing directors-general at the Interior Ministry.

According to the decree, Brigadier Isa Hassan Mohammed Al Qattan was appointed as Northern Governorate Police Directorate director general, Brigadier Jaber Mohammed Al Juwaid Al Khalidi as General Directorate of Guards director-general, and Brigadier

Ibrahim Saif Bakheet Al Najran as Capital Governorate Police Directorate director-general.

The Interior Minister shall implement the decree which takes immediate effect and will be published in the Official Gazette.

Meanwhile, His Majesty the

King also issued Royal Decree 26/2020, appointing deputy governors.

According to the decree, Brigadier Abdulla Khalifa Al Jairan was appointed as Deputy Muharraq Governor, Brigadier Khalid Rabiaa as Deputy North-

ern Governor, and Brigadier Isa Thamer Abdulla Al Dossari as Deputy Southern Governor, for four years.

The Interior Minister shall implement the decree, which takes immediate effect and will be published in the Official Gazette.



HM the King

TDT | Manama

More than 50,000 meals a day have been given out to expatriate workers across the Kingdom's governorates in light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, it has emerged.

The distribution has been carried out by Ministry of the Interior, in cooperation with the governorates and their police directorates, along with the participation of a number of volunteers.

It is in coordination with the "Feena Khair" national campaign, launched by His Majesty the King's Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs representative, National Security Advisor and Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) Board of Trustees chairman His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Southern Governor HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa praised the distribution efforts, which he said reflects a national sense of cohesion and pioneering community work.

In the same context, Muharraq Governor Salman bin Isa bin Hindi Al Mannai thanked His

Charitable efforts stepped up

More than 50,000 meals a day given out to expatriate workers in line with 'Feena Khair' campaign



Food distribution efforts going on



Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, for his great efforts in leading the fight against COVID-19.

He added that the Muharraq Governorate has allocated 12

points for the distribution of meals to the expatriate workers, according to population density and the workers' accommodations.

The Muharraq Governor expressed his thanks to the volunteers for their service, especially during such a challenging time in dealing with the pandemic.

For his part, Capital Governor Shaikh Hisham bin Abdul Rahman Al Khalifa praised the "Feena Khair" initiative, stressing that the campaign has a prominent role in promoting social solidarity. He added that it affirms the love of the Bahraini people for their country, praising the ef-

forts of all those who contributed to the campaign.

Shaikh Hisham said that the governorate, in cooperation with its police directorate and in coordination with seven civil and charitable societies, has been delivering meals at five points, three of which are in the Mana-

ma market and a point each in Adliya and Hooraa.

He added that what has been achieved since the launch of the "Feena Khair" campaign is a source of pride, as everyone has been working in the spirit of one team to deliver basic food supplies to the needy.

Northern Governor Ali bin Shaikh Al Asfour said that the "Feena Khair" campaign illustrates the paternal and humanitarian care of His Majesty the King, and his keenness to ensure the safety of citizens and residents in these exceptional circumstances.

He expressed his appreciation for the role played by the Ministry of Interior, under the directives of Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, and security agencies in providing support and assistance in the distribution of food.

Northern Governor urges building owners to follow measures



Northern Governor Ali bin Shaikh Al Asfour, in cooperation with the Northern Governorate Police Directorate, has urged the owners of buildings with a high number of residents to follow precautionary measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). This comes as the Northern Governorate has been monitoring buildings in a move to spread awareness of the measures being taken nationwide to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Above, a Northern Governorate police officer posts a notice informing building residents of precautionary measures.

COVID-19 human rights efforts discussed

TDT | Manama

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) has highlighted its efforts to educate citizens and residents during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

These efforts have included issuing statements, posting tweets and making visits to isolation and quarantine centers to assess the measures taken by the concerned authorities to provide medical services to patients and contacted individuals.

The NIHR has also distributed questionnaires to learn about the opinions of the quarantined and isolated people, as well as that of the medical and service staff present there.

These highlights were made during a virtual meeting between NIHR president Maria

Khoury and Asia Pacific Forum (APF) director Kieren Fitzpatrick, expert consultant Chris Sidoti, and Capacity Development manager Pip Dargan, as part of their cooperation.

Khoury also provided a summary of the Kingdom's efforts to combat the pandemic taking into account human rights, mainly the royal pardon of 901 people, and the activation of alternative punishment sanctions that benefited about 1,800 people.

The efforts also included establishing several quarantine and isolation centers, granting the necessary permits to set up special centers for temporary isolation and quarantine centers, and allocating schools and temporary buildings to housing workers to prevent overcrowding in their current

accommodations.

Khoury stressed that the NIHR is working to ensure there is no overcrowding in the workers' accommodations.

Fitzpatrick indicated the forum's readiness to provide all support and assistance to the NIHR in implementing its goals and carrying out its functions.

Khoury praised the outstanding efforts made by APF to support national institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires international cooperation and solidarity to combat it.

The meeting also discussed the challenges facing national human rights institutions across the world in dealing with the precautionary measures applied by different countries to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, how they can carry out their duties, and cooperation with APF.

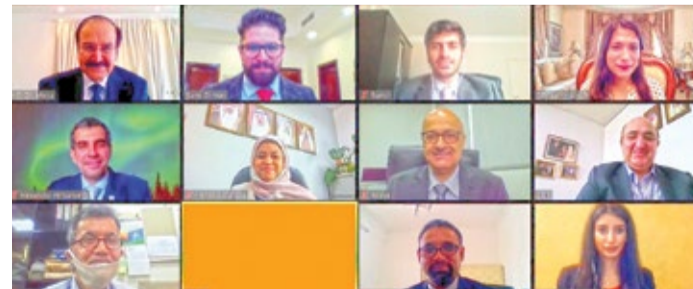
Renewable energy in water desalination discussed

TDT | Manama

Sustainable Energy Authority (SEA) president Dr. Abdulhussain bin Ali Mirza held a virtual meeting with the University of Bahrain (UoB).

The remote video conference saw the participation of SEA officials Dr. Waheeb Al Nasser, Dr. Hanan Al Buflasa, Dr. Mohammed Ridha, Dr. Muammar Talib and Dr. Nour Al Din Mansour along with others. They followed up on the developments of the joint SEA-UoB research cooperation agreement on the use of renewable energy in water desalination.

Dr. Mirza said that the meeting aimed to support the efforts and goals of the Water Resourc-



A screenshot of the video conference

es Council, led by Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, to ensure the sustainability of water resources in the Kingdom.

Dr. Mirza lauded the commitment of UoB and SEA to the continuous implementation of the agreement as well as their keenness to activate it, despite the on-going challenges resulting from the coronavirus (COV-

ID-19) pandemic.

The UoB team, led by Dr. Waheeb Al Nasser, gave a presentation about the outcomes of research efforts on innovative integration of renewable energy, specifically solar energy, and the latest technological solutions applied in water desalination.

The presentation also highlighted the experiences of other countries in this regard.

Asians arrested for bootlegging in West Eker

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior announced last night that the Capital Governorate Police Directorate has arrested a group of Asians while illegally selling alcohol in West Eker.

The arrests were made following a video that circulated on social media.

An investigation into received information led to identifying and arresting the suspects, who were aged between 26 and 44 and who were caught red-handed.

A number of cars they used for



Some of the goods and the cars that were seized

the crime as well as related tools taken, and the case has been referred to the Public Prosecution.

Legal proceedings are being

Residence permit, visit visa guidelines confirmed

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior confirmed yesterday a set of guidelines issued by the Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs (NPRA) on residence permits and visit visas.

The NPRA stated in an infographic posted on the Interior Ministry's official account on social networking service Twitter that all fees associated with all types of residence permits are waived until the end of the year.

It also stated that the length of stay periods for cancelled and expired residence permits are automatically extended until year's end.

Visit visas, meanwhile, are automatically

extended for three months.

The extensions of both the residence permits and visit visas are free of charge, and they do not need to be applied for.

These guidelines are part of the implementation of the directives of the Executive Committee, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, to promote the national efforts against the spreading of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are also part of the follow-up of Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

For those with inquiries, contact the NPRA on the details indicated on the infographic.

National kindergarten to be established



Dr. Ali Nuaimi

TDT | Manama

Education Minister Dr. Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi has approved a decision to establish a national kindergarten under the name "Young Jewels Kindergarten" for children from the age of three to five.

The decision stipulated that the kindergarten should abide by all the articles and provisions of Decree Law 25/1998 regarding private education and training.

They include the commitment to the number of children authorised by the ministry in the current building of the kindergarten, collecting the fees approved by the ministry, and not to increase or add any other fees unless they obtain a written approval.

Other requirements include planning and implementing an educational programme that matches the characteristics of kindergarten children, equipping the kindergarten fully consistent with modern educational requirements, and taking all precautions to ensure the security and safety of children and staff.

Foreign Affairs Minister receives Ambassadors' credentials

TDT | Manama

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani received copies of the credentials of Ambassadors to Bahrain through a virtual meeting attended by the International Affairs undersecretary Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa and Ministry of Foreign Affairs undersecretary Dr. Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Du'aj Al Khalifa.

The Minister received a copy of the credentials of Jaffalie Mussa, Ambassador of Malawi, residing in Kuwait; Marianne Nissila, Ambassador of Finland,

residing in Abu Dhabi; Wong Chow Ming, Ambassador of Singapore, residing in Riyadh; and Berik Aryn, Ambassador of Kazakhstan, residing in Riyadh.

Al Zayani wished the Ambassadors success in their new diplomatic missions, praising the distinguished level of friendly relations between Bahrain and their countries.

The minister affirmed Bahrain's keenness to develop the relations at all levels.

The Ambassadors praised the strong cooperation and relations that link their countries with Bahrain, stressing aspiration to strengthen ties in various fields.



Officials in one of the virtual meetings

NMS-DPS students celebrate Mother's Day



Sprightly students at New Millennium School-DPS Bahrain (NMS-DPS) acknowledged the role of their mothers on the special occasion of Mother's Day yesterday. A host of online activities displaying the creativity of the children were conducted through the digital classes to honour and appreciate all mothers. Students were involved in hands-on activities like designing Mother's Day cards and photo frames, making sandwiches, and decorating cupcakes. Kindergarten students and their mothers also sat together to draw pictures of fond memories in their lives. Principal Arun Kumar Sharma expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all mothers around the world and also urged children to support and help their mothers who have been constantly striving to keep the family comfortable and safe during the ongoing coronavirus crisis. Chairman Dr. Ravi Pillai and managing director Geeta Pillai applauded the students and the teachers for their contribution in making the day special for the mothers. They extended their wishes to all. Above, some of the students' photoframes.

Asian remanded for offering illegal transportation services

TDT | Manama

An Asian man has been remanded for offering transportation services without a permit.

The man has been interrogated by the Public Prosecution and referred to the concerned court for trial.

The 46-year-old was arrested around five hours after he offered to drop a Bahraini man from the

Driving School in A'ali to Manama for a fee of BD3.

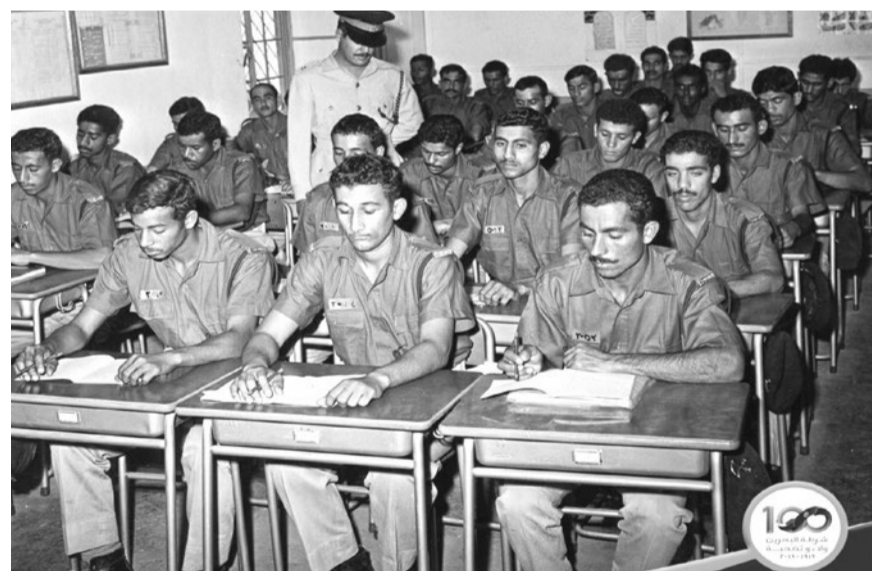
The Bahraini man, who was apparently in the school to renew his driving license, played along and filmed the entire process, showing the Asian man leading him from the school to his vehicle, which was parked in the vicinity of the school.

As shown in the video, the Asian man opened the door for the Bahraini and invited him

inside the car in chauffeur-like behaviour. There were also other passengers in the back seat of the car.

The Bahraini man shared the video on social media platforms with a message to the General Directorate of Traffic, demanding the arrest of the Asian man after he filmed his vehicle's registration plate number.

The directorate soon confirmed the arrest of the man in a tweet.



FLASHBACK: Part of the educational process for Bahraini police, as part of their qualification requirements to advance their duties in security maintenance.

ILA conducts COVID-19 awareness drive at labour camp



As part of supporting the coronavirus (COVID-19) awareness drive, Indian Ladies Association (ILA) executive committee and the ILA workers' welfare subcommittee donated sanitisers, dispensers and bathing soap to workers of a labour camp in Budaiya. There were around 50 men in the camp who were instructed on how to use the sanitisers, and the importance and need of washing hands and practising good hygiene. Flyers and posters consisting of important information and instructions regarding COVID-19 precautionary measures were also distributed. The flyers and posters were provided by the Indian Community Relief Fund. Sweets were also distributed to the people in the camp on account of the Indian festival Holi. Above, ILA executive committee and workers' welfare subcommittee members with the workers of the camp during the awareness drive.

Oil price lifts Saudi

● **Aramco seeks to review SABIC deal price - Sources**

● **Irregular trading dented share price - Emirates REIT**

Reuters

Most stockmarkets in the Gulf closed up yesterday, with shares in Saudi Arabia supported by higher oil prices, but banking shares dragged down Dubai's index.

On Friday, Brent crude settled up \$1.51, or 5.1 per cent, at \$30.97 a barrel after US producers cut output, with the number of drilling rigs falling to a record low, and as more states moved ahead with plans to relax lockdowns.

Saudi Arabia's benchmark index gained 0.8pc yesterday, led by a 4.8pc rise in Saudi British Bank and a 3.7pc increase in Banque Saudi Fransi.

Elsewhere, oil giant Saudi Aramco was up 0.5pc.

Aramco is looking to restructure its deal to acquire a controlling stake in petrochemicals maker Saudi Basic Industries (SABIC) after a more than 40pc drop in SABIC's value following a slump in oil prices and the coronavirus pandemic, Reuters



Traders watching stock movements (Courtesy of Gulf Business)

reported citing two sources.

SABIC was up 1.3pc. In Dubai, the index retreated 1.1pc. Dubai Islamic Bank, the United Arab Emirates' largest sharia-compliant lender, dropped 1.7pc, while Emirates NBD Bank fell 1pc.

Meanwhile, Emirates REIT, a Dubai-based sharia-compliant real estate investment trust, said on Sunday it had found evidence of irregular trading activity that has contributed to its low share price and has reported it to

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 0.8pc to 6,683 pts
ABU DHABI	▲ 1.4pc to 4,119 pts
DUBAI	▼ 1.1pc to 1,902 pts
QATAR	▲ 1.2pc to 8,907 pts
EGYPT	▲ 0.8pc to 10,258 pts
BAHRAIN	▼ 0.9pc to 1,268 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.4pc to 3,469 pts
KUWAIT	▼ 1.1pc to 5,173 pts

regulatory authorities.

The shares were trading at \$0.2 a share on Sunday compared with a net asset value (NAV) per share of \$1.57 at the end of 2019. Emirates REIT said its board was in the final stages of evaluating options to increase share liquidity and the trust value.

The Abu Dhabi stock index ended 1.4pc higher, with the country's largest lender First Abu Dhabi Bank rising 2.3pc.

Qatar's index added 1.2pc, with petrochemical firm Industries Qatar rising 4.1pc.

S&P Global Ratings on Friday affirmed Qatar's rating at "AA-", saying it believed the Arab country's government and external balance sheets will be able to provide sufficient buffers to withstand shocks.

S&P maintained Qatar's outlook at "stable".

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index was up 0.8pc as Commercial International Bank rose 2.5pc.

Tesla sues California in virus closure fight, threatens to leave

Reuters

Tesla Inc sued local authorities in California on Saturday as the electric carmaker pushed to re-open its factory there and Chief Executive Elon Musk threatened to move Tesla's headquarters and future programs from the state to Texas or Nevada.

Musk has been pushing to re-open Tesla's Fremont, California, factory after Alameda County's health department said the carmaker must not re-open because local lockdown measures to curb the spread of the coronavirus remain in effect.

In a blog post on Saturday, Tesla said the county's position left it no choice but to take legal action to ensure Tesla and its employees can go back to work.

The company said it had worked out a thorough return-to-work plan that includes online video training for personnel, work zone partition areas, temperature screening, requirements to wear protective equipment and rigorous cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

The company said it had informed health authorities in Alameda County, where the Fremont factory is located, about its restart plans, but claimed the acting official did not return calls or emails.

Alameda County's Public



Tesla Inc's only US vehicle factory is seen in Fremont, California, US

Health Department, which earlier on Saturday said it had been "communicating directly and working closely with the Tesla team," did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Tesla filed a lawsuit against the county in San Francisco federal court on Saturday, calling the continued restrictions a "power-grab" by the county since California's governor had said on Thursday that manufacturers in the state would be allowed to reopen.

The company said Alameda was going against the federal and California constitutions, as well as defying the governor's order, the lawsuit said.

Alameda County is scheduled to remain shut until the end of May, with only essential businesses allowed to reopen. The county said it does not consider Tesla an essential business. County officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit.

The outspoken Musk also took to Twitter on Saturday to complain and threatened to leave the state.

"If we even retain Fremont manufacturing activity at all, it will be dependen (sp) on how Tesla is treated in the future," he tweeted, referring to the San Francisco Bay area facility that is Tesla's only US vehicle factory.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Financial Statements

31 December 2019

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION as at 31 December 2019

	(Bahraini Dinars)	
	2019	2018*
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property and equipment	1,349,450	565,062
Total non-current assets	1,349,450	565,062
Current assets		
Trade and other receivables	2,645,151	1,959,694
Cash and bank balances	28,926,283	17,907,293
Total current assets	31,571,434	19,866,987
Total assets	32,920,884	20,432,049
ACCUMULATED FUNDS AND LIABILITIES		
Accumulated Funds		
Accumulated surplus	13,553,692	9,365,543
Total accumulated funds	13,553,692	9,365,543
Non-current liabilities		
Employee benefits	24,494	18,930
Lease liabilities	251,323	-
Deferred income	11,392,037	8,162,827
Total non-current liabilities	11,667,854	8,181,757
Current liabilities		
Deferred income	5,483,239	936,760
Lease liabilities	825,376	-
Trade and other payables	1,390,723	1,947,989
Total current liabilities	7,699,338	2,884,749
Total liabilities	19,367,192	11,066,506
Total accumulated funds and liabilities	32,920,884	20,432,049

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES for the year ended 31 December 2019

	(Bahraini Dinars)	
	2019	2018
INCOME		
License fees	3,499,157	3,012,474
Frequency and spectrum fees	10,201,489	5,513,744
Numbering fees	1,064,208	1,064,897
Other regulatory income	2,265,291	1,075,195
Interest income	768,923	602,364
Other income	375,585	911,804
Total income	18,174,653	12,180,478
EXPENSES		
Staff costs	(2,138,871)	(1,871,827)
General and administrative expenses	(817,453)	(1,087,672)
Consultancy and legal fees	(1,669,231)	(2,197,972)
Advertising and publicity	(120,395)	(71,808)
Lease interest expense	(60,360)	-
Depreciation	(665,448)	(330,554)
Total expenses	(5,471,758)	(5,559,833)
Surplus for the year	12,702,895	6,620,645
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total surplus for the year	12,702,895	6,620,645

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS for the year ended 31 December 2019

	(Bahraini Dinars)	
	2019	2018
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Surplus for the year	12,702,895	6,620,645
Adjustment For:		
Depreciation	665,448	330,554
Provision for employees' benefits	5,564	4,139
Other miscellaneous income	-	(18,319)
Adoption of IFRS 16 Impact	(1,315,787)	-
Amortisation of deferred income	(2,871,414)	(936,760)
	9,186,706	6,000,259
Working capital changes:		
(Increase) / Decrease in trade and other receivables	(685,457)	1,198,945
Decrease in trade and other payables	(557,266)	(1,372,555)
Increase in lease liability	1,076,699	-
Increase in deferred income	10,647,103	-
Net cash generated from operating activities	19,667,785	5,826,649
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of property and equipment	(134,049)	(253,099)
Decrease / (increase) in term deposits with banks	301,042	(4,419,708)
Decrease in security deposit	-	1,700,000
Net cash generated from / (used in) investing activities	166,993	(2,972,807)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Transfer made to the Ministry of Finance	(8,514,746)	(9,083,867)
Net cash used in financing activities	(8,514,746)	(9,083,867)
Net increase / (decrease) in bank balance	11,320,032	(6,230,025)
Bank balance at 1 January	170,227	6,400,252
Bank balance at 31 December	11,490,259	170,227

* 2019 results reflect the adoption of IFRS 16. Prior periods have not been restated. Refer to Note 3(a) for further details.

Emirates predicts 18-month lull in air demand

● Emirates' profits were boosted by a fall in oil prices

● However, the carrier saw its annual revenues decline by six percent

● Transported just over 56 million passengers in the fiscal year

AFP | Dubai

Gulf aviation giant Emirates said yesterday it would take at least 18 months for travel demand to return to "a semblance of normality", despite reporting bumper pre-pandemic profits.

The Dubai carrier, the largest in the Middle East, posted 1.1 billion dirhams (\$288 million) in net profit for the financial year



An Emirates A380 sits grounded at Dubai after the airline suspended all passenger operations amid the coronavirus pandemic

ending March, up from \$237 m the previous year.

It was the 32nd straight year of profit for Emirates, which operates a fleet of 115 Airbus A-380 superjumbos and 155 Boeing-777

airliners.

It had suspended flights on March 22 before resuming some services two weeks later.

Emirates Group chief Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al-Maktoum said the airline had performed strongly in the first 11 months of the fiscal year.

"However, from mid-February things changed rapidly as the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the world," he said in a statement.

This caused "a sudden and tremendous drop in demand for international air travel as countries closed their borders and imposed stringent travel restrictions."

"We expect it will take 18 months at least, before travel demand returns to a semblance of normality," he added.

Emirates' profits were boosted by a fall in oil prices, causing a 15 per cent decline in fuel costs to \$7.2 billion -- around 31 pc of its operating costs.

However, the carrier saw its annual revenues decline by six per cent to \$25 bn due to the coronavirus pandemic and the closure of a runway at Dubai airport.

The airline said it had transported just over 56 m passengers in the fiscal year, a drop of four percent year-on-year, while cargo had declined by a tenth to 2.4 m tonnes.

The strong US dollar eroded \$272 m of profits, while intensive competition also affected the bottom line.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic paralysed the aviation industry, Emirates had slimmed its orders from both Airbus and Boeing, cutting tens of billions of dollars-worth of aircraft.

The government of Dubai, whose economy heavily depends on aviation and tourism, said last month it would inject capital into Emirates to help it cope with the impact of coronavirus.

India issues guidelines for post-lockdown factory restarts

Reuters | New Delhi

India has issued guidelines to ensure the safe restart of manufacturing facilities, after a weeks' long nationwide lockdown aimed at stemming the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The guidelines come days after a gas leak killed 11 people and hospitalised 800 others at a plant in southern India operated by a subsidiary of South Korean petrochemicals maker LG Chem Ltd.

The cause, and whether it was related to the restart process, is being investigated.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in a statement issued late on Saturday, said companies should consider the first week of restarting operations as a test run and not attempt to achieve high production targets during



A vehicle enters inside the LG Polymers Plant following a gas leak at the plant in Visakhapatnam, India

the period.

It said the lockdown may have resulted in residual chemicals in pipelines, valves and other areas that could pose a risk. It also said companies must ensure staff are trained to identify abnormalities that could indicate potential system failures.

The NDMA said factories must also carry out complete safety audits of entire plants before restarting activities.

Rated Gulf banks can absorb up to \$36 billion shock before moving into red: S&P

Reuters | Dubai

Rated banks in the Gulf can absorb up to a \$36 billion shock before depleting their capital bases, S&P Global Ratings said yesterday, adding that banks in Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates are the most vulnerable to increases in cost of risk.

The ratings agency said the relatively strong profits of the region's rated banks and loan-loss provisions will help them weather the double shock of the coronavirus pandemic and the collapse of oil prices.

The \$36 billion shock that S&P estimates banks can absorb is about three times the agency's calculated normalised losses, "which implies a substantial level of stress," it said.



A general view of Business Bay area, after a curfew was imposed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

S&P said it expected banks' profitability to suffer in 2020 due to the pandemic and low oil prices.

"This is because financing growth will remain limited, with banks focusing more on preserving their asset-quality indicators than generating new business," it said, adding it expected asset quality will deteri-

orate and cost of risk would rise.

S&P assumed COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, will be contained and non-oil activity will resume by the third quarter. If not, banks' profitability will suffer further and some will see losses, it said.

"In our view, the support measures enacted by GCC governments will at best delay this

problem, in the absence of additional measures," it said, though it added banks' low cost base and potential new cost-saving measures next year could benefit them.

While some banks have taken measures to preserve their workforces, job cuts "will probably come next year if the environment doesn't improve," S&P said.

S&P said Saudi banks are the most resilient, while Kuwait has the highest capacity to withstand higher cost of risk and Bahrain, Oman and UAE are the most vulnerable to such costs.

It added that the \$36 billion figure is not evenly distributed. A few banks have more capacity to absorb losses than others, which is not correlated with the lender's size.

China central bank signals more policy measures to support virus-ravaged economy

Reuters | Beijing

China's central bank said yesterday it will step up counter-cyclical adjustments to support the economy and make monetary policy more flexible to fend off financial risks.

The first-quarter monetary policy implementation report from the People's Bank of China (PBOC) did not repeat the central bank's long-standing vow to refrain from "flood-like" stimulus to support growth, reinforcing signs of more policy measures.

China's long-term stable economic trend remains unchanged, despite the coronavirus outbreak, the central bank said.

"But at present, challenges faced by China's economic development are unprecedented, we must fully consider difficulties, risks and uncertainties," it said.

Mazda Motor seeks \$2.8 billion in loans to ride out pandemic -source

Reuters | Tokyo

Mazda Motor Corp has sought loans totaling about 300 billion yen (\$2.8 billion) from Japan's three megabanks and other lenders to ride out the coronavirus epidemic, a source with direct knowledge of the matter said.

The megabanks - Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group and Mizuho Financial Group - along with the Development Bank of Japan, Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Holdings and others are set to agree, with some already having extended the loans, the person said, declining to be identified because the information is not public.

All three megabanks declined to comment on the loan request, which was reported by the Nikkei business daily earlier. Mazda did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Italian companies ask for \$20 billion in state-guaranteed loans

Reuters | Milan

Large Italian companies have requested 18.5 billion euros (\$20 billion) in state-guaranteed loans to weather the coronavirus crisis, state-backed export credit agency SACE said.

Last month the Italian government approved a package of emergency measures offering liquidity and bank loans to companies hit by the health emergency.

One of the measures allows medium-sized and large companies to ask SACE to guarantee new bank loans, provided the firms refrain from approving dividend payments for a year.

The credit agency said that banks had received 250 requests for state-guaranteed loans so far.

It pledged to act quickly to ensure fresh funds were available for cash-starved companies.

Washington in talks with chipmakers about building US factories - WSJ

Reuters

US President Donald Trump's administration is in talks with semiconductor companies about building chip factories in the United States, the Wall Street Journal reported yesterday.

The Trump administration has held talks with Intel Corp and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co (TSMC), the newspaper reported, citing sources and a correspondence viewed by the Journal.

TSMC has been talking with the US Commerce and Defence departments and with Apple Inc, one of its largest customers, about building a chip factory in the United States, the report added.

Certain US officials are also looking at helping South Korea's Samsung Electronics Co, which has a chip factory in Austin, Texas, to expand its contract-manufacturing operations in the United States, the Journal reported.



Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co



Samsung Electronics Co

It did not give details of any incentives that may be on offer to chipmakers.

TSMC, Apple, Intel and Samsung Electronics were not immediately available for comment on Sunday.

US unemployment rate will get worse, Mnuchin says

Reuters | Washington

The staggering US unemployment rate reported by the government on Friday amid coronavirus lockdowns may get even worse, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said yesterday.

"The reported numbers are probably going to get worse before they get better," Mnuchin told the Fox News Sunday programme.

The unemployment rate surged to 14.7 per cent in April, the Department of Labor reported.

That shattered the post-World War Two record of 10.8pc touched in November 1982.

Mnuchin indicated the White House was talking about more fiscal measures to ease the economic pain from the pandemic. But, Mnuchin said the federal government did not want to bail out states that were "poorly" managed.

Coronavirus spread accelerates again in Germany

Reuters | Berlin

New coronavirus infections are accelerating again in Germany just days after its leaders loosened social restrictions, raising concerns that the pandemic could once again slip out of control.

The Robert Koch Institute for disease control said in a daily bulletin the number of people each sick person now infects - known as the reproduction rate, or R - had risen to 1.1. When it goes above 1, it means the number of infections is growing.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, bowing to pressure from leaders of Germany's 16 federal states to restart social life and revive the economy, announced on Wednesday measures that included more shop openings and a gradual return to school.

At the same time, she launched an "emergency brake" to allow for the reimposition of restrictions if infections pick up again.

Karl Lauterbach, a Social Democrat lawmaker and professor of epidemiology, warned that the new coronavirus could start spreading again quickly after seeing large crowds out and about on Saturday in his home city of Cologne.

"It has to be expected that the R rate will go over 1 and we will return to exponential growth," Lauterbach said in a tweet. "The loosening measures were far too poorly prepared."

Wuhan reports first virus infection in over a month

AFP | Shanghai

China yesterday reported the first case of coronavirus in over a month in Wuhan, the city where the outbreak first started in December last year.

China's National Health Commission also reported the first double-digit increase in countrywide cases in nearly 10 days, saying 14 new infections had been confirmed.

Two of the cases were imported into the country from overseas, the commission said.

The virus first



A man wearing a face mask walks past a mural at Leishenshan Hospital in Wuhan in April

emerged in Wuhan, a major industrial and transport city in central China, in December.

It has since infect-

The total number infected in China is 82,901, with an official death toll of 4,633.

No new deaths have been reported for nearly a month.

China's ruling Communist Party imposed a quarantine lockdown on tens of millions of people -- first in Wuhan and then the rest of Hubei province -- beginning January 23, making Wuhan the first place in the world subjected to draconian restrictions.

Authorities started lifting restrictions in late March.

US FDA grants emergency use authorisation to Quidel for first antigen test for COVID-19

Reuters

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Saturday approved emergency use authorization (EUA) to Quidel Corp for the first COVID-19 antigen test.

The emergency use authorization was issued late Friday to Quidel for the Sofia 2 SARS Antigen FIA, the agency said.

The FDA said the authorization is for an antigen test, which is a new type of diagnostic test designed for rapid detection of the virus that causes COVID-19.

An antigen test can provide results in minutes but it may not detect all active infections, as they do not work the same way as a PCR test, the agency said.

Antigen tests are very specific for the virus, but are not as sensitive as molecular PCR tests which means that posi-



A view shows the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland

itive results from antigen tests are highly accurate, but there is a higher chance of false negatives, so negative results do not rule out infection, it added.

The FDA on Friday also authorized the first diagnostic test for the new coronavirus that allows patients to collect saliva samples at home.

Indian, Chinese border troops in brief skirmish, India says

Reuters | Kolkata

Indian and Chinese troops had a brief skirmish in Sikkim, a northeastern Indian state bordering China, the Indian Defence Ministry said yesterday, blaming both sides for the incident.

"Aggressive behaviour by the two sides resulted in minor injuries to troops. The two sides disengaged after dialogue and interaction at the local level," the ministry said in a statement.

The Indian daily Hindustan Times, citing a military source, said four Indian soldiers and seven Chinese troops were injured when some of the soldiers exchanged blows during the confrontation, which it said took place on Saturday and involved some 150 soldiers.

News in brief

● **South Korea's capital ordered the closure of all clubs and bars after a burst of new cases sparked fears of a second coronavirus wave, and President Moon Jae-in urged the public to remain vigilant.** More than 50 cases so far have been linked to a 29-year-old man who tested positive after spending time at five clubs and bars in Itaewon -- one



of the city's busiest nightlife districts -- last weekend. Gyeonggi province -- which surrounds Seoul with a population of around 12 million people -- also ordered more than 5,700 entertainment facilities to suspend operations for two weeks starting Sunday.

Ten people were arrested and a police officer injured at an anti-lockdown protest in Melbourne, where demonstrators claimed coronavirus was a government-engineered conspiracy designed to control the population. About 150 protesters rallied outside Victoria's state parliament to protest against a shutdown aimed at stemming the spread of COVID-19, while also peddling conspiracy theories about the virus.



Sri Lanka to partially reopen

Sri Lanka will partially reopen from Monday, ending a 52-day lockdown as the community spread of the coronavirus had been brought under control, the health minister said. Pavithra Wanniarachchi said state and private companies would be allowed to open, as authorities seek to revive the island's tourism-dependant economy that has been battered by lockdown since March 20. Public transport will remain closed for two more weeks, however.

Malaysia extended curbs to fight the spread of the coronavirus until June 9th. They had originally been due to come to an end this coming Tuesday. The measures had already been substantially eased at the start of this month, with most businesses allowed to reopen, as the country's outbreak slowed. But restrictions remain in place on schools and business that typically see large groups of people gathering, such as cinemas.

Malaysia extends inter-state travel ban

New coronavirus infections are accelerating again in Germany just days after its leaders loosened social restrictions, raising concerns that the pandemic could once again slip out of control

The Russian authorities said they had recorded 11,012 new cases of the coronavirus in the last 24 hours, bringing the nationwide tally to 209,688.

China's National Health Commission reported 14 new confirmed coronavirus cases on May 9, the highest number since April 28

Three senior officials guiding the U.S. response to the pandemic were in self-quarantine on Saturday after coming into contact with someone who had tested positive for the coronavirus, their agencies and spokesmen said.

The coronavirus could kill between 83,000 and 190,000 people in Africa in the first year and infect between 29 million and 44 million in the first year if it is not contained, the World Health Organization said.

Kuwait will enact a "total curfew" from 4 p.m. (1300 GMT) on Sunday through to May 30, the Information Ministry said on Twitter on Friday.

Libya's Government of National Accord said Sunday at least four civilians, including a child, were killed as rockets rained down on the capital Tripoli and damaged its only working airport.

Warship from Maldives with virus evacuees arrives in India

Kochi | India

A navy ship carrying evacuees from the Maldives arrived in India Sunday as part of a massive effort to bring home hundreds of thousands of nationals stranded overseas due to the coronavirus lockdown.

Workers and students were unable to return home after India banned all incoming international flights in late March as part of the world's biggest lockdown to combat the spread of the deadly infectious disease.

The warship INS Jalashwa carrying 698 Indians from the Maldives capital of Male arrived at Cochin port on the southwestern coast of India on Sunday morning.

It followed the arrival of 326 Indians from London early Sunday at Mumbai's international airport.

Another warship, INS Magar, is expected to arrive at Male Sunday to repatriate more stranded Indians. Around 4,000 of the 27,000 Indians living in the Maldives have reg-



The warship INS Jalashwa carrying 698 Indians from the Maldives capital of Male arrived at Cochin port on the southwestern coast of India

istered to be taken home.

The naval efforts are part of an initial operation to repatriate almost 15,000 Indians from 12 countries.

The repatriation process is expected to be expanded in the next few weeks to include more stranded citizens in other European and Southeast Asian nations, local media reported.

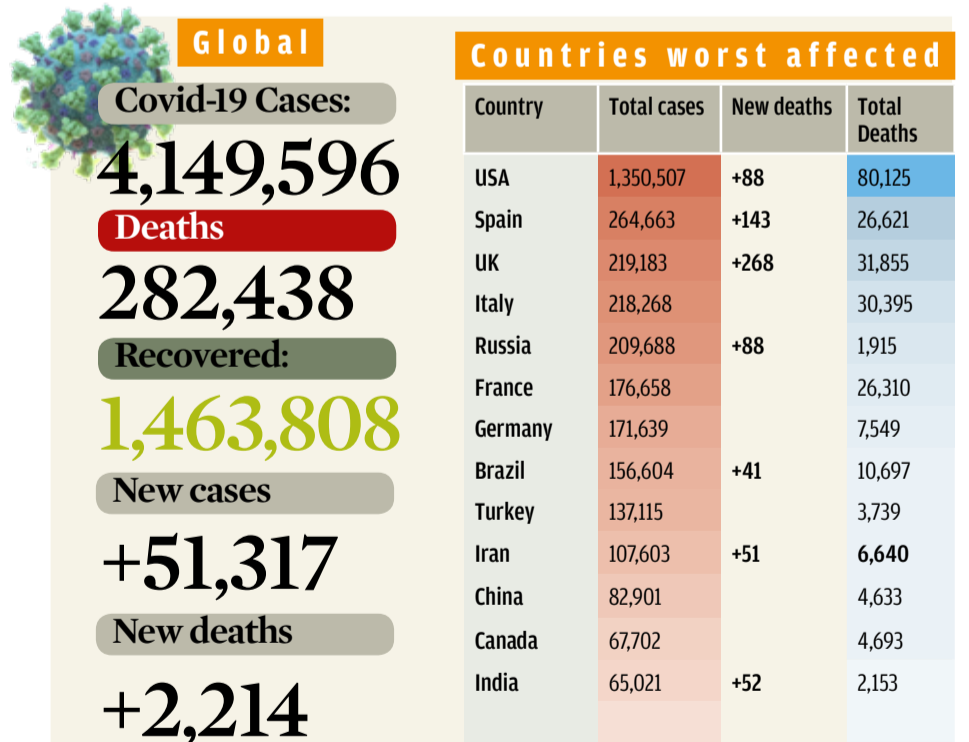
On Thursday, the first two repatriation flights brought back 354 Indians from Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. They then went into quarantine centres.

Two returnees have since tested positive for coronavirus, Kerala state Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said late Saturday. He added that it was "a

warning to those coming back from abroad and for other states to be on the alert".

India has started to ease its lockdown but domestic and international flights remain grounded.

Authorities on Sunday reported 62,939 cases with 2,109 deaths, with recent days having seen record jumps.



Middle East Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases	Serious, Critical	Tot cases/1m pop
Bahrain	4,856	+82	8		2,065	2,783	2	2,854
Saudi Arabia	39,048	+1,912	246	+7	11,457	27,345	140	1,122
UAE	18,198	+781	198	+13	4,804	13,196	1	1,840
Kuwait	8,688	+1,065	58	+9	2,729	5,901	114	2,034
Oman	3,399	+175	17		1,117	2,265	17	666
Egypt	8,964		514		2,002	6,448	41	88



Little Richard, rock's flashy founding father, dies at 87

US rock legend Little Richard inspired scores of musicians including David Bowie, The Beatles, Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly

AFP | New York

Little Richard, whose outrageous showmanship and lightning-fast rhythms intoxicated crowds with hits like "Tutti Frutti" and "Long Tall Sally," has died. He was 87 years old.

Reverend Bill Minson, a friend of the legendary musician, told AFP Little Richard died Saturday morning following a battle with cancer.

With a distinctive range from robust belting to howling falsetto, Richard transfixed audiences and inspired artists including The Beatles as he transformed the blues into the feverish new style of rock 'n' roll alongside Fats Domino and Chuck Berry.

His raunchy 1955 song "Tutti Frutti" became a sort of opening salvo of rock 'n' roll's entry into American life, starting with his nonsensical but instantly thrilling first line: "Awop bop a loo mop / Alop bam boom."

Richard stunned buttoned-down post-World War II America with an otherworldly look of blindingly colorful shirts, glass-embedded jackets, a needle-thin moustache and a six-inch (15-centimeter) high pompadour.

A consummate entertainer, he would play piano with one leg hoisted over the keys and, in one legendary concert in Britain, played dead on stage so effectively that the venue sought medical help before he resurrected himself to an astounded crowd.

With a distinctive range from robust belting to howling falsetto, Richard transfixed audiences and inspired artists including The Beatles as he transformed the blues into the feverish new style of rock 'n' roll alongside Fats Domino and Chuck Berry.

Richard's lifestyle -- he spoke fondly of bisexual orgies -- became the epitome of rock 'n' roll decadence.

But he never became an obvious icon for the African-American or gay communities.

Once openly -- by standards of the time -- attracted to men, Richard became a born-again Christian and renounced homosexuality as a temporary choice, anathema to the modern gay rights movement and psychologists.

And while he was one of the first African-American artists to cross the racial divide, a younger generation of black DJs had little interest in an artist seen as embedded in the white mainstream.

Mentor to rock's greats

But his influence was incalculable. Early white rockers including Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley all pursued Richard's sound.

The upstart Beatles and Rolling Stones served separately as opening acts when Richard toured England, and a young Jimi Hendrix and members of Earth, Wind and Fire played in his back-up band.

"He was the biggest inspiration of my early teens," Mick Jagger tweeted Saturday.

"His music still has the same raw electric energy when you play it now as it did when it first shot through the music scene in the mid 50's."

Bob Dylan called Richard "my shining star and guiding light back when I was only a little boy. His was the original spirit

that moved me to do everything I would do."

"Of course he'll live forever," he said in a series of tweets. "But it's like a part of your life is gone."

David Bowie was mesmerized when he saw one of Richard's movies, with the then nine-year-old deciding to learn the saxophone and later saying, "If it hadn't have been for him, I probably wouldn't have gone into music."

The superstar was aware of the debt his successors owed him. "Prince is the Little Richard of his generation," he told Joan Rivers in 1989.

He then turned to face the camera directly and said: "I was wearing purple before you was wearing it!"

The estate of Prince, who died in 2016, said Saturday that Richard "didn't just open doors, he smashed entire walls to pieces to make way for all who would come after him."

'Tutti Frutti' reborn

Born Richard Wayne Penniman on December 5, 1932, he was raised in grinding poverty in Macon, Georgia. His father sold bootleg liquor and owned a tavern, where he was shot dead in a dispute when Richard was starting his career.

Richard, despite his stage name, stood a skinny five-foot-10 (1.8 meters) and was born with different sized legs. A mischievous child, he lingered in churches for their music and was noticeably effeminate.

In his 1984 authorized biogra-

phy, Richard recalled his father telling him, "My father had seven sons and I wanted seven sons. You've spoiled it, you're only half a son."

"And then he'd hit me. But I couldn't help it. That was the way I was," Richard said.

A key break came in 1947 when gospel singer Sister Rosetta Tharpe spotted him singing at the Macon City Auditorium, where Richard sold soft drinks.

Richard had developed a low-key career singing around Georgia, including in underground drag performances, when he was approached by record labels.

Success was not immediate. Early recording ventures with RCA Victor and Peacock Records fell flat.

Richard never thought to record "Tutti Frutti," a staple of his live performances driven by frantic piano and whose lyrics -- in a wink likely lost on many -- were a light-hearted depiction of anal sex: "Tutti frutti / Good booty... If it don't fit / Don't force it."

But the song caught the ear of Bumps Blackwell, a producer from Specialty Records, which had reluctantly signed Richard after he persistently phoned its office.

Blackwell asked young songwriter Dorothy LaBostrie to quickly pen some more radio-friendly lyrics.

Within 15 minutes and only three takes, Little Richard had recorded his defining hit, now with the tame lines: "Tutti frut-

ti / Aw rootie... I've got a girl named Sue / She knows just what to do."

'True king'

The song -- with its infectious rhythm, high decibel level and lingering sense of naughtiness -- triggered an unprecedented reaction.

In a 1956 Baltimore concert, women threw underwear as police prevented fans from rushing the stage or leaping from the balcony in euphoria.

"Richard arrives and he's attacking the piano; he's banging on it. He's not crooning; he's screaming," said Chris Morris, a music scholar who remastered his 1957 album "Here's Little Richard."

"There had never really been a figure who came out of R&B who was that extroverted or loud or wild."

Richard followed with 1956's "Good Golly, Miss Molly."

But then he abruptly canceled a tour and became a missionary for the evangelical Church of God.

His turn to religion complicated his relationship with the music world -- but his legacy as a titan who ushered in a new musical age held.

Tributes poured in Saturday, with Chic co-founder Nile Rodgers mourning "the loss of a true giant" and former president Bill Clinton hailing his "unforgettable charisma."

Questlove of The Roots was more emphatic: "LITTLE RICHARD IS THE TRUE KING. LONG LIVE THE KING."

Needy Tunisians get food aid via text messages

AFP | Tunis

A Tunisian NGO has set up a food bank that dispenses aid by text message to some 300 needy families rendered more vulnerable because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The initiative, which had been long in the making, was finally launched at the end of April to coincide with the start of the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

It targets families who have lost jobs because of the lockdown imposed by Tunisia to contain the spread of the virus, like that of Messaouda Raouafi, a cleaning woman forced to stay indoors.

"Because of Ramadan and the



For many Tunisians the lockdown to stem the spread of the coronavirus deprived them of jobs and in need of food aid

lockdown I can no longer go out to work," said the 49-year-old.

"I cannot clean homes and earn money to feed my seven children."

Her family was among the 300 chosen by the women's affairs ministry and signalled to the NGO known as the "Banque Alimentaire Durable" or Sustainable Food Bank.

Under the initiative, Raouafi receives a code by text message allowing her to spend 40 to 60 Tunisian dinars (around \$21-32) weekly at specially designated grocery stores.

With that money, Raouafi has been able to buy basic goods such as oil, milk, coffee and flour.

Farah, who runs a grocery

store in the working-class district of Kram, is among those who signed up to take part in the project.

"The money is sent to us ahead of time -- that way the clients can buy what they want with the funds allocated to them," she said.

Farah said this works much better than allowing customers to buy on credit, a system that takes its toll on her own finances.

"In our area there are many poor families and unemployed people," she said, explaining why she decided to embrace the initiative.

Aid and autonomy

A member of the NGO, Aisha

Zakraoui, said she hopes the initiative will grow so as to reach more needy families across Tunisia. The NGO also aims to help families become more self-sufficient through training in skills such as growing their own vegetables or baking bread to sell.

"Our objective is to provide food aid to needy people and in exchange they agree to take part in initiatives aimed at integrating them socially and professionally," Zakraoui said.

Even before the virus outbreak, Tunisia has been struggling with economic and social hardship that has worsened since the country went into lockdown in March to battle the pandemic.

New York mayor sounds alarm over COVID-linked rare syndrome

● The mayor said there have been 38 cases of pediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome detected in New York City

● There have been three deaths statewide linked to the syndrome

● Symptoms of the syndrome include persistent fever, rash, abdominal pain and vomiting

AFP | New York



New York Mayor Bill de Blasio

New York's Mayor Bill de Blasio on Sunday voiced "tremendous concern" over an uptick in cases of a pediatric syndrome that scientists suspect could be linked to COVID-19.

The mayor said there have been 38 cases of pediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome detected in New York City, with an additional nine suspected cases awaiting confirmation.

There have been three deaths statewide linked to the syndrome, Governor Andrew Cuomo had said over the weekend,

with one in the city.

Symptoms of the syndrome include persistent fever, rash, abdominal pain and vomiting.

"What it does is, basically, in a child's body triggers an intensive, almost overwhelming immune system response. And that actually causes harm to the body," de Blasio said.

The mayor said all children with associated symptoms would now be tested for COVID-19 as well as antibodies.

So far, of the confirmed cases, 47 percent had tested positive

for coronavirus and 81 percent had antibodies, indicating exposure to the fast-spreading virus at some point.

De Blasio urged all parents whose children exhibited the symptoms to seek immediate medical attention.

On Friday Cuomo had reported at least 73 children throughout New York state had developed the rare illness, which has some similarities to Kawasaki disease. Kawasaki disease is a mysterious illness that primarily affects children up to the

age of five and causes the walls of arteries to become inflamed, resulting in fever, skin peeling and joint pain.

Britain's National Health Service first sounded the alarm last month, warning about a small rise in children infected with the coronavirus that have "overlapping features of toxic shock syndrome and atypical Kawasaki disease."

France has also reported several cases.

Though frightening, most recover without serious issues.

Turkey threatens to target Haftar's forces in Libya if attacks persist

Reuters | Ankara

Turkey said yesterday it would deem the forces of Libyan General Khalifa Haftar "legitimate targets" if their attacks on its interests and diplomatic missions in Libya persisted.

Turkey backs Libya's internationally-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA). It has signed a military cooperation deal with the GNA, which has been trying to fend off an offensive by Haftar's forces.

Ankara views Haftar's forces as "putschists".

"If our missions and our interests in Libya are targeted, we will deem Haftar's forces legitimate targets," the foreign ministry said in a statement in which it also slammed the United Nations for not taking action over Haftar's attacks.

"It is unacceptable for the United Nations to remain silent against this carnage any longer," it said. "Countries providing military, financial and political aid to Haftar are responsible for the suffering that the people of Libya are enduring and the chaos and instability the country is being dragged into."

It also said attacks on Tripoli's Mitiga airport early on Saturday, part of an intensified barrage of artillery fire on the capital, were war crimes.

On Thursday, Turkey and Italy said the area around their embassies in Tripoli had been shelled.

Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) has been fighting



Libya's eastern-based military leader Khalifa Haftar

for more than a year to capture Tripoli from the GNA with frequent shelling of the capital. The United Nations said four fifths of the 130 civilian casualties recorded in the Libyan conflict in the first quarter of 2020 were caused by LNA ground fighting.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday the LNA was in a "period of regression" after NATO member Turkey threw its support behind the GNA.

"Even the efforts of countries that provide him (Haftar) with unlimited financial support and weapons will not be able to save him," Erdogan said.

Pro-GNA forces have retaken some territory from the LNA around Tripoli during an escalation of fighting in recent weeks with the help of Turkish-supplied drones.

The LNA says Turkey has established a military drone base at Mitiga, but the GNA denies this.

How masks went from 'muzzle' to fashion's object of desire

AFP | Paris

Once upon a time if you wanted to get ahead you got a hat.

Now if you want step outside your front door you need a mask.

In a matter of weeks, the coronavirus has upended the Western wardrobe and challenged its deepest codes about freedom, comfort and self-expression.

From being a curious oddity seen only on Asian tourists, masks have suddenly become as essential as socks -- a signal of civic virtue and a passport to many public spaces denied to the bare faced.

"When you wear one you are saying, 'I'm not a threat,'" said French designer Stephanie Coudert, who made her name with Paris haute couture.

"It's a civic gesture."

Yet when she sat down to design a mask, one thought kept coming back to her.

"It's a muzzle. It is hard to get away from that," Coudert said.

Fashion's Mr Zeitgeist, Louis Vuitton's Virgil Abloh had no such reservations, rushing out a simple black mask emblazoned with the arrow logo of his own Off-White label for \$92 (87 euros) a pop.

It immediately sold out and has since become the most coveted style accessory in the world, according to trends monitor the Lyst Index, with some now selling secondhand for four and five times that.

By contrast, Coudert is selling her couture masks for eight euros.

"It a social choice for me," she said. "I think we are all asking ourselves how we can be useful."

Not surprisingly, she is work-



Making masks fashionable

ing flat out to keep up with demand. Indeed Lyst said internet searches for masks have gone up five times since the beginning of the year.

Early adopters

Even before the virus raised its ugly head, masks were coming in from the fashion cold.

American designer Rick Owens was ahead of the curve, masking many of the models in

his Paris spring summer collection two years ago and giving out masks to everyone at the show.

Back then Owens had pollution and climate change in mind. Yet he was reluctant to revive the idea even as the virus casts its shadow on the last Paris fashion week in March.

"I would hate to capitalise on it," he said. "I'm sure people will and it will be sensational on Instagram."

Owens was not alone in seeing a fashion future for masks. Rising French designer Marine Serre was an early adopter and they have also featured in recent Gucci, Vetements and Japanese designer Takahiro Niyashita's The Soloist shows.

But many of the big houses remain cautious and deeply ambivalent about whether masks will be part of our fashion future. Style historian Olivier Saillard

warned masks were "an accessory we all want to be quickly rid of".

- 'Rather vulgar'

It could be seen as "rather vulgar to make money from putting a logo on a mask," he said.

While Dior, Saint Laurent and Balenciaga have been making free masks for French medical staff and care workers, there is a reticence about going any

further.

Chloe, a bag and accessory designer for a fabled French house, told AFP from the window of her Paris apartment that she had been asked to toy with some ideas around masks.

"It's tricky," she said. "But we could be wearing them for many months or even years, so why not make them into a fetish object. It is what we humans do."

Coudert said that it we had to live with them, it was best to make masks that were clever, comfortable and calming.

AIDS analogy

"I dropped the idea of making ones with a seam down the middle because you can look like a warrior in them. We don't need to make people any more nervous now," said the couturier.

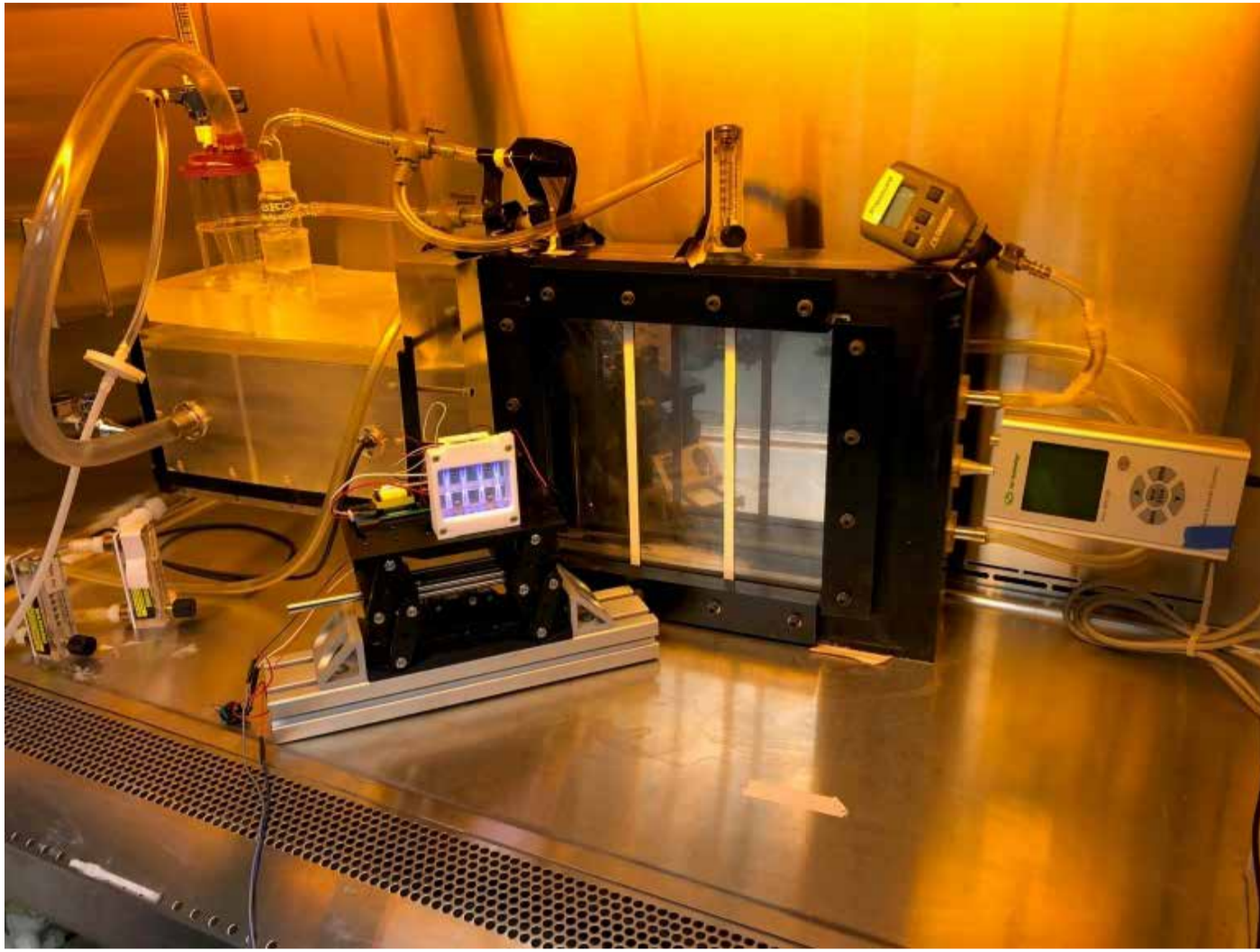
For the anthropologist Frederic Keck, masks have long been regarded in the West as "archaic and oppressive", a prejudice that will be hard to shake.

Indeed, covering the face is technically illegal in France under a controversial "burqa ban" aimed at Islamic face coverings.

In a think piece in the French daily Le Monde, Keck compared masks and the constraints COVID-19 has imposed on social interaction to the "loss of innocence that AIDS brought to love making" in the 1980s.

Despite all the downsides, historian Saillard sees one positive to be drawn from having to wear masks.

"In an era which is all about ego... a little bit of self-effacement is maybe not all bad," he said.



An experiment being conducted on the use of a special kind of ultraviolet rays against the coronavirus

Tests show UVC lamps could light the way in virus fight

New York

Could a new type of ultraviolet lamp be used in stations, airplanes and schools to kill dangerous viruses, becoming a gamechanger in the COVID-19 fight?

Researchers at Columbia University have been working on such uses for years, and the current pandemic could confirm the value of their efforts.

UVC lamps have long been used to kill bacteria, viruses and molds, notably in hospitals and in the food-processing industry. As the coronavirus pandemic knocks world economies on their heels, this technology is experiencing a boom.

But UVC (for Ultraviolet-C) rays are dangerous, causing skin cancer and eye problems, and can be used only when no one is present.

The New York subway system, following the example of Chinese subways, plans to use ultraviolet lamps to disinfect its trains, but only during nighttime closures.

A team at Columbia's Center for Radiological Research is experimenting with so-called far-UVC, rays whose wavelength of 222 nanometers makes them safe for humans but still lethal to viruses, the center's director, David Brenner, said.

At those frequencies, he explained, the rays cannot penetrate the surface of the skin nor of the eye.

That means they could be used in closed and crowded spaces where contamination risks run high, with potentially huge promise for use during the current pandemic.

In late April, President Donald Trump offered confusing remarks about somehow projecting ultraviolet rays into people's bodies to kill the coronavirus.

He appeared to be inspired by federal research on the effects of natural light on the virus -- but

natural light has no UVC rays.

In 2013, the Columbia team began studying the effectiveness of far-UVC against drug-resistant bacteria. It next examined the rays' use against viruses, including the flu virus. Only recently did it turn its attention to the coronavirus.

"We were thinking, how can we apply what we are doing to the current situation," Brenner said.

But to test the impact of UVC on the extremely contagious coronavirus, the team had to move its equipment into a highly bio-secure laboratory at Columbia.

Experiments carried out starting "three-four weeks ago," Brenner said, have already made clear that UVC rays destroy the virus on surfaces within minutes.

The team next plans to test the lamps on viruses suspended in the air, as when an infected person coughs or sneezes.



David Brenner, director of the Center for Radiological Research at Columbia University in New York, is seen in an undated photo provided by the university's medical center

In parallel, tests are being conducted to confirm that these rays are harmless to humans.

For 40 weeks now, the lab has exposed mice to far-UVC rays for "eight hours a day, five days a week, at intensities 20 times higher than we might think of using with humans."

The results?

After testing the rodents' eyes and skin, "we have found absolutely nothing; the mice are very happy -- and very cute as well," Brenner said. The experiment is set to continue for 20 more weeks.

The findings cannot be fully validated by the scientific community until all remaining steps have been taken, even if the team has already submitted its preliminary results to the journal Nature.

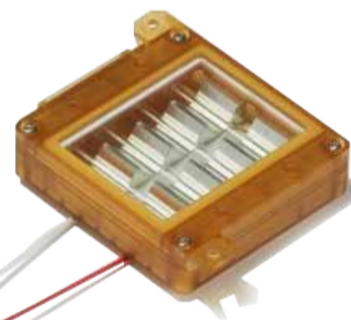
'The world has changed'

But the pressure to reopen the world's economies has become so enormous that factories are accelerating their production of ultraviolet lamps without waiting.

"We really need something in situations like offices, restaurants, airplanes, hospitals," Brenner said.

If UVC lamps have already been in commercial use for two or three years -- notably in the diamond industry, where they can be used to distinguish artificial from real gems -- potential clients are now legion, say companies producing them.

"We felt for a long time this is a great application for this technology," said John Yerger, the CEO of Eden Park Illumination, a small producer based in Champaign, Illinois.



A model of a far-UVC lamp, the Care222, produced by the American subsidiary of the Japanese company Ushio, which provided the photo; far-UVC rays are being tested for their ability to kill the coronavirus

But with the pandemic, "the world has changed a lot in the last three months," he added.

And the US Food and Drug Administration has relaxed its regulation of tools or agents that can be used for disinfection, encouraging manufacturers to find a solution.

"There will be thousands and thousands of these things (UVC lamps) for sure," Yerger said. "The question is, will it be millions?"

"What we are seeing is a tremendous amount of customer interest" to produce lamps for airlines, cruise ships, restaurants, movie theaters and schools, said Shinji Kameda, chief operations officer in the US for Ushio, a Japanese manufacturer.

Production of its 222-nanometer lamps, sold for \$500 to \$800 and already used in some Japanese hospitals, will be stepped up in October, he said.

In the meantime, Brenner said he has been losing sleep.

"I spend nights thinking -- if this far-UVC project had started one or two years earlier, maybe we could have prevented the COVID-19 crisis," he said.

"Not completely, but maybe we could have prevented it being a pandemic."

To celebrate mothers trapped in quarantine, Sao Paulo gets creative



Pianist Rodrigo Cunha serenades from an open truck the lonely mothers in quarantine as the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues in Sao Paulo, Brazil,

Reuters | Sao Paulo

On Friday, musician Rodrigo Cunha and his piano zipped down an elevated highway in a gritty section of downtown Sao Paulo, playing tunes written by Brazil's most famous composers, from Tom Jobim to Vinicius de Moraes.

Dressed in a dark blue suit, wearing a plastic face shield and riding atop a modified flatbed truck, Cunha is a conspicuous presence on the Minhocao, a highway weaving through graffiti-covered buildings that has become a symbol the city's urban grit.

But with South America's largest metropolis under quarantine, the surreal has become increasingly normal in recent weeks. This is one of the few ways, Cunha says, he can serenade the region's mothers, many of whom are forced to pass this Mother's Day without their children or grandchildren.

"I'm really moved to be able to share my art so that people feel alright," said Cunha, a musician at the city's Baccarelli Elizete Costa Orchestra, who is volunteering his time. "And I feel good being able to collaborate and be part of this story that we're living through."

Cunha is part of a crew of dozens of Paulistanos, as the city's residents are known, who have volunteered their time and, in some cases, resources to pay homage to the city's mothers.

Johnson tells Britons to 'Stay Alert' as lockdown easing starts



People walk and cycle along Broadway Market, following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), London, Britain

Reuters | London

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday urged people to "stay alert" to coronavirus risks, as he prepared to outline plans for gradually easing lockdown measures that have shuttered much of the economy for nearly seven weeks.

Housing minister Robert Jenrick said Johnson would set out a five-tier warning system to track the outbreak in England as the government makes limited changes such as encouraging those who cannot work from home to return to their offices and factories.

"Everyone has a role to play in helping to control the virus by staying alert and following the rules. This is how we can

continue to save lives as we start to recover from coronavirus," Johnson said on Twitter on Sunday.

His message was published alongside a new government poster which listed rules including "stay at home as much as possible", "limit contact with other people" and "keep your distance if you go out".

Jenrick told BBC TV there would not be a "grand reopening of the economy tonight", but that Johnson would set out a roadmap for the "weeks and months ahead".

"We need to have a broader message because we want to slowly and cautiously restart the economy and the country," he said in a separate interview with Sky News.



Brazil tops **10,000 deaths** from COVID-19

A funeral worker wearing protective clothing as a preventive measure against the coronavirus walks through Caju Cemetery in Rio de Janeiro on May 9



Sateré-mawé indigenous men navigate the Ariau River at the Sahu-Ape community located some 80 kilometers from Manaus in Amazonas State



Workers dig graves at Nossa Senhora Cemetery in Manaus, Brazil on May 8 amid the coronavirus pandemic



Cemetery workers place the coffin of a coronavirus victim in a grave cubicle at Caju Cemetery in Rio de Janeiro

AFP | Rio de Janeiro

Brazil, the hardest-hit Latin American country in the coronavirus pandemic, has surpassed 10,000 deaths, according to figures released Saturday by the Ministry of Health.

While Brazil's numbers are high -- 10,627 deaths and 155,939 confirmed cases -- scientists think the real figures could be 15 or even 20 times worse, given the country's inability to carry out widespread testing.

Congress and the Supreme Court decreed an official mourn-

ing period of three days and lawmakers asked Brazilians to follow health authorities' recommendations to reduce infection rates while the country prepares for "a safe and definitive return back to normal."

Meanwhile President Jair Bolsonaro, who opposes stay-at-home measures due to their impact on the country's economy, was seen jet skiing on Lake Paranoa in Brasilia, according to the Metropoles news website.

Officials told AFP he did not plan to make a statement on the country reaching 10,000 deaths.

In the last 24 hours alone, the nation saw 10,611 new cases and 730 fatalities, Brazil's second-highest daily death toll, after a record set on Friday (751 deaths).

'Situation is dire'

Resisting pressure from Bolsonaro, the governors of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro states have said they will extend the partial quarantine measures in force since March until the end of May.

The pandemic has given rise to ongoing governmental clash-

es, pitting the president against governors and mayors who have implemented social distancing and confinement measures to contain the virus' spread -- efforts supported by the country's Supreme Court.

In announcing that his state's lockdown would be prolonged, Sao Paulo Governor Joao Doria said Friday: "We are at the height of this pandemic. The situation is dire."

His southeastern state of almost 46 million inhabitants has seen more than 3,600 deaths and over 44,400 cases.

Neighboring Rio de Janeiro state, home to more than 16 million people, follows with 1,653 deaths and 16,929 infections. Less populated states such as Ceara, Pernambuco and Amazonas already have around a thousand dead each.

Amazonas, home to a number of indigenous tribes that are extremely vulnerable to the virus, has recorded 232 deaths per million inhabitants, almost three times the rate in Sao Paulo state.

While Brazil's coronavirus peak is not expected for several more weeks, seven states have already seen their inten-

sive care units fill to 90 percent capacity.

Bolsonaro, who has compared the coronavirus to a "little flu," tweeted Saturday that the country's "army of unemployed continues to grow" in reference to a factory closure in the northeast, before asking "is chaos coming?"

On Thursday the country's economy minister, Paulo Guedes, said Brazil could face "economic collapse" in a month's time due to stay-at-home measures.

According to the IMF, Brazil risks a 5.3 percent contraction in GDP this year.

Sweden admits failure to protect elderly in care homes

AFP | Stockholm

Bjorn Branngard's mother died in a Stockholm nursing home where five of the eight people in her section and more than a third of residents have so far succumbed to the new coronavirus.

"They didn't have time to take care of my mother," he said.

Her coronavirus test came back negative two days after her death, but Branngard, who claims she died of neglect, says the nursing home staff lacked protective gear and were spreading the virus around the home.

Sweden, whose softer approach to the coronavirus has garnered international attention, admits it has failed to adequately protect the elderly, with around half of COVID-19 deaths occurring among nursing home residents.

Reports have flooded Swedish media in recent weeks of care home staff continuing to work despite a lack of protective gear.

Others have refused to work and workers are encouraged to stay home even with mild symptoms, leaving homes short-staffed.

Other personnel have admitted going to work despite ex-



Reports have flooded Swedish media of care home staff continuing to work despite a lack of protective gear

hibiting symptoms of the virus, potentially infecting residents, while some elderly have reportedly been infected while admitted to hospital for other treatments and then sent back to care homes where they unwittingly spread the disease.

Sweden has reported 3,220 deaths from the virus as of Saturday.

The country said early on that shielding those 70 and older was its top priority.

Yet 90 percent of those who had died as of April 28 were over the age of 70. Half were nursing home residents, and another

quarter were receiving care at home, statistics from the Swedish Board of Health and Welfare show.

"We failed to protect our elderly. That's really serious, and a failure for society as a whole. We have to learn from this, we're not done with this pandemic yet," Health and Social Affairs Minister Lena Hallengren told Swedish Television recently.

- 'Staff spread the virus' -

Unlike many European countries, Sweden has kept its primary schools open as well as bars and restaurants, while urging people to respect social distanc-

ing and hygiene recommendations.

It did, however, ban visits to care homes on March 31.

Sweden's Nordic neighbours also introduced bans around the same time, but have recorded far fewer care home deaths.

But unlike in those countries, Swedish nursing homes are often large complexes with hundreds of residents.

They are only available to those in very poor health and unable to care for themselves, and residents are therefore "a very vulnerable group", according to Henrik Lysell of the Board

of Health and Welfare.

Bjorn Branngard told AFP the personnel at his mother's home did not have proper protective gear.

"There was no protection. The personnel were going between different sections and spreading the virus."

In greater Stockholm, the epicentre of Sweden's virus spread, 55 percent of nursing homes have so far confirmed COVID-19 cases, according to Region Stockholm health authorities.

Poor working conditions

Kommunal, Sweden's largest union for municipal employees which includes many care workers, has meanwhile blamed precarious working conditions for the unfolding tragedy.

It said that in March, 40 percent of staff at Stockholm nursing homes were unskilled workers employed on short-term contracts, with hourly wages and no job security, while 23 percent were temps.

In other words: people who often can't afford not to go to work even if they're sick.

"There are a lot of different people who work at several nursing homes, and that also

leads to a greater spread," the head of Kommunal's nursing home division, Ulf Bjerregaard, said.

At the end of April, Kommunal filed a complaint to the Swedish Work Environment Authority, claiming that 27 of the 96 residents at the home where Branngard's mother lived had so far died of the virus, and yet staff were not being provided protective gear or offered testing.

The authority is studying the complaint, and prosecutors have opened a preliminary investigation.

Abdullah, a pseudonym for a 21-year-old refugee who didn't want to disclose his real name, has worked as an assistant in a care home outside Stockholm for two years.

He told AFP about a resident treated in hospital for a broken leg.

"She tested negative for the virus when she was with us. When she returned from the hospital three days later, she was positive," he said.

"We had protective aprons but no masks when we were working with her," he said, adding that he has since refused to go to work.

Bundesliga restart blow as Dynamo Dresden squad put in quarantine



Dresden fans at a 2016 German Cup tie (file photo)

AFP | Berlin

Dynamo Dresden placed their entire squad into a 14-day quarantine on Saturday, just a week from the restart of the Bundesliga season, after the club reported two more cases of coronavirus.

The decision means that Dynamo, who are bottom of the second division, will not be able to play their fixture against Hanover next weekend.

The setback comes just three days after Chancellor Angela Merkel's government gave the German Football League (DFL) the green light to return to action on May 16 after a two-month absence.

"In the past few weeks, we have made an enormous effort, both in terms of personnel and logistics, to strictly implement all prescribed medical and hygienic measures," said Dresden sporting director Ralf Minge.

"We are in contact with the responsible health authority and the DFL. The fact is that we cannot train or participate in games in the next 14 days."

As well as the players, Dresden will isolate its entire coaching and supervisory staff.

The Bundesliga will be the first top European league to restart matches since the outbreak of the coronavirus forced lockdown measures to be imposed across the continent.

However, matches will be played without fans in attendance and with a maximum number of 300 people, includ-

ing both teams, allowed at each game.

In the run-up to the restart, all teams must go into a one-week quarantine training camp.

After the government gave the go-ahead for the season to restart, there were still worries that an outbreak of the coronavirus in the league could halt the resumed season, this time for good.

As of Thursday, there had been 10 positive cases from 1,724 tests of players and staff at the top 36 clubs in the first wave of testing and two more in the second.

Dresden, who are not allowed to train during their isolation, are due to face Greuther Fuerth in their next game on the weekend of May 23-24.

There is little wriggle room for more postponements as officials want the season completed by June 30.



The Bundesliga will be the first top European league to restart matches since the outbreak of the coronavirus forced lockdown measures to be imposed across the continent

Third Brighton player tests positive for coronavirus



Brighton's players are seen during a training session (file photo)

AFP | London

Brighton chief executive Paul Barber yesterday revealed a third player at the Premier League club has tested positive for the coronavirus, raising fresh concerns about the attempt to finish the English top-flight season.

The unnamed player was tested on Saturday and will self-isolate for 14 days while he recovers from the virus.

The rest of Brighton's squad will continue to train at home and in solo sessions at the team's training ground.

Two other Brighton players, who were not named, contracted the virus several weeks ago and have reportedly recovered.

"Unfortunately we have had a third player test positive just yesterday," Barber told Sky Sports News.

"Despite all the measures we have all been taking over the last few weeks, when the players haven't been involved in taking any significant training at all, we have still suffered another player testing positive for the virus.

"There are concerns and I

“We really do want to play and we want to make sure the competition stays as fair as it can be despite these exceptional circumstances that we are facing”

PAUL BARBER

think it is normal for all clubs to have those concerns.

"We want to make sure we do all that we can so the protocols that are put into place are safe and secure and mitigate the risk."

Brighton's latest positive test comes ahead of Monday's Premier League meeting, where clubs are expected to debate the plan to complete the season behind closed doors at neutral venues and vote on whether

player contracts will be extended until the end of the rescheduled campaign.

The Premier League would like to restart the season in June and play the remaining 92 fixtures by August.

Barber has been critical of the neutral venue idea, insisting that the campaign should still be played on a home-and-away basis as Brighton battle to avoid relegation.

Norwich, Watford and Aston Villa were in the relegation zone when the Premier League was suspended because of the health crisis on March 13.

'Self-interest'

Brighton have received criticism for their vocal stance, but Barber insists all clubs will act with a degree of self-interest.

"People will accuse us of self-interest, I totally understand that, but at this stage of the season there is self-interest at every level of the table," he added.

"There is as much self-interest at the top as there is at the bottom, there is as much self-interest in the middle as there is at

the bottom.

"Everyone has different objectives for the season and we are all looking to play out the season, if it is safe to do so.

"We really do want to play and we want to make sure the competition stays as fair as it can be despite these exceptional circumstances that we are facing."

Aston Villa and Watford have joined Brighton in speaking out against the neutral stadium plan.

But Crystal Palace chairman Steve Parish has backed the 20 clubs to eventually come to a consensus.

"There are no easy answers, we have to work through it as a collective and I think we will and come out with a consensus in the end," he told the BBC.

"(The meeting) is another part of the journey in trying to get football back. We would be derelict in our duty if we did not find a way for the game to come back.

"It may prove beyond us, we have huge challenges in order to get it back to complete the season but we are planning on doing so."

Palace chairman expects lengthy delay if 'Project Restart' fails

Reuters | London

The Premier League's plans to resume its season disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic will be guided by the progress in Germany but "insurmountable" problems could result in a long delay, Crystal Palace chairman

Steve Parish has said.

Germany's plans to restart competitive soccer on May 16 suffered an early setback after the entire team of second tier Dynamo Dresden were placed in a two-week quarantine following two positive coronavirus tests.

"The German example could provide a blueprint for us and clearly we can see some of the early challenges," Parish told the BBC yesterday.

"They may prove insurmountable, but the concern for us is that if they prove insurmountable now then we may be in for a

very, very extended period of not being able to play and that has huge ramifications for the game.

"We would be derelict in our duty if we didn't find a way to try and bring the game back. It may prove beyond us."

Premier League clubs are set to meet on Monday to discuss

plans to resume matches in June at neutral venues and with no spectators present, provided there is government clearance.

Scott Duxbury, the chief executive of relegation-threatened Watford, said on Saturday that neutral venues were not fair and that at least six clubs were

against the idea.

Palace are among the teams opposed to the proposal.

"... If we can play in our own stadiums that would be preferable for everybody, but for the moment that situation is with government and the authorities," Parish said.

SUDOKU

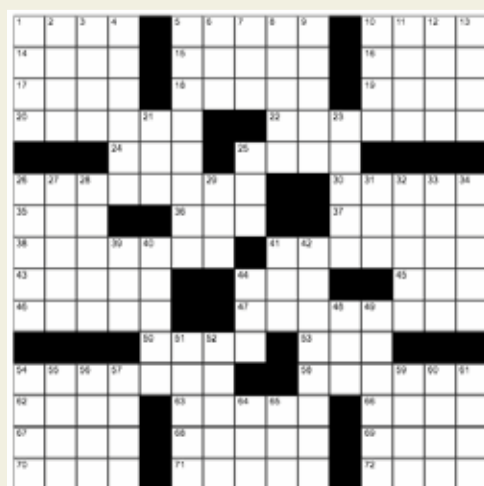
9								
3			8		1		9	
		4	2				5	
	2		6				4	
	9		1	4	2		6	
	1				5		8	
	7				1	3		
2	1		5				6	
								8

Yesterday's solution

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

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



Across

1- Diner orders; 5- Flower segment; 10- Mideast gulf; 14- Actress Singer; 15- Main artery; 16- Composer Schifrin; 17- Up and _; 18- Leg joints; 19- Additional; 20- Two-piece bathing suit; 22- Reclusive; 24- Fleur-de-; 25- Son of Aphrodite; 26- Beholden; 30- ware (Japanese porcelain); 35- Prizm maker; 36- Tack on; 37- Reddish dye; 38- Teachings; 41- Exceed; 43- Playwright Clifford; 44- Russian space station; 45- Tee follower; 46- Watering holes; 47- Specialist in city planning; 50- to differ; 53- Bordeaux buddy; 54- Snack bar; 58- Super Bowl MVP; 62- Neighbor of Cambodia; 63- Maker of Pong; 66- Vigor; 67- Switch back; 68- Adjust to zero; 69- Lip-curling facial expression; 70- Department store department; 71- Hang with cloth; 72- Acquire through work

Down

1- Spill the beans; 2- Monetary unit of Lesotho; 3- Journey; 4- Figure of speech with "like" or "as"; 5- Republic in S Asia; 6- Many moons; 7- It's past due; 8- Shed _; 9- Doggie catcher; 10- A Baldwin brother; 11- Spanish surrealist; 12- Socialite Maxwell; 13- Christmas; 21- Pen point; 23- Willow; 25- Hall or Byrnes; 26- Dome home; 27- _ vacation; 28- Prescribed amounts; 29- Begley and Wynn; 31- Swab; 32- Japanese beer brand; 33- Ascends; 34- Atlas feature; 39- Canonized Mlle.; 40- Actor Davis; 41- Highly respectful way of addressing a man; 42- Resident of a city; 44- Make a face; 48- Doctors' org; 49- Agile; 51- Facial hair; 52- Computer key; 54- Skelton's Kadiddlehopper; 55- Bern's river; 56- Midday; 57- General _ chicken; 59- Bailiwick; 60- Wedding cake feature; 61- Word with French or English; 64- Al Jolson's real first name; 65- Agent;

Yesterday's solution

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

The sportsmen who went to war

AFP | London

Many sportsmen were forced to put their careers on hold to fight in World War II.

The conflict cut short the lives of some, including England Test cricketer Hedley Verity and German Olympic long jumper "Luz" Long, but others survived to forge careers after the conflict ended in 1945.

Here is a view of the careers of sportsmen who made an impact in the post-war world as Europe marks the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

Crash survivor

Stan Mortensen -- the only man to score a FA Cup final hat-trick and England's first-ever goalscorer at a World Cup -- became a giant of the post-war game but only after a lucky escape.

Serving as a wireless operator in the Royal Air Force, he survived when his plane crashed into a forest, killing two crew members.

Doctors believed Mortensen's head injuries were too severe for his football career to continue, but he was allowed to return for the RAF team and went on to build an impressive legacy at Blackpool.

His crowning achievement came in the 1953 FA Cup final, often referred to as the "Matthews Final" due to the performance of his Blackpool teammate Stanley Matthews.

However, Matthews said in his autobiography that it was Mortensen who was the star of the show as he scored a hat-trick in Blackpool's 4-3 win against Bolton in front of 100,000 people at Wembley.

Mortensen was inducted into the English football hall of fame in 2003, 12 years after his death at the age of 69.

Prisoner of war

Bert Trautmann became one of English football's most unlikely heroes after time spent as a German prisoner of war.

When the former paratrooper was released in 1948, he declined repatriation, instead combining working on a farm with playing in goal for St Helen's Town in England's north-west.

Word of his outstanding ability quickly spread and Manchester City snapped him up in 1949

despite protests at the signing of a former German soldier for a club with a large Jewish following.

He is remembered for a remarkable performance in the 1956 FA Cup final when he helped City lift the trophy after a 3-1 win against Birmingham City despite playing for the final 17 minutes with a broken neck.

That same year, Trautmann became the first player who was not British or Irish to win the Football Writers' Association player of the year.

In 2004, he was honoured by Britain for his efforts to promote Anglo-German relations through football. He died in 2013 at the age of 89.

All-round Australian hero

Glamorous Australian all-rounder Keith Miller caught the eye when making 181 runs for Victoria on his first-class cricket debut in 1938.

He was a fighter pilot who flew night missions over Nazi Germany in the war.

Asked later about the pressure of playing in a Test match, Miller famously replied: "Pressure? There's no pressure in Test cricket. Real pressure is when you are flying a Mosquito with a Messerschmitt up your arse!"

A generation of cricket fans revelled in Miller's seemingly



All-rounder Keith Miller is honoured with a statue outside the MCG in Melbourne



Bert Trautmann in action during a match (file photo)

carefree approach to the game, whether as a dynamic fast bowler or as a dashing batsman.

Miller's new-ball partnership with Ray Lindwall was a central feature of the 1948 Australian "Invincibles" who swept all before them on an Ashes tour of England.

Tales of how he would turn

up for a match straight from an evening out socialising became the stuff of legend, with Miller's movie-star good looks and rumours of an affair with Princess Margaret, the younger sister of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, providing copy for the gossip columnists.

Miller's statistics for Australia were impressive but his contribution to cricket cannot be measured in figures alone. He died in 2004, aged 84.

Miller's statistics for Australia were impressive but his contribution to cricket cannot be measured in figures alone. He died in 2004, aged 84.

'Greatest Living Welshman'

Tasker Watkins, who played for Glamorgan Wanderers, was never a famous rugby player and many newcomers to the Principality Stadium may wonder why there is an imposing statue of him outside the ground.

Watkins achieved distinction in World War II when he was awarded the Victoria Cross, Britain's highest military honour, for leading a bayonet charge

against a machine-gun post, which he eventually silenced, in Normandy in 1944.

The citation said his "superb leadership not only saved his men, but decisively influenced the course of the battle".

After the war, Watkins started a legal career and rose to become one of the most senior judges in England and Wales.

An 11-year stint as president of the Welsh Rugby Union that started in 1993 encompassed rugby union's transition to professionalism and the move from club to regional rugby in Wales. Shortly before his death in 2007, at the age of 88, Watkins gave an interview to the Daily Telegraph.

"Leadership and patriotism are two virtues that translate wonderfully well from the rugby pitch to battle... (so) that top rugby players had an independence of thought and deed that marked them out as leaders."



Stan Mortensen is the only man to score a FA Cup final hat-trick and England's first-ever goalscorer at a World Cup

Players must play, crowd or no crowd, says Pietersen



Former England captain Kevin Pietersen chats with England head coach Chris Silverwood during a match (file photo)

Reuters | London

The resumption of sport will lift morale for people around the world during the COVID-19 crisis and cricketers owe it to fans to play behind closed doors if that hastens the process, former England captain Kevin Pietersen has said.

The spread of novel coronavirus has brought sport across the world to a standstill over the last two months and Pietersen thinks every effort should be made to resume professional cricket as soon as it is safe to do so.

"Fans, the public, need a morale boost. Their morale at the moment is so negative, so down in the dumps," the 39-year-old said in an interview.

"Sport is so uplifting and so positive for so many people. New sport will have to be played behind closed doors until we find a vaccination for coronavirus. Sportsmen have got to deal with it."

With golfer Rory McIlroy preparing to play a charity event on May 17 and English soccer's Premier League plotting a return for mid-June, Pietersen finds in unfathomable that any top athlete would not want to be plying their trade as soon as possible.

"Some sportsmen are in the prime of their life. Why would they not want to be playing?" he added.

"So what if the crowds are not there? The crowds may not be there in person but the broadcasting numbers will be massive."

Looking more broadly at a possible silver lining to the crisis, Pietersen said it was an opportunity for his sport to have

a serious look at solutions to problems shared by the entire cricketing world.

"The nice thing, if you can have a look at something that's nice about this coronavirus, is it's affecting absolutely everybody," Pietersen said. "Virat Kohli is in the same position as

Kane Williamson as Joe Root to Steve Smith as Quinton de Kock ... we're all in this together."

"So we've all got to come together, understand what's important to us, work together, get through this together and make good decisions together."

Always a big favourite with fans, Pietersen hit 23 centuries and scored more than 8,000 runs in 104 tests for England before finally hanging up his bat in 2018 after a few years playing for club teams across the world.

“Sport is so uplifting and so positive for so many people. New sport will have to be played behind closed doors until we find a vaccination for coronavirus. Sportsmen have got to deal with it”

KEVIN PIETERSEN

Afghanistan's Shafaq handed six-year ban for corruption

Reuters | Kabul

Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batsman Shafiqullah Shafaq has been hit with a six-year ban after he accepted four charges of breaching their Anti-Corruption Code, the country's cricket board (ACB) said.

The charges relate to offences during the first edition of the Afghanistan Premier League (APL) T20 in 2018, where Shafaq played for the Nangarhar Leopards, and the 2019 Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), where he represented Sylhet Thunder.

The 30-year-old Shafaq, who made his Afghanistan debut in 2009 and has played 24 one-day internationals and 46

Twenty20 internationals, will be banned from all forms of cricket.

"This is a very serious offence where a senior national player is involved in the corruption of a high-profile domestic game in APL T20 2018," ACB's senior anti-corruption manager Sayed Anwar Shah Quraishi said in a statement.

"The player had also attempted but failed to get one of his team mates to engage in corruption in another high-profile game during the BPL 2019.

"It's an alert for all those players who think their illegal activities concerning the game of cricket will not be disclosed to the ACB's anti-corruption unit."



A statue of former Welsh rugby union president Tasker Watkins outside the Principality Stadium in Cardiff

Keep the shine on: Pat Cummins

Pat Cummins pleads to be able to carry on shining and swinging the ball

Reuters | Sydney

Australia fast bowler Pat Cummins believes test cricket will be much the poorer if using spit and sweat to help shine the ball is banned without some form of replacement in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cricketers have long used saliva and sweat to shine one side of the ball, altering the aerodynamics in an attempt to generate movement in the air as it flies towards the batsman.

The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS)'s protocols for the return of sport in the country, however, specifically rules out the practice because of the danger of transmitting COVID-19.

Cummins, the world's top-ranked test bowler, thinks that such a radical change to the longest form of game would be unacceptable.

"As a fast bowler, I think you've got to be able to shine the ball," he said in an interview on the website of his Indian Premier League team, the Kolkata Knight Riders (kkr.in).

"Why everyone loves test



Australia's Pat Cummins prepares to bowl during a Test match (file photo)



I think if you can't shine the ball, that takes away swing bowling, that takes away reverse swing bowling and I just don't want to give batsmen another reason to score runs

PAT CUMMINS

cricket is because it has so much art to it. You have swing bowlers, spinners, you have all these different aspects that make test cricket what it is.

"I think if you can't shine the ball, that takes away swing bowling, that takes away reverse swing bowling and I just don't want to give batsmen another reason to score runs."

Cricket boards are desperate to get players back on the field after social exclusion restrictions are eased to get revenue flowing once more.

Cummins, though, believes that the game at the top level

will probably not resume while there are still major concerns about the transmission of the virus.

"Obviously, health is the absolute, the number one priority but I'm kind of thinking that if we are in a position where we are worried about passing on the coronavirus ... I don't think we would be playing in the first place," he added.

Australian ball manufacturer Kookaburra this week said it had developed a wax applicator that would enable cricketers to shine balls without using sweat or saliva.

Cummins believes some sort of alternative is essential if the tried and tested methods of generating swing are outlawed.

"I want them to come up with another option. Whether it's saliva or any another substance, we need to be able to shine the ball and make sure it keeps swinging," he said.

Cummins became the most expensive overseas buy ever in the IPL when the Knight Riders paid a staggering 155 million rupees (\$2.18 million) for him in last year's auction.

Roland Garros could be behind closed doors, says French tennis boss



AFP | Paris

French tennis chief Bernard Giudicelli admitted yesterday that Roland Garros, already controversially pushed back four months due to the coronavirus, could be staged behind closed doors.

Guidicelli, who said that the French federation (FFT) had "no regrets" over its unilateral decision to move the clay court Grand Slam from May 24-June 7 to September 20-October 4, insisted all options remain on the table.

"We haven't ruled out any option. Roland Garros is first and foremost a story of matches and players," he told the Journal du Dimanche.

"There is the tournament taking place in the stadium, and the tournament on TV screens.

"Millions of viewers around the world are waiting. Organising it behind closed doors would allow part of the business model -- television rights (which account for more than a third of the tournament's revenues) -- to go ahead. This cannot be overlooked."

The spread of the coronavirus has halted all tennis since mid-March and will not resume until July 13 at the earliest.

Wimbledon has already been cancelled for the first time since the Second World War.

KHK Heroes Challenge joins Bahrain Red Crescent Society for Ramadan Assistance

TDT | Manama

KHK Heroes have joined with Bahrain Red Crescent Society to help distribute supplies during their Ramadan Assistance to those in need during this Pandemic.

Bahrain Red Crescent Society is a volunteer charity recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

KHK Heroes joined Society in line with both humanitarian initiatives of Bahrain Red Crescent and KHK Heroes Challenge by distributing iftar meals, water, nonperishable food parcels, and masks.

Initiated by HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa to support the vision of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander, and First Deputy Premier and HH Shaikh



KHK volunteers with the supplies

Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, His Majesty the King's Representative for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, National Security Advisor and President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, KHK Heroes has called on the nation for a united cause, helping those most vulnerable

during the Coronavirus Pandemic. Public can take part in the challenge by making donations, volunteering time to KHK Heroes or taking up the challenge to post a video online and nominate someone to pay it forward.

said it was hoping to resume matches without spectators in June, said detecting positive cases was vital to its programme for returning to activity.

"One of the objectives of these tests was to detect asymptomatic cases. That way, we guarantee everyone's safety as we return to work and comply with rules on workplace safety," added the statement.

Five coronavirus cases in Spain's top two divisions

Reuters | Madrid

Five players in Spain's top two divisions have tested positive for COVID-19 since clubs began testing players and staff members last week, organising body La Liga said in a statement.

La Liga said the players would remain at their homes where they would continue individual training before being

tested again "in the next few days" to determine whether they can return to their club's training ground.

Many clubs including champions Barcelona have returned to individual training as part of the second stage of La Liga's four-phase protocol for getting back to activity after play was halted in early March due to the pandemic.

La Liga, who last week

Sri Lanka cricket captain Karunaratne praises Arthur, eyes top-four rank



Sri Lanka's captain Dimuth Karunaratne (R) and team's head coach Mickey Arthur walk off the field before a match (file photo)

Reuters | Colombo

Sri Lanka cricket captain Dimuth Karunaratne lauded the impact of new coach Mickey Arthur yesterday and said his side must target a top-four spot in the world rankings for both the test and 50-over formats.

South African Mickey Arthur was appointed as Sri Lanka's head coach on a two-year contract in December.

Former first class cricketer Arthur has previously been head coach with the national teams of South Africa, Australia and Pakistan.

"Mickey is a no nonsense cool bloke with loads of experience to back him and his brand," Karunaratne told Sri Lanka Cricket.

"At the international level, planning and role clarity is a norm. What is very important is the belief he has instilled

among us in his own and subtle way. It sure helped and the results always speak for itself."

Since Arthur's appointment, Sri Lanka lost a two-test series in Pakistan before defeating Zimbabwe at home. The are currently ranked fifth in the format.

The team languish at eighth in one-day internationals but managed to defeat a dangerous West Indies side 3-0 in their last series before the COVID-19 shutdown.

"Rankings is the key word. I'd say Sri Lanka needs to be in the top four of not just ODI cricket, but test cricket as well," Karunaratne, 32, said.

"That would indirectly mean semi-finalists to say the least and you are perhaps two games away from the plum. There onwards, it's anybody's guess and if you do well on your day you could end up being World Champs."

Lyon slam 'sudden' decision to end Ligue 1 season

AFP | Paris

Lyon hit out at the French football league (LFP) yesterday for "suddenly" ending the Ligue 1 campaign, saying the decision could see the division slip further behind Europe's top leagues and calling for it to be reversed.

The LFP ended the season last month with 10 rounds of matches unplayed due to the coronavirus pandemic, crowning Paris Saint-Germain champions and relegating the bottom two, Amiens and Toulouse.

Lyon, who have reached this season's Champions League last 16, were left seventh in the standings and outside the European qualification places.

"Today, it is not only about OL, but quite simply about the future of French football," the seven-time champions said in a lengthy statement.