

Bid of \$28 million wins a rocket trip with Bezos

Reuters

A seat on a spaceship ride with billionaire Jeff Bezos went for \$28 million during a live auction on Saturday, concluding the month-long bidding process for the sightseeing trip on the Blue Origin's maiden voyage next month.

Within four minutes of the open of Saturday's live phone auction, bids reached beyond \$20 million. The bidding closed seven minutes after the auction began. The identity of the winner - presumably an ultra-wealthy space aficionado - was not immediately disclosed.

The July 20 launch of Blue Origin's New Shepard booster from West Texas would be a landmark moment as U.S. firms strive toward a new era of private commercial space travel.

Blue Origin's founder and Amazon.com Inc executive Bezos, the world's wealthiest man and a lifelong space enthusiast, has been racing against fellow aspiring billionaire aeronauts Richard Branson and Elon Musk to be the first of the three to travel beyond Earth's atmosphere.

G7 agree to hike climate finance, details missing

● The leaders signalled their desire to build a rival to Beijing's multi-trillion-dollar Belt and Road initiative

Reuters

G7 leaders agreed on Sunday to raise their contributions to meet an overdue spending pledge of \$100 billion a year to help poorer countries cut carbon emissions and cope with global warming, but campaigners said firm cash promises were missing.

Alongside plans billed as helping speed infrastructure funding in developing countries and a shift to renewable and sustainable technology, the world's seven largest advanced economies again pledged to meet the climate finance target.

But climate groups said the promise - in a copy of a draft communique seen by Reuters - lacked detail, most importantly a figure for the increases. A spokesman for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said individual nations were expected to set out the size of the increases "in due course".



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, US President Joe Biden, France's President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, President of the European Council Charles Michel, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa and South Korea's President Moon Jae-in attend a working session during G7 summit in Carbis Bay, Cornwall, Britain

There was a clear push by leaders at the G7 summit in southwestern England to counter China's increasing influence in the world, particularly among developing nations.

The leaders signalled their desire to build a rival to Beijing's multi-trillion-dollar Belt and Road initiative but the details were few and far between.

In the draft communique the seven nations - the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan - reaffirmed their commitment to "mobilise \$100 billion/year from public and private sources, through to 2025".

"Towards this end, we commit to each increase and im-

prove our overall international public climate finance contributions for this period and call on other developed countries to join and enhance their contributions to this effort."

In statement released late on Saturday, G7 host Johnson said: "Protecting our planet is the most important thing we as leaders can do for our people".

"As democratic nations we have a responsibility to help developing countries reap the benefits of clean growth through a fair and transparent system. The G7 has an unprecedented opportunity to drive a global Green Industrial Revolution, with the potential to transform the way we live."

Bahrain hosts REGE 21 workshop, discusses UN survey indicators



TDT | Manama

Information & eGovernment Authority held a virtual Regional eGovernment Experts workshop last week on Wednesday to provide vital inputs to improve eGovernment 2022.

The workshop, under the patronage of Mohammed Al Qaed, the Chief Executive, Information & eGovernment Authority, brought together senior UNDESA officials, leaders of digital government in the Arab and Gulf Region, ICT experts, decision-makers, academicians, researchers, government officials and practitioners across the globe.

The event granted deep insights into the achievements of GCC countries in the digital government and the ways to address challenges about UN eGovernment indicators.

Al Qaed discussed the top technological advancements such as 5 G, Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence and how ICT advancements have accelerated the diversification of the economy in countries in the region. He also stressed how technological advance-

ment had an effort to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Al Qaed highlighted the importance of reflecting the regional challenges and technological advancement aspirations in the UN Report.

Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief, Digital Government Branch, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) provided a glimpse of the Global eGovernment scenario and the methodology associated with various components of eGovernment development components such as Online Service Index (OSI), Telecommunication Infrastructure Index (TII) and Human Capital Index (HCI).

Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Morocco presented their digital achievements and plans with the participation of Egypt and Jordan.

Information & eGovernment Authority said it would summarize all observations, suggestions, and recommendations and submit them to UNDESA to present at the UN Expert Group meeting to update the UN eGovernment Survey 2022.

Alba launches environment, social and governance campaign

TDT | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain yesterday announced launching a first-of-its-kind campaign, 'Achieving the Balance', that focuses on Environment, Social and Governance matter. With this campaign, Alba joins its peers in the GCC to mark the ESG Week under the umbrella of the Gulf Aluminium Council.

The campaign will be held virtually until 17 June 2021 on sustainable initiatives aligned with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

Alba's Chief Executive Officer, Ali Al Baqali, said: "Global challenges such as Climate Change, Environment Conservation, Clean Energy and COVID-19 pandemic have prompted a sense of urgency to rebalance ESG matters." "In Alba, we want to be the ESG change we want to see in the world. As one of the leading companies in Bahrain, we can only produce respon-



Participants during the virtual campaign

sibly by achieving the balance between our business activities and sustainable initiatives."

The campaign kicked off with a virtual keynote by Al Baqali to all employees and contractors' personnel yesterday. Alba Man-

agement will present, via virtual lectures during this week, topics on Reduction of Green House Gases, Creating a Sustainable Social Impact, and Responsible Sourcing, amongst others.

A live debate on Climate

Change between two teams comprising Alba employees will highlight the last day of the campaign. Alba officials will also participate in activities held in cooperation with the Gulf Aluminium Council.

Toshiba's No.2 shareholder calls for resignation of board chair, 3 directors

Reuters

Toshiba Corp's second-biggest shareholder on Sunday demanded the board chairman and three other directors immediately resign after an investigation found the company had colluded with the Japanese government to pressure foreign investors.

The letter is from 3D Investment Partners, which owns a 7.2% stake in Toshiba. It was sent to the four on Sunday, ac-

ording to people with direct knowledge of the process.

It is likely to heighten scrutiny into governance at Toshiba, a renowned industrial conglomerate in crisis sparked by Thursday's report.

The shareholder-commissioned report marked an explosive turn in a long battle between the Japanese company's management and foreign shareholders. In addition to 3D, these shareholders include activist investors and Harvard University's endowment fund.

Gulf Air honours outgoing Bahrain Airport Services CEO



In pictures, the honouring ceremony

TDT | Manama

Gulf Air, the national carrier of Bahrain, organised a fare-

well for the outgoing Bahrain Airport Services CEO Salman Al Mahmeed in recognition of his 18-year career at BAS.

The airline's Executive Management, represented by the Acting Chief Executive Officer Captain Waleed AlAlawi,

thanked him for his overall support to the national carrier during his tenure.

Gulf Air's Acting CEO present-

ed a commemorative dhow to Al Mahmeed. Newly appointed BAS CEO Mohammed Khalil was present.

Executive Management of Gulf Air wished Khalil all successes and extend their full support during his tenure