



Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Avoid gatherings to reduce the risk of infection



Iran says 60% enrichment started at Natanz site
 Reuters

Iran has begun 60% uranium enrichment at its Natanz plant, the country's nuclear chief said yesterday, days after an explosion at the site that Tehran blamed on Israel.

"We are producing about nine grams of 60% enriched uranium an hour," Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran, told state television.

"But we have to work on arrangements... to drop it to 5 grams per hour. But then we will simultaneously produce 20%(uranium)," Salehi said.

In Vienna, a spokesman for the United Nations nuclear watchdog IAEA declined to comment on the Iranian statements about 60% enrichment.

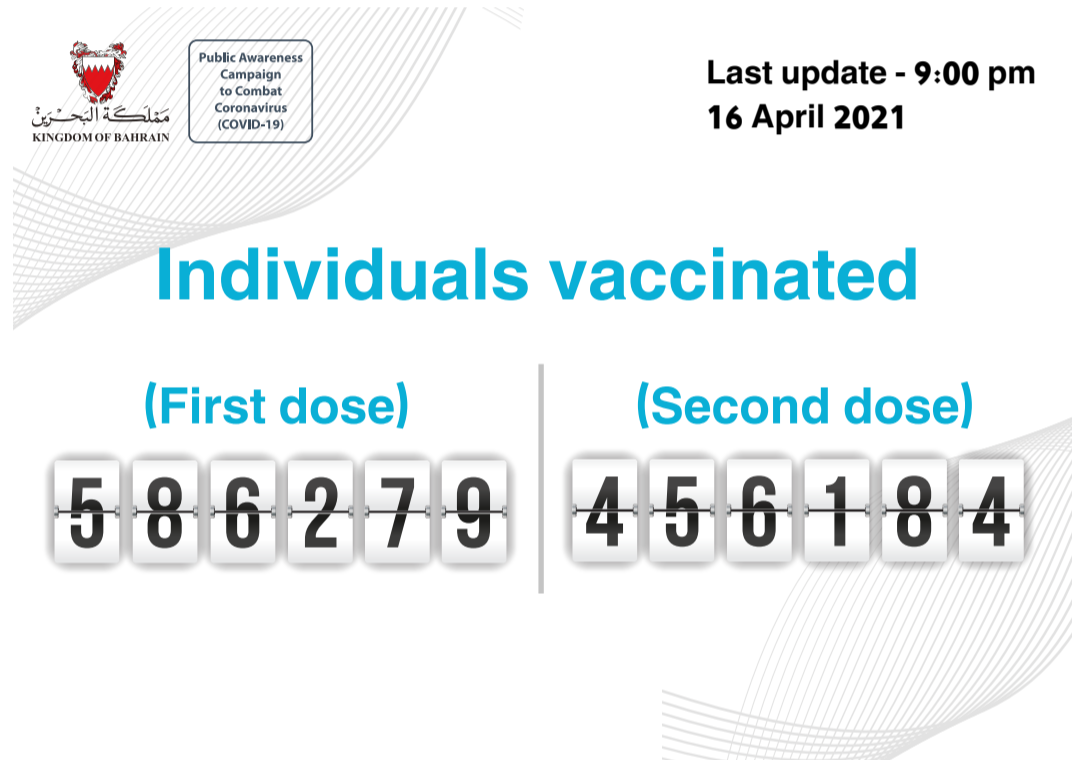
Iran and global powers are meeting in Vienna to try to rescue a 2015 nuclear deal abandoned by Washington three years ago.

Abbas Araqchi, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator at nuclear talks in Vienna, said on Tuesday that Iran would activate 1,000 advanced centrifuge machines at Natanz.



The French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle arrives in Bahrain

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For peace

His Majesty the King, Royal family members, perform Friday prayers

TDI | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday performed Friday prayer at the Sakhir Palace mosque alongside royal family members.

HM the King also listened to a Friday sermon by Dr Rashid bin Muhammad Al-Hajri, the Chairman of the Sunni Endowment Council.

Sheikh Dr Rashid spoke about the virtues of the Holy Month of Ramadan and the keys to goodness and forgiveness in it and prayed to protect HM the King and bless him with every success in serving the Kingdom. Dr Al Hajeri wished HM the King continued good health

and happiness and further growth and prosperity to the Kingdom of Bahrain and its people.

Dr Rashid thanked His Majesty the King for re-opening some mosques for Friday prayer during the Holy Month of Ramadan. He also extended thanks to His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and Bahrain's task force for their constant efforts to combat the outbreak.

Dr Al Hajeri wished Bahrain ever-lasting security, stability and prosperity under the leadership of HM the King, praying to Allah Almighty to protect the Kingdom, Muslim nations and the whole world from all pandemics and diseases.

Thousands gather for Friday prayers



P3



BAHRAIN COVID-19

TOTAL TESTED

3869936

ACTIVE CASES

11329

DEATHS

581

DISCHARGED

150179

NEW CASES

1155

CRITICAL

86

Ambassador Abdullah Abdullatif Abdullah of Bahrain to Germany met the Deputy Director-General of Human Rights, International Development and Social Affairs at the German Foreign Ministry, Helga Margarete Barth. Discussions focused on efforts to confront the Coronavirus pandemic, Bahrain's efforts to immunise society, and support citizens and economic sectors via a financial package. They also discussed issues related to the promotion and protection of human rights.



Bahrain determined to fight violence against women: Parliamentarians tell Interparliamentary meeting



Dr Ibtisam Muhammad Saleh Al-Dalal



Ahmed Mahdi Al-Haddad

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is committed to eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination including domestic violence, Bahraini parliamentarians told an international parliamentary strategic dialogue.

The parliamentarians also told the Inter-Parliamentary Union that the Kingdom has a National Strategy for the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence.

The move came as Dr Ibtisam Muhammad Saleh Al-Dalal, the chairman of the Women and Child Affairs Committee of the Shura Council, and Ahmed Mahdi Al-Haddad, the Human Rights Committee chairman, took part in the International Parliamentary Strategic Dialogue on Violence against Women and Girls during Corona.

Dr Al-Dalal and Al-Haddad confirmed that the Kingdom had taken many steps to end domestic violence.

Bahrain, they said, maintains a database and statistics to monitor and follow up domestic violence cases through an advanced electronic platform.

"This programme has enabled the authorities to follow up the cases and give victims

access to health, psychological and social services provided by state institutions.

Dr Al-Dalal and Al-Haddad also told the meeting that the programme works to strengthen the national strategy for advancing Bahraini women 2013-2022.

"It will assist Ministry Interior officials, civil society organisations, and media partners in combating domestic violence."

The Supreme Council for Women headed by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King, launched the National Strategy for the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence.

They also pointed out that the National Strategy complies with the seventeen goals for sustainable development.

"This strategy is designed to secure and promote the rights of Bahraini women, combat all forms of violence against them, and meet the requirements of Bahraini women. (2013-2022) and strengthening family and community contact."

The meeting discussed the contributions made by Bahraini women in combating the deadly pandemic, with the National Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus (COVID-19), and at the front lines.

Al Fadil elected to Arab Observatory for Human Rights



TDT | Manama

Ali bin Saleh Al-Saleh, Speaker of the Shura Council, congratulated Dr Jihad Abdullah Al-Fadil, Chair of the Council's Services Committee, for becoming a member of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Observatory for Human Rights of the Arab Parliament.

The speaker wished Dr Al-Fadhel all success in representing the legislative authority in the observatory.

The Observatory, Al Saleh said, ensures human rights at the Arab level, and promotes the values and principles of human rights in Arab nations.

Al Saleh said her legislative experiences would help her perform well in the position.



Labour and Social Development Minister and Labour Market Regulatory Authority board Chairman Jameel Humaidan discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation during a meeting with the Chairman of the Bahrain Jurists Society, Dr Abduljabbar Ahmed Al Tayeb. They discussed ways to spread legal awareness in labour and social protection.



President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, received at the "Green Corner" in Muharraq, Shaikh Abdulla bin Rashid Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States. Shaikha Mai commended the efforts exerted by Shaikh Abdulla bin Rashid to enhance the Bahrain-US relations, stressing the importance of cooperation of all parties to promote the kingdom's cultural and civilisational image. BACA President pointed out that the Bahrain-US cultural cooperation has resulted in diverse events and activities that contributed to enriching the local cultural movement over the past years. The ambassador expressed his constant readiness to cooperate with BACA to strengthen cultural relations between the two friendly countries.

Ayman bin Tawfiq Al-Moayyad, the Youth and Sports Affairs Minister, chaired a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Hope Fund established to support projects and initiatives for youth. The directors discussed ways to hone Bahraini talents and contributing to the national economy. The board also discussed plans to involve the national competencies in all sectors as strategic partners. The members exchanged proposals and ideas to achieve the Hope Fund's goals. Hope Fund has Shaikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al Khalifa representing the private sector, Abdullah Jihad Al Zain and Ahmed Yusef Talib representing the Office of the Representative of HM the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, Abdulrahman Abdullah Al Shafei representing Bahrain Bourse Company and Samir Zuhair Antoun Auji and Ali Habib Ahmed Qassim representing the private sector as members.



Fawzia bint Abdullah Zainal, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, affirmed the continuous parliamentary support for infrastructure development and public services to provide quality job opportunities for Bahraini youth during a virtual meeting.



The Governor of the Northern Governorate, Ali bin Sheikh Abd Hussain Al-Asfour, called for developing joint initiatives and projects with Businesswomen Association to support Bahrain's women empowerment drive. The governor was receiving a book on the association's "20 Years of Success" from the Business Women Association, Ahlam Janahi. The book details the activities and achievements of the association twenty years after its establishment.

Thousands gather for Friday prayers all over the Kingdom

Citizens and residents perform Friday prayers in mosques, thank HM King, HRH Prince Salman



In pictures, worshippers performing Friday prayers at various mosques in the Kingdom

● **Worshippers entered after showing proof for COVID-19 vaccination**

● **Mosques opened 45 minutes before the prayer and closed 25 minutes**

● **Prayers were performed wearing masks and ensuring social distancing**

● **Toilets and ablution places remained closed**

● **Sermons were restricted to 10 minutes**

TDT | Manama

Mosques and shrines in the Kingdom reverberated with prayers yesterday as citizens and residents returned for Friday prayers following a royal order allowing mosques to open during Ramadan.

People flocked to places of worship all over the Kingdom for Ramadan prayers adhering to social distancing measures and COVID-19 protocols, as directed by the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Mosques were opened 45 minutes before the prayer and closed 25 minutes after the prayers.

They, however, denied entry to women and children under the age of 15.

A directive issued by His

All of the citizens and residents showed full commitment to instruction and directives given by the authorities

OFFICIALS

Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa had earlier authorised opening mosques from the first day of Ramadan for Friday prayers, Isha and Tarawih, under the supervision of the Sunni and Jafari endowment administrations.

The entry is only after showing proof for COVID-19 vaccination or recovery through the 'BeAware Bahrain' app. Proof of vaccination will only appear 14 days after the second dose.

"All of the citizens and resi-

dents showed full commitment to instruction and directives given by the authorities," said officials.

Arrangements were in place at the mosques to accommodate people for prayers adhering to the COVID-19 protocols.

Prayers, officials said, were performed wearing masks and ensuring social distancing.

People listened to sermons at mosques and thanked His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al

Khalifa for keeping the mosques open during the holy month of Ramadan.

"The noble act has filled the hearts of the believers with joy and happiness," preachers said.

They also thanked His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for successfully leading the Kingdom's battle against the deadly

pandemic.

Authorities had earlier made clear that worshippers should cooperate fully with volunteers, and sermons should not exceed 10 minutes.

Directives also required performing Isha and Taraweeh prayers within 40 minutes. Taraweeh prayers commenced immediately following the Isha prayer.

Toilets and ablution places remained closed. A ban was also in place against setting up tents outside mosques.

Sunni and Jafari endowment decided which mosques are okay to welcome worshippers.

Officials said the endowments informed mosques to ensure precautionary measures ahead of the Friday prayers.

Directives also required to shorten the recitation as much as possible.

French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle arrives in Bahrain

TDT | Manama

The aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, the flagship of the French Navy and part of the carrier battle group known as Groupe aéronaval (GAN), arrived in Bahrain yesterday.

The battle group, usually composed of a carrier air wing, a complement of 60 aircraft, is currently engaged in the "CLEM-



ENCEAU 21 mission".

Welcoming the group, French ambassador, Jérôme Cauchard, said, "The arrival of



part of the naval air group in Bahrain fully illustrates the strategic place that France gives to the fight against terrorism, to the security and stability of the Gulf and the freedom of navigation in this 'very important' maritime axis. "

"By coming to Manama, the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, France's main military tool in the field of naval aviation, reminds Bahrain's strategic location in the region and underlines the solidity of relations between

France

and the Kingdom," he added.

The CLEMENCEAU 21 mission is symbolic of the relations of trust that unite the countries involved in the fight against terrorism, particularly between France and the United States.

"GAN took command, on 31 March and for the second time in its history of the American Task Force 50, a naval force is turned towards the Iraqi-Syrian theatre to fight against Daech," the embassy statement said.

It said several French ships have passed through Bahrain in recent weeks, including multi-mission frigates such as "La Provence" at the end of March and minehunters such as "L'Angle" or "Céphée" in April.

The French Navy is also involved in the Combined Mari-

time Forces (CMF), a multinational coalition of 33 nations.

France Navy is active in direct support of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), one of the three Task Forces of the CMF, which fights against illicit trafficking to finance terrorism and organised crime.

More than eight tonnes of narcotics were seized in March 2021 by several French vessels operating in the northern Indian Ocean as part of CTF 150.

France is also involved with several European partners in the European-led maritime surveillance mission in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASoH/Agenor), launched on its initiative more than a year ago, and is helping to de-escalate tensions in the Gulf.



Research survey vessel for works ministry, new roads and more

TDT | Manama

Works Ministry is moving ahead with plans to build a research survey vessel for its Remaal project. Project details are not disclosed.

The ministry has also opened a tender for the project calling for competent and specialist suppliers to design, build and supply the vessel.

The successful bidder should complete the vessel in about 52 weeks.

The contract also calls for providing maintenance of the boat for three years after the warranty period.

The tender, which published on Thursday and closes on 19 May 2021, requires an initial bond of BD5,000.

Isa town roads

The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning also unveiled plans to develop the roads at block 805 in Isa Town.

As per a tender, the ministry will construct a six-meter wide two-lane single carriageway internal roads, with asphalt paving



The bid opening process was attended by representatives of the administering authorities and the companies participating in the tenders

for a length of 2,750 meters.

The contractor should perform earthworks, construct drainage, kerbing, asphalt paving, instal footpath and road markings.

The successful bidder will have to finish the work in 36 weeks. The initial bond for participating in the bidding is BD4,000.

The tender opened on Tues-

day will close next month on the 19th.

Malkiya Market

The Northern Area Municipality said it is looking for a contractor to invest and operate Malkiya Market at Malkiya.

The 35-year contract includes two floors of the supermarket, vegetable section, fish market and other areas.

A tender, which opened on 28 March 2021 and will close by 28th this month, calls for an initial bond of BD2,500.

The tender board, charged with supervising government bidding and bidding practices, also opened 47 bids received for eight tenders by seven administrative bodies.

Maryam Bint Omran Primary

Girls

A Works Ministry tender for the rehabilitation of Maryam Bint Omran Primary Girls School attracted four bids. The bids ranged from BHD 250,425.150 to BHD 377,378.000. Almoayyed Contracting quoted the lowest amount.

iWorld Connect, which quoted BHD 67,284.000, emerged as the lowest bidder for a contract to supply three IT consultants at the Ministry of Finance. The job attracted 13 parties.

security guards

The Ministry of Labour and Social Development has 71 openings for security guards, for which the tender board received ten bids. The bids ranged between BHD 597,082.500 and BHD 999,810.000. G4S Secure Solutions Bahrain made the lowest quote.

A contract for the general maintenance of the facilities at the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs attracted four bids. Dadabhai Construction's BHD 48,914.765 was the lowest amount.

Further, the board opened two tenders for the Electricity and

Tender Board Ramadhan Timing	
Working Hours	
«Sunday- Thursday»	8:00 - 14:00
Bid Submission	
«Sunday- Thursday»	8:00 - 13:30
Bid Opening Session	
«Monday - Thursday»	9:00

Water Authority. The first for updating electricity transmission in the master plan of the Electricity and Water Authority received seven bids. The second for a fuser unit in overhead lines attracted two bidders.

The committee also opened a tender by the Bahrain Bourse for health and life insurance of Bourse employees. The tender received five bids.

Finally, the committee opened a tender for the General Poultry Company for supplying 2,925 tons of laying poultry feed for which received two bids. Delmon poultry company, which quoted BHD 479,449.280, was the lowest bidder.

It's all about tackling a crevasse

Bahrain Everest team spend a day polishing their crevasse crossing skills

TDT | Manama

After a day of recess, Bahrain's Everest team is back again and is on with taxing practice session in preparation for their final ascent.

The 16-member expedition team said they are practising some of the most dangerous climbs and crossings using ladders.

"The team practised some of the most dangerous parts of the climb today, ladder crossing the crevasses which sometimes are 2,3 or 4 ladders tied together across the bottomless crevasses. It makes it harder wearing crampons and carrying all your equipment," the team wrote on social media.

Pictures posted showed team members, kitted fully, practising the ladder crossing, which is one of the most important for mountaineering in a snow



country.

Experts say it is almost sure that one will encounter a crevasse on their way up, which is scary as it is impossible to spot them in advance and know its depth only when it appears.

If the journey is through the Kumbu Ice falls on mount Everest, then ladder crossing

is necessary.

Sometimes a single ladder will suffice to bridge a crevasse but will need to lash a couple of them for longer crossings.

The technique involves place a ladder or a combination of ladders over the chasm, fastening them to an object to avoid losing them.



Climbers use ice screws to fix the ladders to the nearest side of a crevasse.

Experts, however, point out that the tricky part is who will do it first.

The first person bears the entire risk, and he should be someone with experience in crossing

crevasses.

Once everything is secured at the other end, and after fixing hand lines, the rest of the team can cross the ladder, one at a time.

The mantra or key here is doing it slowly and steadily, as a miss-step could turn fatal.

Biden to invest \$1.7 billion to fight COVID-19 variants

● \$1 billion to expand genomic sequencing, \$400 million to help build six research centers for genomic epidemiology and \$300 m to build a national bioinformatics infrastructure

Reuters

The Biden administration yesterday said it will invest \$1.7 billion to help states and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention fight COVID-19 variants that are rapidly spreading across the United States.

The investment, which will be part of President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan, will improve detection, monitoring, and mitigation of these variants by scaling up genomic sequencing efforts



- a key step in containing the spread, the White House said. "The original strain of COVID-19 comprises only about half of all cases in America today. New and potentially dangerous strains of the virus make up the other half," the White House said in a statement.

In early February, US laboratories were only sequencing about 8,000 COVID-19 strains per week. Since then the ad-

“”
The original strain of COVID-19 comprises only about half of all cases in America today. New and potentially dangerous strains of the virus make up the other half

WHITE HOUSE

ministration has invested nearly \$200 million to increase genomic sequencing to 29,000 samples per week - an effort that will get a boost with the new funding.

The investment will be broken down into three areas: \$1 billion to expand genomic sequencing, \$400 million to help build six research centers for genomic epidemiology and \$300 million to build a national bioinformatics infrastructure - which will

help build a repository of data.

The first portion of the funding will be distributed in early May and the next round will be invested over the coming several years, the White House said.

The White House also offered a state-by-state breakdown of the funds with California receiving over \$17 million, Texas over \$15 million and Florida over \$12 million.

A White House official said on Thursday the United States is preparing for the possibility that a booster shot will be needed between nine to 12 months after people are initially vaccinated against COVID-19.

Also, Pfizer Inc Chief Executive Albert Bourla said people will "likely" need a third booster dose of COVID-19 vaccines within 12 months and could need annual shots.

The United States had administered 198,317,040 doses of COVID-19 vaccines in the country as of Thursday morning and distributed 255,400,665 doses, according to the CDC.

EU drafts plan to delay decision on labelling gas a 'green' investment



An aerial picture shows the four natural-gas power plants "Gersteinwerk" of Germany's RWE Power, one of Europe's biggest electricity and gas companies near the North Rhine-Westphalian town of Hamm, Germany

Reuters | Brussels/London

The European Union plans to delay a decision on whether to label natural gas power plants as a sustainable investment in landmark green finance regulations due to be published next week, according to a draft document seen by Reuters.

The European Commission is due to publish on April 21 the first section of its "sustainable finance taxonomy," a long list of economic activities plus

the specific rules they must meet to be labeled as green investments in the EU.

Among the most contentious issues is whether to label natural gas, a fossil fuel, as green.

EU countries are split between those who say that would be greenwashing, and those who see gas as crucial for them to quit more-polluting coal.

The Commission looks set to delay a decision, after multiple draft proposals failed to bridge that divide.

Oil holds near \$67

Reuters

Oil held near \$67 a barrel yesterday and was heading for a weekly gain as a stronger demand outlook and signs of economic recovery in China and the United States offset rising COVID-19 infections in some other major economies.

Brent crude was down 8 cents, or 0.1%, at \$66.86 a barrel at 1340 GMT. It was heading for a weekly gain of 6.2% after rising in the past four sessions. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell 10 cents, or 0.2%, to \$63.36. New US sanctions imposed on Russia, one of the world's top oil producers, over alleged election interference and hacking could also support prices.

China GDP grows record 18.3% in first quarter in virus rebound

AFP News

China's economy expanded at a record pace in the first quarter as the country continued its rapid recovery from last year's pandemic-fueled slump, official data showed yesterday.

The 18.3% explosion in gross domestic product growth was the fastest pace since quarterly records began three decades ago, but came off a historic contraction in 2020 during the depths of the pandemic.

While the coronavirus first emerged in central China in late 2019, the country was also the quickest to bounce back after authorities imposed strict control measures and consumers stayed home.

"The national economy made a good start," National Bureau



Industrial output rose a less-than-estimated 24.5 percent in the quarter.

of Statistics spokeswoman Liu Aihua told reporters.

The sharp spike was partly due to "incomparable factors such as the low base figure of last year and increase of working days due to staff staying put during the Lunar New Year" holiday, said Liu.

Migrant workers were urged to remain in the areas where

they work during the break owing to fears that the annual massive migration might lead to local outbreaks.

On a quarterly basis, GDP rose 0.6% from the last quarter of 2020, slowing slightly, a shift analysts attributed to a wave of local virus outbreaks which triggered travel restrictions and lockdowns.

Gulf Air resumes direct flights to Istanbul



TDI | Manama

Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, announced resuming its direct operations to Istanbul Airport in Turkey with 2 weekly flights starting from 11 May 2021.

Gulf Air has been operating direct flights between Bahrain and Turkey since 1985, and it is one of the airline's main regional destinations.

The airline currently flies to and from Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Kuwait, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Medina, Muscat, Cairo, Amman, Casablanca, London, Paris, Frankfurt, Athens, Bangkok, Manila, Singapore, Dhaka, Colombo, the Maldives and several destinations in India

and Pakistan.

The airline said it would also boost its services and frequencies to its current network as follows: Cairo: From 6 weekly flights to daily flights, Dammam: From 6 weekly flights to double daily flights, Riyadh: From 5 weekly flights to daily flights, Jeddah: From 4 weekly flights to daily lights, Medina: From 3 to 5 weekly flights, Sialkot: Resumed with three weekly flights, Multan: Resumed with three weekly flights, Athens: From 2 to 3 weekly flights, Casablanca: From 1 to 2 weekly flights, Faisalabad: Resumed with two weekly flights, Manila: From 6 weekly flights to daily flights, and Dubai: From 18 to 21 weekly flights.

Run out of milk? Robots on call for Singapore home deliveries

Reuters

Hoping to capitalise on a surge in demand for home deliveries, a Singapore technology company has deployed a pair of robots to bring residents their groceries in one part of the city state.

Developed by OTSAW Digital and both named "Camello", the robots' services have been offered to 700 households in a one-year trial.

Users can book delivery slots for their milk and eggs, and an app notifies them when the robot is about to reach a pick-up point - usually the lobby of an apartment building.

The robots, which are equipped with 3D sensors, a camera and two compartments each able to carry up to 20 kg (44 lb) of food or parcels ordered online, make four or five deliver-



ies per day on weekdays and are on call for half day on Saturday.

They use ultraviolet light to disinfect themselves after every trip, said OTSAW Digital's chief executive, Ling Ting Ming.

"Especially during this pandemic period, everybody is looking at contactless, humanless," he told Reuters.

For the time being, staff accompany the robots on their rounds to ensure no problems arise.



Tashfique Haider, a 25-year-old student who has tried out the service, said it could be particularly helpful for the elderly so they wouldn't have to carry goods home.

But a passerby worried the technology might be too much trouble for some.

"The younger customers will like it. I don't think they (the older generation) will, because these are gadgets that younger people like," said 36-year-old housewife Xue Ya Xin.



News in brief

South Korea's Moon replaces PM, cabinet ministers after election defeat



Moon Jae-in replaced the prime minister and six other cabinet members in a bid to revive his party, after devastating local election defeats, and his policy agenda. Moon named Kim Boo-kyum, a former interior minister and four-term lawmaker, to succeed Chung Sye-kyun as prime minister, while nominated new ministers of land, industry, fisheries, labour, and science and technology.

◆ In a sweeping reshuffle, South Korean President

◆ North Korean leader Kim Jong Un paid his respects at the mausoleum for his grandfather Kim Il Sung on Thursday to mark the birthday of the founder of the state, official media KCNA reported.

North Korea's Kim visits family tomb to pay tribute to grandfather



Kim and his wife, Ri Sol Ju, also watched a performance of song and dance at the Kumsusan Palace of Sun, where his father and grandfather lie in state, in celebration of the national holiday, KCNA reported.

Brazil's Bolsonaro promises Biden to end deforestation, seeks financial help



counterpart Joe Biden pledging to end illegal deforestation in Brazil by 2030 and seeking "considerable" financial assistance to get there, officials said. The letter comes a week before Biden hosts a virtual climate summit with 40 world leaders, including Bolsonaro -- a far-right climate-change skeptic with whom he previously clashed on the issue of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon.

◆ President Jair Bolsonaro wrote a letter to his US

◆ Google violated Australian law by misleading users of Android mobile devices about the use of their location data, a court ruled in a landmark decision against the global digital giant.

Google broke Australian law over location data collection: court



The US company faces potential fines of "many millions" of dollars over the case, which was brought by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACC), the regulators' chief Rod Sims said.

Pakistan orders temporary social media shutdown after violent protests



hours-long shut down of social media and instant messaging platforms after days of violent anti-France protests. In a notice to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, the Interior Ministry requested a "complete blocking" of Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp, YouTube and Telegram until 3 pm (1100 GMT).

◆ The Pakistan government ordered an

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths
1 USA	32,239,969	579,141
2 India	14,496,601	175,459
3 Brazil	13,758,093	365,954
4 France	5,187,879	98,750
5 Russia	4,684,148	100,073
6 UK	4,383,572	127,087
7 Turkey	4,150,039	33,939
8 Italy	3,842,079	116,366
9 Spain	3,407,283	76,981
10 Germany	3,111,574	80,328
11 Poland	2,660,088	61,208
12 Argentina	2,629,156	58,925
13 Colombia	2,602,719	67,199
14 Mexico	2,295,435	211,213

Global tally

140,216,248

Deaths

3,005,634

Recovered:

119,114,500

New cases

+142,083

New deaths

+2,525

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	213,798		12,611		161,470	39,717
Saudi Arabia	403,106	+964	6,801	+10	387,020	9,285
UAE	493,266	+1,843	1,547	+2	476,518	15,201
Kuwait	253,066		1,428		236,384	15,254
Oman	176,668		1,821		156,845	18,002
Qatar	194,930	+978	367	+10	172,598	21,965

Chicago releases graphic video of police shooting 13-year-old

● **Bodycam footage shows teen wasn't holding anything, had hands up when shot**

Reuters | Chicago



Screengrab from the footage shows Adam Toledo, 13, holding up his hands a split second before he was shot by police in Little Village

Chicago officials released to the public on Thursday a graphic body-camera video showing a police officer shooting and killing a 13-year-old boy while he appeared to be raising his hands in an alley more than two weeks ago.

The nine-minute video from Eric Stillman's body camera showed the 34-year-old officer getting out of his squad car and running after Adam Toledo in an alley at 2:30 a.m. on March 29 in Little Village, a Mexican neighborhood on the city's West Side.

The video then showed Stillman yelling "Stop" to Toledo before he caught up to him and ordered him to show his hands. Toledo appeared to raise his hands right before Stillman fired one shot and then ran to the boy as he fell to the ground.

"Shots fired, shots fired. Get an ambulance over here now," the police officer is heard saying in the video.

"Stay with me, stay with me" Stillman said. "Somebody bring the medical kit now!"

The Chicago Police Department said immediately following the incident that Toledo had a gun in his hand.

The release of the video was likely to rattle a nation already on edge over issues of policing, justice and race relations. Tensions were high on Thursday as a former suburban police officer in Minnesota appeared in court after she was charged in the killing last Sunday of a

Chicago, as well as way too many parts of our country, has a long legacy of police violence and police misconduct that have left far too many residents, especially those who are black and brown, in a constant state of fear and pain

CHICAGO MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT

Black man during a traffic stop.

Hours earlier, the prosecution and defense rested their cases in the murder trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who is charged in the death of George Floyd, which ignited a wave of protests last year.

Chicago's Civilian Office of Police Accountability also released some 33 data files, including other police body-camera videos, footage from nearby security cameras and documents related to the March 29 incident.

One of the documents identified Stillman, who has been on the force for six years, as

the officer who shot and killed Toledo. He has been placed on administrative duty.

The Chicago Police Department also released part of the same video on its website on Thursday. The department placed an arrow on a still frame, pointing to what appeared to be a handgun in Toledo's right hand before Stillman opened fire.

"838 milliseconds between gun shown in hand and single shot," the police department said in a caption.

About five minutes and 30 seconds into the video, the officer shines a flashlight on a handgun feet from where officers worked frantically to save Toledo's life, giving him CPR.

Protesters critical of police gathered in central Chicago, some of them blocking traffic. They were met by helmeted officers on foot, social media images showed, but there were no immediate reports of conflict.

An attorney for the Toledo family, Adeena Weiss Ortiz, told a news conference after the release of the video that Toledo complied with Stillman's orders, dropped his weapon and turned around before the officer opened fire.

Shooting of Indianapolis

Police say gunman killed

● **The incident took place at a Fedex facility located close to the international airport**

Reuters | Washington

At least eight people were killed in a shooting at a delivery company by a gunman who is believed to have then turned the gun on himself, police in the US city of Indianapolis said.

The victims all died at a Fedex facility where the shooting took place late Thursday, police spokeswoman Genae Cook told a news conference, adding several other people had been taken to hospital.

Four people with gunshot wounds were transported by ambulance, including one in critical condition, police said. Three were transported with other injuries, while two were treated at the scene and then released.

One man who was working a twilight shift at the plant near the city's international airport told local broadcaster WISH-TV he saw the gunman start shooting and heard more than 10 shots.

"I saw a man with a sub-machine gun of some sort, an automatic rifle, and he was firing in the open. I immediately ducked down and got scared," Jeremiah Miller said.

"My friend's mother, she came in and told us to get inside the car. What we've been doing [since] is telling everyone, our co-workers

Pentagon team reveals Covid-19 chip that can be implanted in the

SCMP | Washington

A team of US scientists working under the US Department of Defense has unveiled a chip that it said can detect signs of the new coronavirus in human bodies within minutes when it is implanted under the skin.

Retired Colonel Matt Hepburn said that the implant invented by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), a Pentagon unit that develops emerging technologies for military use, can continuously test blood.

Carried in a tissue-like gel, the microchip shows chemical reactions in the body – a signal to wearers that they will develop symptoms the next day. This allows them to get tested early for the virus, he said.

"We can have that information in three to five minutes," Hepburn told CBS News show 60 Minutes last Sunday.

"As you truncate that time, as you diagnose and treat, what



The green gel, seen in a lab, contains a microchip which senses when the body is infected

you do is you stop the infection in its tracks."

Hepburn suggested that the chip could be used to monitor the health of sailors.

The chip implant does not trace movement and is now in late-stage testing, researchers said.

Medical microchips have been around since 2004 when the US Food and Drug Admin-

YOU KNOW WHAT

Medical microchips have been around since 2004 when the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved an implantable radio frequency identification (RFID) device that enabled doctors to access a wearer's medical records

istration (FDA) approved an implantable radio frequency identification (RFID) device that enabled doctors to access a wearer's medical records.

Since then, scientists have developed implantable microchip devices to deliver birth control drugs and other medi-

Christopher Columbus signs a contract with the Spanish monarchs to find the "Indies" with the stated goal of converting people to Catholicism. This promises him 10% of all riches found, and the governorship of any lands encountered



Treaty of Shimonoseki is signed ending the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)

1,400 Cuban exiles land in Bay of Pigs in a doomed attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro

Proclamation of the Constitution Act by Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau

Shooting kills 8 in US city Indianapolis: police

Shooter killed himself after shooting in which several others were wounded



The scene outside a FedEx facility in Indianapolis where multiple people were reportedly shot

not to go to work today."

Cook told reporters that officers were called to an "active shooter incident" at around 11:00 pm (0300 GMT), adding they believed the gunman -- who has not been identified -- died by suicide.

"The officers responded, they came in, they went in and they did their job. A lot of them are trying to face this because this is a sight that no one should ever have to see," Cook said.

Authorities judged there was no longer an immediate threat to public safety, Cook told reporters, and police were still gathering information to identify the victims.

"We have located eight people at the scene with injuries consistent to gunshot wounds. Those eight were pronounced deceased at the scene," Cook said.

"This is a tragedy." A Fedex spokeswoman confirmed to AFP that the company's facility was the scene of the

shooting, and said the firm was cooperating with authorities.

"We are aware of the tragic shooting at our ground facility near the Indianapolis airport," the company said in a statement.

"Safety is our top priority, and our thoughts are with all those who are affected."

The plant is reported to employ more than 4,000 people.

Timothy Boillat, another employee, told WISH-TV that he saw around 30 police cars arriving at the scene as he witnessed the shooting unfold.

"After hearing the shootings, I did see a body on the floor," he said.

"Luckily, I was far enough away to where he [the shooter] didn't see me."

Spate of shootings

The incident in Indianapolis follows a spate of mass shootings across the US in recent weeks.

At the end of last month, four people, including a child, were shot dead in an office building in southern California.

On March 22, 10 people were killed in a shooting at a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado.

That came less than a week after a man shot and killed eight people, including six women of Asian descent, at spas in Atlanta, Georgia.

Thursday's shooting was the third in Indianapolis this year. In January, five people including a pregnant woman were killed; three adults and a child were killed in March.

Nearly 40,000 people in the United States die each year from guns, more than half of those being suicides.

The issue of gun regulation in the United States is politically fraught.

President Joe Biden this month announced six executive measures he said would help stem the gun violence crisis.

YOU KNOW WHAT

Nearly 40,000 people in the United States die each year from guns, more than half of those being suicides

Myanmar's ousted MPs form new shadow government



Police security forces stand by inside a police vehicle and on the sidewalk of Hledan Road in Kamayut township in Yangon

AFP | Yangon

A "parliament" working in hiding to oust Myanmar's junta from power announced a new shadow government yesterday, with deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi at its helm alongside ethnic minority politicians.

The country has been in turmoil since the military detained Suu Kyi and seized power, triggering a massive uprising that the junta has sought to quell with lethal force.

Besides demanding for democracy's return, protesters are also increasingly calling for more of a governing role for the country's minority groups -- which have long seen their voices marginalised by the ethnic Bamar majority.

The Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) -- a group of lawmakers mostly from Suu Kyi's party attempting to govern underground via a shadow parliament -- yesterday announced its leaders.

Helming the so-called "National Unity Government" is Suu Kyi, in her position as State Counsellor, and President Win Myint -- who is also

Please support the National Unity Government for the future of our citizens and our younger generation. The people are the decision makers and the people will fight the final battle. Victory is coming, We must win our revolution

MIN KO NAING, DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST

under house arrest and facing a barrage of charges from the junta.

They are flanked by a vice president who is ethnic Kachin and a prime minister who is ethnic Karen, said Min Ko Naing, a prominent democracy leader, in an address on the CRPH's official Facebook page.

"We have organized a government which has the largest number of ethnic minority groups," he said.

A list of appointed ministers also included prominent leaders from the Chin, Shanni, Mon, Karenni and Ta'ang ethnic groups.

Detecting body

as well as chips that monitor health indicators such as heart rate and blood oxygen level.

But microchipping humans, even for medical reasons, has raised privacy fears. Biotechnology firms have yet to deliver a product that is attractive to a slice of the population.

DARPA, founded in response to the Soviet Union's launch of the Sputnik 1 satellite in 1957, has been working on pandemic prevention for years.

Another recent DARPA invention is a filter that can be attached to a dialysis machine to remove the coronavirus from the blood of critically ill patients, researchers revealed.

The filter was tested on "Patient 16", a military spouse in intensive care who was near death due to organ failure and septic shock.

After the experimental four-treatment, the patient made full recovery.

The FDA has since approved the filter for emergency use.

Fit for, and designed by, a prince: Philip's Land Rover funeral hearse

Reuters | London

When Prince Philip's coffin is conveyed to church for his funeral service, it will be taken in a specially-commissioned Land Rover that the British royal himself helped design.

Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth, died last week aged 99 and his funeral will be held

"That vehicle's unique and idiosyncratic silhouette reminds the world that he was above all a practical man, who could take something very traditional - whether a machine or indeed a great national institution - and find a way by his own ingenuity to improve it, to adapt it for the 20th or the 21st century"

BORIS JOHNSON



The Jaguar Land Rover that will be used to transport the coffin of Prince Philip

entirely at Windsor Castle on Saturday, with no public allowed.

Although the event has been scaled down because of COVID-19 restrictions, many traditional elements will remain, with a military procession inside the castle and pall bearers from units with close links to Philip.

However, in place of the usual hearse, Philip's body will be taken from its current resting place to St George's Chapel on a

bespoke Land Rover which has been modified to carry a coffin in keeping with Philip's original plans for the funeral.

Buckingham Palace said the prince started on the project with Land Rover 18 years ago with the hearse based on a Defender TD 130 chassis and then modified, with the open top rear section custom made to Philip's specification.

It was painted Dark Bronze Green, a colour used for many military Land Rovers.

Lulu Group chairman Yusuff Ali undergoes spinal surgery



Yusuff Ali

Reuters | Chennai

NRI businessman and Lulu group chairman M A Yusuff Ali, who had a miraculous escape on April 11 after his helicopter crash-landed on marshy land here, has undergone a spinal surgery at a hospital in Abu Dhabi, the company said.

It said Yusuff Ali underwent the surgery at Burjeel Hospital in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday.

"An expert team of 25 doctors led by renowned German neurosurgeon Prof Dr Shawarbi performed the surgery and Yusuff Ali is recovering well in the hospital," the Lulu Group said in the statement issued last night.

The Gulf-based Indian businessman, who suffered injuries in the crash-landing, had returned to Abu Dhabi on Monday by a special aircraft sent by the Royal Family there.

TOP 4 TWEETS

01

I'm looking forward to welcoming my friend Prime Minister Suga to the White House this afternoon for the first foreign leader visit of my presidency -- and to renewing the historic alliance between the United States and Japan.

@POTUS

02

From the start of the pandemic, we knew that vaccines would be a vital tool for ending it. But we also knew from experience that market forces alone wouldn't deliver #VaccinEquity. Huge thanks, @gavi, for launching "One World Protected" campaign to raise \$2B to fight #COVID19.

@DrTedros

03

As we defeat #COVID19 together, we must also address our most existential threat - the climate crisis. We urgently need to set targets & timelines to cut greenhouse gases & achieve net zero emissions by 2050. #ClimateAction

@antonioguterres

04

The British government had strongly defended the International Criminal Court from Trump's attacks while it investigated possible Israeli and Palestinian war crimes in Palestine, which is a member of the ICC. Then Boris Johnson stepped into the picture.

@KenRoth

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

Pregnant women's health during Ramadan

PROF. DR. SAMY ISMAIL

Health of the pregnant women during the Holy Month of Ramadan is very important. Here are the answers to some questions many have in relation to pregnancy and fasting:

1. Is pregnancy a disease?

The answer surely is that pregnancy is not a disease. It is a special physiological and healthy situation characterized by a cascade of physiological, physical and emotional changes that occur once the pregnancy occurred within the body of the pregnant mother.

2. Is the pregnant mother considered a patient?

The answer is no, she is not. The pregnant mother is a healthy woman with top healthy performance on its top its capabilities to get pregnant.

3. Do we advise the pregnant mother to fast during Ramadan?

Generally, we do not advise the pregnant mother to fast especially during the first 4 months as during this period, the lady tends to have physiological changes affecting all her body systems especially to her digestive system usually. The pregnant women develop excessive vomiting, nausea, difficulty with digestion and absorption. They are at risk of losing a lot of body fluid to the degree of developing dehydration (Hyperemesis Gravidarum). These changes can affect all system of the pregnant mother and the developing embryo which may jeopardize her and her baby.



- During the second trimester of pregnancy the fetus needs regular supply of nutrition to start and continue his growth. Any disturbance of nutrition supplement from the mother to the baby may affect his growth. The same regarding the continuation of growth during the last trimester of pregnancy.

- Any pregnant lady suffering from any medical disorders with pregnancy like Diabetes Mellitus, hypertension, thyroid dysfunction indicates the decision to avoid fasting as her baby is at great risk.

- Pregnant mothers are advised to report any alarming signs like hypertension, headache, blurring vision and decreased amount of urine output.

- After all the above advice, the final decision to fast is the responsibility of the pregnant women.

Prof. Dr. Samy Ismail is the Professor of OB/Gyn

NOTICE

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Saudi Arabia's city of roses blooms in Ramadan

AFP | Taif

Every spring, roses bloom in the western Saudi city of Taif, turning pockets of the kingdom's vast desert landscape a vivid and fragrant pink.

In April, they are harvested for the essential oil used to cleanse the outer walls of the sacred Kaaba, the cubic structure in the holy city of Mecca towards which Muslims around the world pray.

This year, the harvest falls during the



Roses from the Saudi city of Taif are harvested for oil to clean the sacred Kaaba in Mecca



holy fasting month of Ramadan, which observant Muslims devote to prayer and reflection.

Workers at the Bin Salman farm tend rose bushes and pick tens of thousands of flowers each day to produce rose water and oil, also prized components in the cosmetic and culinary industries.

The perfumed oil has become popular among the millions of Muslims who visit the kingdom every year for pilgrimages.

Patterns of plants and flowers have

long been part of Islamic art.

Known as the city of roses, with approximately 300 million blooms every year, Taif has more than 800 flower farms, many of which have opened their doors to visitors.

While workers pick flowers in the fields, others labour in sheds, filling and weighing baskets by hand.

The flowers are then boiled and distilled.

"We start boiling the roses on high heat until they are almost evaporated,

and this takes around 30 to 35 minutes," Khalaf al-Tuweiri, who owns the Bin Salman farm, told AFP.

"After that we lower the heat for around 15 to 30 minutes until the distilling process starts, which lasts for eight hours."

Once the oil floats to the top of the glass jars, the extraction process begins.

The oil is then extracted with a large syringe to fill different-sized vials, the smallest going for 400 Saudi riyals (\$106).



Ramadan cooking

Ingredients

For the garlic starter

- 2/3 cup (104 grams) plus 1/2 cup (70 grams) regular semolina flour (pasta flour)
- 3/4 cup (85 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled

For the bread

- 2 cups (400 grams) extra-fine semolina flour
- 1/2 teaspoon (1 1/2 grams) dry yeast
- 2 1/2 teaspoons (15 grams) fine salt
- 1 cup (52 grams) regular semolina flour or all-purpose flour, for handling the dough
- Moroccan Almond-Argan Butter, for serving

Preparation

For the garlic starter

1. Make the starter: In a glass or ceramic bowl, combine 2/3 cup semolina flour with the all-purpose flour. Gradually stir in 3/4 cup water to make a wet dough. Mix in garlic, cover, wrap in a towel and leave in a warm place, like an unheated oven, for a day.

2. Uncover the starter, add 1/4 cup water and the remaining 1/2 cup semolina flour, and mix. Cover, wrap in a towel, and leave for 12 to 24 hours. The starter will get a crusty top and blossom underneath. Scoop out 1/2 cup starter and discard the rest, including garlic cloves (otherwise, as it continues to ferment, the smell would drive you out of your home).

3. Make the bread: In a food processor fitted with the metal



blade, combine extra-fine semolina flour, the 1/2 cup of starter, the yeast and salt. Pulse once or twice. Add 1 cup warm water and process for 15 to 20 seconds to knead. Let rest 10 minutes. Pulsing food processor, trickle in another 1/4 cup water. Sprinkle a work surface with flour and turn dough onto it. Cover with an upside-down bowl for 10 minutes. Cut 4 1-foot squares of waxed or parchment paper and sprinkle with flour. Divide dough in four and put each piece on a piece of a floured paper, turning to coat. Press each into an 8-inch circle. Cover with kitchen towels and let rise 1 hour.

For the bread

1. When ready to cook, gently flatten each disk, then prick the tops all over with a fork. Heat an 8- or 10-inch nonstick skillet or griddle (or two, if you have them) over medium-high heat. Sprinkle the pan's surface with flour, then pick up a dough round and flip it into the pan, paper side up. Peel off the paper and adjust the heat so that the bread sizzles gently. When it is browned and blistered on the bottom, about 5 minutes, flip the bread out onto a plate, then slide it back into the pan to cook the other side. Cook about 2 minutes, shaking the skillet often to prevent sticking. When browned, firm and fragrant, slide onto a platter and serve immediately, or cover with a towel to keep warm while you cook the remaining breads. Serve with Moroccan almond-argan butter.

Pakistan complete four-series sweep against South Africa

Faheem Ashraf took three for 17 to spark South Africa's collapse in the fourth Twenty20 at Centurion

● Both teams suffered collapses, but South Africa's 145 target proved insufficient

AFP | Centurion

Pakistan completed a clean sweep of four trophies in four series against South Africa but had anxious moments before scrambling to a three-wicket win with one ball to spare in the fourth and final Twenty20 international at SuperSport Park in Centurion yesterday.

"It is a big moment for Pakistan. It is not easy winning matches in South Africa," captain Babar Azam said through an interpreter at the post-match presentation.

Pakistan, who earlier in the season defeated South Africa in Tests and T20 internationals in Pakistan, followed up a 2-1 one-day series win with a 3-1 victory in the T20s to round off a successful tour.

Medium-pace bowler Faheem Ashraf set up what seemed likely to be an easy win for Pakistan when he took three for 17 as South Africa were bowled out for 144 on what is usually a high-scoring ground.

Pakistan was cruising at 92 for one in the tenth over as Babar and Fakhar Zaman shared an impressive second-wicket



Faheem Ashraf celebrates with teammates after a wicket

partnership after Mohammad Rizwan was stumped in the first over.

But Fakhar, who hit five fours and four sixes in a 34-ball 60, went for one big hit too many and sliced a high catch to backward point.

Babar, who was named man of the series, was caught at wide third man for 24 three balls later and Pakistan found themselves in a collapse in which six wickets fell for 37 runs.

Two no-balls in the penultimate over by Sisanda Magala proved disastrous for the hosts, with the second resultant free hit being slammed for six by Mohammad Nawaz.

However, it still went down to the fifth ball of the over before Nawaz clinched victory with another six, off Lizaad Williams.

South Africa, with five key players released to the Indian Premier League and without appointed captain Temba Bavuma because of injury, batted poorly but clawed their way back into the game despite bowling four no-balls and seven wides.

"I am disappointed but we have young cricketers with great talent and I am proud of them," said stand-in captain Heinrich Klaasen.

"We showed we can fight and compete as a young group but we need to get more consistency in our performances."

Faheem earlier started a South African collapse similar to that which later afflicted Pakistan.

South Africa had reached 73 for one after the early loss of Aiden Markram when Faheem

YOU KNOW WHAT

The series completed a truncated home season for South Africa, who lost a T20 series against England and gained their only series win when they won two Tests against Sri Lanka before taking on Pakistan

had Janneman Malan caught at mid-off for 33 in the ninth over.

He followed up with the wickets of Klaasen and George Linde. He bowled his four overs in succession and did not concede a boundary.

"My brief was clear from the captain but the tone was set by the new ball bowlers," he said.

Fast bowlers Hasan Ali and Haris Rauf took three for 40 and two for 18 respectively.

Rassie van der Dussen top-scored for South Africa with 52 off 36 balls.

The series completed a truncated home season for South Africa, who lost a T20 series against England and gained their only series win when they won two Tests against Sri Lanka before taking on Pakistan.

BRAVE CF Signs Combat Sambo World Cup Champion Ruslan Tedeev

TDT | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation continues to beef up its Lightweight division with the addition of a huge name in Russian MMA. Combat Sambo World Cup champion Ruslan Tedeev has signed a multi-fight deal with the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world and is expected to make his promotional debut sooner rather than later.

Tedeev has amassed a very respectable 13-2 professional record and will make his BRAVE CF debut on the back of a five-fight win streak, which saw him become one of Eastern Europe's most sought-after fighters.

Through his social media



Ruslan Tedeev

profiles, the Lightweight contender expressed his happiness at joining BRAVE Combat Federation and is hopeful he can debut soon, perhaps in Belarus, where the promotion is heading to next for BRAVE CF 51.

"I'm delighted to have signed a deal with BRAVE Combat Federation, which has been recognized as the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world. I can't wait to debut in my new home and show the world all my skills. Thank you to His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and Mohammed Shahid for the opportunity to fight at BRAVE CF"

Tedeev will join a stacked Lightweight roster at BRAVE CF, led by world champion Amin Ayoub and also containing the likes of top KHK Team Bahrain wrestler Ahmed Amir, Kyrgyzstan's number one male fighter Abdusalom Kubanychbek, BRAVE CF 2020 Fighter of the Year Rolando Dy, England's Sam Patterson, among other top fighters.

"I'm delighted to have signed a deal with BRAVE Combat Federation, which has been recognized as the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world. I can't wait to debut in my new home and show the world all my skills. Thank you to His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and Mohammed Shahid for the opportunity to fight at BRAVE CF"

RUSLAN TEDEEV

Folayang faces Aoki in battle of veterans

TDT | Manila

Once and for all, Filipino former ONE lightweight world champion Eduard Folayang and Japanese grappling specialist Shinya Aoki will make known who the real boss is.

The two grizzled veterans will square off for the third time in the Circle in ONE on TNT IV at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on April 29.

The trilogy will surely be a big draw among fight fans as both fighters are eager to settle their unfinished business and, of course, emerge victorious.

Folayang, who is known as "The Landslide", was supposed to face Japanese-Korean icon Yoshihiro Akiyama but the latter withdrew due to injuries. On the other hand, Aoki's original opponent, Sage Northcutt, was also forced to pull out of their scheduled bout due to COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

Folayang and Aoki first met in the Circle in 2016 when the Igorot warrior scored a third-round technical knockout win to capture the lightweight belt.

Representing Team Lakay, the 36-year-old Folayang had his first successful title defense against Ev Ting of Malaysia and New Zealand in 2017 before Martin Nguyen dethroned the Filipino mixed martial arts icon the same year.



Folayang hits Aoki with a leg kick during their second meeting

It was in 2018 when Folayang rode high on crest of a three-match win streak capped off by retaking the vacant belt against Amir Khan.

In the Folayang-Aoki rematch, their first encounter in more than two years, the Japanese exacted sweet revenge on the Filipino via first-round arm-triangle choke submission

for the title.

Coming into the fight, Folayang is in high spirit and looking forward to an action-packed encounter with Aoki.

"This is a very unpredictable sport as in our previous bouts, Aoki did well while I'm in a bad performance streak but we always learned from the past,"

"My expectation is to give all my best with no regrets. I will approach this fight positively and as much as possible be precise in the way I execute my game"

XX EDUARD FOLAYANG

Folayang who believes that he has evolved as a fighter and improved his skill.

"My expectation is to give all my best with no regrets. I will approach this fight positively and as much as possible be precise in the way I execute my game."

Folayang only earned one victory from his last five fights since March 2019, with the last one coming against Mongolian Tsogookhuu Amarsanaa. In that span, aside from his loss to Aoki, he also fell to Eddie Alvarez of the US, Pieter Buist of the Netherlands and Caruso.

So this battle of veterans will serve as a golden opportunity for Folayang to snap a two-bout slide and for his waning career to receive a much-needed shot in the arm.

"I think I'm a much different fighter now compared to before. I have prepared hard for him," said Folayang.

Chelsea's Tuchel vows to hunt down Man City ahead of FA Cup clash

AFP | London

Thomas Tuchel admits Chelsea still lag behind Manchester City as he prepares to face the runaway Premier League leaders in an FA Cup semi-final but vowed to hunt down Europe's "benchmark" club next season.

Chelsea face City at Wembley on Saturday, with Tuchel chasing a maiden managerial win over Pep Guardiola, whose side are still on course for an unprecedented quadruple.

The Blues' German boss be-

lieves Chelsea still have long-term ground to make up on City but has exhorted his players to close that gap just for 90 minutes.

"We have to accept that there is a gap between us and Manchester City," said Tuchel, who replaced Frank Lampard in the Stamford Bridge hot seat in January.

"If you look at the fixture in the Premier League and the fixtures in the last years we have to accept this. And it's important that we accept this without making ourselves too small.

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Bahrain earn play-off berth in FIBA Esports Open



Bahrain's players line-up on screen after their win against Lebanon

● **Bahrainis among 60 national teams from around the world taking part in online tournament, featuring NBA 2K21 platform**

● **Bahrain win both preliminary round games, first against Lebanon and then against the UAE**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain powered through to the first round of the play-offs in the FIBA Esports Open III, which got underway yesterday with the participation of 60 national teams from around the world.

The Bahrainis, who are competing in Group Two of the competition's Middle East Conference, won both their games in the preliminary round. They first defeated their counterparts from Lebanon 84-80, and then beat the UAE 20-0.

The nationals are thus through to the play-offs, where they are set to take on Kuwait, who finished with a 1-1 win-loss record in Group One.

The other play-off match-up will be between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia.

The play-offs are scheduled to continue today and tomorrow.

Bahrain's squad features six members, including guards Jassim Ali, Hussain Albanna, Salman Sharaf and Ali Showaikh, power forward Ahmed Shareeda and centre Yaqoob Seyadi.

In their win over Lebanon yesterday, the team's character named "kamppoo" led the team with 24 points, 12 rebounds and four assists. Teammate "Black-Cobra_Z" contributed 23 points and 11 assists, while "Clutch-69Gamer" had 16 points and "||-Rodman-||" chipped in with 15.

Bahrain overcame the 44-point effort of Lebanon's "||Yenchy||", while "CantBeat-TheGrind" added 36 points and 15 assists.

The online tournament, which features the NBA 2K21 video game, features six regional conferences. Six teams are battling it out in the South East Asia, Africa and Middle East Conferences; while North and Central America have eight sides apiece. South America have seven teams while 28 are playing in the Europe Conference.

Mercedes dominate practice in Imola

Max Verstappen crawls to a halt in second practice session

● **Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas was quickest in the first practice session at Imola Emilia Romagna Grand Prix**

AFP | Imola

Mercedes drivers Valtteri Bottas and Lewis Hamilton produced the quickest times in practice on Friday for the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix but Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc both ran into trouble in the second session.

Bottas was quickest round the legendary Imola circuit in both sessions but only just, 0.01 seconds faster than his teammate Hamilton.

The pair were followed by AlphaTauri's Pierre Gasly and the Ferrari of Carlos Sainz and Leclerc who crashed into a wall at the end of the second session, prompting a red flag and the decision not to restart.

There was bad news for Red Bull too as Verstappen pulled up with a mechanical problem.

"Something snapped on the rear," Verstappen told his team.

The Dutchman, who finished second behind Hamilton in the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix, had earlier clocked the third-fastest time in the opening session behind the two



Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas Mercedes.

The first session was also marked by two red flags.

A collision between Red Bull's Sergio Perez and the Alpine of Esteban Ocon, which escaped the cameras, resulted in both cars off the track.

Perez, who was on a "flying" lap, according to his team boss Christian Horner, had a damaged rear-left tyre while Ocon, on a "slow" lap, had a broken front right.

The drivers were called to the stewards to explain the incident but no further action was taken.

"The two cars reached the apex at the same time, and just barely touched wheels," said the stewards' report.

"Both drivers agreed in the

limited or no communications with their teams at the time.

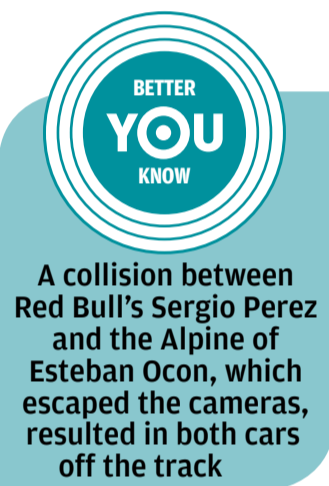
"Both drivers agreed that neither was at fault."

They were both back in business for the second session with Perez clocking the sixth fastest time.

The second red flag of the morning came just before the end of the session after Haas rookie Nikita Mazepin went too wide into a corner and spun.

It was another unfortunate incident for the 22-year-old Russian. He failed to complete the opening lap in Bahrain and has been tagged with the nickname 'Mazespin'.

The third practice session starts at 0900 GMT on Saturday with qualification taking place from 1200 GMT.



hearing that it was an unfortunate miscommunication of timing between them, not helped by the fact that both drivers had

Roma line up Europa League semi with United, Arsenal cruise into last four

AFP | London

Roma lined up a blockbuster Europa League semi-final clash with Manchester United on Thursday after holding Ajax to a 1-1 draw to go through to the last four 3-2 on aggregate.

Edin Dzeko's strike 18 minutes from time ensured the draw and passage for Paulo Fonseca's side, who were on the back foot for most of the match, and a showdown with United who strolled into the semis 4-0 after a 2-0 win over La Liga outfit Granada at Old Trafford.

The other semi-final will see Arsenal face Villarreal, coached by former Gunners boss Unai Emery.

"I've never got to a semi-final before, so I'm very proud, especially as we are representing Italy right now," said Fonseca, who has been under pressure following a disappointing Serie A campaign.

"It's a source of pride for Roma and we are all very happy."

Italy's only remaining representative in Europe came into the clash at the Stadio Olimpico with a slender lead but two away goals from last week's first leg in Amsterdam.



Roma's Bosnian forward Edin Dzeko (R) scores an equalizer past Ajax Dutch goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg



"If you look at the overall tie we were the better side, but that doesn't mean anything"

AJAX'S DAVY KLAASEN

Their European campaign looked in danger when Ajax teen Brian Brobbey was introduced for Antony at the break and the striker made an instant impact, racing onto Perr Schuurs pass three minutes after the restart and nipped the ball past an onrushing Pau

Lopez.

However after Dusan Tadic's strike for the away side six minutes later was ruled out for a foul on Henrikh Mkhitaryan in the build up, Dzeko tipped the tie in Roma's favour.

The Bosnian was on hand to tap home the leveller which put Roma a goal ahead on aggregate after Riccardo Calafiori's low cross was deflected into his path.

With Ajax needing to score again to take the tie into extra-time the hosts were galvanised and managed to fend off Erik ten Hag's outfit, who will have to wait until next season for a shot at European glory.

Riffa title celebrations put on hold

● **League leaders Riffa held to 1-1 deadlock by bottom-of-the-table club Busaiteen**

● **Manama defeat Malkiya 1-0 to move second; Najma and Budaiya play to 1-1 draw**

TDT | Manama

Riffa will have to wait a little while longer before kicking off their title celebrations in the 2020/2021 Nasser bin Hamad Bahrain Premier Football League, after being held to a 1-1 draw by bottom-of-the-table club Busaiteen last night in their Week 15 fixture.



Riffa's Mahdi Humaidan, right, battles for possession of the ball with Busaiteen captain Mohamed Saleh Sanad

A win would have put Riffa in position to seal the season's crown by tonight, if chief rivals East Riffa drop any points against Al Ahli.

But a share of yesterday's points with Busaiteen means East Riffa and Manama are still with a mathematical chance to steal away the title from Riffa, who have been the runaway leaders all season long.

Manama were 1-0 winners over Malkiya last night as they moved to second place on the table, nine points behind Riffa with three matches remaining for each team.

Al Najma and Budaiya played to a 1-1 stalemate in yesterday's third game.

In Riffa's draw, skipper Kamil Al Aswad opened the scoring in the match in the 37th minute. His goal came following a corner kick from teammate Mohammed Marhoon, which was poorly cleared by the Busaiteen defence. The ball went straight into the path of Alaswad, and he sent home a left-footed strike from just inside the penalty box past opposing goalkeeper Ahmed Abdulrasool.

Al Aswad's goal was fitting for the occasion, as he had earlier this week signed a contract extension with Riffa. The terms of his deal were not disclosed, but it is reported to be the richest in the history of the Bahrain premier league.

Busaiteen, however, were able to level the proceedings in the second half with a header from substitute Sultan Mansoor Sultan off a corner kick.

The result was only the second draw for Riffa in 15 matches, while Busaiteen earned their seventh deadlock but remained in last place.

Standings

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
Riffa	15	12	2	1	15	38
Manama	15	9	2	4	10	29
East Riffa	14	9	1	4	10	28
Muharraq	14	5	5	4	6	20
Hidd	14	5	3	6	0	18
Al Ahli	14	4	5	5	-6	17
Al Najma	15	3	5	7	-9	14
Malkiya	15	2	6	7	-11	12
Budaiya	15	2	6	7	-11	12
Busaiteen	15	1	7	7	-4	10
Al Malkiya	3	0	1	2	-6	1