



Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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Finance Minister praises HM King royal initiatives

P2



Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Individuals vaccinated

Last update - 9:00 pm
23 June 2021

(First dose)

1048212

(Second dose)

930614

(Booster dose) **70903**

Iran's rocket launch 'failed'
Dubai

Iran likely conducted a failed launch of a satellite-carrying rocket in recent days and now appears to be preparing to try again, the country's latest effort to advance its space programme amid tensions with the West over its tattered nuclear deal.

We're here for you!

Tamkeen extends financial support to COVID-affected businesses and individuals

BAHRAIN COVID-19

TOTAL TESTED

4951227

ACTIVE CASES

5844

DEATHS

1330

DISCHARGED

256933

NEW CASES

418

CRITICAL

132

Register on website from June 27 to July 11 for three-month support

TDT | Manama

Tamkeen is extending financial support for three more months to businesses and individuals hardest hit by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Labour Fund announced the extension of its Business Continuity Support Programme from June, July to August during a meeting of its Board of Directors.

The decision is based on His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's directives to launch a financial and economic stimulus package to reduce the effects of the pandemic and maintain sustainable development efforts.

It also follows the order of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to government entities to continue implementing the royal directives and develop the



Cinemas and gyms stand to benefit from the programme



right solutions to support sectors adversely affected by the pandemic.

Tamkeen will reopen its application window for the Business Continuity Support Programme from Sunday, June 27, to July 11.

The support will cover children's play leisure centres, day care centres, cinemas, gyms and fitness studios, salons and spa, restaurants and cafes that are mainly reliant on dine-in services, events' halls, retail shops (non-food items), travel and tourism agencies and event planning companies.

The salaries of taxi and bus drivers and driving trainers are

also expected to be supported for three months.

Eligibility criteria of the sectors benefiting from the Support Programme will be available on Tamkeen's website.

The applications will be assessed and the value of the support will be determined based on the extent to which the institution is affected by the closure of businesses.

The Business Continuity Support Programme was introduced in April last year to provide financial assistance to sectors affected by COVID-19. The Fund provided 100 per cent wage support to all sectors from April to June last year, then 50 per cent

to affected sectors from July to December.

Last March, Tamkeen also extended support for another six months to institutions operating in exhibitions, conferences and gyms due to the suspension of their activities in implementation of the precautionary measures.

The support, which was also under the Business Continuity Support Programme, included tour guides in the tourism and hospitality sector registered with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism.

(Tamkeen hails leadership call for private sector's participation - Page 2)



The applications will be assessed and the value of the support will be determined based on the extent to which the institution is affected by the closure of businesses.

Finance Minister praises HM King royal initiatives

Stimulus financial and economic package key to cushion impact of pandemic and sustain progress

TDT | Manama

Finance and National Economy Minister Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa commended the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to launch a stimulus financial and economic package to handle the repercussions of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and maintain the sustainable development efforts.

He also lauded the Cabinet's decision, under the presidency of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to re-open the door for application to the Liquidity Fund while focusing on small and medium companies.

Shaikh Salman said the decision to re-open the door for applications to the Liquidity Fund is an assertion of the leadership's keenness to continue harnessing all capabilities to



Shaikh Salman

mitigate the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic on various vital sectors in the Kingdom.

He noted the importance of the move in stimulating the entrepreneurship environment, promoting economic growth and boosting prosperity.

The Finance Minister underlined the need to continue building on the achievements brought about thanks to the national efforts led by HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Shaikh Salman was speaking during a virtual meeting yesterday with Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism Zayed bin Rashid Al Zayani, Tamkeen Board Chairman Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Chairman Samir Abdullah Nass, National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) Board Chairman Farooq Al Moayed, Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait (BBK) Board Chairman Murad Ali Murad, Bahrain Islamic Bank (BIB) Board Chairman Dr Essam Abdullah Fakhro, Bahrain Development Bank (BDB) Board Chairman Khalid Amru and Chief Executives of the national banks.

The Finance Minister expressed thanks and respect to all parties for their support and one-team spirit to attain the desired goals.

Discussions focused on procedures related to carrying out the decision of the Cabinet.

HM King ratifies and issues laws

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday ratified and issued Law 14/2021 on endorsing the Kingdom's accession to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, adopted on October 10, 2013.

Article (2) of Law 14 of 2021 stipulates that according to paragraph (5) of Article (30) of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Kingdom of Bahrain declares that "any amendment to an annex shall enter into force only upon the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with respect thereto."

His Majesty King Hamad also ratified and issued Law 13/2021 on endorsing the Kingdom's accession to the Convention on Registration of



HM the King

Objects Launched into Outer Space, adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 12, 1974.

The Prime Minister and ministers, each in their capacity, shall implement the provisions of the laws, which take effect upon their publication in the Official Gazette.

HRH Princess Sabeeka hails HH Shaikha Fatima



HRH Princess Sabeeka

TDT | Manama

Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and Supreme Council for Women (SCW) President, sent a cable of congratulations to Her Highness Shaikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation, on the inauguration of the "Shaikha Fatima bint Mubarak Centre for Women, Peace and Security" in the UAE.

In the cable, HRH Princess Sabeeka hailed the move which comes as part of the pioneering initiatives of HH Shaikha Fatima to empower women and enable them the nation, become an essential factor for the stability of societies and contribute to regional and global security and peace.

She praised HH Shaikha Fatima's drive to serve women-related issues in order to top the national and international development agenda, wishing the new pioneering initiative success.

She reiterated Bahrain's support to all sincere efforts aimed at supporting women to participate in peace operations and contribute to development conducive to more progress and prosperity.

Parliament Minister receives Japanese Ambassador and outgoing Sudanese envoy



Parliament Affairs Minister Ghanem bin Fadhul Al Buainain received newly appointed Japanese Ambassador to Bahrain Miyamoto Masayuki. Al Buainain praised the advanced level of the solid relations between Bahrain and Japan, wishing the Ambassador success in carrying out his diplomatic duties and success in enhancing cooperation between the governments and peoples of the two friendly countries. Masayuki affirmed his country's keenness to achieve the highest levels of cooperation, praising the efforts of the Kingdom, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, in promoting and developing this cooperation. Al Buainain also received the outgoing Sudan Ambassador to Bahrain Ibrahim Mohamed Al Hassan. The Minister praised the efforts made by the Ambassador to enhance relations between the two countries, wishing him success in his future duties.

Tamkeen hails leadership call for private sector active participation

TDT | Manama

(From Page 1)
Tamkeen Board of Directors Chairman Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa lauded His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's sound directives and the constant follow-up of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Shaikh Mohammed also praised HRH's Prince Salman's leadership of the national efforts to mitigate the repercussions of the pandemic, and encouragement of enterprises to continue playing their role in developing the national economy and achieving more growth.

Tamkeen's Chief Executive Officer, Hussain Mohammed Rajab, commended the tremendous efforts exerted by Team Bahrain to combat the pandemic.

He highlighted the important role played by various private



Shaikh Mohammed also praised HRH's Prince Salman's leadership of the national efforts to mitigate the repercussions of the pandemic.

sector institutions to continue carrying out their businesses using creative and sustainable ways in dealing with the market's changes and challenges.

Rajab cited the private sector institutions' success in turning challenges into real opportunities that have yielded positive results, contributing to the continuity of their business during

the current circumstances.

Tamkeen's Business Continuity Support Programme was first launched in March 2020, based on HM the King's directives to support the private sector through an economic and financial stimulus package to help adversely affected sectors.

The scheme covers part of the operating expenses of enterprises in sectors that are unauthorised to carry out their commercial activities due to the precautionary measures taken to limit the spread of the COVID-19.

The programme is part of the initiatives launched by the government to support individuals and businesses during the period.

During the previous four stages of the Business Continuity Support Programme, Tamkeen has supported more than 16,000 enterprises with an overall budget exceeding BD56 million.

At the Forefront of Women's Health

Dr. Nailah Nisar
Consultant
Obstetrics & Gynecology

Dr. Siti Saleha
Consultant
Obstetrics & Gynecology

Dr. Dalya Al Hamdan
Consultant
Obstetrics & Gynecology

Dr. Murat Koc
Consultant - Gynecology & Gynecological Oncology
(Part Time: Tue 12 noon - 8PM)

Dr. Bhanu Handa
Specialist
Obstetrics & Gynecology

Dr. Natasa Nikolic
Specialist
Obstetrics & Gynecology

Dr. Amaal Kareem
Specialist
Obstetrics & Gynecology

Clinical Expertise:

Colposcopy • Female Sexual Health • Treatment of Endometriosis

High Risk Obstetrics (Normal & C-Section Deliveries)

Infertility • Gynecological Conditions • Recurrent Miscarriages

Menopause and Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) • Vulval Disease

ROYAL BAHRAIN Hospital

1724 6800 1724 6888 3218 1810

Royal Bahrain Hospital

TV broadcasting system upgraded

Information Ministry inaugurates two new high technology vehicles to improve media coverage

● Equipped with high-definition TV broadcasting technology

● Will enhance capacity of fleet of television transport vehicles

● Project part of Information Ministry's modernisation process

TDT | Manama

As part of the modernisation process of the direct TV broadcasting system, the Ministry of Information has introduced two new live broadcasting services vehicles for internal and external media coverage.

They are equipped with high-definition (HD) TV broadcasting system with the latest technologies.

Information Ministry Undersecretary Dr Abdulrahman Muhammad Bahar said that the vehicles will enhance the capacity of the fleet of television transport vehicles.



Dr Bahar visiting the modern facilities of the two vehicles

They are owned by the Ministry, which has been modernised under the directives of Information Minister Ali bin Muhammad Al Romahi to develop its programmes and projects through upgrading the level of recording, imaging, sound and lighting equipment, news and production studios, and broadcasting equipment.

The Ministry's Assistant Un-

dersecretary for Technical Affairs, Abdullah Ahmed Al Balushi, expressed his appreciation to the Minister's great interest in supporting the project and the keen follow-up of the ministry undersecretary.

He praised the achievements made during this period in terms of introducing advanced digital technology systems for radio and

television broadcasting, which reflected the continuous interest in keeping pace with all important developments in the media production sector.

Al Balushi said that the two new external transport vehicles are equipped with high-resolution cameras and operate within advanced hydraulic systems and wireless systems.



The two new external transport vehicles are equipped with high-resolution cameras and operate within advanced hydraulic systems and wireless systems.

He pointed out that they are designed in a dynamic manner that takes into account the needs and requirements of production work in line with the nature of production work to cover all official events, exhibitions, conferences and events, local and international sports games held in the Kingdom.



"They are designed in a dynamic manner that takes into account the needs and requirements of production work in line with the nature of production work to cover all official events, exhibitions, conferences and events, local and international sports games held in the Kingdom."

- ABDULLAH AHMED AL BALUSHI, INFORMATION MINISTRY TECHNICAL AFFAIRS ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY

Yousuf Mahmood Husain Pharmacy supports Bahrain Medical Society



Dr Al Ghanim receives the donation from Ibrahim

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Medical Society extended its thanks and appreciation to Yousuf Mahmood Husain Pharmacy for its donation as part of the national efforts to support fronliners and the Society to fulfill its financial obligations under the current challenging circumstances.

This was stated during the Society's receipt of the support from Khalil Ibrahim, Director of Personnel and Operations at Yousuf Mahmood Husain

Company, at its headquarters in the Salmaniya area. Dr Amal Al Ghanim, a member of the Board of Directors of the Society, received the support.

Bahrain Medical Society affirmed its keenness to invest the support of partners in the private sector to improve the services, initiatives, and events it organises, and to advance the Bahraini doctor in scientific and professional terms, in addition, to boost the Society's initiatives related to confronting the pandemic.

MPs to tackle retirement pension bills

TDT | Manama

The retirement pension, the media and the lawyers' laws will be discussed in the fourth and final session of the current legislative term, according to MP Sayed Falah Hashim.

He explained that the MPs will have many hot items on their table when they return from their annual break as they will try to race against time to discuss several bills, including the aforementioned ones.

He added that retirees are keeping a close eye on the parliament's discussions after a decision was made to freeze

their annual 3% increment as the government is working hard to curb spending to balance books especially amid the coronavirus crisis and the growing demands on the public health services.

"We will work hard, that's for sure, because we will have limited time. It's our last session before new representatives will be elected. The new retirement pension will be a priority because it touches a big segment of people," he said.

"There are different opinions in place in this regard, and hopefully the best will be decided."

Rare knee surgery performed at Royal Bahrain Hospital successfully

TDT | Manama

When Saleh, age 38, walked into the office of Dr Gianluca Cusma Guatteri, Consultant-Orthopedics at the Royal Bahrain Hospital, with severe knee arthritis secondary to congenital deformity, only one thing surfaced his mind - will I be able to walk freely without any pain?

For a condition like this, a normal approach would be total knee replacement, explained Dr Gianluca, considering the ultimate aim of the surgery would be to realign the limb.

"However, we evaluated the possibility of partial knee replacement and were weighing our chances should Hazem was to pursue the same. Which he ultimately did," he said.

Dr Gianluca explained that partial knee replacement or unicompartmental knee replacement (UKR) is a minimally invasive surgery in which only the damaged compartment of the knee is replaced with an implant.

Usually, this procedure is done for people who have arthritis in a specific area of

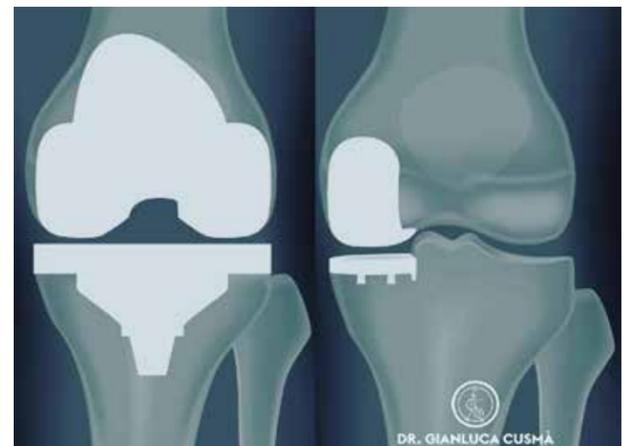


Dr Gianluca



"In few weeks Hazem will be able to not just walk but run as well without facing any difficulty or pain."

- DR GIANLUCA CUSMA GUATTERI



UKR case

slightly longer walks on the hospital floor.

"In few weeks Hazem will be able to not just walk but run as well without facing any difficulty or pain," he said.

UKR is a small but at the same time very demanding surgery and is usually done by surgeons who have reached extreme proficiency.

Dr Gianluca, who has performed more than 500 UKRs in the past 5 years in Italy, tells us that there is a lot of innovation in the type of implant as well.

In fact, Dr Gianluca has also designed and patented a UKR implant which is made of titanium and Vitamin E polyethylene to avoid allergies, minimise oxidation and wearing off with an estimate of a 20 year life of the implant.

To book your appointment with Dr Gianluca, call Royal Bahrain Hospital on 17246800 or WhatsApp 32181810. You can also book your appointment online on www.royalbahrainhospital.com.



Bahraini-South Korean environmental cooperation discussed

Special Envoy for Climate Affairs Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE) Dr Mohammed Mubarak bin Daina received South Korean Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Hae Kwan Chung. He lauded the ambassador's efforts to boost bilateral relations, mainly in the environmental field, stressing SCE's keenness to further enhance cooperation between both countries through the exchange of information and experiences and the implementation of environmental projects. The South Korean Ambassador praised the advanced level of bilateral relations, pointing out his country's keenness to further bolstering cooperation between both countries mainly in the environmental field.

Education Minister endorses results

TDT | Manama

Education Minister Dr Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi has endorsed the results of all school stages, including the secondary, technical and vocational and intermediate, in addition to those of the students of the Nasser Vocational Training Centre (NVTC).

On the occasion, NVTC Director-General Dr Abdulla Nasser Al Nuaimi extended sincere thanks, appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, for HM's care for the educational march in the kingdom, praising the constant support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

He paid tribute to HM the King's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs and NVTC's Board of Trustees Chairman, His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, for his support to the Centre's affairs.

Dr Al Nuaimi extended congratulations to the students, parents and teachers for their success.

Waste management is the way forward

Private sector urged to 'invest' in waste recycling, treatment and reuse

● BCCI organises online symposium on opportunities available in recycling

● Dr Bin Daina presents success stories about turning waste into useful products

TDT | Manama

The Supreme Council for Environment is working to develop long-term waste management system in the Kingdom of Bahrain in cooperation with the relevant authorities and private sector.

This was confirmed by Special Envoy for Climate Affairs and CEO of the Supreme Council for Environment Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak Bin Daina who said it is based on the integrated national strategy for waste management approved by the Cabinet.

Dr Bin Daina took part yesterday in a symposium entitled "Opportunities Available in Recycling" which was held remotely and organised by the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) in cooperation with the Council and Min-



The participants in the online symposium



Construction materials make up the bulk of Bahrain's waste

istry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning.

He gave a presentation detailing the Council's future plans and current projects and referred to a number of success stories about investing in waste recycling, treatment and reuse in cooperation with the private sector.

They include the establishment of a 35,000-tonne aluminium lining cell treatment and recycling unit by Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), which will start operation this year.

He stressed the role of the private and public sectors in achieving environmental goals, and exchanging stories of successful cooperation in recycling and reducing waste.

Dr Bin Daina also stressed the need to invest in recycling and treating various types of waste generated in the primary and transformative aluminium industry, for which Bahrain plays an important centre in the region and the world.



"The private and public sectors play an important role in achieving environmental goals, and exchanging stories of successful cooperation in recycling and reducing waste."

- DR MOHAMMED BIN MUBARAK BIN DAINA, SPECIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE AFFAIRS AND CEO OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL FOR ENVIRONMENT

He noted that there is a need to invest in the recycling of electronic and electrical waste due to the increasing volume of production.

The Council is seeking the lawmakers' help in issuing special legislation regulating the management of this type of waste to encourage the private sector to invest in it.

Undersecretary Shaikh Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Khalifa said that the Works Ministry, with the help of experts in this

field, is currently studying the establishment of a waste recycling plant.

The Ministry is expecting the completion of research studies for this project soon for its implementation.

Shaikh Mohammed said that the Ministry, in cooperation with the private sector, has succeeded in setting up a pilot project to recycle construction and demolition waste, which amounts to 600,000 tonnes. They were treated and turned into useful products.

About 79,000 tonnes of green waste were also recycled and converted into fertilisers, and reused last year.

The Undersecretary revealed that the largest volume of waste comes from household, followed by construction and building materials, and industrial and commercial products.

With regard to waste tyres, he said that Bahrain exports large quantities of it to Malaysia for recycling. The Kingdom produces 8,939 tonnes of waste tyres annually that are dumped at the Askar landfill.

Meanwhile, BCCI's Industry and Energy Committee chairman Farid Badr stressed that plans are underway to implement various programmes on sustainable development in line with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

Project to rehabilitate 32 sewage pumping stations

● Completion rate hits 57 percent

● It aims to raise their efficiency

● Project amounts to BD759,801

TDT | Manama

The completion rate of a project to rehabilitate sewage pumping stations in various governorates of the Kingdom has reached 57 percent.

The Director of Sanitation Planning and Projects Department at the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, Eng. Fathi Abdullah Al Farea, said 32 sewage pumping stations have been selected for rehabilitation.

These stations will be equipped with new pumps, internal pipes, valves, electrical control panels, control systems



Work is in progress at sewage pumping stations

and sensors, and some civil works will be carried out in some stations.

The project aims to rehabilitate and improve the pumping stations to raise their efficiency and ensure their sustainability, in addition to reducing malfunctions and floods in some areas.

Eng. Al Farea said that the project includes the rehabilitation of 32 main and subsidiary

pumping stations distributed in various regions, including three stations in Muharraq Governorate, 19 stations in the Capital Governorate, seven stations in the Northern Governorate and three stations in the Southern Governorate.

The project was awarded by the Tender and Auctions Board to Messrs. Al Dur Contracting Company for Excavation and Building, at a cost of BD759,801.

Prosecution witnesses to testify in corruption case

TDT | Manama

Prosecution witnesses will testify on July 1 in the trial of an employee of the Jaffaria Waqf Directorate, who is accused of corruption.

The defendant was charged with wasting money worth a whopping BD60 million in addition to receiving a bribe worth BD16,000 from a businesswoman who wanted to modify the classification of a land plot in

order to carry out a project.

According to court files, the defendant was a director at the directorate's land classification department.

He received the bribe from the woman after he pledged to change the classification of the land, but his failure to do so prompted her to reveal what happened during a meeting with officials.

She said that the defendant re-

quested her to issue a BD16,000 cheque without a receipt.

As a result, his superiors launched a comprehensive investigation which didn't just conclude with that the defendant received a bribe, but he also wasted BD60 million.

It was discovered that the defendant's wife received the money.

The businesswoman was also charged in connection with this case.

Shaikha Mai receives team documenting archaeological sites in Bahrain



Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA), received in her office yesterday a team of experts documenting archaeological sites led by Professor Fulvio Rinaudo, Secretary General of the Council and Secretary General of the International Council on Antiquities and Sites (ICOMOS), and in cooperation with Dr Una Felix, a heritage conservation expert from the Institute of Archeology University College London and member of the Board of Directors of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). A number of experts and professors from the University of Applied Sciences in Turin, Italy were also present. The project comes in cooperation with the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage in order to document the historical castles in the Kingdom of Bahrain such as the Qal'at Al Bahrain registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List, Shaikh Salman bin Ahmed Al Fateh Castle in Riffa, Bu Maher Castle and Arad Castle in Muharraq. Shaikha Mai stressed the importance of documenting historical sites and castles in Bahrain, which reflect the rich history and culture of the Kingdom and the civilisation.

National Disaster Management Committee meeting



Chief of Public Security, Lieutenant-General Tariq Al Hassan, yesterday chaired the virtual meeting of the National Disaster Management Committee, with the participation of the concerned ministries' representatives. The Chief valued the roles of medics in protecting the health and general safety of the public. He applauded the directives of the Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa to ensure the precise implementation of preventive measures, including wearing masks, social distancing and taking legal steps against violators.

Oman introduces long-term residencies for foreign investors

● The move to offer renewable 5- or 10-year residency visas echoes moves by neighbour the United Arab Emirates

Reuters

Oman will start granting long-term residence visas to foreign investors, state media said yesterday, as the Gulf state pursues wide-ranging reforms to fix its shaky finances.

The move to offer renewable 5- or 10-year residency visas echoes moves by neighbour



General view of old Muscat., Oman

the United Arab Emirates in recent years to offer longer-term residencies and recently, even citizenships, to investors and

certain professionals.

Non-citizens in Gulf Cooperation Countries usually have renewable visas valid for only a few years tied to employment. In the era of lower oil prices and economic diversification away from hydrocarbons, states are looking to retain residents and their families who can contribute to the economy.

Oman's initiative, effective from September, grants foreign investors and retirees the right to reside for long periods in the sultanate, the ministry added.

Since the oil price crash in 2014, Oman's debt to GDP ratio has leapt from about 15% in 2015 to 80% last year, while Oman's

Oman's initiative, effective from September, grants foreign investors and retirees the right to reside for long periods in the sultanate

plans to diversify revenue away from oil and to reduce spending on its bloated public sector have lagged.

Austerity measures unveiled last year are seen as crucial for maintaining the cash-strapped country's ability to access international debt markets.

In response, Sultan Haitham, who acceded to power in Janu-

ary 2020, ordered the government to accelerate plans to create thousands of jobs.

Expatriates make up around 42% of Oman's population, government data from 2020 showed. The country has a long-standing workforce nationalisation policy, known as Omanisation, to create employment opportunities for its citizens.

The number of foreign workers in the Gulf state began to fall in 2018.

In the latest development, this week local media reported that from January only Omani nationals will be able to work in Seeb Central Market, a main market near the capital Muscat.

LuLu 'Let's connect' promotion beings



TDI | Manama

LuLu Hypermarket's popular "Let's Connect" promotion started yesterday, which brings some of the best deals in phones and devices and accessories with fantastic discounts on latest models. There will also be options, exclusive deals and bundle offers as well.

The promotion will run till July 3 at all the eight LuLu Hypermarkets in Bahrain as well as LuLu online.

Kuwait Finance House gives initial guidance for AT1 sukuk - document

Dubai

Kuwait Finance House has given initial price guidance in the 4% area for US dollar-denominated Additional Tier 1 sukuk, or Islamic bonds, that will be non-callable for 5-1/2 years, a document showed yesterday.

KFH Capital, Standard Chartered, Boubyan Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank, Dukhan Bank, Emirates NBD Capital, First Abu Dhabi Bank and Mizuho Securities are arranging the deal, which is expected to launch later yesterday, the document from one of the banks showed.

Saudi Arabia's STC Pay gains digital banking licence

Reuters | Dubai

Saudi Telecom's STC Pay business will be converted into a digital bank with paid-up capital of 2.5 billion riyals (\$666.7 million) after Saudi Arabia's cabinet approved licenses for two digital banks, it said yesterday.

The company will inject additional 802 million riyals to retain 85% of STC Pay's share capital, with Western Union investing 750 million riyals for the remaining 15%.

Bitcoin fund launches on Dubai bourse in ME first

AFP | Dubai

The Middle East's first bitcoin fund launched on the Dubai bourse yesterday, with Canadian digital asset manager 3iQ Corp seeking to raise around \$200 million in the offering.

Created in 2008 as an alternative to traditional currencies, bitcoin is the world's most popular virtual unit, but its price has slumped recently due to fresh moves from China to crack down on cryptocurrencies.

"3iQ Corp., Canada's largest digital asset investment fund manager... today officially listed The Bitcoin Fund on Nasdaq Dubai, the region's international exchange," the bourse said in a statement.

It said that "this fund is the world's first regulated major Bitcoin fund to be listed on the capital markets in the Middle East North Africa region".

"Bitcoin trades 24 hours a day around the world, and in Canada we trade around North American market times and Dubai is almost perfectly opposite of (those) trading hours," 3iQ Corp chief executive Fred Pye told Bloomberg Television.

"We think if the market holds up for the next few months while we get the listing going,



Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies are minted by solving puzzles using powerful computers that consume enormous amounts of electricity.

we expect to probably be quite far north of (\$200 million)."

Bitcoin fell under \$30,000 on Tuesday for the first time in five months, hit by concerns over

China's ongoing crackdown.

The unit had recovered some lost ground by 1040 GMT on Wednesday, punctuating a rollercoaster month of trading, standing at \$34,104 a piece.

Chinese mines power nearly 80 percent of the global trade in cryptocurrencies despite a domestic trading ban since 2017.

But in recent months several provinces have ordered mines to close as Beijing puts the industry under the regulatory microscope.

The 3iQ fund finished up 10.38 percent at \$38.30 following Wednesday trading, according to the Nasdaq Dubai website.

The fund's prospectus says that it seeks to invest in long-term holdings of bitcoin as a less volatile alternative to direct investments in unpredictable cryptocurrencies.

Batelco enables instant access to 5G for businesses in Bahrain

TDI | Manama

Batelco has revamped its 5G Mobile Business Broadband packages for the enterprise sector, enabling entrepreneurs, SME's and large corporations to experience the benefits of the fastest and largest 5G network in Bahrain.

The enhanced packages deliver speeds six times faster than 4G, higher data capacity to meet the business demands for mobility, reliability, and security at the workplace.

To bring the 5G experience to all business sectors, Batelco said it is providing a 5G outdoor solution that comes for free with the new Mobile Broadband packages and is fixed outside the building, to enable



The enhanced packages deliver speeds six times faster than 4G, higher data capacity to meet the business demands for mobility, reliability, and security at the workplace.

strong connections to the 5G network at the workplace through the next generation of WiFi technology, WiFi 6. "This is beneficial for busy business environments, or even when connecting to multiple devices such as desktops, laptops, mo-

bile phones and smart security devices in one area, either at offices, shopping malls, universities, or restaurants. Batelco offers this service through a range of packages starting from BD15/month."

Batelco A/General Manager Enterprise Division Abdulla Danesh said, "With speeds 6 times faster than 4G, 5G technology is a game-changer and promises to enable truly exciting possibilities for businesses and society; it is powering the digital revolution and transforming capabilities and efficiencies across industries."

The provisioning and installation of the 5G indoor and outdoor solution are taken care of by Batelco's technical team, at no additional costs.

Emirates Global Aluminium in talks to refinance \$6 bn loan



The Dubai Aluminium logo is seen in the Jebel Ali area of Dubai

Reuters | Dubai

Emirates Global Aluminium, one of the world's largest aluminium producers, is in talks with banks to refinance and change the terms of a loan of about \$6 billion it secured in 2019, two sources with knowledge of the matter said yesterday.

The United Arab Emirates firm, which is owned equally by Abu Dhabi state fund Mubadala and the Investment Corporation of Dubai, is seeking to extend the tenor and lower the pricing of the seven-year loan through a refinancing facility to take advantage of low rates, the sources said.

"EGA is fortunate to have a large relationship bank group who support our business. We are always looking

at ways to optimise our financing arrangements," the company said in response to a Reuters request for comment.

EGA's fundraising exercise comes as borrowers in the Gulf seek to improve their financing arrangements to reflect better market conditions after last year's coronavirus-driven downturn.

EGA, which produces 4% of the world's total aluminium, took a loan of over \$6 billion in early 2019 to refinance a \$4.9 billion loan secured in December 2015 as well as to fully repay a \$1.8 billion loan raised by EGA's subsidiary Dubai Aluminium.

The syndicated loan EGA is seeking to restructure was issued on Jan. 28, 2019 and totalled \$6.545 billion, according to Refinitiv data.

Crypto is 'rat poison', a third of mainstream firms tell JPM

Reuters | London

Only 10% of institutional investment firms surveyed by JPMorgan trade cryptocurrencies, with nearly half labelling the emerging asset class as "rat poison" or predicting it would be a temporary fad.

Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, fell to a five-month low on Tuesday, extending losses from China's deepening crackdown on mining and trading cryptocurrencies. The US Securities and Exchange Commission has said it would like to see more regulation around trading in the space.

Of those firms who did not invest, 80% did not expect to start investing or trading in cryptocurrencies, according to the survey conducted at JPMorgan's Macro, Quantitative



and Derivatives conference, attended by some 3,000 investors from around 1,500 institutions.

However, asked about their personal investments, 40% of the investors said they were active in cryptocurrencies.

Four-fifths of investors also expected regulators to get tougher on the asset class, while a whopping 95% of them believed fraud in crypto world was "somewhat or very much prevalent", the survey released late on Tuesday found.

News in brief

Germany's coronavirus infection levels are encouraging but cases of the Delta variant are rising and the country should exercise sound judgment so as not to risk what it has achieved, Chancellor Angela Merkel said yesterday. "The pandemic is not over yet. We are still on thin ice," she told lawmakers in the Bundestag lower house of parliament.



Merkel says pandemic is not over, Germany still on thin ice

Nine Catalan separatists who were

long prison sentences for their role in a failed 2017 independence bid were released from jail on Wednesday a day after being pardoned by Spain. Rain was falling as the seven male prisoners walked out of Lledoners jail some 70 kilometres (45 miles) northwest of Barcelona, where they were met by umbrella-carrying supporters shouting "Independence, independence!" As they walked through the gates, they were embraced by newly-appointed Catalan leader Pere Aragonés, and posed for a photograph alongside a Catalan independence flag and a banner reading "Freedom for Catalonia", an AFP correspondent said. At the same time, the two remaining prisoners, both women, were released from two other facilities.

Nine Catalan separatists freed after Spain pardon



through the gates, they were embraced by newly-appointed Catalan leader Pere Aragonés, and posed for a photograph alongside a Catalan independence flag and a banner reading "Freedom for Catalonia", an AFP correspondent said. At the same time, the two remaining prisoners, both women, were released from two other facilities.

At the same time, the two remaining prisoners, both women, were released from two other facilities.

Thai authorities warned demonstrators against gathering to mark the anniversary of the Siamese Revolution on Wednesday, citing the kingdom's soaring Covid-19 infections. Key pro-democracy groups have announced plans for demonstrations across Bangkok on Thursday to commemorate the 89th anniversary of the Siamese Revolution, an uprising that transformed Thailand from absolutism to a constitutional monarchy. Mass protests against the government of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha shook Bangkok in the second half of last year, fuelled by discontent at the former military chief who came to power via a 2014 coup, but tailed off as covid cases rose.

Thai authorities warn against planned pro-democracy protest



Key pro-democracy groups have announced plans for demonstrations across Bangkok on Thursday to commemorate the 89th anniversary of the Siamese Revolution, an uprising that transformed Thailand from absolutism to a constitutional monarchy. Mass protests against the government of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha shook Bangkok in the second half of last year, fuelled by discontent at the former military chief who came to power via a 2014 coup, but tailed off as covid cases rose.

A massive manhunt is underway in central India after a gang of robbers stole nearly a tonne of cow dung from a village, police said. Villagers in the central state of Chhattisgarh complained to police last week after more than 800 kilogrammes (1,770 pounds) of poo disappeared from their storehouse. Police said the gang struck at night, breaking into the depository in Korba district's Dhurena village and fleeing with their pungent plunder estimated to be worth some 1,600 rupees (\$22). "We have questioned some suspects but no arrests have been made yet," local police officer Harish Tandekar told AFP on Wednesday. He added that it was not clear how the suspects had been able to transport such a large amount of faeces, or why they had stolen it. "Investigations are continuing and every effort is being made to find the culprits," Tandekar said.

Manure hunt underway after India thieves steal cow dung

local police officer Harish Tandekar told AFP on Wednesday. He added that it was not clear how the suspects had been able to transport such a large amount of faeces, or why they had stolen it. "Investigations are continuing and every effort is being made to find the culprits," Tandekar said.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	34,435,231	617,893	180,079,604
2 India	30,067,305	391,385	
3 Brazil	18,056,639	504,897	
4 France	5,760,002	110,829	3,900,979
5 Turkey	5,381,736	49,293	Recovered:
6 Russia	5,368,513	130,895	164,822,188
7 UK	4,667,870	128,027	New cases
8 Argentina	4,298,782	90,281	+160,500
9 Italy	4,254,294	127,322	New deaths
10 Colombia	3,997,021	101,302	+3,090
11 Spain	3,768,691	80,719	
12 Germany	3,731,551	91,101	
13 Iran	3,128,395	83,329	
14 Poland	2,879,192	74,893	

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	278,295		15,935		206,852	55,508
Saudi Arabia	478,135	+1,253	7,716	+13	459,091	11,328
UAE	618,148	+1,988	1,773	+6	597,008	19,367
Kuwait	342,929		1,888		322,897	18,144
Oman	254,656	+2,047	2,816	+34	222,344	29,496
Qatar	221,273	+154	586	+2	218,787	1,900

Russian forces reportedly fire warning shots at British destroyer in Black Sea



British Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyer HMS Defender arrives for a port visit in Istanbul, Turkey

Reuters | Moscow

A Russian military ship fired warning shots at a British Royal Navy destroyer after it entered Russian waters in the Black Sea, and a Russian jet dropped bombs in its path as a warning, Interfax cited Russia's defence ministry as saying on Wednesday.

The British Ministry of Defence did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The HMS Defender left Russian waters soon after the incident, having ventured as much as 3 kilometres (2 miles) inside, the Russian ministry said, adding that the confrontation took place near Cape Fiolent, a landmark on the coast of Crimea.

Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine in 2014 in a move condemned by the West which still considers it Ukrainian territory.

"The destroyer had been warned that weapons would be used if it trespasses the border of the Russian Federation. It did not react to the warning," it said.

A Russian bomber dropped four high explosive fragmentation bombs as a warning in the British destroyer's path, according to the Russian ministry.

Three killed in bomb targeting police in Pakistan's Lahore

AFP | Lahore, Pakistan

A bomb killed three people in Pakistan's eastern megacity Lahore yesterday, in an attack officials believe targeted police and security forces.

The blast happened outside a house near a checkpoint in an affluent neighbourhood, the province's police chief Inam Ghani said.

"Our assessment is that the most obvious target was the police and security forces," he said, adding that the blast was being treated as a terrorist incident.

He said it was unclear whether a vehicle was packed with explosives that were remotely detonated or if a suicide bomber was behind the blast.

US blocks 36 Iran websites

Several of the sites were back online within hours with new domain addresses

The sites seized included Press TV, the Iranian government's main English-language satellite television channel, and Al Alam, its Arabic-language equivalent

The Justice Department said the 33 domains used by IRTVU are owned by a United States company

Reuters | Dubai

The US Justice Department said yesterday it seized 36 Iranian-linked websites, many of them associated with either disinformation activities



A screen grab from alalamtv.net shows a notice saying the website has been seized by the United States government as part of law enforcement action,

or violent organizations, taking them offline for violating US sanctions.

Several of the sites were back online within hours with new domain addresses.

"Today, pursuant to court orders, the United States seized 33 websites used by the Iranian Islamic Radio and Television Union (IRTVU) and three websites operated by Kata'ib Hizballah (KH), in violation of US sanctions," the department said in a statement.

Also spelled Kataib Hezbollah, KH is one of the main Iran-aligned Iraqi militia groups and has been designated a Foreign Terrorist Or-

Dozens killed after air strike market in Ethiopia's Tigray

The bomb hit a market at around 1:00 p.m

The market had been full of families

A medical official confirmed at least 43 fatalities

AFP News



A woman is taken to Ayder Referral Hospital, in Mekelle, after an air strike in Togoga, Ethiopia's Tigray region

An air strike killed at least 43 people in the town of Togoga in Ethiopia's Tigray region yesterday, a medical official told Reuters, after residents said new fighting had flared in recent days north of the regional capital Mekelle.

Ethiopian military spokesman Colonel Getnet Adane did not confirm or deny the incident. He said air strikes were a common military tactic and that government forces do not target civilians.

The bomb hit a market at around 1:00 p.m., according to a woman who said her husband and two-year-old daughter had been injured.

"We didn't see the plane, but we heard it," she told Reuters on Wednesday. "When the explosion happened, everyone ran out. After a time we came back and were trying to pick up the injured."

The woman said the market had been full of families, and she did not see any armed forces in the area. "Many, many" people had been killed, she said.

Reuters could not independently verify her account. She and other sources asked not to be identified for fear of reprisals.

The medical official confirmed at least 43 fatalities, citing witnesses and first responders.

A spokesperson for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the head of a government task force on Tigray did not respond to requests for comment on the incident.

News of the airstrike came as Ethiopian officials counted ballots from national and regional parliamentary elections held this week in seven of the nation's 10 regions.

No voting was held in Tigray, where the military has been battling forces loyal to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the region's former ruling party, since November. Security concerns and

North Korea's foreign minister says talks

AFP | Seoul

North Korea's foreign minister yesterday ruled out any talks with the United States, saying dialogue with Washington would "get us nowhere".

His comments come after Sung Kim, the top US envoy in charge of North Korea negotiations, visited South Korea this week in a bid to



1812

Napoleon Bonaparte's Grand Armée numbering half a million begin their invasion of Russia by crossing the Nieman River

1853

US President Franklin Pierce signs the Gadsden Purchase, buying 29,670 square-miles (76,800 square km) from Mexico for \$10 million (now southern Arizona and New Mexico)

1901

1st exhibition by Pablo Picasso aged 19, opens in Paris



1930

1st radar detection of planes, Anacostia, Washington, D.C.

Sites for disinformation

organization by the United States.

The sites seized included Press TV, the Iranian government's main English-language satellite television channel, and Al Alam, its Arabic-language equivalent. Both came back online using Iranian domain addresses Alalam.ir and PressTV.ir.

The Justice Department said the 33 domains used by IRTVU are owned by a United States company and that IRTVU did not obtain a license from Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control prior to utilizing the domain names.

KH also did not obtain a license.

Notices appeared earlier on Tuesday on a number of Iran-affiliated websites saying they had been seized by the United States government as part of law enforcement action.

Iranian news agencies said the US government had seized several Iranian media websites and sites belonging to groups affiliated with Iran such as Yemen's Houthi movement.

The notices appeared days after a prominent hardliner and fierce critic of the West, Ebrahim Raisi, was elected as Iran's new



US prosecutors in October seized a network of web domains they said were used in a campaign by Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to spread political disinformation around the world.

The Justice Department said then it had taken control of 92 domains used by the IRGC to pose as independent media outlets targeting audiences in the United States, Europe, Middle East and Southeast Asia.

president and after envoys for Iran and six world powers, in-

cluding Washington, adjourned high-stakes talks on reviving their tattered 2015 nuclear accord and returned to capitals for consultations.

The website of the Arabic-language Masirah TV, which is run by the Houthis, read:

"The domain almasirah.net has been seized by the United States Government in accordance with a seizure warrant ... as part of a law enforcement action by the Bureau of Industry and Security, Office of Export Enforcement and Federal Bureau of Investigation."

The site quickly opened up a new, working website at www.almasirah.com.

Iran's Arabic language Alalam TV said on its Telegram channel: "US authorities shut down Al-Alam TV's website."

Notices also appeared on the website of Lualua TV, an Arabic-language Bahraini independent channel that broadcasts from Britain.

The semi-official Iranian news agency YJC agency said on Tuesday the US move "demonstrates that calls for freedom of speech are lies."

ke on y region

problems with ballot papers also delayed voting in two other regions.

Residents reported that TPLF forces had entered several towns north of Mekelle in the past three days, withdrawing from one of them within hours.

Ambulances blocked

The official and two other health workers helping with the response in Togoga told Reuters on Wednesday that Ethiopian soldiers were blocking the main road from Mekelle to the town and preventing ambulances from reaching the scene.

"Patients are dying right now," said the official.

He said two ambulances had been able to reach the town via a back road late on Tuesday but did not have the necessary equipment and were not being allowed to leave.

He said the teams had counted at least 40 dead at the scene, three people had died overnight, and there were 44 critically wounded patients needing treatment.

Another medical worker said around 20 health workers in six ambulances had tried to reach the wounded on Tuesday but soldiers stopped them at a checkpoint.

Japan top court backs ban on separate married surnames

AFP | Tokyo

Japan's top court yesterday ruled a law requiring married couples to have the same family name is constitutional, rejecting plaintiffs who sought the right to keep separate surnames, local media said.

The plaintiffs -- three couples -- submitted marriage registration documents with different surnames for wives and husbands in 2018. But municipal governments refused to accept the documents, the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper reported.

The plaintiffs argued requiring married couples to choose a single name "is against equality under the law and freedom of marriage, which are guaranteed by the constitution."

The ruling is in line with a 2015 Supreme Court decision that also found the law constitutional but urged lawmakers to discuss a bill addressing growing calls for flexibility on the issue.

Calls to allow separate surnames have been growing in recent years. The couples argued that the "reasons for the 2015 verdict are no longer valid given changes in society", Jiji Press said.

Supreme Court officials could not immediately confirm



details of Wednesday's verdict, which was widely reported by local media.

Under existing legislation, couples can choose to adopt either the husband or wife's surname when they marry. But in practice, the vast majority of couples opt for the husband's name.

The surname rule has been in place since the late 19th century as part of a family system gathering members under one head of household, usually male.

Backers say having a single family name is important to promote family ties and consider efforts to change the rules an attack on traditional values.

lks with US would lead 'nowhere'

restart diplomacy with the nuclear-armed nation.

But US hopes for a revival of talks were rebuffed by influential official Kim Yo Jong, the sister of North Korea's leader, saying Washington had "wrong" expectations for dialogue.

Foreign minister Ri Son Gwon said yesterday he welcomed Kim's rejection of the "hasty judgment,

conjecture and expectation of the US".

"We are not considering even the possibility of any contact with the US, let alone having it, which would get us nowhere, only taking up precious time," he was quoted as having said by the state-run KCNA news agency.

Talks between Washington and Pyongyang have long been stalled

over the international sanctions imposed on the nuclear-armed state and what the North should give up in return for their lifting.

In her Tuesday statement, Kim Yo Jong derided recent comments made by US national security adviser Jake Sullivan, who called her brother's remarks an "interesting signal".

WIDE ANGLE

Individuals Ethics vs Corporate Ethics

JOEL INDRUPATI



"Água", he said and pushed aside the Coca-Cola bottle from his table.

With that, Cristiano Ronaldo also pushed down the market value of Coca-Cola by a shocking 4 billion dollars, overnight. And who was happy?

Everyone. Well, everyone, except the company's shareholders.

The following day, Paul Pogba too removed a bottle of alcoholic beverage placed in front of him at another Euro 2020 press conference.

Both bottles, we know, were placed by companies that had bid for and paid enormous amounts of money to get those placings in those football briefings. So that their brands can get visibility.

In fact, if it were not for such sponsorships and advertisements, we would not be enjoying many shows, sports or otherwise.

TV broadcasting rights and online streaming rights are often bitterly contested for, with the sole aim of making revenue from sponsors. And we all know that, ultimately, advertising pays for all the shows we freely watch.

So, here is the question. Did Ronaldo, Portugal's soccer-team captain and the poster-boy for health and fitness, do the right thing? And did Pogba, France's midfielder and a professing Muslim, do the right thing?

By standing up for their individual beliefs, and by winning the applause of most of the world as 'excellent role models' for the young generation, did they really act in the best interest of the community?

Maybe yes. But then, wouldn't that be a breach of contract? At least between the broadcasters and the sponsoring companies? Can these individual sports persons act, brashly, to the detriment of their sponsors? If you scare away the sponsors, will they come back next time?

After all, it is the money that matters in the business of sports. Just like in the others.

Which is why - to cash-in on the controversy - Ikea has already launched a reusable water bottle called 'Cristiano'.

The real question is, therefore, about the conflict between individual ethics and corporate ethics. One's individual beliefs need not be aligned with those of one's organisation.

I remember cricket tournaments being sponsored by Wills, Rothmans, and Benson and Hedges. All cigarette companies. That contrast was so striking that some cricketers had to state they stay healthy, and they really do not smoke.

On the 'American Idol' show, I often find it odd to see paper cups of Coke on the tables of those judges. Amidst all that glitz and the glamour on those shiny and smooth sets, I find those huge red paper-cups sticking out like sore thumbs. Perhaps, some would call those organisers and judges as suckers. Of not just that drink from those cups, but for the money the sponsors put in, which pays them.

Celebrities are often wooed with large sums of money because advertisers seek endorsements of their products. But if it backfires, like in Cristiano's case now, advertisers might think twice before sponsoring again.

The fact that Cristiano himself had promoted Coca-Cola in his earlier days is overlooked. His 2006 advertising campaign for Coca-Cola has now been dug out by social media users who are sharing it and calling him a hypocrite.

But times are different. He is wealthy and wise now. And he probably regrets that old endorsement. And his individual ethical beliefs may have changed. That is understandable.

But, in the same way, organizational ethics should also be understood. After Cristiano's act, Coca Cola had responded saying "everyone is entitled to their drink preferences" and that "players are offered water, alongside Coca-Cola and Coca-Cola Zero Sugar" at these events. So, did the company take away anyone's choice? No.

Celebrities must regularly remind themselves of the adage, "with great power comes great responsibility".

The real question is, therefore, about the conflict between individual ethics and corporate ethics. One's individual beliefs need not be aligned with those of one's organisation.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Developers/.../expect to extract 150 million barrels of oil — roughly equivalent to operating 16 coal-fired power stations for a year." The UK set to approve a new oilfield. The "green industrial revolution" is proving to be a huge success...

@GretaThunberg

02



This #PublicServiceDay, join me in thanking the hundreds of millions of public servants worldwide who dedicate themselves to ensuring the wellbeing of our communities. As the world continues to face the devastation of #COVID19, their work is more important than ever.

@antonioguterres

03



Schools play a vital role in the well-being of students, families and their communities. The new @WHO/@UNESCO global standards are designed to create schools that equip students with the knowledge & skills for their future health & well-being, employability & life prospects.

@DrTedros

04



We can't sit idly by while democracy is in peril — here, in America. We need to protect the sacred right to vote and ensure "We the People" choose our leaders, the very foundation on which our democracy rests. We urgently need the For The People Act.

@JoeBiden

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

Classifieds

THE DAILY **tribune**

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HAJI HASSAN READYMIX B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17785353 or VIJESH.NAIR@HAJIHASSAN.COM

CPIC Abahsain Fiberglass W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17468532 or MSYED@ABAHSAIN.COM

Kotta villa contracting w.l.l has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77305030 or khanptpm1@gmail.com

AMERICAN SCHOOL OF BAHRAIN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17564000 or swajeed@asb.bh

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DFS Aviation Services Bahrain Co WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER - IAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36155121 or MORITZ.MANZEL@DFS-AS.AERO

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HAMADA HUSSAIN ABDULLA HAMADA JALIB RIZQ (1770) has a vacancy for the occupation of FISHERMEN, HUNTERS & RELATED WORKERS, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39440778 or JASSIMDOCUMENTS@GMAIL.COM

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Golden Marsa Restaurant WLL has a vacancy for the occupation

of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17414142 or JINNA1234@GMAIL.COM

WESTON CLEANING has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38034111 or ALISWAR83@GMAIL.COM

MOHAMMED IBRAHIM FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36103555 or SIMON.AHMED8884@GMAIL.COM

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GEMS INDUSTRIAL SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17491106 or unni@gems-bahrain.com

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SIGNATURE HOTEL (FOUR SEASONS BAHRAIN BAY) COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CHEF, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17115000 or EHAB.ZAINUDDIN@KEYPOINT.ME

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ALYAMI CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33486172 or AHMED@AYALYAMI.COM

BLANC SPECIALTY COFFEE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COFFEE SERVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36996636 or EMPIRE.RENTACAR@GMAIL.COM

Lost parts of Rembrandt masterpiece restored by AI

AFP | Amsterdam

It's one of the great acts of art vandalism. In 1715 large chunks of Rembrandt's masterpiece "The Night Watch" were cut off in order to fit the colossal canvas into a new home.

Now for the first time in more than 300 years, visitors to Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum can see the painting in its original form thanks to a stunning reconstruction of the lost pieces.

Based on a small 17th century copy of "The Night Watch", scientists used artificial intelligence to recreate the missing sections, which have been printed and mounted around the famed artwork.

"It's very exciting to see," Rijksmuseum director Taco Dibbits told AFP.

"Because you know the painting since you're a child, and you feel that suddenly you've taken a step back in time for 300 years."

The reconstruction has revealed the true dynamism of Rembrandt's original composition, with the two key people at the centre of the painting, Cap-



For the first time in more than 300 years, art lovers can see Rembrandt's "The Night Watch" after a stunning reconstruction

tain Frans Banninck Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch, now offset to the side, said Dibbits.

The lost figures of two men and a small boy have meanwhile been restored to the left hand side where a 60-centimetre (24-inch) strip was cut off the painting, which even in its smaller form measures a huge 3.79 metres by 4.36 metres (12 feet, five inches by 14 feet, four inches).

The Rijksmuseum, which re-

cently reopened after the relaxation of coronavirus measures, will keep the panels in place for three months, as part of a huge restoration of the painting launched in 2019.

'Sending AI to art school'

Rembrandt painted "The Night Watch" in 1642 after a commission by Cocq, the mayor and leader of the civic guard of Amsterdam, to depict the officers and other members of the

militia.

After hanging in the civic guards' club house for 73 years the painting was moved to Amsterdam town hall where it was destined for a space between two doors but "it didn't fit", said Dibbits.

"The people who moved it decided to cut it and really took scissors and just cut on all four sides."

The strips that were cut off have never been found.

"The people who moved it decided to cut it and really took scissors and just cut on all four sides." The strips that were cut off have never been found.

It was the first of many trials suffered by "The Night Watch", which was stabbed by a man with a knife in 1911, hidden in a bunker when Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands, slashed by another knifeman in 1975 and sprayed with acid in 1990.

The reconstruction of the missing pieces was possible because of a much smaller copy made in the 17th century by the artist Gerrit Lundens -- but that copy was in a somewhat different style and colour, and from a slightly different perspective.

The solution was "sending artificial intelligence to art school", said Robert Erdmann, Senior Scientist at the Rijksmuseum, who led the project.

'A delight'

"If we were to simply blow this up and put it next to "The Night Watch" it wouldn't match in any way," Erdmann told AFP.

"So to help it match, I've trained three separate neural networks to help with this process, so that's a kind of artificial intelligence in which we can teach the computer by giving it examples."

The computer compared Rembrandt's original to the copy, and once it had mastered his style, Erdmann set it to work on recreating the lost pieces.

Its mimicry was so successful it even learned to copy the minute cracks in the surface of the existing Night Watch, he said.

Finally the image was printed onto canvas, which was varnished and then placed on four metal frames that were placed around the painting.

"It was really a delight" to see the restored painting, said Erdmann. "It really changes the entire composition."

Art experts can now see how the black-clad captain and his white-uniformed lieutenant were in fact set off to the side to show how the militia was in motion, while the extra figures on the left give depth and perspective.

"The key is that Rembrandt keeps on surprising us, he keeps on doing things that you wouldn't expect him to do," said Dibbits.

More than 150 Texas hospital staff fired or quit over vaccine ruling

AFP News

More than 150 employees at the Houston Methodist hospital in Texas were fired or resigned after failing to comply with orders to get a Covid-19 vaccination to continue working there, a hospital spokeswoman said Tuesday.

Officials Houston Methodist told its staff they needed to have received a Covid vaccination by June 7 or be suspended for two weeks.

Hospital spokeswoman Gale Smith said that 153 employees "either resigned in the two-week suspension period or were terminated today.

"The employees who became compliant during the suspension period returned to work the day after they became compliant," she said.

Nearly 200 staff had been suspended, the New York Times reported, and protests were staged against the mandatory vaccine rule.

Last month, 117 staff members filed a lawsuit against the hospital, accusing it of "forcing its employees to be human guinea pigs" as a condition for continued employment."

The lawsuit was dismissed by a judge who said the vaccines' safety was not at issue, and that Texas law only protects employ-

ees from refusing to commit a crime.

"Receiving a Covid-19 vaccination is not an illegal act, and it carries no criminal penalties," Judge Lynn Hughes wrote.

The judge also reprimanded one of the main plaintiffs behind the lawsuit, nurse Jennifer

Bridges, for the analogy that the threat of being fired for not getting vaccinated was like "forced medical experimentation during the Holocaust."

"Equating the injection requirement to medical experimentation in concentration camps is reprehensible," Hughes wrote.

Olympic swim champ Paltrinieri sidelined with glandular fever before Tokyo Games



Winner Ukraine's Mykhaylo Romanchuk (up) and second-placed Italy's Gregorio Paltrinieri react after the final of the Men's 800m Freestyle Swimming event

AFP | Milan

Olympic swimming champion Gregorio Paltrinieri is suffering from glandular fever a month before his 1,500m title defence in Tokyo, the Italian swimming federation (FIN) announced.

"Paltrinieri is suffering from mononucleosis although his symptoms are light," FIN president Paolo Barelli said.

"We'll know the effects of the infection day by day," added Barelli of the infectious viral illness commonly

known as mononucleosis or mono.

"Paltrinieri is a phenomenal champion and he'll fight to the last metre to take the medals he dreams of in Tokyo.

"He has never given up on anything."

The 26-year-old has cut back on training and will not take part in the Sette Colli Trophy in Rome starting Friday.

Paltrinieri, a two-time world champion over 1,500m, took silver over 800m and 1,500m at this year's European championships in Budapest.

Tomorrow's games

Copa America

Bolivia vs Uruguay (00:00, Cuiaba)

Chile vs Paraguay (03:00, Brasilia)

Results

EURO 2020

*Scores as of closing

Slovakia	0	5	Spain
Sweden	3	2	Poland
Germany	2	2	Hungary
Portugal	2	2	France

Sweden scores late to beat Poland at Euro 2020

Claesson's late strike for Sweden seals top spot with victory over Poland

● Two goals from Robert Lewandowski weren't enough to save Poland, who fought hard but still go home

AFP | London

Viktor Claesson scored an injury-time winner as Sweden beat Poland 3-2 in Saint Petersburg yesterday to clinch top spot in Group E and knock their opponents out of Euro 2020.

Emil Forsberg struck twice, the first coming after just 81 seconds, but Robert Lewandowski's double gave Poland hope of qualifying before Claesson's late goal sent Sweden through as group winners.

Sweden will likely play Ukraine in the last 16 after pipping Spain to first place, with Slovakia exiting alongside Poland following a crushing 5-0 defeat in Seville.

Janne Andersson's side, safe in the knowledge they were assured of a place in the next round before kickoff, made a dream start as Forsberg scored for the second game in a row, netting the second-fastest goal in European Championship history.

The RB Leipzig attacker collected a loose ball just outside the Poland area after Kamil Glik flattened Alexander Isak, riding a challenge from Kamil Jozwiak before firing into the far corner.

With Poland needing victory to avoid elimination Le-



Poland's Grzegorz Krychowiak, left, and Sweden's Emil Forsberg vie for the ball

wandowski hit the crossbar twice in a matter of seconds, incredibly failing to convert his own rebound from point-blank range after connecting with Piotr Zielinski's corner.

Zielinski forced Robin Olsen into a pair of flying saves with shots from distance either side of halftime, with the Sweden goalkeeper also making a fine stop from Grzegorz Krychowiak's long-range shot.

Juventus winger Dejan Kulusevski came on 10 minutes into the second half for his first appearance after testing positive for Covid-19 just before the tournament.



Poland had not scored more than once in any of their previous 13 matches at the finals

His driving run and pass set up Forsberg to curl in Sweden's second on 59 minutes, but Poland responded to set up a thrilling finish.

Lewandowski halved the deficit with a brilliant solo effort on 61 minutes, bending into the top corner to become his country's all-time leading scorer at the tournament.

Poland had not scored more than once in any of their previous 13 matches at the finals, but Lewandowski took advantage of confusion between Victor Lindelof and Marcus Danielson to equalise six minutes from time.

As Poland desperately pushed for a winner, Sweden snatched all three points right at the death when Kulusevski played in fellow substitute Claesson to slot beyond Wojciech Szczesny.

Modric leads Croatia into Euro 2020 last 16 at Scotland's expense

Scotland's Euro 2020 dreams dashed as Croatia and Modric turn on the style

● Scotland got their first goal of the tournament but Luka Modric made the difference to end the hosts' last-16 hopes

AFP | London

Scotland's hopes of reaching the knockout stage of a major tournament for the first time were ended in a 3-1 defeat to a Luka Modric-inspired Croatia at Hampden Park on Tuesday that took the World Cup runners-up into the last 16 of Euro 2020.

After ending a 23-year wait just to qualify for a major tournament, another historic feat was beyond Steve Clarke's Scotland side who were undone by a moment of magic from Modric.

Callum McGregor cancelled out Nikola Vlasic's early opener to give the hosts hope heading into half-time.

But Modric showed the class that made him the man to break Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo's grip on the Ballon d'Or in 2018, a stunning strike with the outside of his foot just after the



Croatia's midfielder Luka Modric (C) shoots to score the second goal

hour mark restoring Croatia's lead.

"No one is sure how Luka manages that," Croatia boss Zlatko Dalic said of the 35-year-old.

"We expect that Luka will go down, lose his strength, but he is the force that pulls the whole team.

"Anything I would say about Luka would not be sufficient. I'm very proud to have such a player as part of our team."

Ivan Perisic's header rubbed

salt into Scottish wounds 13 minutes from time as Croatia pipped the Czech Republic to second place in Group D behind England.

Dalic's side will face the runners-up from Group E, featuring Spain, Sweden, Slovakia and Poland, in Copenhagen next Monday.

Scotland's preparation had been blighted by the loss of Billy Gilmour to a positive test for coronavirus after the 20-year-

“No one is sure how Luka manages that. We expect that Luka will go down, lose his strength, but he is the force that pulls the whole team”

CROATIA BOSS ZLATKO DALIC

old had shone on his first international start in the 0-0 draw against England on Friday.

Without the Chelsea midfielder, Scotland lacked anyone close to the class of Croatia's midfield maestros who eventually ran the hosts into the ground with nearly two-thirds of possession.

"Overall Croatia were the better team on the night and sometimes you just have to accept that," said Clarke.

"We're disappointed we haven't managed to get out the group stage. We'll all sit down, take stock, look and see what we can do better in the future and make sure it is not 23 years before we are at the next tournament."

Just as against the Czechs and England in their opening two games, Scotland were made to pay for not taking their chances.

Roared on by 12,000 fans inside Hampden, Che Adams was inches away from connecting with John McGinn's dangerous cross early on.

Chasing shadows

Croatia had barely threatened before they went in front on 17 minutes.

Perisic headed down a lofted ball into the box and Vlasic found space between three Scotland defenders to fire low into the corner.

Croatia then had Scotland chasing shadows for a spell as the midfield trio of Modric, Marcelo Brozovic and Mateo Kovacic took control of the game.

"Modric was incredible," said Arsenal defender Kieran Tierney. "I think tonight was a big learning curve for us all.

"They've been there before, the quality they showed it was hard for us to get going."

Modric's blistering drive from outside the box was brilliantly tipped over by David Marshall.

But Scotland bounced back to

net their first major tournament goal since 1998.

McGregor pounced on a loose ball at the edge of the box and, on his weaker right foot, the Celtic midfielder drilled into the bottom corner to spark jubilant scenes.

Scotland went down the tunnel at half-time with a spring in their step, but the physical exertions of holding England four days earlier took their toll as the energy levels of Clarke's men dipped in the second period.

Modric's deft touch finally broke Scottish hearts on 62 minutes.

Croatia calmly worked the opening at the edge of the box before the Real Madrid midfielder caressed the ball into the top corner with the outside of his right foot.

Along with Modric, Perisic has consistently been one of his country's key performers at major tournaments for nearly a decade.

The Inter Milan winger's flicked header from a Modric corner dropped in off the inside of the post for his ninth goal at a World Cup or European Championship to end any hope of a Scottish revival.

Spain put five past Slovakia to book Croatia showdown

Spain claimed the biggest win of the tournament with a 5-0 thrashing of Slovakia in their final Euro 2020 Group E match

● Spain finish second in the group E

AFP | Seville

Spain finally have lift-off at Euro 2020 after a 5-0 hammering of Slovakia yesterday sent them through as runners-up in Group E, with Croatia their opponents in the last 16 on Monday.

Luis Enrique described his team as a bottle of cava about to be popped and they certainly exploded in Seville, where a scoring frenzy felt cathartic and could yet prove transformative for their chances in the knockout stages.

Spain were even about to progress as group winners until Viktor Claesson scored in the 94th minute against Poland to secure top spot for Sweden. Slovakia finish third and are out.

After two tension-filled draws against Sweden and Poland, Spain were left scrambling to qualify, with Luis Enrique admitting he would have taken any position in the group as long as it meant going through.

But Spain ran riot at La Cartuja, their early anxiety heightened by Alvaro Morata's missed penalty and then quickly eased by two dreadful mistakes by Slovakia's goalkeeper Martin



Spain's Aymeric Laporte heads the ball to score his side's second goal

Dubravka.

The first was an own goal that will surely go down as one of the strangest moments of the tournament before another Dubravka error allowed Aymeric Laporte to head in.

With the shackles off, Spain let loose in the second half as Pablo Sarabia, Ferran Torres and another own goal from Juraj Kucka confirmed an emphatic win, even if Croatia and Luka Modric will provide a much sterner test next week.

Spain monopolised the ball in the first half but for 30 minutes, it was a familiar story of chances missed and frustration growing.

Spain were awarded a penalty as Jakub Hromada went to clear

but instead lashed into the leg of Koke.

Morata had deferred the spot-kick to Moreno against Poland and this time took charge, only to whip the ball at a comfortable height for Dubravka to palm away to his right. It was the fifth consecutive penalty Spain have missed.

Dubravka nightmare

They might have crumbled but instead persevered, even as Sarabia and Pedri both kicked the air before finally Dubravka stepped in to give them a helping hand.

Lubomir Satka's scuffed clearance fell straight to Sarabia, whose dipping shot banged

BETTER YOU KNOW

Spain monopolised the ball in the first half but for 30 minutes, it was a familiar story of chances missed and frustration growing

against the top of the crossbar and flew upwards. Dubravka was under it and as he tried to flick the dropping ball over his own crossbar, he succeeded only in flapping it into his own net.

Spain breathed a sigh of relief and just before half-time they made it two. Dubravka was again at fault, this time edging out only to see Moreno steer the ball away from him in the area and cross it back in. Laporte did brilliantly to loop his header into the top corner.

Slovakia threw Michal Duris and Stanislav Lobotka on at half-time but Spain were liberated and within 10 minutes, it was three. This time, it was not a mistake but a slick move that made it, Jordi Alba pulling back to Sarabia, who steered into the corner.

Argentine Gonzalez joins Fiorentina on five-year deal



Nicolas Gonzalez (L) in action at the Copa America with Argentina

AFP | Milan

Striker Nicolas Gonzalez has signed for Fiorentina after three seasons with Stuttgart, the Serie A club confirmed yesterday.

The 23-year-old, currently playing in the Copa America with Argentina for whom he has eight caps and two goals, has signed a five-year deal until June 2026.

Fiorentina reportedly paid 23-million euros (\$27.5 million) plus bonuses for the player whose season at Stuttgart was hampered by a muscular injury.

Gonzalez played just once between February and May, having scored six goals in 15 games earlier in the season.

His 14 goals the previous season helped Stuttgart return to the Bundesliga. In total, he scored 23 goals in 79 games for

YOU KNOW WHAT

Nicolas Gonzalez's 14 goals the previous season helped Stuttgart return to the Bundesliga. In total, he scored 23 goals in 79 games for Stuttgart.

Fiorentina are searching for a new coach after former Napoli manager Gennaro Gattuso left three weeks after being appointed following a row over the club's strategy and resources for signing new players.

England get the job done with 1-0 win over Czechs

England beat Czech Republic to top group as Raheem Sterling strikes again

● Raheem Sterling's early goal was enough for England to top Group D, as Bukayo Saka and Jack Grealish both impressed

AFP | London

Raheem Sterling scored the only goal as England found an attacking spark to beat the Czech Republic 1-0 at Wembley on Tuesday and clinch top spot in Group D at Euro 2020.

The Manchester City forward, who kept his place alongside Harry Kane in a rejigged attack also featuring Jack Grealish and Bukayo Saka, settled fans' nerves with an early headed goal, which ultimately proved decisive.

The result means Gareth Southgate's side finish top of their group with seven points while Croatia are second with four points. The Czech Republic will join them in the last 16 as one of the best third-placed teams.

With just two goals scored, England are the lowest-scoring side to ever finish top of a group at a European Championship but their defence is yet to be breached.

England now have the dubious privilege of a potential match-up against world champions France, holders Portugal or Germany but will have home advantage on June 29.

"We are not fluent but we have moments where we look a good side," Southgate told ITV.

"Different sorts of tests. All of our



England's Raheem Sterling nets the winner

next opponents will be different games. There is a lot of good things we are doing. We are getting minutes for a lot of the players. Ninety minutes for Harry Maguire was important tonight. Jordan Henderson getting 45 minutes is a step forward. A lot of positives."

Grealish starts

There was clamour before the match for Aston Villa captain Grealish to start to shake up a blunt attack that produced an insipid display in the 0-0 draw against Scotland.

Southgate obliged, also bringing in Saka among four changes to his side.

Chelsea midfielder Mason Mount was unavailable as he was isolating due to coronavirus protocols while Southgate opted to leave Phil Foden out to prevent the risk of a suspension.

Manchester United defender Maguire made his first appearance of Euro 2020 alongside John Stones in central defence.

England started brightly in the evening sunshine and Sterling went agonisingly close in just the second minute but could only watch as his deft chip over the goalkeeper come back off the post after he collected a raking pass from Luke Shaw.

As chants of "Football's Coming Home" rang around the stadium, captain Kane -- heavily criticised for his toothless performances in the tournament so far -- shot from distance and Grealish let fly. England broke the deadlock in the 12th minute, when Grealish, on the left side of the penalty area, lifted the ball to the back post, where Sterling headed in for his second goal of Euro 2020.

Grealish and man-of-the-match Saka

2

goals were only scored by England to become the lowest-scoring side to ever finish top of a group at a European Championship

were inventive and direct on either side of Kane, showing a willingness to run at their opponents.

Kane went close midway through the first half, forcing a fine left-handed save from Tomas Vaclik and thumping the ground in frustration.

But the Czechs carried a threat of their own on their forays forward, growing in menace as the half wore on.

Tomas Holes forced a flying save from England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford just before the half-hour and Tomas Soucek fired wide of the left post.

Liverpool midfielder Henderson replaced Declan Rice at half-time and the Czechs made their own change, bringing on Petr Sevcik for Jakub Jankto.

The sides were evenly matched in the second half, with the reduced crowd making an impressive noise in the cavernous stadium.

Both sides made further changes as the match wore on and the intensity dipped, with fans having to wait until the 83rd minute for the first attempt at goal in the second half.

Up to 10,000 fans allowed at Tokyo 2020 venues, despite warnings



A general view shows the National Stadium during an athletics test event

Reuters | Tokyo

Up to 10,000 domestic spectators will be allowed in Tokyo 2020 venues, Olympics organisers said on Monday, a decision that cuts against the recommendation of medical experts who said holding the event without fans was the least risky option.

The announcement ends months of speculation and highlights Japan's determination to push on with the Games and salvage the multi-billion-dollar extravaganza amid public opposition and deep concern about a resurgence in infections.

The decision was widely expected after some recent comments by organisers and as the government's own medical experts last week appeared resigned to the event going ahead with fans.

Gauff beaten by Sevastova in Eastbourne



Coco Gauff hits a return

AFP | Eastbourne

American teenager Coco Gauff's Wimbledon preparations suffered a blip as she bowed out of the Eastbourne tournament yesterday, losing to Latvian Anastasija Sevastova 4-6 7-5 6-2.

The 17-year-old Gauff came back after losing the opening eight games the previous evening against seventh seed Elise Mertens, but this time she succumbed after leading.

Sevastova, a lucky loser from qualifying, cruised through the deciding set as Gauff's game went off the boil.

She will face Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina next after she knocked out Ukraine's Elina Svitolina in straight sets.

World number 23 Gauff reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final at the French Open this month and will head to Wimbledon where she took the tournament by storm in 2019, beating former champion Venus Williams en route to the fourth round.



World number 23 Gauff reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final at the French Open this month

Former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko showed signs of coming back to her best form as she knocked out Tunisia's Ons Jabeur, winner of last week's WTA event in Birmingham.

Ostapenko, who is playing doubles at Eastbourne with Gauff, won 5-7 6-4 6-3. Qualifier Camila Giorgi reached the third round after beating American Shelby Rogers.

Top seed Aryana Sabalenka was in action later against American Alison Riske.

New Zealand beat India in World Test final

New Zealand prevail in gripping final against India to claim WTC title

● **New Zealand romped home in the final session of the reserve day, which was activated to make up for lost time in the first five days**

AFP | London

New Zealand enjoyed the greatest triumph in their cricket history as they beat India by eight wickets in the inaugural World Test Championship final at Southampton yesterday.

Two years on from their agonising Super Over loss to England in the 50-over World Cup final at Lord's, the Blackcaps claimed their first major global title.

Set a modest target of 139 in 53 overs, New Zealand finished on 140-2 with plenty of time to spare in a match extended into a reserve sixth day following two days lost to rain.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin reduced New Zealand to 44-2 by removing openers Tom Latham and Devon Conway to the delight of India fans.

But New Zealand captain Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor, the team's most-experienced batsmen, settled any lingering nerves in an unbroken



New Zealand's Ross Taylor reacts after getting hit on the helmet by a ball alongside Kane Williamson

stand of 96.

Williamson, who won plaudits for the sporting way he dealt with defeat in the 2019 World Cup final, was 52 not out following his first-innings 49, with Taylor -- who hit the winning boundary -- unbeaten on 47.

India's last hope of turning the tide evaporated when, with New Zealand 55 runs shy of victory at 84-2, Cheteshwar Pujara dropped a regulation slip catch off the luckless Jasprit Bumrah to reprieve Taylor on 26.

Bumrah dropped Williamson shortly before one of the most outstanding batsmen of his era completed an 86-ball fifty, including eight fours.

Taylor ended the match in the 46th over when he whipped Mohammed Shami off his pads for four.

Southee strikes

In a match in which bowlers held sway it was New Zealand's all-pace attack that did most damage yesterday by dismissing India for just 170 in their second innings despite blue skies providing the best batting conditions of the game.

Tim Southee took wickets at both ends of the innings in a return of 4-48 in 19 overs, with longtime new-ball partner Trent Boult striking twice in an over during his 3-39.

And the towering Kyle Jamie-

“Big congratulations to Kane and his team for winning in what was really three days. Big credit to them for sticking to their processes long enough to put us under pressure. The Kiwi bowlers executed their plans to perfection today and we were 30 or 40 short

VIRAT KOHLI

son followed his first-innings 5-31, by snaring India captain Virat Kohli for the second time in the match during a miserly 2-30 in 24 overs.

New Zealand, whose only previous men's title in an International Cricket Council tournament was their 2000 Champions Trophy one-day final win over India, would have confronted an even smaller target had Rishabh Pant not been dropped on five during his innings of 41.

Few cricket lovers would begrudge New Zealand, a country with a population of around five million compared with cricket powerhouse's India's 1.3 billion, their success.

Djokovic, Barty are Wimbledon top seeds, Federer, Serena seventh

AFP | London

Defending champion Novak Djokovic was named as the top seed at Wimbledon yesterday as he seeks a 20th Grand Slam title while Roger Federer and Serena Williams will begin the grass-court tournament next week seeded seventh.

Top-ranked Ashleigh Barty is seeded first on the women's side. The Australian hasn't played since retiring from her second-round match at the



Serbia's Novak Djokovic kisses the cup after defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece during their final match of the French Open

French Open due to the flare-up of an upper-leg injury.

The draw is Friday and the tournament begins Monday.

Eighth-ranked Federer has the seventh seed because third-ranked Rafael Nadal is sitting out Wimbledon to rest and recover after his loss to Djokovic in the French Open semifinal.

Daniil Medvedev is the second seed, followed by Stefanos Tsitsipas and Dominic Thiem, although the Austrian retired from a match in Mallorca on Tuesday because of wrist pain.

Defending champion Simona Halep is seeded second, ahead of Aryna Sabalenka and Elina Svitolina. Sec-

ond-ranked Naomi Osaka is not playing.

At Roland Garros, Djokovic earned his 19th Grand Slam title to leave him one short of the record co-held by Federer and Nadal.

Federer, a record eight-time champion at the All England Club, said earlier this year that he would build up to Wimbledon as he returned from two surgeries on his knee.

But the 39-year-old Swiss great hasn't been in top form, pulling out of the French Open after a grueling third-round match and failing last week to reach the Halle Open quarter-finals for the first time.

Conway, De Kock sign for Southern Brave in cricket's Hundred

AFP | Sydney

New Zealand's Devon Conway and South Africa's Quinton de Kock have been signed as overseas replacements by the Southern Brave for English cricket's inaugural edition of the Hundred, it was announced yesterday.

The Hampshire-based franchise were in the market for top-order batsmen after Australia's David Warner and Marcus Stoinis withdrew citing Covid-19 travel complications.

Opening batsman Conway hit a double century on Test debut against England earlier this month and top-scored in



Devon Conway plays a shot

the first innings of the ongoing World Test Championship final in Southampton.

The South Africa-born left-hander averages 75 in one-day internationals and 59 in Twenty20 internationals.

"I'm really excited to have joined Southern Brave," Conway said. "I have really enjoyed my time playing in the UK so far, and I'm looking forward to getting stuck in with the team and taking part in the first season of the Hundred."

De Kock, a dynamic wicketkeeper-batsman, has long been a multi-format star of the

world game and will be reunited with coach Mahela Jayawardene, having worked with the Sri Lanka great at Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League.

"I'm also really excited to be working with Mahela again," he said. "Hopefully we can have plenty of fans in to support us and we can give them something to cheer about."

The Hundred is a pioneering 100 balls-per-side tournament, which is even shorter than a T20 match, featuring eight franchises, all fielding men's and women's teams.

“I’m really excited to have joined Southern Brave. I have really enjoyed my time playing in the UK so far, and I’m looking forward to getting stuck in with the team and taking part in the first season of the Hundred

DEVON CONWAY



Federer was tantalizingly close to a ninth Wimbledon title in the 2019 final, holding two championship points before eventually losing to Djokovic in a fifth-set tiebreaker. It was Djokovic's fifth Wimbledon title