

THE DAILY tribune

Self-isolation makes training easier: Ricciardo

Australian Daniel Ricciardo reckons self-isolation makes for a perfect training camp -- although it helps to be on the family farm in western Australia with a swimming pool and some machinery to play with. **P12**

G20 leaders pledge \$5trn, 'united' response to coronavirus crisis

6 BUSINESS

WORLD 8 'Coronavirus could become seasonal'

Thirty per cent of evacuees on Wednesday flight test positive

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Thirty per cent of the 63 Bahraini citizens who were evacuated from the Islamic Republic of Iran on a chartered flight that arrived Wednesday night have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19).

This was announced last night at a press conference of the National Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus.

As of 8pm last night, the total number of active COVID-19 cases in Bahrain, according to the Ministry of Health website, was 244. Of these, all but one were stable. There have also been 210 patients discharged and a total of 29,533 individuals tests.

29,533

is the total number of people who have been tested for the coronavirus

Meanwhile, Salmaniya Medical Complex Infectious and Internal Diseases Consultant Dr. Jameela Al Salman reiterated that Bahrain is amongst the first countries to use hydroxychloroquine to treat the symptoms of COVID-19, noting its success in China and South Korea.

Speaking at the conference, Dr. Al Salman expressed her condolences to the family of the 78-year-old Bahraini citizen who passed away on Wednesday. The deceased was an active COVID-19 patient with underlying medical and chronic issues. His death marked the fourth in the Kingdom related to the coronavirus.



02 Court arguments to be submitted electronically

03 Food supplies adequate!

04 Bahrainouna National Plan marks first anniversary

210 fils (includes VAT)



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Interior Minister Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa announced last night the punishments of up to three years' imprisonment and up to a BD5,000 fine for anyone violating directives banning public gatherings of more than five people.

The decision stipulated the prohibition of gathering on roads, squares, beaches, parks and other public places for more than five people.

Anyone who defies this shall



General Shaikh Rashid



Shaikh Hesham

be reprimanded and given a jail term for a period not exceeding

three years plus a fine not exceeding BD5,000, or either one

of the two penalties.

The Minister called on all citizens and residents to adhere to the measures related to the ban of gatherings in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and preserve public safety in the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, Capital Governor Shaikh Hesham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa also urged compliance with the nation-wide precautionary measures to combat COVID-19.

He highlighted particularly the ban on gatherings exceeding five people in public places and

urged the public to avoid going out unless necessary -- whether to report to work, go to the hospital, buy medicine, or buy other essential commodities.

He underlined the need to avoid sparking panic and stressed the importance of abiding with social distancing at shopping markets and other facilities providing public services.

He stressed that all citizens and residents show awareness and comply with the mandatory instructions in support of all efforts to combat COVID-19.

Follow the rules or face the consequences

Up to three years in jail and up to a BD5,000 fine for violators of ban on public gatherings

Bahrain on right track to beat COVID-19



From left, Dr. Qahtani, Health Minister Al Saleh and Dr. Al Salman

National Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus highlights measures taken to prevent coronavirus spread

● Kingdom has shifted from containment to mitigation phase, can avoid suppression phase

● COVID-19 Test results now accessible via an online account at the Ministry of Health's website

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Bahrain is headed in the right direction in its fight to contain the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the Kingdom.

This was declared by Infectious Diseases Consultant and Microbiologist at the BDF Hospital and National Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus member Lt. Col. Dr. Manaf Al Qahtani.

He commended the self-discipline and civic responsibility citizens and residents have shown in adhering to preventive measures in combatting COVID-19.

Dr. Al Qahtani was speaking at a press briefing of the National Taskforce, where updates were given regarding the current state of efforts and future plans to prevent the further spread of the virus.

Also in attendance were Minister of Health Faeqa bint Saeed Al Saleh and Salmaniya Medical Complex Infectious and Internal Diseases Consultant Dr. Jameela Al Salman.

The conference was held at the Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research at the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Hospital.

Dr. Al Qahtani underscored three phases of overcoming COVID-19: containment, mitigation and suppression.

He explained that Bahrain, at present, has moved to the mitigation phase. He noted that this is a natural shift and underlined that no country can remain in the containment phase in light of the global outbreak of the virus.

Dr. Al Qahtani added that as long as citizens and residents continue to adhere to the procedures and regulations outlined by the concerned authorities, the Kingdom can overcome the virus and

avoid the suppression phase and its challenges.

He noted that there has been a slight increase in the weekly average of active cases. It was seven during the first week, five during the second week, 19 during the third week, 17 during the fourth week and 21 during the fifth week. These averages follow the registration of the first active case in the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, the Health Minister underlined the comprehensive approach of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander, and First Deputy Prime Minister to stem the spread of COVID-19 by utilising tailored, effective and preventative strategies. She also emphasised that hospital

beds remain available to meet surge capacity in active cases. Current treatment centres' capacity stands at 1,667 beds, of which 249 beds are occupied, and current quarantine centres' capacity is at 2,504 beds, of which 139 beds are occupied. Additionally, the compartmentalised structure of quarantine centres allows for quick conversion to treatment centres, if required.

The Minister noted that Bahrain has conducted over 29,000 tests for COVID-19, with results now accessible via an online account at the Ministry of Health's website for individuals that have taken the test. Additionally, contact tracing activities are underway to reduce COVID-19 transmission by identification, isolation and treatment.

SHUTTERS DOWN

Stores across Bahrain close temporarily as part of measures to combat COVID-19

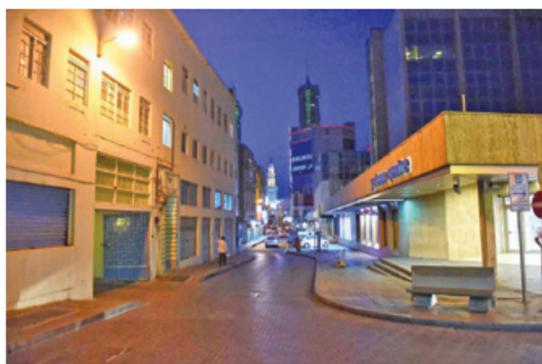
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Commercial stores across the Kingdom closed up shop at or before 7pm last night in compliance with government directives to help combat the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and ensure the safety of all in Bahrain.

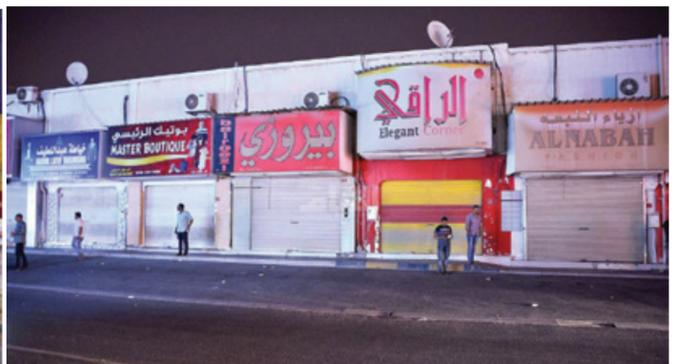
These stores will remain closed until April 9, after which they will re-open until April 23.

Only a handful of essential businesses are to remain open, as approved by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism.

These include hypermarkets, supermarkets, cold stores, grocery stores, butcher shops



Scenes across Bahrain showing rows of shops closed in usually busy areas



and fish shops; bakeries; natural gas-fuelling stations and liquid-fuelling stations; hospitals, medical centres, pharmacies and optical centres; banks

and currency exchange bureaus; corporate administration offices of companies and organisations that conduct activities without direct engagement with custom-

ers; businesses that import, export and distribute goods; automotive garages and repair shops; businesses operating in the construction and maintenance in-

dustry; and manufacturers.

Meanwhile, community police were deployed last night to help ensure that all concerned businesses adhered to the rules.