



NEIGHBORS

Dubai

Majority of MENA travellers set to go

DUBAI, May 19: Wego, the largest online travel marketplace in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), today released its survey on travellers' behaviors and MENA travel trends.

The survey which is based on respondents from the MENA region revealed that 60% of people are planning to travel upon resumption of domestic and international flights.

The countries' technological innovation, post-COVID-19 plans, their dynamic hospitality offerings along with the significant precautionary measures taken by the GCC national carriers gave reassurance for travellers to travel again.

Mamoun Hmedan, Managing Director, MENA, and India, Wego, said: "The coronavirus has reshaped the travel industry scene in the world. Most countries in the MENA are introducing precautionary measures to curb the outbreak

of the virus and revive the industry. As a result, we will see an increase in the demand for intra-regional travel in the MENA region."

Among the respondents, 40% are eager to book a relaxing getaway as soon as the country's restrictions are lifted. The majority of respondents are planning to travel within the next 3 months.

With the restrictions being eased in the region and particularly in the UAE where residents can travel between emirates, we expect to see more demand for domestic travel as hotels gradually reopen with access to beaches and limited water sports activities.

Mamoun added: "Even in times of prolonged uncertainty, we at Wego maintain an optimistic mindset and this survey is a true testament that 60% of people have travel plans in the next couple of months."

ADIHEX 18th edition off to September 2021

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, May 19, (AETOSWire): The Higher Organizing Committee of the Abu Dhabi International Hunting and Equestrian Exhibition (ADIHEX) has announced that the 18th edition of the exhibition, which was scheduled for 29th September-3rd October 2020, will be rescheduled to September 2021, under the theme of 'Sustainability and Heritage... A Reborn Aspiration'.

The 18th edition of ADIHEX will be organized by the Emirates Falconers' Club at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), under the patronage of HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in Al Dhafra Region and Chairman of Emirates Falconers' Club.

The decision to postpone the exhibition for a year was taken in consideration due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, to ensure the health and safety of all participants and visitors.

H.E. Majid Ali Al Mansouri, Chairman of the Higher Organizing Committee of the exhibition has revealed major changes for ex-

hibitors and visitors including enhancing the quality of its exhibits, products, and unique innovations from the world of hunting and equestrian; maintaining ADIHEX's profile as the largest annual event of its kind in the Middle East and Africa.

The comprehensive expansion plan also includes improving the content of the event by providing innovative services, technologies, activities, and events with a renewed vision, strengthening the exhibition's role in preserving the UAE's heritage and promoting sustainable hunting. This is in addition to organizing more environmental, heritage, art, educational and awareness-raising activities.

ADIHEX continues in its effort to achieve its mission by developing long-term plans in line with the national strategy of celebrating UAE's five decades of achievements in 2021 and preparing for the coming 50 years with an ambitious vision which looks towards the future.



Qatar shuts Eid

Malls in UAE ready to open

ABU DHABI, May 19, (KUNA): The UAE Ministry of Health on Tuesday reported three additional deaths due to the novel coronavirus (Covid-19), bringing the death toll to 227.

The number of infections with the highly contagious bug in this Gulf country rose by 873 to 25,063, the ministry said in its daily briefing.

The latest cases were confirmed as more than 38,000 new Covid-19 tests for citizens and residents were conducted, using sophisticated testing devices, the ministry added.

A total of 1,214 more patients have recovered from the deadly virus, raising the country's total count of recoveries to 10,791.

Dr Saif Al-Dhaheri, spokesman of the National Authority for Management of emergencies, crises and disasters, announced reopening of shopping centers and malls as of Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m..

He said in a statement people over 60 years old and children under 12 years old would be banned from entering the shopping centers, which should comply with health instructions. People will have two hours to shop, he added.

DOHA: The Qatari government decided Monday to close all commercial activities starting tomorrow Tuesday until May 30.

The government excluded food stores, pharmacies and restaurants doing home deliveries, Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of State for Cabinet Dr. Essa Al-Nuaimi said in a statement.

He said citizens and expatriates should download Ehtiraz application on their smart phones when they leave their homes starting Friday.

Al-Nuaimi said cars should not contain more than two persons.

The government allowed people to exercise outdoors but people should avoid gathering while practicing, wear masks and keep physical distancing.

Al-Nuaimi said people violating the regulations would be fine or jailed. (KUNA)

DOHA: Qatar announced 1,365 new cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 24 hours, bringing the total to 33,969.

According to the Health Ministry, recoveries from the virus were at 529, putting the grand total at 4,899.

The ministry indicated that the new infections were sent to quarantine to receive proper medical treatment. (KUNA)

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health of Oman announced on Tuesday the death of a new novel coronavirus patient, increasing total fatalities to 26.

In a press statement, the ministry said 292 new coronavirus infections were reported in the past 24 hours, raising the tally up to 5,671. (KUNA)

MANAMA: Bahraini Ministry of Health declared on Monday recording 200 new infection cases with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), amid 19 newly registered recoveries.

The ministry said in a statement that the new cases included 121 for incoming workers and 79 others for persons who mingled with infected persons. Whole number of the recoveries reached 2,929 after 19 patients were relieved of quarantine isolation.

Existing cases are in the range of 4,215 including 4,207 stable ones and eight in intensive care units. (KUNA)

RIYADH: Eight persons infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) died raising fatalities' toll due to the virus to 320, spokesperson of the Saudi Ministry of Health said on Monday.

Dr. Mohammad Alabduali, in his daily briefing about status of the virus in the kingdom, said 2,593 people contracted the germ in past hours, increasing tally of contaminations with the bug to 57,345. (KUNA)



Hawaya Founders - Sameh Saleh, Tamer Saleh, Shaymaa Ali, Aly Khaled

'Scientific, safe, culturally accepted approach'

Muslim matchmaking platform across GCC

DUBAI, UAE, May 19: Following its success in Egypt, Hawaya, a Cairo-based mobile application that approaches matchmaking with respect for Muslim traditions and cultures, has announced the expansion of their platform across the GCC. Now accessible in UAE, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the platform is set to take the region by storm, offering a carefully curated solution for young, modern, and confident Muslim adults who want to take the search for a life partner into their own hands.

Hawaya was founded in 2017 by an Egyptian entrepreneur, Sameh Saleh, who crafted the app to help his sister go through a pleasant, comfortable and safe journey towards marriage. Shortly after, Saleh joined forces with co-founders Shaymaa Ali, Tamer Saleh and Aly Khaled, to amplify the platform. Ever since, Hawaya has grown in popularity and facilitated hundreds of marriages in Egypt.

Currently operating across the GCC, Turkey and Indonesia, the name Hawaya was inspired by the word "Hawa" which means "love" in Arabic. The program was specifically developed to connect single Muslims who are looking for a secure exchange with one another right up to a serious relationship. Hawaya uses a scientific, safe, and culturally accepted approach, and was founded keeping in mind sisters, cousins,



Hawaya in Appsscreenshot

and friends, as well as the founders' collective personal experiences with matchmaking.

"Finding a life partner is hard, and in our community, we often face the pressure to settle down sooner rather than later. The use of regular dating apps often fails to offer the right prospects, experiences, or results. It could be because of a mismatch in values, beliefs, or just not knowing how to move the conversation forward. In the end, many people hit a dead-end and never get a chance to see what is beyond that first match. However, at Hawaya, we are here for you throughout your entire journey, from the moment you match to when forever begins. We ensure that the journey to discovering your soulmate begins and remains respectful of your values, culture, and intentions. This is a great milestone for Hawaya, and we are humbled that Muslim community have warmly welcomed this unorthodox and modern approach to matchmaking. We look forward to celebrating many more success stories", said Sameh Saleh, CEO, Hawaya.

Recently, Hawaya witnessed a 40% surge in app-internal communication and a general increase of almost 25%. Saleh believes this was a result of current circumstances and social distancing directives enforced by authorities. "Undoubtedly, individuals

are feeling an increased need for connection as face-to-face time with friends and even strangers is limited. Nonetheless, this is a good time for people to discover new ways of engaging with others, and the app offers a platform to do just that. We want to create an ecosystem of support and provide people with a sense of companionship and the possibility of finding lifelong true love."

Hawaya's matchmaking algorithm has been built with the help of a team of psychologists, where the users' preferences are analyzed to bring them the appropriate matches to choose from. Hawaya also attaches great importance to the privacy and security of its members. When signing up, Hawaya authenticates all new members using a 'selfie verification' system that works with a highly developed technological infrastructure to prevent the creation of fake profiles. The app also offers female users the option of initially displaying profile pictures out of focus. In addition, Hawaya has a security function "Guardian", which offers users the opportunity to involve a trusted person, such as a friend or family member, in the communication while getting to know their match.

Hawaya also has helpful tools to facilitate a more fruitful conversation - engaging icebreakers, and personalised conversation starters. Another unique feature of the app is the "Exclusive Mode", for when users have decided that they would like to be exclusive. This disables any other ongoing conversations for both users.

Hawaya is available on the AppStore on Apple devices and Google Play Store on Android devices. For more information, visit www.hawaya.com.

editor's choice

