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Fishing Boat Crash: Strong Wave Kills 4 Fishermen in Morocco's Tarfaya



by Safaa Kasraoui — Dec, 31, 2020

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bat – A strong wave caused a [fishing boat](#) carrying 14 fishermen to crash near Tarfaya, southern Morocco, in the early hours of Thursday.

The wave destroyed the fishing [boat](#) after leaving the port of Tarfaya, Morocco's state media reported.

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Preliminary data on the tragic incident said that authorities rescued three people, who were transferred immediately to the emergency room of the [Tarfaya](#) Health Center.

Authorities recovered four other individuals, while a search is ongoing to find other missing fishermen.

Morocco launched an investigation to determine the circumstances of the fishing boat crash.

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This is not the first time a tragic accident has happened on Tarfaya's coast.

In January 2019, authorities rescued 30 fishermen aboard a boat that started to sink off the city's shores.

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Bahrain Diplomat: Laayoune Consulate to Boost Cooperation With Morocco



by **Safaa Kasraoui** — Dec, 31, 2020

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Abat – Bahrain is still expressing satisfaction regarding its decision to open a consulate in the city of Laayoune, reflecting the Gulf country's unwavering support for Morocco's territorial integrity.

On Wednesday, undersecretary of the Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikha Rana Bint Issa Bin Daji Al Khalifa, said the opening of [Bahrain's](#) consulate in Morocco's Laayoune is a "historic and strategic step," according to Morocco's state media.

The diplomat emphasized that the development will boost the "solid and prosperous" relations between the two brotherly countries at all levels.

The Bahraini official made her remarks during a meeting with the Moroccan Ambassador to Bahrain, Mustapha Benkhiyi.

The Bahraini official told the Moroccan diplomat that the opening of the consulate general reflects the constant position of her country's support for Morocco's sovereignty over [Western Sahara](#).

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"The opening of this consular representation in Laayoune will give a strong impetus to the continuous efforts of the two brotherly countries."



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She argued that the move’s objective is to advance in different aspects of joint cooperation and further develop coordination on various regional and international issues in the service of the two countries’ interests.

The official also expressed her country’s satisfaction with the strong relations between Bahrain and Morocco.

The Moroccan Ambassador to Manama expressed Morocco’s permanent commitment to strengthen solid fraternal relations with Bahrain.

She stressed “the great esteem of Morocco for the constant fraternal positions of the Kingdom of Bahrain supporting the Kingdom of Morocco, which reflects the depth and solidity of relations between the two brotherly countries.”

Bahrain and Morocco share strong diplomatic relations.

Bahrain was among the countries that expressed support for the US’ decision to recognize Morocco’s sovereignty over Western Sahara.

Bahrain also congratulated Morocco for establishing relations with Israel.

Trade cooperation is another area of collaboration between the two countries.

Trading Economics reported that Bahraini exports to Morocco stood at \$110.29 million in 2018.

Morocco’s exports to Bahrain were \$3.2 million in 2019, Trading Economics [said](#).

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Moroccan Painter Abdelfettah Karmane Wins Two Awards for 'El Guerrab'



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Moroccan painter Abdelfettah Karmane has won two medals in international art competitions, Morocco's state media reported today, December 31.

The artist won a gold medal, awarded by the Grand Jury of French art collective Mondial Art Academia, and a silver medal, awarded by the International Masters Watercolor Alliance.

More than 1,100 [artists](#) participated in the competitions, the [Moroccan painter](#) told the press.

Abdelfettah Karmane earned the awards for his 2019 watercolor painting "El Guerrab" (The water carrier).

Guerrabs, or [water carriers](#), are people dressed in a multi-colored costume who distribute and sell water in Moroccan ancient medinas. They are typically known for carrying water in a large leather-made flask and announcing their presence with a bell.

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In the past, Guerrabs played an important role in the daily life of Moroccans, providing thirsty workers with fresh water to drink.

Nowadays, however, with bottled water available everywhere, Guerrabs are mainly a tourist attraction, serving water or posing for photos in exchange for a few dirhams.



Abdelfettah Karmane - El Guerrab (2019)

Abdelfettah Karmane, El Guerrab, Watercolor on mounted paper, 113 x 81 cm, 2019

Abdelfettah Karmane's award-winning painting captures the core and identity of a Guerrab and his job. It depicts an old water carrier standing in front of a wall decorated with a traditional Moroccan zellige pattern.

The detailed wrinkles in El Guerrab's skin and his facial expression attest to the man's life journey, from an essential actor in society to a figure for young people to pose with.

"The painting is inspired by the human soul, identity, and memory, which manifests itself through the different cultural aspects of the Moroccan-Andalusian heritage," the painter said. "The canvas transcribes deep emotions, representing both shadow and light."



Born in Sidi Slimane, near [Kenitra](#), Abdelfettah Karmane graduated from the School of Plastic Arts in Rabat. He has been creating artworks for more than 36 years.

The painter has exhibited his work in several national and international museums and won several awards, including two gold medals in Morocco, four gold medals in France, and a silver medal in China.

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Morocco to Launch Notary Services for Diaspora in UAE



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Rabat – The Embassy of Morocco in the UAE is set to launch a registration program for adoul (notaries) services for Morocco’s diaspora in the gulf country starting January 4.

A statement from the embassy said that a judge of the Superior Council of the Judicial Power as well as two adouls will be tasked with carrying out the operation.

The move is in line with “high instructions” from King Mohammed VI, the embassy said, lauding the monarch’s efforts to make the concerns of the Moroccan diaspora one



of his “top priorities.”

“The operation also comes in response to requests made by Moroccans living in the [United Arab Emirates](#),” the embassy added.

The notary services will concern,among others, the sale and purchase of real estate.

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Adouls can perform several tasks. These include drawing contracts, including marriage and divorce settlements; making certification; approving wills or testaments; and adjudicating inheritance.

The embassy promised to remain at the disposal of the Moroccan diaspora established in the [UAE](#) for any questions and concerns regarding this operation and other services.



Morocco has a sizable number of skilled workers living across the world. Morocco’s government estimates the number over five million.

With Morocco determined to devise and implement a new, more fitting “development model” for its current socio-political and economic realities, the country’s officials have in recent years repeatedly emphasized Moroccan expatriates’ essential contribution to Morocco’s GDP.

Money transfers from Moroccan diaspora stood at MAD 65.8 billion or \$7.35 billion in 2020 despite [COVID-19](#) crisis.

Meanwhile, Morocco’s central bank, Bank Al-Maghrib, expects [remittances](#) from the expats to reach MAD 70 billion or \$7.8 billion in 2021. The bank forecasts transfers to increase in 2022 to \$7.97 billion.

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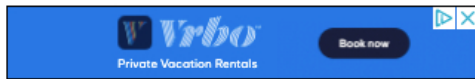
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China Approves Sinopharm Vaccine For National Campaign



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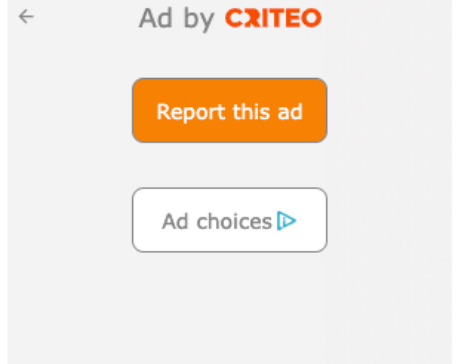
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Rabat – China has announced it will use the Sinopharm vaccine for its own national vaccination campaign. Sinopharm on Wednesday [reported](#) that the vaccine is 79% effective, exceeding the required efficacy set by the WHO. China will aim to vaccinate 60-70% of its population, which could mean up to a billion Chinese citizens will receive the vaccine.



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China's main problem in testing the vaccine had been its own success in eradicating the virus through strong government measures. With less than a few dozen new cases reported each day, Chinese vaccine laboratories found a variety of foreign partners where their clinical trials could proceed.

Morocco was one of the countries that helped test China's vaccine. Clinical trials in Morocco involved 600 Moroccans who participated in the important phases that determine the vaccine's safety. The results of the trials were "very positive," according to Morocco's Minister of Health Khalid Ait Taleb.

China has become a leader in the global fight against COVID-19. Its own government measures showed the importance of lockdowns and mask wearing. China's 1.4 billion population has contracted less than a few dozen new cases everyday while advanced economies in the West have struggled with tens of thousands of new cases everyday.

Despite China's success in bringing down local cases, it will still proceed with a large-scale national vaccination campaign. Initially, China's role as a major manufacturing nation globally helped spread the COVID-19 virus. Now, however, China runs the risk of seeing the virus return from abroad as international business and travel slowly return.

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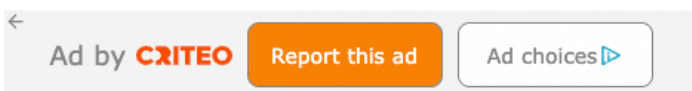


China's decision to distribute its vaccine to hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens in spite of not having a significant outbreak nationally expresses confidence in the safety and efficacy of its vaccine. More than a million people have already received the Sinopharm vaccine, making it arguably one of the most widely used vaccines currently available.

For Morocco, China's announcement again confirms confidence in its chosen vaccine candidate. While Morocco will also use other vaccine candidates, China's decision comes as a morale boost for Moroccan authorities' campaign to get Moroccans to trust the country's vaccine candidate.



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Algeria Picks Russian Sputnik V Vaccine For Vaccination Campaign



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Rabat — Algeria has at last decided on its chosen vaccine candidate, with authorities in



Algeria has not decided on its chosen vaccine candidate, with authorities in Algiers choosing the Russian “Sputnik V” vaccine for the country’s national vaccination campaign.

The government announced its choice during a weekly governmental meeting chaired by Prime Minister Abdelaziz Djerad on Wednesday this week.

Algeria’s Minister of Health Abderrahmane Benbouzid spoke of the signing of a “direct agreement” to acquire the vaccine from a Russian laboratory. The decision is a “concretization of the decision of the President of the Republic to start the vaccination operation from next January,” the minister explained.

In the meantime, Algeria’s Pasteur Institute (IPA) has started a “series of talks” with Russian vaccine producers, according to Health Minister Benbouzid. Reporting on the agreement between Algiers and Moscow, Algerian news outlet TSA [suggested](#), without supplying further details, that Algeria could also purchase other vaccines.

Delayed decision



The sudden [decision](#) is likely a reaction to public frustration over delays in choosing the country’s vaccine candidate. The process of selecting a vaccine for national use had been hampered by bureaucratic and procedural delays, partly due to the absence of Algeria’s President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, who was receiving COVID-19 treatment in Germany.

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The process had required presidential input while Tebboune was incapacitated in Germany. Algeria’s presidential office has not been patently forthcoming about the status of the president’s health. Widespread speculation about the president’s health occupied center stage while the country waited for a verdict on which vaccination path to take amid surging COVID-19 cases.



The government announced that a vaccine would be free for all citizens of Algeria on December 14 without explaining which vaccine would be used. A week later, on December 20, President Tebboune instructed the prime minister to select a vaccine for mass use in January.

Russian vaccine

Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine was the first vaccine to be presented as an official vaccine against COVID-19. But the announcement, which was made by Russian President Vladimir Putin in August, received widespread scepticism. Critics argued that the Russian vaccine had at that time not passed all the required testing phases.

President Putin however expressed confidence in the vaccine and announced that his adult daughter had already been given a dose. Russia maintained that it would complete clinical trials and, on December 14, [announced](#) its vaccine was found to be as effective as the Pfizer vaccine.

91.4% effective.

Like Morocco's choice of China's Sinopharm vaccine, Algeria's preference for the Russian vaccine has been met with skepticism from the West. Western distrust and direct opposition to Russia and China likely influenced opinions on Sinopharm and Sputnik V. But only time will tell whether these concerns are valid.

Algeria, like Morocco, is likely to expand its selection of vaccines. While Morocco announced its use of the Chinese Sinopharm vaccine, it is also purchasing alternatives in order to diversify its options in a field where much remains unclear. Details on side-effects, long-term immunity, and direct efficacy of most vaccines will only become clear once millions are vaccinated.

Tags: COVID-19 covid-19 in Algeria COVID-19 vaccine



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Morocco to Create Museum in Emblematic Marrakech Jemaa El Fna Square

by yahia-hatim — Dec, 31, 2020

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Morocco's National Museum Foundation (FNM) is set to create the Jemaa El Fna Museum of Tangible and Intangible Heritage in Marrakech.

The museum will be located at the historic building of Bank al-Maghrib, Morocco's central bank, facing the emblematic Jemaa El Fna square.

The Marrakech City Hall has recently delivered the keys of the building to the FNM in a symbolic ceremony marking the start of the project.

"The museum will offer a welcoming and attractive experience, not only through exhibitions, but also through workshops and a rich and diverse cultural program," said FNM President Mehdi Qotbi.

"The museum will be emblematic, like the [Jemaa El Fna] square that hosts it," he added.

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The historic headquarters of Bank al-Maghrib in Marrakech, which is currently out of use, will provide an attractive location for the Jemaa El Fna museum.

The museum will exhibit a collection of artworks and written, visual, and audio documents, relating to the history of the Jemaa El Fna square.

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“This will be one of the most emblematic museums in the city of Marrakech, thanks to its location in the Jemaa El Fna square, which has long nourished the collective memory of Morocco and the artistic personality of Moroccans,” Qotbi declared.

The project falls within Morocco’s strategy that places culture at the heart of development, he explained.

Meanwhile, Marrakech Mayor Mohamed Larbi Belcaid said the museum will further enhance the image of Marrakech and its international attractiveness.

The [FNM](#), which currently manages 13 museums across Morocco, including the Dar El Bacha and Dar Si Said museums in Marrakech, will lead the project, but it will collaborate with several partners.

The partners include the Wilaya (Governorate) of Marrakech-Safi, the Marrakech City Hall, Bank al-Maghrib, and the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO).

Tags: museums museums in Morocco museums in rabat

National Foundation of Moroccan Museums The National Museums Foundation (FNM)

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Morocco to Improve Role of Casablanca Hebrew Chamber in Civil Cases

by **Safaa Kasraoui** — Dec, 31, 2020

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Morocco's Ministry of Justice seeks to enhance the role of the Hebrew Chamber of the Civil Court.

Minister of Justice Mohamed Ben Abdelkader visited the Hebrew Chamber in Casablanca on Wednesday.

The official held meetings with judges at the chamber to learn about their expectations regarding the government's plan to improve the role that the Hebrew chamber plays within the framework of the [Moroccan judicial system](#).

During the visit, Ben Abdelkader unveiled the new nameplate bearing the name of the Hebrew Chamber.

For Ben Abdelkader, the plan to make the Hebrew chamber more visible and better integrated within the Moroccan system echoes the North African country's longstanding history of social inclusiveness and religious tolerance. The Hebrew judicial system was "historically framed by several royal decrees," he argued.

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The decrees stressed that Morocco constitutes an “exception in that the kingdom is the only Arab country where Moroccan citizens celebrate the Jewish religion and benefit from their own Hebrew judicial system.”

The Moroccan minister also emphasized that the Hebrew judicial system in Morocco has undergone development and has become “specialized in matters of personal status on the basis of the Law of Moses.”

The President of the Chamber, Judge Rabbi Joseph Israel, expressed satisfaction with the visit.

Joseph Israel has been a judge at the court since 1987.

The chamber specializes in settling personal matters for Moroccans of Jewish faith, including marriage, divorce, as well as last will and testament.

The judge recalled that Morocco is the only country in the world that has a Hebrew Chamber.

This situation does not even exist in European countries,” he said.

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9 Moroccans Among Choiseul's 100 African Economic Leaders

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Nine Moroccans ranked among the top 100 African economic leaders in Choiseul's 2020 ranking, which was revealed on Monday 28 December.

The [Choiseul Institute](#), which bills itself as dedicated to the development of business opportunities in Africa, explores and assesses trends in the African business environment.

The institute also organizes events that bring together some of the most influential decision-makers in Africa and Europe including corporate leaders, international funders, heads of state, and business community representatives.

According to the institute, the Choiseul 100 Africa is an independent annual study that identifies and ranks the most promising young African leaders 40-years-old and under. The selected figures are expected to play a major role in the continent's economic development in the near future.



The study takes specific criteria into account to rank the selected profiles. Image and reputation, power and function, influence and networks, potential, and leadership are among the considered skills.

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The total score obtained in the different categories determines the position of each laureate in the final ranking. Profiles with less than 10% in any of the categories are eliminated.

This year's final rankings include 17 Moroccans among the 200 profiles initially identified. Of the 17 Moroccans, nine ranked in Choiseul's top 100 of Africa's future economic leaders.



The nine top Moroccan profiles selected

In 8th place is Badr Alioua in 8th place. A graduate of the Polytechnique Engineering School and the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées in Paris, Alioua currently serves as the Chief Executive of Wafasalaf, a Moroccan investment bank.

Marouane Ameziane ranked 19th. An alumni of the Ecole des Mines de Paris and of the Said Business School at the University of Oxford, Ameziane is the Executive Vice President of Strategy & Corporate Development.

Abdellatif Kabbaj, in 26th place, is the Managing Director of Softgroup, a Casablanca-based real estate agency. He graduated from HEC Maroc, Morocco's leading business school.

Saad Sefrioui, who ranked 28th place, serves as Deputy Managing Director of Addoha Group, a real estate development agency. He graduated from the HEC Montreal business school in Canada.

Sarah Kerroumi, Secretary-General of Ynna Holding, an IT and real estate company, and a graduate of Al-Akawayn University in Morocco and Johnson & Wales in the US, came in 36th place.



Yahim Belkora, 51st, is the Managing Director of Agro Juice Processing, a Meknes-based juice production company. and graduate of Groupe IFG France, an elite business and management school.

Mehdi Alj, the, of Sanam Agro and graduate of EDC Paris Business School, ranked 66th.

Mehdi Bennouna, who came in 78th place, is the Managing Director of Mutandis Group, a sales company. He graduated from the Polytechnique Engineering School and IFP School.

Naoufel Ghafir, in 79th, is the CEO of AXA Partners for Morocco, Tunisia, and West Africa. He is a graduate of Telecom Sudparis Engineering School and Sciences Po.

Read also: [Choiseul Institute Ranks 10 Moroccans in Africa's 100 'Economic Leaders'](#)

The eight Moroccans from Choiseul's second list

Najwa El Iraki, founder and managing director of AfricaDev Consulting Ltd, was 108th place with three stars. Hamza Kabbaj, managing director of SGTm, ranked in 111th place with three stars. Rachid Kettani, Chief Financial Officer of Attijariwafa Bank, came in 114th place with three stars.

Karim Beqqali, managing director of Yamed Capital, was 127th with two stars. Anis Sefrioui, managing director of Arena Property Development, came in 141st place with two stars. Nawfal Terrab, managing director of NT Global Invest, ranked 144th with two stars.

Loubna Tricha, Director General of the Office for Professional Training and Labor Promotion (OFPPT) was 148th with two stars, while Meryam El Ouafi, President and CEO of Green Engineering Mission, came in 164th place with one star.

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by **Safaa Kasraoui** — Dec, 30, 2020

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Rabat – Morocco's Ministry of Education has decided to cancel local exams for sixth and ninth graders.

The decision is due to the country's **COVID-19** epidemiological situation, the ministry said.

The ministry, which announced the move earlier today, noted the decision seeks to ensure the safety of students and teachers.

The final exams were expected to take place in the third week of January.

Minister of Education Saaïd Amzazi said earlier this month that the education and health ministries had identified a total of 13,619 cases of **COVID-19** among students, teachers, technical, and administrative personnel in Morocco.

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Amzazi said at the time that the infection rate did not exceed 0.06% among students and 3% among educational, administrative, and technical staff.

But with a pronounced increase in COVID-19 figures in recent weeks, the number of schools closed since the start of the academic year reached 468, including 107 private schools that host 270,000 students.

In March, Morocco suspended schools after the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country, adopting remote education methods in the 2019-2020 school season.

The country also adjourned some of the final exams, which took place later than their regular schedules.

Morocco encouraged remote learning for the 2020-2021 academic year but provided parents and students with in-person education options.

The country is still struggling to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control. The Ministry of Health reports thousands of COVID-19 cases and dozens of deaths daily.

To date, Morocco's health authorities have confirmed 437,332 COVID-19 cases, 7,355 deaths, and 405,251 recoveries.

Tags: COVID-19 cases in Morocco covid-19 in morocco

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Total COVID-19 Tests in Morocco Exceed 4 Million

by [yahia-hatim](#) — Dec, 30, 2020

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Morocco's Ministry of Health has recorded 2,143 new COVID-19 cases in the country in the past 24 hours.

Today's figure brings the total number of Morocco's confirmed COVID-19 cases to 437,332 as of Wednesday, December 30, at 6 p.m.

Moroccan health authorities [announced](#) 3,822 new recoveries from COVID-19, increasing the total number of recovered patients in the country to 405,251. The number represents a national recovery rate of 92.7%.

In the past 24 hours, 41 patients succumbed to the disease. In total, Morocco has recorded 7,355 coronavirus-related deaths, marking a national fatality rate of 1.7%.

Morocco currently counts 24,726 active COVID-19 cases, including 1,121 patients in severe or critical condition. Severely-ill patients include 98 who are under intubation and 686 under non-invasive ventilation.

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Moroccan laboratories conducted 17,806 COVID-19 tests in the past 24 hours,

including 15,663 that came back negative. Since the start of [the domestic outbreak](#), Moroccan laboratories have excluded 4,002,348 suspected COVID-19 cases.

Casablanca-Settat remains the most affected region in the country. In the past 24 hours, it recorded 811 new COVID-19 cases and 16 coronavirus-related deaths.

Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima comes second, with 340 new cases and two deaths, followed by Rabat-Sale-Kenitra (278 cases, two deaths), Souss-Massa (211 cases, three deaths), Marrakech-Safi (181 cases, three deaths), and the Oriental region (94 cases, six deaths).

The regions of Fez-Meknes (75 cases, four deaths), Beni Mellal-Khenifra (57 cases, two deaths), Laayoune-Sakia El Hamra (52 cases, one death), Draa-Tafilalet (20 cases, two deaths), and Guelmim-Oued Noun and Dakhla-Oued Ed Dahab (12 cases each) have all recorded less than 80 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours.

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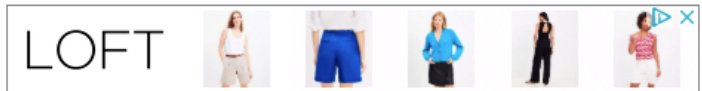
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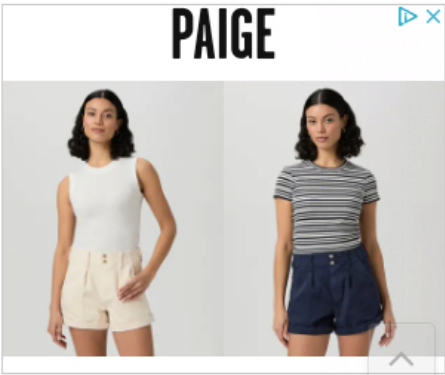
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