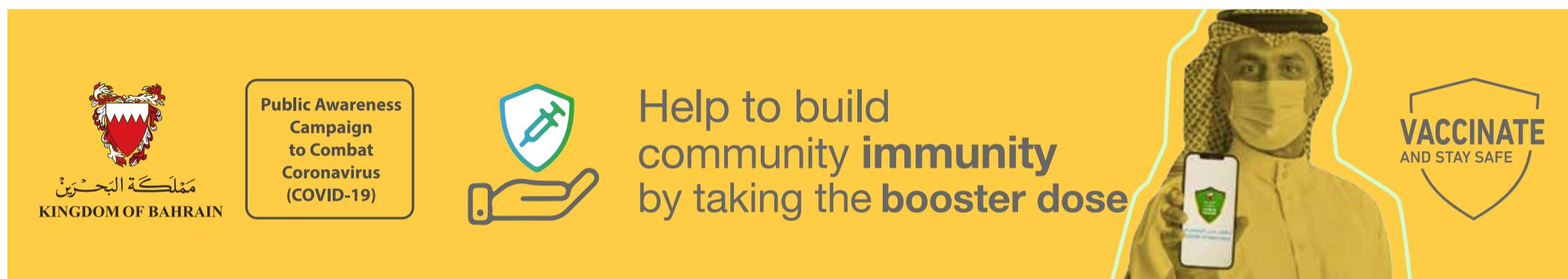




Beyoncé's 'Formation' named as best music video of all time

9 **CELEBS**

BUSINESS 5 **Gulf Air increases flights to Paris to Daily**



HM King greets Niger President

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa sent a cable of congratulations to President Mohamed Bazoum of Niger on his country's Independence Day. His Majesty wished the president best wishes for good health and happiness on this national occasion.

Hijri New Year holiday announced

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday issued a circular regarding the 1443AH Hijri New Year holiday.

The circular stipulates that the Kingdom's ministries, agencies and official institutions will be closed on Monday, 9 August, corresponding to the first day of Muharram.

'Speaker' Ritaj hailed by top lawmakers



P3

BAHRAIN COVID-19

ACTIVE CASES

991

DEATHS

1384

DISCHARGED

267026

NEW CASES

98

210 fils (includes VAT)



UAE approves Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine for children between 3 and 17

Abu Dhabi

The UAE's Ministry of Health and Community Prevention has approved the emergency use of Sinopharm vaccine against the coronavirus (COVID-19) for children between 3 and 17 years old.

The approval follows a trial involving 900 children in Abu Dhabi.

"The decision comes after clinical trials and extensive evaluations and is based on the emergency-use authorisation and local evaluations," the Ministry said.

The adoption of the Chinese vaccine is within the framework of strengthening the efforts of the Emirates to combat the COVID-19 and emphasising its proactive approach by

taking care of the health and safety of the members of the community.

The UAE, which has among the world's highest immunisation rates, was already providing the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children aged 12-15.



For children's protection

Last update - 9:00 pm
2 August 2021

Individuals vaccinated

(First dose)

1 1 1 0 8 6 7

(Second dose)

1 0 5 8 7 1 0

(Booster dose)

1 5 3 4 5 7

Aged 40 and above
and those with comorbidities

1 2 6 3 7 3 (49.5%)

Total of this Category 254,870

Protecting human rights

Bahrain supports efforts to intensify global fight against serious problem of trafficking in persons

Cabinet stresses need to unify international efforts to strengthen regional maritime security

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is committed to strengthening cooperation with the international community in fighting people trafficking.

During yesterday's weekly meeting, chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, the Cabinet expressed its appreciation for the active role played by the Ministry of Interior and responsible authorities to address this serious global problem.

The Kingdom has joined the international community in celebrating the United Nations World Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July.

In addition, the Cabinet stressed the importance of protecting international maritime traffic from threats that adverse-



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister chairs the Cabinet meeting



ly impact global trade, stressing the need to unify international efforts, to further strengthen regional maritime security.

The Cabinet commended the meeting that took place between His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and HRH the Crown Prince, in which HM the King

emphasised the importance of further strengthening GCC ties and unity to advance the development of member countries.

The Cabinet noted HM the King's statement that the "Al-Ula Declaration" had reaffirmed the commitment of GCC Member States to the goals of the GCC

Charter, through integration and strengthened cooperation amongst the six GCC Arab nations. The Declaration reflects the aspirations of GCC citizens for a return to joint GCC cooperation, greater integration and cohesion.

The Cabinet emphasised the

importance of mutual respect amongst the citizens of GCC member states and responsible media discourse to be compatible with the social values, Arab customs and traditions that consolidate the unity and common purpose of GCC citizens.

The Cabinet extended its best

wishes to HM the King, HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and the citizens and residents of Bahrain, as well as to the Arab and Islamic nations, on the occasion of the new Islamic Hijri year 1443 AH.

It commended the Kingdom's achievements in mitigating the impact of COVID-19, and extended its gratitude to Bahrain's citizens and residents, for their responsibility in adhering to necessary precautionary measures.

The Cabinet noted the importance of continuing to responsibly follow these measures in support of Team Bahrain.

YOU KNOW WHAT
Trafficking in persons, also called human trafficking, is a crime and a human rights abuse. The three most common forms of trafficking in persons are: sex trafficking, forced labour, and child soldiering.

6 084010 110021 >

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister receives outgoing Ambassadors

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday received, from left above, the outgoing Ambassadors to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Abdullah bin Rashid Al Mudailawi of Oman and Padam Sundas of Nepal, to mark the end of their tenures. HRH Prince Salman highlighted Bahrain's commitment to strengthening long-standing bilateral ties with Oman and thanked Ambassador Al Mudailawi for his contribution to achieving our countries' mutual goals. The Ambassador expressed his appreciation for His Royal Highness's support of efforts to foster good relations. HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister highlighted the importance of continuing to develop the strong ties that exist between Bahrain and Nepal. He wished Ambassador Sundas' success in his future assignments. Finance and National Economy Minister Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa was present on both occasions.

Bahrain keen to enhance opportunities for wider cooperation with Thailand

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is keen on strengthening opportunities for wider joint cooperation with Thailand.

This came as the second semi-annual meeting to discuss the outcomes of the Joint Committee of Bilateral Cooperation between the two countries was held yesterday.

The session was chaired by Foreign Ministry Undersecretary for Political Affairs Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa and Thai Foreign Ministry Deputy Permanent Secretary Dusit Manapan.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla stressed Bahrain's keenness to enhance strategic partnership with friendly countries, hailing close historical relations steadily-growing ties binding both



The meeting in progress

countries.

He praised the distinguished level of relations between the two countries.

Thai Foreign Ministry Deputy

Permanent Secretary affirmed his country's aspiration to enhance friendly relations and cooperation with Bahrain, wishing the Kingdom further progress

and prosperity. The two sides also exchanged views on issues of common interest during the meeting.

Foreign Minister receives Thai Foreign Ministry Deputy Permanent Secretary

Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani received in his office at the Ministry yesterday the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kingdom of Thailand, Dusit Manapan, on the occasion of his visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain to take part in the follow-up meeting of the Bahraini-Thai Joint Committee. The meeting affirmed the deep-rooted friendly relations between Bahrain and Thailand, which are constantly developing thanks to the mutual keenness of both countries to enhance bilateral cooperation in various fields.

HM King's Advisor for Diplomatic Affairs receives outgoing Omani Ambassador

Advisor to His Majesty the King for Diplomatic Affairs Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa received outgoing Omani Ambassador Abdulla bin Rashid Al Mudailwi. The Advisor praised the efforts made by the Ambassador and his role in strengthening ties between the Bahrain and Oman and enhancing bilateral cooperation for the benefit of the two countries, wishing him further success in his future duties. The Ambassador expressed his gratitude for the support and cooperation he received from all officials, wishing the Kingdom further progress and prosperity in all aspects.

Cabinet approves memorandums

TDT | Manama

The Cabinet approved the following memorandums during its weekly meeting yesterday.

1. A Memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs regarding amending the provisions of the decree-law regarding medals, to create the Prince Salman bin Hamad Medal for Medical Merit.
2. A Memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs regarding a draft resolution on financial regulations for government health institutions, aimed at balancing financial and accounting transactions and managing the cycle of revenues and expenditures within them.
3. A Memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs on a draft resolution on employee regulations across government health institutions, which includes hiring and job specifications, as well as evaluating performance and training.
4. A Memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for

Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal Balance, regarding the Kingdom of Bahrain's contribution in support of the international response to COVID-19 and the provision of vaccinations.

A Memorandum by the Minister for Shura Council and the Council of Representatives Affairs regarding regulations aimed at enhancing cooperation with the Legislative Authority.

A Memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs regarding the government's response to a proposal submitted by the Council of Representatives.

The Cabinet also reviewed a memorandum by the Minister of Labour and Social Development regarding labour market indicators for the first half of 2021.

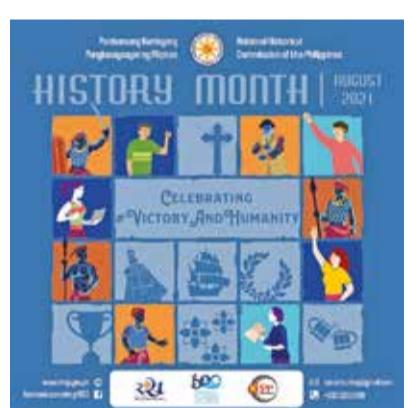
The report noted the outcomes of government initiatives to protect the labour market from the repercussions of the global pandemic, as well as the role of the National Employment Programme (2.0) in providing sustainable employment opportunities for Bahraini citizens.

Philippine Embassy celebrates 'victory and humanity' in history

TDT | Manama

siding and working in the Kingdom.

The celebration gives special attention to the country's pre-colonial ancestors who exhibited victory and humanity five centuries ago and how they inspired Filipinos throughout generations.



The Embassy of the Philippines in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Sentro Rizal-Manama join the nation in celebrating the National History Month this August with the theme, "Celebrating Victory and Humanity".

The Embassy is pleased to share the activities prepared by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) to celebrate, particularly to Filipinos re-

The Embassy and Sentro Rizal-Manama also join the Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs and our neighbours in celebrating the 54th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Higher Education Council Secretary General praises role of Bahrain Polytechnic

Secretary General of the Higher Education Council and Deputy Chairperson of the Higher Education Council Board of Trustees, Dr Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Daj Al Khalifa, received yesterday Acting Chief Executive of Bahrain Polytechnic, Dr Rim Al Buainin, who informed her about the college's preparations for the new academic year, its academic programmes and the goals to be attained in the next years. Dr Shaikha Rana praised the role of Bahrain Polytechnic and the tangible efforts of Dr Al Buainin to develop the college's practical programmes.

Bahrain Embassy in Egypt to start vaccinating Bahraini citizens

Cairo

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Egypt will start the vaccination process for all Bahraini citizens and students.

The initiative is in line with the implementation of the royal directive issued by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to start vaccinating Bahraini citizens residing abroad to preserve their health and safety, and support the national efforts led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, in combatting the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Bahrain Ambassador to Egypt Hisham bin Mohammed Al Jowder, who is also the Permanent Representative to the League of Arab State, lauded the Kingdom's success in dealing with the virus, saying that



Ambassador Al Jowder

the royal directives affirm that Bahraini citizens at home and abroad are a priority.

Bahraini citizens have started signing up for free vaccination at the Embassy in Cairo through its e-platform to complete the necessary procedures. Embassy staff contacted them to inform them of the time and place of receiving their vaccination.

Two Asians held for possessing marijuana and 'dirty money'

TDT | Manama

The Anti-Narcotics Directorate of the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science announced yesterday the arrest of two Asians, 37 and 38, for possessing marijuana and money suspected to be collected from narcotics selling.



Marijuana

An investigation into received information led to identifying and arresting the suspects and confiscation of

Legal proceedings were taken to refer the case to the Public Prosecution.

Foreign Minister receives MP Al Nefaei



Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani yesterday received the member of Council of Representatives, MP Ibrahim Khaled Al Nefaei. They discussed issues related to parliamentary work, stressing the importance of continuing communication and joint coordination between the executive and legislative branches to serve various national issues and enhance the development process.

by WHO, the first capital city in Middle East region to have received this honour.

He has also thanked the government for its vaccination campaign, particularly their support to our special vaccination drive of Indian community members, who were unable to get vaccines due to some reasons.

Ambassador Srivastava commended the government of Bahrain for achieving milestone of 1 million of fully vaccinated population, as well as Manama being declared 'Health City 2021'

as well as for their own safety.

He also called upon the community members, who are facing any kind of problems in registering for vaccination, to reg-

'Speaker' Ritaj hailed by top lawmakers

Shura Chairman Al Saleh and Speaker Zainal highlight Bahraini youth leadership quality



Chairman Al Saleh and Speaker Zainal with Ritaj



the Arab Child Parliament in its second session.

This came as the Kingdom's legislative leaders received Ritaj yesterday in their respective offices.

Chairman Al Saleh congratulated the student for this honorable achievement that is added to the Kingdom's international achievements at the educational level, where she obtained 52% of the votes, outperforming candidates from 12 Arab countries.

He highlighted the role of the Arab Child Parliament in consolidating the concepts and principles of constructive dialogue among children, educating them to exercise their rights and performing their duties.

Al Saleh affirmed that the capabilities that the youth of Bahrain obtains to achieve leading positions on national and

international levels, which reflects the successful strategies embarked from the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa in caring for the youth and harnessing the youth and their talents.

Ritaj expressed her thanks and appreciation to Shura Council Chairman for his continuous support for children, and motivating them to give and exert efforts in order to enhance the status of Bahrain, praising the efforts made by the Shura Council to develop and modernise legislation related to children.

High royal attention

Speaker Zainal praised the high attention from the government headed by His Majesty King Hamad and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin

Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for the Bahraini youth by providing them with all the necessary capabilities and support to achieve their aspirations and highlight their talents, enabling them to serve their community and represent their country abroad.

Zainal affirmed the parliament's keenness to enhance parliamentary culture among all segments of society, especially the youth, noting that the parliament continues to provide programmes and activities to raise societal awareness about parliamentary work.

Representatives Council Member and Woman and Child Affairs Committee Chairperson Kaltham Al Hayki, and Women and Child Affairs Committee Vice-Chairperson Bader Al Dossari were present.

518 undocumented OFWs complete COVID-19 vaccine doses

TDT | Manama

The Embassy of the Philippines in the Kingdom of Bahrain successfully assisted in the inoculation of 367 undocumented overseas Filipinos in Bahrain.

They were part of the second batch of beneficiaries for its "Libreng Bakuna Para kay Juan at Juana" programme recipients.

They received their second dose of AstraZeneca vaccine on 31 July at Sitra Mall, bringing the total number of fully vaccinated recipients of the programme to 518.

Philippine Ambassador to Bahrain Alfonso A. Ver, together with other Embassy officials and staff, as well as some Filipino community volunteers, provided assistance during the event by guiding the recipients of the programme and helping them register with the BeAware app of the Kingdom.

The 367 undocumented OFWs are among the 360 individuals

who received their first dose on 3 July, while there were also seven individuals from the 1st batch of recipients who missed their second dose on 16 July but were fully vaccinated last Saturday.

These OFWs are now able to register in the comprehensive BeAware health app and avail of all features of the app including an electronic vaccination certificate ("green shield")

which is required for entry into office buildings, government institutions, malls, restaurants, schools, etc.

Besides having the protection against COVID-19, the Bakuna para Kay Juan at Juana programme also aims to provide undocumented Filipinos a fighting chance in their quest to find employment in the Kingdom.

The green shield or proof of having received the complete

dose of COVID-19 vaccine is now one of the primary requirements of prospective employers in hiring a worker.

The Embassy advises those who were vaccinated during the first and second batch of the vaccination program, but were not able to get their second dose last Saturday, to proceed to Al Hoora Health Centre in Manama to complete their required vaccine dosage.

Indian Ambassador takes part in virtual Open House to interact with community

TDT | Manama

The Embassy of India organised the Open House in virtual format on 30 July, during which Ambassador Piyush Srivastava directly interacted with the Indian community for redressal of their urgent/non-routine consular and labour issues.

Ambassador Srivastava commended the government of Bahrain for achieving milestone of 1 million of fully vaccinated population, as well as Manama being declared 'Health City 2021'

as well as for their own safety.

He also called upon the community members, who are facing any kind of problems in registering for vaccination, to reg-



Ambassador Srivastava meets the Indian community online

drastically to around 40,000; recovery rate touching 97%; and vaccination coverage crossing 450 million.

Ambassador Srivastava informed the community that the government of India is issuing vaccination certificates containing QR code along with passport number as well as indication of both doses of vaccines which would be helpful in hassle-free travel for vaccinated Indian citizens, particularly with Covishield/AstraZeneca vaccine, to Bahrain as and when travel restriction eases.

ister with the Embassy at the following link: <https://forms.gle/pMT3vlg3o4yVgnES8>

The link is also available at Embassy's website and social

media handles.

The Ambassador briefed the community about significantly improved COVID situation in India (daily infection coming down

Online Space Cooking Challenge winners announced

More than 37 aspiring space chefs take part in competition organised by National Space Science Agency

Ali Abdulmutaleb Alsalam wins top prize

TDT | Manama

The National Space Science Agency (NSSA)'s latest creative educational outing dubbed Culinary Space Challenge was recently held to an excited pack of virtual audience and a distinguished panel of judges that were wowed by the feast.

Over 37 aspiring space chefs aged 7 to 12 sent in their entry, with the top 10 shortlisted participants advancing to the virtual judging by prominent

Bahraini Chefs Mahmoud Janahi and Shaikha Hessa Humood Al Khalifa.

Shaikha Hessa is a connoisseur of all things delicious. She is a food blogger (Curiously Hungry) and founder of "At The Table," a unique Bahrain-based supper club which brings together a community of like-minded people.

Mahmoud Janahi is a self-taught chef who is recognised for his baking and cooking skills. He hosts several baking workshops and demos across Bahrain and the GCC.

Each finalist's demo video was shown followed by a 5-minute Q+A session with the judges. The recipes were evaluated



Aligned with the NSSA's mission to spark space curiosity, the competition aimed to promote awareness of the real-world relevance of space careers, demonstrate the role of food scientists in preparing a healthy diet for astronauts in space and encourage children to engage in space science in fun and interactive ways.



based on the criteria of health & wellness, suitability for space and creativity.

The top prize went to Ali Ab-

dulmutaleb Alsalam while Saleh Mohamed Alnoaimi and Asmeh Jassim Alzayani took home the second and third places, respectively. The Top 3 Winners will receive a plaque, an education STEM/Space toy, a certificate of participation and NSSA sou-

venirs.

Aligned with the NSSA's mission to spark space curiosity, the competition aimed to promote awareness of the real-world relevance of space careers, demonstrate the role of food scientists in preparing a healthy diet for astronauts in space and encourage children to engage in space science in fun and interactive ways.

The next children's challenge will be announced soon. Stay on the loop of upcoming space-inspired competitions and special events by visiting NSSA.gov.bh or connecting via Instagram @nssa_bh or link with NSSA's STEM partner, Clever Play Education & Training @clever.play.

Adorable Maltese dog 'Ari' reunited with owner!

She has been missing since 27 July in Amwaj area

TDT | Manama



The story of the missing dog ended peacefully, and yesterday returned to its owner after being apart for nearly a week.

The owner of the 12-year-old dog named "Ari" thanked all those who contributed and interacted with them, assuring her safe return home, and said

that she was very grateful for the community's concern and sympathy towards their cause.

As for the BD1,700 financial reward, which was allocated to

those who found the dog, the owner said that the man who found "Ari" refused to receive it.

"He only wanted to see the dog back with her family," said the owner who appreciated his noble feelings.

It is reported that the Maltese dog has been lost since 27 July in Amwaj area, and has been allocated a financial reward of BD1,000, before the reward goes up to BD1,700 yesterday.

Jailed for robbing two phones

TDT | Manama

he would pay through Benefit Pay.

The High Appeals Court upheld the jail sentence issued against a young Bahraini man for stealing two mobile phones worth BD800.

The defendant was arrested following thorough investigations.

According to court files, the defendant contacted a phone shop and placed an order for purchasing two phones. He told the shop's employees that

The young Bahraini man reportedly switched his phone off as soon as he received the phones, while the shop made various attempts to reach him.

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED INCOME STATEMENT			
For the six months ended 30 June 2021			
	Six months ended	Three months ended	
	30 June 2021	30 June 2020	30 June 2021
	BD'000 (reviewed)	BD'000 (reviewed)	BD'000 (reviewed)
INCOME			
Income from financing	21,104	20,385	10,428
Income from investment in Sukuk	6,853	6,004	3,140
Total Income from jointly financed assets	27,957	26,389	13,568
Return on equity of investment accountholders	(12,599)	(10,168)	(5,881)
Group's share as Mudarib	10,741	8,016	4,952
Net return on equity of investment accountholders	(1,858)	(2,152)	(929)
Group's share of income from jointly financed assets (both as mudarib and investor)	26,099	24,237	12,639
Expense on placements from financial institutions	(1,494)	(2,762)	(697)
Expense on placements from non-financial institutions and individuals	(3,647)	(4,738)	(1,653)
Expense on borrowings from financial institutions	(68)	(178)	(46)
Fee and commission income, net	2,799	2,175	1,409
Income from investment securities, net	14	925	14
Income from investment in real estate, net	(54)	(453)	(102)
Share of results of associates, net	(358)	3	85
Other income, net	784	1,035	456
Total income	24,075	20,244	12,105
EXPENSES			
Staff costs	5,762	6,612	2,506
Depreciation and amortization	773	714	394
Other expenses	4,531	4,451	2,232
Total expenses	11,066	11,777	5,132
Profit / (Loss) for the period	2,599	1,480	(1,713)
BASIC AND DILUTED EARNINGS PER SHARE (BD)	2.56	1.41	(1.54)
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN OWNERS' EQUITY			
For the six months ended 30 June 2021			
	30 June 2021	30 June 2020	
	BD'000 (reviewed)	BD'000 (reviewed)	
Balance at 1 January	96,042	120,923	
Profit for the period	2,599	1,480	
Zakah approved	(122)	(328)	
Donations approved	(250)	(250)	
Issuance of ATI	25,000	-	
Issuance costs of ATI	(458)	-	
Shares allocated to staff during the period	82	199	
Government Subsidy	-	1,689	
Modification loss	-	(14,615)	
Net movement in investment securities fair value reserve	77	(513)	
Balance at 30 June	122,970	108,593	
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN OWNERS' EQUITY			
For the six months ended 30 June 2021			
	30 June 2021	30 June 2020	
	BD'000 (reviewed)	BD'000 (reviewed)	
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Modification loss	-	(14,615)	
Net movement in investment securities fair value reserve	77	(513)	
Balance at 30 June	122,970	108,593	

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION			
As at 30 June 2021			
	30 June 2021	31 December 2020	
	BD'000 (reviewed)	BD'000 (audited)	
ASSETS			
Cash and balances with banks and Central Bank	47,405	50,362	
Placements with financial institutions	140,386	44,442	
Financing assets	578,993	571,513	
Investment securities	248,231	276,608	
Ijarah Muntahia Bittamleek	225,131	191,365	
Ijarah rental receivables	21,999	20,677	
Investment in associates	18,375	19,024	
Investment in real estate	16,109	16,226	
Property and equipment	13,671	14,047	
Other assets	7,552	7,317	
TOTAL ASSETS	1,317,852	1,211,581	
LIABILITIES, EQUITY OF INVESTMENT ACCOUNTHOLDERS AND OWNERS' EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Placements from financial institutions	133,697	147,893	
Placements from non-financial institutions and individuals	201,761	261,002	
Borrowings from financial institutions	19,067	-	
Customers' current accounts	277,259	188,742	
Other liabilities	31,498	23,642	
Total Liabilities	663,282	621,279	
Equity of Investment Accountholders			
Financial institutions	51,089	33,986	
Non-financial institutions and individuals	480,511	460,274	
Total Equity of Investment Accountholders	531,600	494,260	
Owners' Equity			
Share capital	106,406	106,406	
Subordinated Mudaraba (AT1)	25,000	-	
Treasury shares	(892)	(892)	
Shares under employee share incentive scheme	(175)	(257)	
Share premium	206	206	
Reserves	(7,575)	(9,421)	
Total Owners' Equity	122,970	96,042	
TOTAL LIABILITIES, EQUITY OF INVESTMENT ACCOUNTHOLDERS AND OWNERS' EQUITY	1,317,852	1,211,581	
The condensed consolidated interim financial information was approved by the Board of Directors on 2 August 2021 and has been reviewed by KPMG.			
Dr. Esam Abdulla Fakhro Chairman Khalid Yousif Abdul Rahman Vice Chairman Hassan Amin Jarrar Chief Executive Officer			

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS			
For the six months ended 30 June 2021			
	30 June 2021	30 June 2020	
	BD'000 (reviewed)	BD'000 (reviewed)	
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Profit for the period	2,599	1,480	
Adjustments for non-cash items:			
Depreciation	625	714	
Fair value movement on investment in real estate	117	395	
Impairment allowance and other provisions, net	1		

ila Bank accelerates customer onboarding

ila introduces a simplified digital onboarding process, now requiring only one ID and a selfie



Mohamed Al Maraj, Chief Executive Officer, ila Bank

Nada Tarada, Head of Business & Customer

TDT | Manama

ila Bank, Bahrain's digital, mobile-only bank, announced releasing five new seamless app features to enhance the overall banking experience.

The newly launched features reflect customer feedback received through the bank's various digital touchpoints and ila's AI and data analytics.

digital onboarding

ila said it launched a simplified digital onboarding process, which now empowers customers to open an account within minutes using only one ID and a selfie. This was made possible by leveraging the national eKYC platform operated by BENEFIT in collaboration with the Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA), under the supervision of the Central Bank of Bahrain.

Commenting, Mohamed Al Maraj, Chief Executive Officer, ila Bank, said: "ila now offers an unparalleled onboarding

process, reflecting our commitment to creating a banking experience that is accessible and inclusive of all in our fast-paced, 'contactless' environment."

ila's new release also includes a 'long-press' feature enabling customers to access key features by touching and holding on the app icon right from the home screen; enables transfers between 'Hassala's', an innovative digital saving pot, further easing the saving process; and permits two shares for each user in a 'Jamiyah', a collaborative digital savings tool inspired by a long-standing regional tradition.

Nada Tarada, Head of Business & Customer at ila bank, added: "ila's latest app release is driven by customer needs and feedback. It reflects our ongoing mission to design banking around their lives and enable their day-to-day and long-term experiences through effortless, frictionless and seamless banking solutions."

Huawei reveals new range of 'Super Device' Products

HUAWEI Super Device

One as All, All as One



TDT | Manama

Huawei Consumer Business Group had launched a range of new Super Device products during an event at Huawei's corner at Sharaf DG Bahrain City Centre.

The product line-up includes the HUAWEI WATCH 3|3 Pro, the new HUAWEI MatePad 11, HUAWEI FreeBuds 4, and HUAWEI MateView.

Commenting on the launch, Steven Li, President of HUAWEI CBG, Middle East Multi Countries (Oman, Qatar and Bahrain) said: "Huawei's Super Device experience enables our line-up of innovative devices to connect and collaborate in a convenient and secure manner for users. Our goal is to provide consumers in Oman/

Qatar/Bahrain with access to a seamless user experience across multiple devices in all different types of scenarios. In today's 'all-connected' age, we want to bring people together and create a world where everything works harmoniously, intelligently, and safely."

Running on HarmonyOS, HUAWEI WATCH 3|3 Pro features five-day battery life in smart mode and 21 days in ultra-long battery life mode.

Huawei said it has worked closely with various partners in the region to leverage the Super Device capabilities. Talabat, one of the leading food delivery apps, are the first regional partners to see their app running on the flagship HUAWEI Watch 3|3 Pro smartwatch.

Gulf Air increases flights to Paris to Daily

TDT | Manama

Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, will ramp its services to the French capital daily starting today.

This is in line with the latest decision by the French authorities to add Bahrain to their Green List.

Being on the green list will mean that citizens and residents of Bahrain could travel to France without quarantine. Passengers aged 12 and above must present proof of a com-



plete vaccination.

Gulf Air began the summer season with flights to 80% of its pre-pandemic network, and it continued to resume operations and restore services to cities of

its original 2019 destination network. The airline currently flies to and from Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Kuwait, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Medina, Muscat, Cairo, Amman, Casablanca, London, Paris, Frankfurt, Athens, Istanbul, Tbilisi, Larnaca, Bangkok, Manila, Singapore, Dhaka, Colombo, the Maldives and several destinations in India and Pakistan.

Gulf Air's Acting Chief Executive Officer Captain Waleed AlAlawi said: "This is wonderful news for citizens and residents of the Kingdom of Bahrain to

be able to travel on Gulf Air to Paris on our newly introduced Airbus A321neoLR on any day of the week and with relaxed restrictions thanks to the newly announced green list status. Paris has always been a major European point that we have been operating since 1976 and it was one of the destinations we always continued flying to during the pandemic. Starting from the 2nd of August, we are proud to resume our pre-pandemic daily frequency, offering maximum convenience to our passengers."

India launches e-RUPI

● The electronic voucher-based digital payment system has been developed by the National Payments Corporation of India

● It is a QR code or SMS string-based e-voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries

TDT | agencies

Giving a further boost to the digital payment system in the country, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched e-RUPI yesterday.

The electronic voucher-based digital payment system has been developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.

"The launch of e-RUPI is in line with our efforts to make



India a leader in Fintech and leverage technology to boost 'Ease of Living,'" Modi said in a statement.

He added: "Thanks to technology, things which were earlier deemed impossible have become a reality. Through e-RUPI, numerous tech solutions, particularly in healthcare will be available."

E-Rupee is a cashless and contactless means of digital payment. It is a QR code or SMS string-based e-voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries.

With the help of e-RUPI pay-

ment service, a user will be able to redeem the voucher without a card, digital payments app, or internet banking access.

How do e-RUPI works?

E-Rupee connects the sponsors of the services with the beneficiaries and service providers in a digital manner without any physical interface. It also ensures that payment is made to the service provider only after the transaction is completed. E-Rupee is pre-paid in nature, so it assures timely payment to the service provider without the involvement of any

intermediary.

Where can e-RUPI be used?

It can also be used for delivering services under schemes meant for providing drugs and nutritional support under Mother and Child welfare schemes, TB eradication programmes, drugs & diagnostics under schemes like Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, fertilizer subsidies etc. Even the private sector can leverage these digital vouchers as part of their employee welfare and corporate social responsibility programmes.

Arbah Capital approves dividend



Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Ansari and Mahmood Al-Kooheji

TDT | Manama

Management from 362 million Saudi riyals at the end of 2017 to about 1.6 billion Saudi riyals by the end of the year 2020."

The CEO of Arbah Capital, Mahmood Al-Kooheji, said the company is keen to implement the strategy approved by the Board of Directors, which keeps pace with the latest developments in the investment financial industry.

Arbah Capital was the first Saudi financial investment firm to obtain all the permitted licenses from the Capital Market Authority in the Eastern Province.

Twitter's Dorsey leads \$29 billion buyout of Afterpay

Reuters | Sydney

Square Inc, the payments firm of Twitter Inc co-founder Jack Dorsey, will purchase buy now, pay later pioneer Afterpay Ltd for \$29 billion. The take-over, also the biggest buyout of an Australian firm, underscores the popularity of a business model that has upended consumer credit by charging merchants a fee to offer small point-of-sale loans which their shoppers repay in interest-free instalments, bypassing credit checks.

The deal also locks in a remarkable share-price run for Afterpay, whose stock has

surged from A\$10 in early 2020 to over A\$100 in less than two years.

The all-stock buyout resulted in a payday of A\$2.46 bn (\$1.81 bn) each for Afterpay's founders, Anthony Eisen and Nick Molnar. China's Tencent Holdings Ltd (0700.HK), which paid A\$300 million for 5% of Afterpay in 2020, would pocket A\$1.7 bn. The Afterpay founders said the deal marked "an important recognition of the Australian technology sector as homegrown innovation continues to be shared more broadly throughout the world".

NOTICE

to Cancel the License of

Chartis Takaful Enaya B.S.C (c)

Pursuant to Article (49) of the Central Bank of Bahrain and Financial Institutions Law No. (64) of 2006 and its amendments, and based on the Extra Ordinary General Meeting resolution of Chartis Takaful Enaya B.S.C. (c) dated 18th May 2020. The Central Bank of Bahrain hereby gives notice of the Cancellation of the license of Chartis Takaful Enaya B.S.C. (c) registered under Commercial Registration No. 61589-1 issued on 01/07/2006.

The CBB decision was published in the Official Gazette Issue No. 3543 on 29 July 2021.

News in brief

◆ **The Lebanese army said yesterday it had detained a man wanted over an attack** on mourners at a funeral where three people were killed, after the powerful Shi'ite group Hezbollah demanded the perpetrators be detained. The attack targeted the funeral of Hezbollah member Ali Shibli who was shot dead on Saturday during a wedding. Sunni Arab tribes claimed responsibility for that shooting, saying they had taken revenge for the killing of one of their members last year in Khaldeh. Army intelligence stormed the homes of a number of wanted people and detained a man who was involved in the funeral attack, the army said. Hezbollah, an armed group backed by Iran, has said it is seeking to maintain calm but said the attackers must be handed over. The group has called it a planned ambush.



Lebanese army detains man after deadly funeral attack

◆ **Britain summoned Iran's ambassador yesterday** after London and the United States both blamed an attack on an Israeli-managed tanker in Oman last week on Tehran. "Minister (James) Cleverly reiterated that Iran must immediately cease actions that risk international peace and security, and reinforced that vessels must be allowed to navigate freely in accordance with international law," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

◆ **The death toll from last month's floods in the central Chinese province of Henan rose to 302 as of yesterday**, officials said, triple the figure of 99 that was reported last week, with most of the fatalities reported in the provincial capital Zhengzhou. In Zhengzhou, a city of 12 million that lies along the Yellow River, the death toll was 292, including 14 who perished when a subway line was flooded. In total, 39 people died in underground areas in Zhengzhou including garages and tunnels.



Death toll from floods in China's Henan province rises to

◆ **A preponderance of evidence proves the virus that caused the COVID-19 pandemic leaked from a Chinese research facility**, said a report by US Republicans released yesterday, a conclusion that US intelligence agencies have not reached. The report also cited "ample evidence" that Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) scientists - aided by US experts and Chinese and US government funds - were working to modify coronaviruses to infect humans and such manipulation could be hidden. Representative Mike McCaul, the top Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, released the report by the panel's Republican staff. It urged a bipartisan investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic that has killed 4.4 million people worldwide. "We now believe it's time to completely dismiss the wet market as the source," said the report. "We also believe the preponderance of the evidence proves the virus did leak from the WIV and that it did so sometime before September 12, 2019." The report cited what it called new and under-reported information about safety protocols at the lab, including a July 2019 request for a \$1.5 million overhaul of a hazardous waste treatment system for the facility, which was less than two years old.

Republican report says coronavirus leaked from China lab

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

	Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1	USA	35,771,553	629,387	199,253,018
2	India	31,708,870	425,082	
3	Brazil	19,938,358	556,886	
4	Russia	6,312,185	160,137	
5	France	6,146,619	111,885	
6	UK	5,902,354	129,743	
7	Turkey	5,747,935	51,428	
8	Argentina	4,935,847	105,772	
9	Colombia	4,794,414	120,998	
10	Spain	4,447,044	81,486	
11	Italy	4,355,348	128,068	
12	Iran	3,940,708	91,407	
13	Germany	3,778,719	92,175	
14	Indonesia	3,462,800	97,291	

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	284,311		16,528		230,699	37,084
Saudi Arabia	527,877	+1,063	8,259	+10	508,994	10,624
UAE	683,914	+1,537	1,956	+5	661,156	20,802
Kuwait	398,538		2,328		385,401	10,809
Oman	297,122	+287	3,868	+18	280,423	12,831
Qatar	226,540	+150	601		223,995	1,944

Bahrain's Biodiversity Strategy must change gears

BY KOTA SRIRAJ



The Kingdom of Bahrain has always strived to achieve sustainable economic growth that is in conformity with environmental protection and judicious use of natural resources while ensuring that a stringent check is kept on air and water pollution. The effective government policies and steadfast commitment towards environment has ensured that the stellar economic prosperity of the island nation has not compromised with the many rare species and environmental ecosystems found in Bahrain. This has helped sculpt Bahrain's unique environmental culture and biodiversity on the global arena. But as times change and challenges increase on account of the pandemic and worsening climate change conditions, Bahrain must have a re-look at its biodiversity strategy. This can help the nation insulate its precious biodiversity bank against latest set of man-made threats.

Bahrain's first ambitious National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) was drafted in 2007 which later received some much-required revisions between 2013 and 2015. In fact, Bahrain was one of the very first nations in the region to respond to the initiative launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) calling for embracing the "Ecosystem Based Approach" on the national and regional levels. Furthermore, in 2016 Bahrain worked closely with the United Nations to ensure proper alignment of its NBSAP with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). Bahrain is also the first country in the region to establish a "Clearing House Mechanism" for biodiversity, which is essentially a biodiversity database, and an obligation under the Convention on Biological Diversity. With so much of commendable track record to safeguard biodiversity, Bahrain is without doubt effectively implementing its NBSAP.

However times are changing fast and for worse. The ongoing pandemic that has ravaged the world since the beginning of 2020 has changed the narrative on how biodiversity conservation strategies must be developed and implemented. Bahrain must ensure that the erstwhile biodiversity strategies are suitably upgraded and implemented so that the recovery from covid19 is sustainable and resilient from the environmental point of view.

Bahrain's very first implementable NBSAP was not only a testament to the nation's determination to protect its biodiversity, but also endeavoured to improve livelihoods and food security conditions. This was critical as the nation only had 3 per cent arable land. The strategy aimed to restore marine resources and fish stocks to safe and sustainable limits in addition to protecting agricultural lands from urban development which was become a growing problem for the rapidly developing nation. The new version of the biodiversity strategy must evolve keeping in mind the disastrous impact future pandemics can have both on human lives and the environment. Therefore the strategy must be able to pre-empt the future outbreak of zoonotic diseases by factoring in the risk factors and also protecting biodiversity from the diseases and viruses of the future.

The next chapter of the Bahrain's biodiversity protection strategy must contain essential elements such as steps to minimise human and animal interface, eliminating transmission points where the likelihood of viral spill over to humans is high, such as unhygienic commercial markets in wild animal meat and live animals. Additionally, better monitoring to ensure cessation of any type of wildlife commercialisation and parallelly conserving natural habitats can have an immense positive impact in preserving the valuable biodiversity of Bahrain in these trying times. Conserving natural habitats in turn require profound changes in human food production and human encroachment on remaining natural habitats. Incorporating the twin goals of pandemic prevention and nature conservation in the new version of strategy for biodiversity protection, may be a tedious process but will be quite rewarding.

The world is realising fast that an intact biodiversity is key to preventing future outbreak of viruses and diseases such as COVID19. A research survey published recently in The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) has concluded that an intact and healthy biodiversity actually protects against the emergence of new infectious diseases by keeping the handful of species most likely to spread diseases in check. The policies and strategies must be recalibrated to ensure that biodiversity is given sufficient importance and protection so that it does its job in preventing outbreak of more diseases. Nature is better at controlling the dangerous species that give rise to pandemic such as COVID19 all it needs is a healthy biodiversity to do this. Bahrain already has an excellent biodiversity conservation strategy in place, it just needs to factor in pandemic prevention aspects in the strategy to make it future proof.

Veteran Egyptian actress Azizk critical after contracting COVID, preparing for lung transplant

● Her family is yet to agree on the transplant

TDT | agencies



Egyptian actress Dalal Abdel Azizk

surprise happens."

He urged news outlets and journos not to spread "news of death" without being "200% certain."

Understand "the circumstances of the family and the challenges they face," he said during his show DMC Evening.

The family, he said, is "trying to cross the bottleneck and a difficult stage, and please don't add wound on another wound."

Aziz was undergoing treatment in a private hospital but is now in a government hospital.

An Albawaba report claims that the ailing actress received a shocking bill for \$95,600 for her 90-day stay at the private hospital. The report, quoting unnamed medical sources, further confirms that decision to transfer her to a government hospital "was a pure family procedure."

Tunisia's powerful parliament speaker Ghannouchi leaves

● Ghannouchi, 80, has led opposition to last week's move by President Kais Saied to seize governing powers

● Ghannouchi was taken to hospital briefly on Saturday and later discharged

Reuters | Tunis



Parliament Speaker Rached Ghannouchi, h

olution that introduced democracy, Ennahda has since then been the most consistently powerful political party, backing successive coalition governments and helping to agree the 2014 constitution.

However, economic stagnation, declining services and a public perception of increased corruption have dented its support and Saied's sudden declaration on Sunday appears to have widespread backing.

Ghannouchi, who was also taken to hospital briefly on Saturday and later discharged, faces internal dissent within Ennahda over both his handling of the immediate crisis and his strategic choices since the 2019 election.

Tunisia's parliament speaker Rached Ghannouchi, head of the moderate Islamist Ennahda party that has had an influential national role for a decade, left the hospital hours after he was admitted on Sunday, two advisers said, in the midst of a major political crisis.

Ghannouchi, 80, has led opposition to last week's move by President Kais Saied to seize governing powers, dismiss the prime minister and freeze parliament, steps that the Ennahda leader quickly branded a coup.

His advisers did not say what was wrong with Ghannouchi, who was hospitalised for a week last month with COVID-19.

"After a few hours in the military hospital, Ghannouchi returned home and he is fine now", an advisor said.

Suppressed before the 2011 rev-

1492

Christopher Columbus sets sail on his first voyage with three ships, Santa María, Pinta and Niña from Palos de la Frontera, Spain for the "Indies"

1914

Germany invades Belgium and declares war on France, beginning World War I

1934

Adolf Hitler merges the offices of German Chancellor and President, declaring himself "Führer" (leader)



1972

US Senate ratifies the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with the Soviet Union to limit the use of missile systems capable of defending against missile-delivered nuclear weapons

Delta spreads 'like wildfire' as doctors study whether it makes patients sicker

Delta is as contagious as chickenpox and far more contagious than the common cold or flu, according to the CDC report.

Reuters | Los Angeles

With a new wave of COVID-19 infections fuelled by the Delta variant striking countries worldwide, disease experts are scrambling to learn whether the latest version of coronavirus is making people - mainly the unvaccinated - sicker than before.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned that Delta, first identified in India and now dominant worldwide, is "likely more severe" than earlier versions of the virus, according to an internal report made public on Friday.

The agency cited research in Canada, Singapore and Scotland showing that people infected with the Delta variant were more likely to be hospitalized than patients earlier in the pandemic.

In interviews with Reuters, disease experts said the three papers suggest a greater risk from the variant, but the study populations are limited and the findings have not yet been reviewed by outside experts. Doctors treating patients



infected with Delta described a more rapid onset of COVID-19 symptoms, and in many regions an overall increase serious cases.

But the experts said more work is needed to compare outcomes among larger numbers of individuals in epidemiologic studies to sort out whether one variant causes more severe disease than another.

"It's difficult to pin down increase in severity and population bias," said Lawrence Young, a virologist at the UK's Warwick Medical School.

In addition, it is likely that the extraordinary rate of Delta transmission is also contributing to a greater number of severe cases arriving at hospitals, the experts said.

Delta is as contagious as chickenpox and far more contagious than the common cold or flu, ac-

cording to the CDC report.

Shane Crotty, a virologist at the La Jolla Institute for Immunology in San Diego, said the clearest indication that the variant may cause more severe disease comes from the Scotland study, which found that Delta roughly doubled the risk of hospitalization compared to an earlier version.

For vaccinated, otherwise healthy individuals, the odds are that if they contract COVID-19 they will only experience asymptomatic or mild disease, said Dr. Gregory Poland, infectious disease expert at the Mayo Clinic.

"But they can pass it on to family members and others who may not be so lucky," Poland said. "We have to be vaccinated and masked or we will, for the fourth time now, endure another surge and out of that will come worse variants."



The majority of hospitalizations and deaths from coronavirus in the United States are occurring in people who have not been vaccinated. But there is evidence that the shots are less effective in people with compromised immune systems, including the elderly.

'FULL-ON FLAMES'

The rate of severe illness, especially in regions where vaccination rates are low, is again straining healthcare workers on the front lines of the pandemic.

"This is like a wildfire, this is not a smoldering campfire. It is full-on flames right now," said Dr. Michelle Barron, senior medical director of infection prevention and control at Colorado's UCHealth.

Research from China suggesting that the Delta variant replicates much faster and generates 1,000 times more virus in the body compared to the original strain highlights the biggest danger of this new wave, Barron said.

US to take in thousands more Afghan refugees

President Joe Biden has ordered a withdrawal of remaining US troops by the end of the month, ending the longest war in US history

Biden administration acknowledges fears for the stability of the internationally backed government

AFP | Washington



Afghan internally displaced families arrive in Kandahar as they flee battles between Taliban fighters and Afghan security forces

The United States said yesterday it will take in thousands more Afghan refugees, fearing for the safety of people with US associations as America ends its longest war.

The State Department said it will expand the eligibility of refugee admissions beyond the roughly 20,000 Afghans who have already applied -- with some being evacuated out -- under a programme for interpreters who assisted US forces.

"In light of increased levels of Taliban violence, the US government is working to provide certain Afghans, including those who worked with the United States, the opportunity for refugee resettlement to the United States," the State Department said in a statement.

The State Department will also let in more Afghans who served as interpreters or in other support roles to forces of the US-led coalition but did not meet earlier requirements on time served.

The State Department is des-

ignating Afghan refugees with US affiliations under so-called Priority 2, the same level given to persecuted minorities from a number of countries.

President Joe Biden has ordered a withdrawal of remaining US troops by the end of the month, ending the longest war in US history.

With the Taliban going on the offensive, the Biden administration acknowledges fears for the stability of the internationally backed government.

But it insists that the United States has done all that it can and has accomplished its priority mission of eliminating al-Qaeda extremists who carried out the September 11, 2001 attacks.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Today I nominated Croatia to join the Visa Waiver Program. This step towards visa-free travel recognizes Croatia's tremendous progress to meet the rigorous standards for participant countries. We look forward to an even stronger U.S.-Croatia relationship.

@SecBlinken

02



"We must be faster in distributing vaccines all over the world. We must aim higher at vaccinating 70% of the population of all countries by the middle of next year... And we must #DoItAll together, in solidarity."

@DrTedros

03



Congratulations to @TeamGB on winning their first gold medal in team eventing since 1972, and well done to @TomMcEwen1 and Toledo de Kerser for taking silver in the individual eventing.

@BorisJohnson

04



The launch of e-RUPI is in line with our efforts to make India a leader in Fintech and leverage technology to boost 'Ease of Living.'

@narendramodi

India's monsoon rains forecast to be average in August, September

Reuters | New Delhi

India is likely to receive an average amount of rainfall in August and September, the state-run weather office said yesterday, raising expectations of higher crop yields in Asia's third-biggest economy, which relies heavily on the vast farm sector.

"As per most parameters, we expect monsoon rains to be normal in August and September this year," Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, Director General of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), told a news conference.

The IMD defines average, or normal, rainfall as between 96% and 104% of a 50-year average of 88 cms (34 inches) for the four-month season beginning in June.

In August, monsoon rains are likely to be "below normal to normal" in the central region, Mohapatra said, where soybean and cotton are grown.

Farmers generally start planting rice, corn, cotton, soybeans, sugarcane and peanuts, among other crops, from June 1, when monsoon rains typically arrive in India. Sowing usually lasts until July or early August.

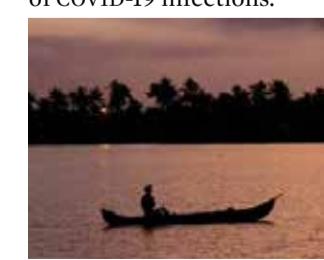
Indian farmers have planted summer-sown crops on 84.8 million hectares, down 4.7% year-on-year, according to the latest data from the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare.

The area planted with cotton stood at 11 million hectares versus 12.1 million hectares the previous year, while soybean covered 9.3 million hectares, down 3.4% from a year earlier.

After lashing the southernmost Kerala coast on June 3, the monsoon spread to two-thirds of India by the end of the first half of the month, nearly 15 days earlier than expected. And then it tapered off in the third week of June.

While monsoon rains were still 10% above average in June, they turned 7% below average in July. Overall rains have been 1% below average so far in the season that began in June.

In June, the IMD said India was likely to receive average monsoon rains this year, boosting expectations for larger farm output amid a devastating second wave of COVID-19 infections.



A man rows his boat in the tributary waters of Vembanad Lake

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

Classifieds

THE DAILY tribune

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Belarus sprinter granted Polish visa after refusing to go home

● Krystsina Tsimanouskaya, 24, would seek asylum in Poland

● The European Union welcomed Poland's decision

● Her husband, Arseni Zhdanovich, will join her in Poland

Reuters | Tokyo

A Belarusian athlete who took refuge in the Polish embassy in Tokyo on Monday, a day after refusing her team's orders to board a flight home from the Olympic Games, has been granted a humanitarian visa by the Warsaw government.

Sprinter Krystsina Tsimanouskaya plans to leave for Poland in the coming days, a Polish deputy foreign minister, Marcin Przydacz, told Reuters. She is "safe and in good condition" after walking into the embassy on Monday morning, he said.

Another deputy foreign minister, Paweł Jabłonski, said: "I can confirm that we have issued a humanitarian visa. I can confirm that we will provide all necessary support in Poland if she wishes to use it."

Tsimanouskaya, 24, had been due to compete in the women's



Belarusian athlete Krystsina Tsimanouskaya



Krystsina Tsimanouskaya enters the Polish embassy in Tokyo, Japan,

BETTER YOU KNOW

In March, the IOC refused to recognise the election of Lukashenko's son Viktor as head of the country's Olympic Committee. Both father and son were banned from attending the Games in December.

200 metre heats on Monday but said that on Sunday she was taken to the airport to board a

Turkish Airlines flight.

She refused, telling Reuters: "I will not return to Belarus."

The European Union welcomed Poland's decision and said the repatriation attempt was further evidence of "brutal repression" by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko.

"We express our full solidarity to Krystsina Tsimanouskaya and commend the (EU) member states that offered her support," EU spokeswoman Nabila Massrali said.

The incident has focussed attention on Belarus, where police have cracked down on dissent following a wave of protests triggered by an election last year which the opposition says was rigged to keep Lukashenko in power. The athlete arrived at the Polish embassy in an unmarked silver van about 5 p.m. local time

(0800 GMT).

She stepped out with her official team luggage, and greeted two officials before going inside.

Two women, one carrying the red and white flag seen as the symbol of opposition in Belarus, came to the gates to support her.

POLICE PROTECTION

Her husband, Arseni Zhdanovich, will join her in Poland, a Warsaw-based Belarusian opposition politician said.

"Thanks to the support of the Belarusian Athletes' Solidarity Foundation, (Tsimanouskaya's) husband is in Kyiv and he will join Krystsina," Pavel Latushko told Reuters.

Zhdanovich had already entered Ukraine, a Ukrainian interior ministry source said.

A Belarusian opposition politician said Belarus officials had

told Tsimanouskaya's mother that her daughter was a spy for Western governments.

Pavel Latushko, who lives in Warsaw, told Reuters Tsimanouskaya had told him via text message that her mother had been approached by someone from Lukashenko's office and asked to persuade the athlete to come home.

Tsimanouskaya told a Reuters reporter via Telegram that the Belarusian head coach had turned up at her room on Sunday at the athletes' village and told her she had to leave.

"The head coach came over to me and said there had been an order from above to remove me," she wrote in the message. "At 5 (pm) they came my room and told me to pack and they took me to the airport."

But she refused to board and

sought the protection of Japanese police.

Tsimanouskaya said she had been removed from the team as she had spoken out about what she described as the negligence of their coaches.

She had complained on Instagram that she was entered in the 4x400 m relay after some team members were found to be ineligible to compete at the Olympics because they had not undergone sufficient doping tests.

"And the coach added me to the relay without my knowledge," Tsimanouskaya said.

The Belarusian Olympic Committee said coaches had decided to withdraw Tsimanouskaya from the Games on doctors' advice about her "emotional, psychological state".

Belarus athletics head coach Yuri Moisevich told state television he "could see there was something wrong with her ... She either secluded herself or didn't want to talk".

Earlier on Monday, International Olympic Committee spokesperson Mark Adams said officials would continue conversations with Tsimanouskaya and had asked for a full report from the Belarus Olympic committee.

The Japanese government said she had been kept safe while Tokyo 2020 organisers and the IOC checked her intentions.

US, UK embassies in Afghanistan accuse Taliban of possible war crimes

Reuters | Kabul

The US and British embassies in Kabul said on Monday the insurgent Taliban may have committed war crimes in southern Afghanistan by carrying out revenge murders of civilians, a charge denied by the insurgents.

Suhail Shaheen, a Taliban negotiating team member based in Doha, told Reuters that tweets containing the accusations were "baseless reports."

The US Embassy in the capital Kabul tweeted a statement accusing the Taliban of killing dozens of civilians in the area of

Spin Boldak in southern Kandahar province. The statement was also tweeted by the British embassy.

"These murders could constitute war crimes; they must be investigated & those Taliban fighters or commanders responsible held accountable," the U.S.

Embassy tweeted.

In a second tweet, it said: "The Taliban's leadership must be held responsible for the crimes of their fighters. If you cannot control your fighters now, you have no business in governance later."

The tweets, accompanied by

calls for a ceasefire, stepped up the United States' public criticism of the group as U.S. troops withdraw and the Taliban goes on the offensive.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last week that Afghanistan would become a 'pariah state' if any future Taliban

rule in Afghanistan resulted in atrocities against civilians.

The insurgents gained control last month of the strategic area of Spin Boldak, which lies at a border and trade crossing with Pakistan, and heavy fighting has taken place since as Afghan forces try to recapture the area.



Beyoncé

Beyoncé's 'Formation' named as best music video of all time

ANI | Washington

Formation', the song recorded by American popstar Beyoncé for her sixth studio album Lemonade (2016), has become the best music video of all time.

According to Page Six, 'Formation' secured the No. 1 spot on a list of 100 music videos ranked by Rolling Stone magazine. The video, released in 2016 and directed by Melina Matsoukas, pushed other iconic music videos like Michael Jackson's 'Billie Jean', Prince's 'Kiss', and Lady Gaga's 'Bad Romance' aside.

The video featured several striking visuals, including Beyoncé laying on top of a sinking police car in a ruined New



The video featured several striking visuals, including Beyoncé laying on top of a sinking police car in a ruined New Orleans and a wall with the words "stop shooting us" spray-painted on it

Orleans and a wall with the words "stop shooting us" spray-painted on it.

According to the magazine's director Matsoukas, the 39-year-old singer wanted the video to show the "historical impact of slavery on black love, and what it has done to the black family," as she explained to The New Yorker in 2017.

"I wanted to show -- this is black people. We triumph, we suffer, we're drowning, we're being beaten, we're dancing, we're eating, and we're still here," Matsoukas added while discussing the 'Formation' video's concept.

As per Page Six, critics categorized the video, and Beyoncé as "anti-police."

Beyoncé denied the accusations in an interview with Elle claiming that anyone who truly believed she was "anti-police" was wrong.

"I'm an artist and I think the most powerful art is usually misunderstood, but anyone who perceives my message as anti-police is completely mistaken. I have so much admiration and respect for officers and the families of officers who sacrifice themselves to keep us safe," the mother of three told Elle in April 2016.

The singer also explained that the message behind 'Formation' was "I am against police brutality and injustice. Those are two separate things."

Kit Harington shares rare insight about parenting with wife

ANI | Washington

Hollywood actor Kit Harington, who just five months ago welcomed his first child, a baby boy, with his wife Rose Leslie, recently shared rare insight about his life as a first-time father.

According to E! News, while the couple is known for being notoriously private about their personal lives, Kit pulled back the curtain on his new dad duties during an interview with an entertainment outlet.

When asked what has been the most surprising thing about fatherhood, the English actor kept it real. "They tell you and they don't tell you [about fatherhood]. Everyone goes, 'Look, it's big what you're about to go through.' You have no way of knowing that until it happens," he said.

Billie Eilish talks about her experience with internet trolling

ANI | Washington

American singer and songwriter Billie Eilish, recently during an interview, opened up about her experience with the dark side of internet trolling and criticism.

As per Fox News, the 19-year-old spoke about social media trolling in an interview with DJ Clara Amfo.

"The people that even say the crazy stuff don't even think you will see it. They

would never say that to you in real life. What is the point of trying to do good if people are just going to keep saying that you are doing wrong?" she said.

The Grammy-winner talked about the online hate and trolling she gets despite her attempts to do "good for people".

"I try so hard to do good for the world and good for people. It's like you can try to do everything right and still it is like one of those exposing celebs accounts goes, 'Billie Eilish is getting backlash for whatever in the world,'" the musician

added.

The 45-minute interview aired the day after the release of her much-awaited second studio album, 'Happier Than Ever' on Friday.

Eilish has joined the list of celebrities like Adele, Ariana Grande and Harry Styles who have landed their own 'At The BBC' TV specials in the past.

Billie Eilish

Britney Spears says she is not afraid to burn bridges

ANI | Washington

in on her mom and sister, among many others.

Through her message, she seems to be saying that she is not afraid to torch relationships that have harmed her over the years.

Britney also posted pictures of her recent trip to Maui, talking about "the little things" she enjoys. One of the pictures shows what appears to be her cocktail of choice, held by her boyfriend Sam Asghari.

Her posts include the image of a statue of a "rare white owl," with the caption.. "Pssss check out the statue of the rare white owl ... I saw it this morning !!! Before I saw it, a beautiful little boy with white-blond hair who was two years old screamed at his mamma because he wanted his drink with a straw ... it was the most adorable thing ever cause he reminded me of my boys when they were younger."

On a related note, as per TMZ, Britney and her lawyer, Matt Rosengart, have been mounting a full-court press to remove Jamie from the conservatorship, a prelude to asking the judge to end the conservatorship, which has been up and running for more than 13 years.

Jessica Alba talks about her relationship with husband Cash Warren

ANI | Washington

Hollywood star Jessica Alba recently opened up about her relationship with her husband Cash Warren during an interview with Katherine Schwarzenegger.

According to Fox News, talking to Katherine on her Instagram show, 'Before, During and After Baby', the 40-year-old actor said, "It's all rosy for 2 1/2 years. But then after that, you become roommates."

She further added, "You're just going through the motions. You have the responsibilities. You're not going anywhere,"

bilities. It's a lot of like, checking the boxes, right?"

Jessica also opened up about how it is to take your partner for granted. The 'Good Luck Chuck' actor shared,

"We have, like, obviously the friendship, the comfort of, like,

It's all rosy for 2 1/2 years. But then after that, you become roommates. You're just going through the motions. You have the responsibilities. It's a lot of, like, checking the boxes, right?

JESSICA ALBA

and so sometimes you don't treat those people the best, right?"

She continued, "You don't consider their feelings in the way that you would consider other people's feelings. So that is something that I think is a constant one to work on."

Jessica and her film pro-

ducer husband have been married since 2008. Together, the couple shares three children Honor, Haven and Hayes.

As per Fox News, in the end, she told Katherine that becoming a mother forced her to become comfortable with being vulnerable. "I feel like I didn't really understand the nooks and crannies of the complexity of feelings and relationship dynamics," she said, adding, "There wasn't a lot of space held for vulnerability."

Britney posted a simple message on her Instagram handle saying "If standing up for yourself burns a bridge, I have matches" - a reference to ending relationships, something she has been doing recently. In addition to going after her dad, Jamie, she has zeroed

Britney Spears

SUDOKU

7			9		2	4		
5			4	9				
4		3						
			5	3		9		
9	8	1		3		6		
4	7	9						
			8		3	5		
7	2			4				
3	8	9			5			

Yesterday's solution

1	7	9	8	6	3	5	4	2
2	6	8	5	7	4	1	3	9
4	3	5	1	2	9	7	8	6
9	5	6	7	3	2	8	1	4
8	2	4	9	1	5	3	6	7
3	1	7	6	4	8	2	9	5
7	9	3	4	5	1	6	2	8
5	8	2	3	9	6	4	7	1
6	4	1	2	8	7	9	5	3

How to play

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD

Across

1- Novelist Waugh; 5- Sallow; 10- Inner layer of a quilt; 14- Church court; 15- Norman Vincent; 16- "The Time Machine" race; 17- Graceful horse; 18- Give consent; 19- Barbie, e.g.; 20- Be unsuitable; 22- Name; 23- Satisfied sound; 24- Droop, sink; 25- Dog of mixed breed; 29- Become less dark; 33- Bed down; 34- I'd hate to break up; 36- Commotion; 37- Excavate; 38- Remain; 39- Circle of flowers; 40- Superior to; 42- Chipper; 43- Stalks; 45- More than two; 47- Remain longer; 49- Lingus; 50- Little, in Lille; 51- Distributed cards; 54- Acuity; 60- He played Ricky; 61- Short-hand take; 62- Shrinking sea; 63- Torah holders; 64- Rodeo rope; 65- "Give that ___ cigar!"; 66- Baseball's "Walking Man" Eddie; 67- Aquatic mammal; 68- News bit;

Down

1- Composer Khachaturian; 2- Actress Singer; 3- JFK postings; 4- Garden vegetable; 5- Cochise, for one; 6- Utah Iily; 7- Injure; 8- Gen. Robert; 9- Genealogy word; 10- Array; 11- Gobs; 12- Tribute; 13- One with a glazed look, perhaps; 21- 1994 Costner role; 22- Playground game; 24- Web locale; 25- Windows predecessor; 26- Martin garnish; 27- Israeli desert; 28- Trademark; 29- Brought on; 30- Flat sign; 31- Plant problem; 32- Clangorous; 35- Title of a knight; 38- On ___ with; 41- Pragmatic person; 43- Part of a process; 44- Large sea wave; 46- Not emp.; 48- Turmoil; 51- June 6, 1944; 52- Architect Saarinen; 53- Requests; 54- Editor's note; 55- Warmth; 56- Poker pot starter; 57- Quod ___ demonstrandum; 58- All there; 59- Close with force; 61- B-way hit sign;

Yesterday's solution

B	A	W	L	I	N	A	P	E	P	L	U	M
O	A	H	U	O	B	E	Y	S	O	O	P	S
C	R	O	C	B	A	S	E	L	W	S	I	G
A	P	S	E	O	T	T	A	B	S	A	N	T
R	O	D	E	A	C	M	E					
M	A	N	L	Y								
U	R	L	E									
S	G	W	E									
H	I	T	H	E	R	T	O					
P	E	S	T	A	R	G	U					
O	L	A	V	I	M	B	U					
L	I	R	E	N	A	R	A					
L	A	I	R	I	S	I	N					
L	A	I	R	I	S	I	N					

Said Maleem knocks out Fakhreddine at BRAVE CF 52

Mohamed Said Maleem puts bad blood behind to claim Light Heavyweight world title

● Chsiev stops hometown hero Cortese

TDT | Manama

It was a lead-up based on bad blood. It was all over the place, including on the event's tagline. But at the end of BRAVE CF 52 in Milan, Italy there was nothing but cordiality and respect, and, of course, the supreme glory for Mohamed Said Maalem, the new BRAVE CF 52 Light Heavyweight champion of the world.

Following months of back-and-forth public statements, social media war of words, and lots of anticipation, Said Maalem showed resilience, in addition to his traditional firepower, to emerge victorious and claim the vacant 93kg belt with a first-round KO over the reigning Middleweight champion Fakhreddine.

After the fight, in a long speech given in both Arabic and French, and subsequently translated to English by his team, "L'Ambiance" tried to smooth things over with Fakhreddine.

"I have no issue with Fakhreddine, at all. We are brothers before God, he's a good man, and I like to think I am too. I respect him, his team, and his country of Lebanon. The only thing in my mind now is happiness, happiness for becoming the world champion", Fakhreddine stated.

The fight

When the bell rang, Said Maalem went for an early takedown, Fakhreddine tried a guillotine choke and managed to stand up. When they were clinched, Fakhreddine complained about a groin shot but the referee Dec Larkin let the fight proceed. Less than a minute later, though, the referee stopped the fight due to a now undisputable low blow.



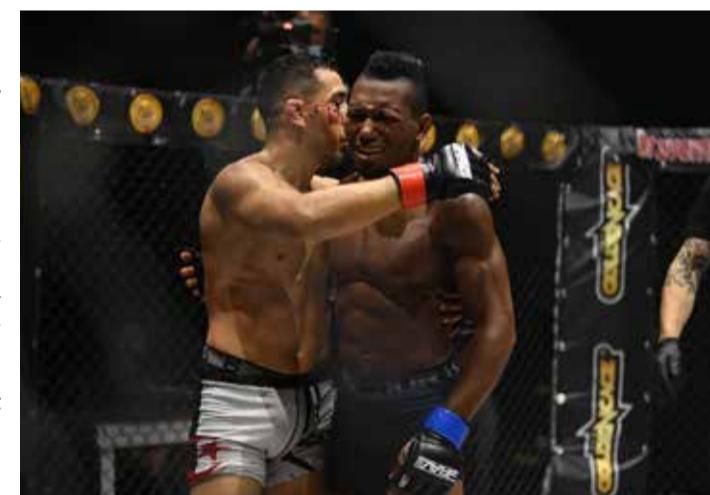
moments after the fight and also the most controversial moment of the fight, the alleged illegal shots on the back of the head he suffered during the TKO.

Fakhreddine recovered quickly and went for it right away, combining vicious leg kicks that slowed Maalem down and powerful strikes to the head, which promptly forced Maalem to shoot for a takedown.

They scrambled and fought on the fence and then Said Maalem showed great sense of urgency,

seizing the opportunity and connecting a short left hook that dropped Fakhreddine. With his opponent down, L'Ambiance engaged determined to finish the fight right there and connected multiple strikes until the fight was finally stopped.

These final seconds also led to the most controversial moment



Elias Boudejdam and Brice Picaud

of the fight, with Fakhreddine claiming he got hit on the back of the head by Said Maalem a few times.

With a little bit more than 30 seconds on the clock in the first round, the referee stepped in and stopped the fight. Said Maalem got his 8th KO victory and his first MMA world title at age 37.

At Chsiev's terms

BRAVE CF 52 was a night of highlights, beautiful finishes and exciting fights from the bottom to the top and that was also true in the co-main event of the evening.

Sadly for the Italians, though, the home fighter Enrico Cortese wasn't the one producing the highlights, but the victim in his opponent Rustam Chsiev's one.

The two men started at full throttle, putting everything on each single strike. Such incredible pace wasn't sustainable for the whole fight, so Chsiev brought the fight to his own

terms and took Cortese down -- the first of many times within only five minutes.

In fact, Chsiev did so every time he needed to, like when Cortese managed to bring the fight back up and started swinging and connecting at him.

On the ground and with time on the clock, Chsiev worked his way through a full mount, from which he managed to inflict huge damage on Cortese.

The Italian was able to stand up but was mauled to the ground once again, absorbing an enormous amount of strikes in the process. For a moment, it seemed that the fight was going to be stopped but Cortese was saved by the bell.

That didn't last long either, during the break between rounds, the doctors deemed Cortese unfit to continue due to an injury on his arm and Rustam Chsiev confirmed his 5th professional win, the third consecutive inside the BRAVE CF Arena.

Kane skips Spurs return amid Man City transfer talk

AFP | London

Harry Kane reportedly failed to turn up for his scheduled pre-season tests with Tottenham yesterday amid mounting speculation the striker wants to force a move to Manchester City.

England captain Kane was due back at Tottenham's training headquarters for a coronavirus test and a fitness assessment following his three-week holiday after Euro 2020.

However, it was widely re-



England's forward Harry Kane takes part in their MD-1 training session at the Tottenham Hotspur training ground in London

BETTER YOU KNOW
Kane has grown frustrated at Tottenham's failure to win a major trophy since 2008, with their latest letdown coming in last season's League Cup final defeat against Manchester City

ported Kane did not make an appearance at Tottenham's Enfield base, sparking fresh talk that he is determined to engineer a transfer to Premier League champions Manchester City.

He believes he has a 'gentleman's agreement' with Tottenham which allows him to move this year.

But with three years left on his contract, Tottenham chairman Daniel Levy has no intention of selling his club's prized asset, who is valued at around £150 million (\$208 million).

'I just want my friend to be ok': Root backs Stokes after England exit

AFP | London

England captain Joe Root has told Ben Stokes to take as long as he needs away from cricket after the all-rounder opted to prioritise his mental health.

Stokes on Friday said he was taking "an indefinite break from all cricket with immediate effect" because of the stress of his role as one of England's most high-profile stars.

Stokes will miss England's five Tests against India, which start in Nottingham on Wednesday.

After that, England face a winter series against Pakistan, the T20 World Cup, five Tests



in Australia and three in the West Indies.

That relentless grind may have weighed on Stokes, who was a regular in all three formats of the game.

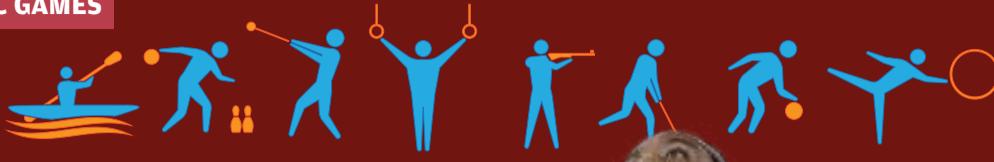
The 30-year-old also had surgery on his left index finger in April after suffering a fracture while playing for the Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League.

"From my point of view, I just want my friend to be OK. Anyone who knows Ben, he always puts other people in front of himself and first," Root told reporters yesterday.

"Now is an opportunity for him to put himself first, to take time to look after himself and get to a good place again. Hopefully that can be sooner rather than later."

From my point of view, I just want my friend to be OK. Anyone who knows Ben, he always puts other people in front of himself and first

JOE ROOT



Hassan launches treble bid with gold

● **Sifan Hassan wins Olympic 5,000m in first step in treble gold bid**

TDT | Manama

Dutch runner Sifan Hassan stayed on course for a historic Olympic treble with a brilliant victory in the 5,000m yesterday.

Ethiopia-born Hassan put on a masterclass in distance running to claim gold, surging clear of the field with around 250 metres to go in a time of 14min 36.79sec. Kenya's Hellen Obiri took silver while Ethiopia's Gudaf Tsegay collected bronze.

The win means Hassan's dreams of claiming three gold medals in Tokyo -- the 1,500m, 5,000m and 10,000m -- remain very much alive.



Netherlands' Sifan Hassan (R) and Kenya's Agnes Jebet Tirop (L) in action during Women's 5000 metres Final

Yesterday night's stirring 5,000m victory capped a remarkable day for Hassan, who only 12 hours before had produced an improbable comeback to advance from her opening 1,500m heat.

Hassan's treble hopes looked to be in jeopardy after she dramatically tumbled to the track after a heavy collision at the start of the last lap.

But she picked herself up and

produced a devastating turn of speed over the final 350 metres to finish first and advance.

"It has been an amazing day," said Hassan after her 5,000m win. "When I fell down and had to jump up I felt like I was using so much energy.

"I can't believe it. I used all my energy this morning and I was kind of tired. I felt terrible afterwards and I never thought I am going to be Olympic champion."

Hassan's victory was one of five gold medals decided on day four of the Olympic track and field competition.

OLYMPIC MEDAL TABLE				
	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
China	29	17	16	62
USA	22	25	17	64
Japan	17	6	10	33
Australia	14	4	15	33
ROC	12	21	17	50
Great Britain	11	12	12	35
France	6	10	7	23
Germany	6	6	11	23
South Korea	6	4	9	19
Netherlands	5	7	6	18
Italy	4	9	15	28
New Zealand	4	3	4	11
Czech Republic	3	1	8	12
Canada	3	4	7	14



Sifan Hassan, of the Netherlands, celebrates as she crosses the finish line to win the women's 5,000-meters final

Puerto Rico win first



Jasmine Camacho-Quinn of Puerto Rico in action

In the women's 100m hurdles, Puerto Rico celebrated the country's first ever athletics gold at the Olympics as US-born Jasmine Camacho-Quinn upset world record holder Keni Harrison to win in 12.37sec.

It completed a fairytale redemption story for Camacho-Quinn, who had exited the 2016 Olympics in tears when she crashed out in the semi-finals after falling at the last hurdle.

"For such a small country it gives little people hope," Camacho-Quinn said. "I wanted to be a gold medallist and I manifested that. I spoke it into existence." Harrison claimed silver in 12.52sec while Jamaica's Megan Tapper took bronze in 12.55sec.

Jamaican sprint duo look strong in 200 metres

Defending champion Elaine Thompson-Herah and fellow Jamaican Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce laid down the gauntlet to the young pretenders in the Olympic women's 200 metres yesterday, delivering emphatic performances in their semi-finals.

Thompson-Herah, seeking a second successive Olympics sprint double after bagging the 100m gold on Saturday, looked in third gear throughout but still matched her personal best of 21.66 seconds, from lane nine.



Elaine Thompson-Herah of Jamaica reacts after the semi-finals

Fraser-Pryce, 200m silver medallist in 2012 and silver winner in the 100 in Tokyo, has barely run the 200 since winning the world title in 2013. After a very comfortable morning heats run she upped the effort to win the opening semi in 22.13.

World leader Gabby Thomas, whose 22.61 at the U.S. trials made her the second-fastest in history behind Florence Griffith-Joyner, also looked sharp in 22.01.

Canada stun US to set up final with Sweden

Canada stunned world champions the United States yesterday, handing them a shock 1-0 defeat in the semi-finals of the women's Olympic football tournament to set up a clash with Sweden in Friday's showpiece match.

The Swedes beat Australia 1-0 thanks to a 46th minute goal from Fridolina Rolfo to return to the final after their silver medal in Rio five years ago.

Canada celebrated their first win over the US in over 20 years after Jessie Fleming's 75th minute penalty settled the contest.

The crucial moment, in a game which had produced little incident, came when US defender Tierna Davidson challenged Deanne Rose on the edge of the penalty area. After a video review, a spot kick was awarded.

Canada's veteran striker Christian Sinclair initially had the

ball in her hands, but Fleming took the responsibility and kept her cool to slot home.

The US, pre-Games favourites for the gold medal, went close to an equaliser when Carli Lloyd struck the bar with a header but Canada held on for a famous victory - and their first appearance in an Olympic final.

The Americans have won the gold medal four times and have not lost to Canada for over 20 years. It is only the fourth time the Canadians have beaten their neighbours in 62 meetings.



Janine Beckie of Canada in action with Crystal Dunn of the United States

China edge out Germany to win first velodrome gold

China clinched the first track cycling gold medal of the Tokyo Olympics in the women's team sprint yesterday and set a new world record as Germany took silver on a dramatic first day at the Izu Velodrome.

Australia's Alexander Porter also suffered a nasty crash during qualifying for

the men's team pursuit after his handlebars snapped off, while Germany smashed a world record in the women's event to advance as favourites for gold on Tuesday.

It meant some consolation for the German team, who were edged out in the women's team sprint final by Chinese pair Bao Shanju and Zhong Tianshi.

Bao and Zhong had earlier broken China's own world record with a time of 31.804sec in the heats and they were too quick in the final, their 31.895 just ahead of Germany's 31.980. The Russian Olympic Committee beat the Netherlands to take bronze.

Kenyan reign ends



Soufiane El Bakkali of Team Morocco reacts as he wins the gold medal in the men's 3000 metres steeplechase

In the men's 3,000m steeplechase, Morocco's Soufiane el Bakkali ended Kenya's 37-year dominance of the event to take gold in 8:08.90.

Kenyan runners had won

every Olympic steeplechase gold medal since the 1984 Olympics. Lamecha Girma of Ethiopia was second in 8:10.38, while Kenya's Benjamin Kigen claimed bronze in 8:11.45.

American Valarie Allman wins gold medal in women's discus



Valarie Allman of the United States celebrates with her national flag after winning gold

The women's discus saw the United States bag their first track and field gold of the Tokyo Games with Valarie Allman's throw of 68.98m enough to secure victory.

The women's discus saw the United States bag their first track and field gold of the Tokyo Games with Valarie Allman's throw of 68.98m enough to secure victory.



Zhong Tianshi celebrates after China won gold in the women's team sprint



Bahrain set for knockout test

Kingdom's national handball team to face 2012 Olympic champions France in quarter-finals today of men's handball tournament at Tokyo Games

TDT | Manama

Bahrain face off with 2012 Olympic champions France today in the first of four quarter-final matches in the men's handball tournament at the Tokyo Games.

The fixture is scheduled for a 3.30am throw-off, Bahrain time, and it will put the Bahrainis against the top team of Group A from the preliminary round. The nationals qualified from Group B as the fourth-ranked side.

"The French national team is one of the most prominent teams in the world," Bahrain national team's young star Mohamed Mohamed was quoted as saying.

"They had previously won Olympic gold, been crowned world champions several times and won the European championship, but this does not mean giving up in facing them, but rather playing with full force in order to bring a high level commensurate with the reputation of Bahrain handball."

Mohamed added that the Bahrainis proved at this Olympics that they should not be underestimated when facing top global opposition. He added that it will be most important for the team to put on a good performance and fight until the end.

The nationals will today be wearing their white kits, which



Bahrain's Mohamed Mohamed in action during the preliminary round

is one of the three official colours adopted for the national

team, in addition to red and gold. The French will be in blue.

The winner of Bahrain's game with France will be pitted in the last four against the victor of the other quarter-final between Germany and Egypt.

The two other games in the round of eight are between Sweden and Spain, and Denmark

Today's QF games

(all times Bahrain)

3.30am: France vs Bahrain
7.15am: Sweden vs Spain
11am: Denmark vs Norway
2.45pm: Germany vs Egypt



Bahrain players prior to the start of a game in Tokyo

This does not mean giving up in facing them, but rather playing with full force in order to bring a high level commensurate with the reputation of Bahrain handball

MOHAMED MOHAMED

and Norway.

From the quarters onwards, there can be no draws. Should the game be tied after regular time, overtime will be played consisting of two halves of five minutes each.

If the game is again tied after a first overtime period, a second period is played. This overtime period also consists of two halves of five minutes apiece.

Should the match still not be decided after the second overtime period, the winner is determined through a seven-metre shoot-out.



The winner of Bahrain's game with France will be pitted in the semi-finals against the victor of the other quarter-final between Germany and Egypt

Bahrain delegation chief meets WADA regional director



HH Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, right, presents Kazuhiro Hayashi with a token of appreciation

TDT | Manama

joint cooperation in combating doping.

HH Shaikh Isa affirmed BOC's keenness to work with WADA to eliminate the scourge of doping and raise awareness of its dangers.

On his part, Hayashi wished the BOC continued success and prosperity.

At the end of their meeting, HH Shaikh Isa presented Hayashi with a token of appreciation from BOC.

They discussed issues of mutual interest and ways of

Bahraini quartet begin their medal hunt in Tokyo

Al Siddique Mikho set to compete on track in Men's 1,500m Heats

Abdelrahman Mahmoud set for the field in Men's Shot Put Qualification

Birhanu Balew, Dawit Fikadu to run in separate Men's 5,000m Heats

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's bid for an athletics medal at the Tokyo Olympic Games goes up a notch today with four athletes in action at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium.

They include Al Siddique

Mikho in the Men's 1,500m Heats, Abdelrahman Mahmoud in the Men's Shot Put Qualification, and the pair of Birhanu Balew and Dawit Fikadu in the Men's 5,000m Heats.

Mikho will be the first to take to the track today at 3.16am, Bahrain time, when he competes in the first of three heats

in his distance. He will be one of 16 runners in the race and will need to finish in the top six or be one of the six fastest losers to advance to the semi-finals.

Mikho heads into the event with a season's best of three minutes 33.81 seconds, not far from his personal best of 3:33.31.

There are a total of 48 athletes in the Men's 1,500m first round. The semi-finals are scheduled for Thursday.

For Mahmoud, he will be in Group A of the Men's Shot Put Qualification, starting at 1.15pm, Bahrain. He is one of 16 athletes in the group, and must have a throw of 21.20 metres or be at least amongst the 12 best performers to advance to the final. Group B also has 16 athletes, who all hope to make it to the medal round, slated for Thursday.

Mahmoud has a season's and personal best of 21.15m.

In the Men's 5,000m Heats, Balew will be in the first of two races at 2pm, Bahrain time, amongst a field of 20. He will need to be amongst the top five finishers or five fastest losers to make it through to the final, which will be held on Friday.



Bahrain Shot Putter Abdelrahman Mahmoud all set for Qualification

Fikadu is racing amongst another group of 20 in the second heat, set to start at 2.20pm, Bahrain.

Balew has a fastest time of 12:57.71 for this year and a personal best of 12:56.26, while Fikadu's top career mark is 13:10.40.

The quartet are part of Bah-

rain's 13-athlete team in Tokyo. John Koech and Winfred Yavi have already appeared for the national team in their respective Steeplechase races, with Koech pulling out of the men's event due to injury and Winfred advancing as the fastest qualifier from the women's heats to their final.