

Manama Club set to compete at home, while fellow-Bahraini side Riffa will be playing in Jordan in Group C of the continental competition this October/November | P 08



COVID-19 takes three more lives; active cases rise slightly

TDI | Manama

The coronavirus (COVID-19) took the life of three men in Bahrain yesterday, the Ministry of Health announced.

The deceased included two Bahrainis, aged 64 and 50, and a 57-year-old expatriate.

Their passing brought the total number of virus-related deaths in the Kingdom to 154.

The Health Ministry expressed its condolences to the victims' families.

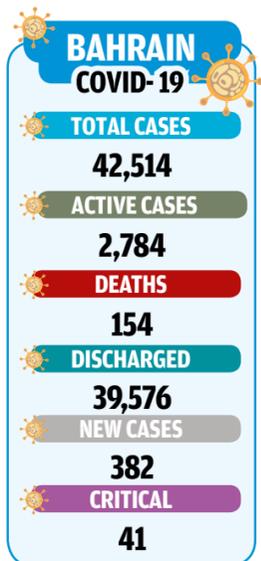
Meanwhile, the ministry announced early this morning that out of 9,285 COVID-19 tests conducted yesterday, 382 new cases were detected. These included 149 expatriate workers, 224 contacts of active cases, and nine travel-related cases.

The new active cases brought the overall number of confirmed registered cases in Bahrain to 42,514, dating back to when the first case was reported in February of this year.

There were also 241 additional recoveries from the virus yesterday, bringing the Kingdom's total number of discharged individuals to 39,576.

Despite those recoveries, the total number of current active cases rose slightly to 2,784, with 41 in critical condition and 125 receiving treatment. The remaining 2,743 cases are stable.

The total tests conducted in Bahrain increased to 867,534.



210 fils (includes VAT)



Royal aid for Lebanon

HM the King directs to dispatch urgent humanitarian relief aid to help alleviate suffering in blast-hit Beirut

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa directed yesterday to dispatch urgent humanitarian relief aid to Lebanon to help alleviate their suffering in the aftermath of the massive blasts which rocked the capital Beirut.

HM the King assigned the Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) to undertake the operation, under the supervision of HM the King's Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs representative His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al-Khalifa.

HH Shaikh Nasser paid tribute to HM the King, who is the RHF honorary chairman, hailing his continuous humanitarian initiatives in support of disaster-hit people.

He hailed the royal drive which, he said, reflects the unwavering stance of Bahrain's leadership, government and people towards brotherly and friendly



HM the King

countries and peoples in times of adversity.

HH Shaikh Nasser lauded HM the King's keenness to extend a helping hand to all people, describing the royal drive as stemming from the fraternal and humane ties binding all nations worldwide and the brotherly relations linking the Kingdom and Lebanon.

He said that the foundation is honoured to implement HM the King's directives to extend support to Lebanon on all levels, reiterating Bahrain's solidarity with the Lebanese people, who are facing painful humanitarian conditions in the aftermath of the massive explosions that rocked Beirut.

HH Shaikh Nasser announced that the foundation is preparing a consignment to be dispatched urgently, reiterating heartfelt condolences to Lebanon's leadership, government and people as well as the bereaved victims' families.

RHF secretary-general Dr Mustafa Al Sayed announced that, based on HM the King's initiative and HH Shaikh Nasser's directives, a medical consignment would be dispatched to Lebanon, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and other relevant authorities.

Dr Al Sayed said that other initiatives and efforts would be undertaken to support the people of Lebanon in the aftermath of the painful incident, lauding

Based on HM the King's initiative and HH Shaikh Nasser's directives, a medical consignment will be dispatched, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and other authorities, while further initiatives and efforts will also be undertaken to support the Lebanese people.

ROYAL HUMANITARIAN FOUNDATION SECRETARY-GENERAL DR MUSTAFA AL SAYED

strong fraternal and historic relations binding Bahrain and Lebanon.

"The Kingdom of Bahrain has always been among the first states that extends aid and support to brotherly and friendly countries, under all humanitarian circumstances facing them," Dr Al Sayed said.

Beirut 'a disaster-stricken city'

- Lebanese prime minister declares three days of mourning from today
- Damage estimated to be worth up to \$15 billion
- Government to investigate, hold the responsible and negligent accountable
- Death toll reaches 135 and rising; over 5,000 injured, 250,000 homeless

Reuters | Beirut

Lebanese rescue teams pulled out bodies and hunted for missing in the wreckage of buildings yesterday as investigations blamed negligence for a massive warehouse explosion that sent a devastating blast wave across Beirut, killing at least 135.

More than 5,000 people were injured in Tuesday's explosion at Beirut port, Health Minister Hamad Hassan said, and up to 250,000 were left without homes fit to live in after shockwaves smashed building facades, sucked furniture out into streets, and shattered windows kilometres inland.

Hassan said tens of people remained missing, while prime minister Hassan Diab declared three days of mourning from today.

The cabinet announced a two-week state of emergency



A man carries an injured woman after the blast in Beirut.

The explosion was the most powerful ever to rip through the Lebanese capital, a city already reeling from an economic meltdown and a surge in coronavirus (COVID-19) infections.

The death toll was expected to rise from the blast, which officials blamed on a huge stockpile of highly explosive material.

President Michel Aoun said 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate, used in fertilisers and bombs, had been kept for six years at the port without safety measures, after it was seized.

In an address to the nation during an emergency cabinet session, Aoun said: "No words can describe the horror that has hit Beirut last night, turning it into a disaster-stricken city."

He added that the government was "determined to investigate and expose what happened as soon as possible, to hold the responsible and the negligent accountable".

Beirut Governor Marwan Aboud told local media that the blast had caused damage worth up to \$15 billion, and possibly more.

UN-backed tribunal postpones Hariri case verdict

A UN-backed tribunal has postponed the delivery of judgments in the trial of four members of the militant group Hezbollah, charged with involvement in the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri.

The move was a mark of respect to victims of the devastating explosion that rocked Beirut, AP reported.

The verdicts were to have been read out in the Special Tribunal for Lebanon's courtroom in the Netherlands tomorrow, but will now be delivered on August 18.

Offers of international support poured in. Gulf Arab states sent planes with medical equipment and other supplies; while the US, Britain, France and other Western nations also offered help.

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Bahrain steps up fight against Iran's terrorism financing

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Bahrain's fight against Iran's terrorism financing is not simply a battle of ideals waged in the shadows, but also an ongoing campaign for transparency and global stability, the Kingdom's Ambassador to the US Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashid Al Khalifa has stressed.

In a commentary he wrote for US News and World Report, Shaikh Abdullah highlighted how Bahrain is fighting terror through transparent banking laws.

"The US government rightly labels Iran as the world's leading state-sponsor of terrorism," he wrote. "Its clerical regime exercises direct or indirect control over most of the country's largest financial and commercial institutions to allegedly train, finance and equip forces in the Middle East, South Asia, Africa and Latin America."

Iran has had historical claims over Bahraini sovereignty and the Kingdom continues to be a target of Iran's efforts to expand its sphere of influence and hegemony since the revolution, he added. "More ominously, the Iranian regime has consistently used all the tools of its national power to destabilise our nation, which, though territorially small,

serves as a critical linchpin in the security architecture of the Middle East," he said.

In partnership with US agencies, Bahrain recently took down a key node of Iran's global money laundering network.

Future Bank was established in 2004 by two Iranian state-owned banks—Bank Melli and Bank Saderat—and a local Bahraini bank, Ahli United Bank.

However, by 2008, the US Treasury Department designated Future Bank as being controlled by an entity linked to Iran's proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) placed Future Bank under administration following its own investigation into its activities and required time in order to examine the bank's accounts.

Following a comprehensive audit, the CBB found that Future Bank had engaged in systematic and wholesale violations of Bahrain's banking laws and regulations. There was widespread large-value international financial activity found to be in violation of anti-money laundering and anti-sanctions proliferations laws of numerous countries, including those of Bahrain. The modalities of Iran's fraud offer useful insights into how the world's number one sponsor of international terror operates.

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