

Philippine Embassy closes after two staff test positive for COVID-19

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The Philippine Embassy announced yesterday that it will be closed until further notice after two staff members had tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19).

In an urgent advisory posted on social media signed by Philippine Ambassador Alfonso A Ver, the embassy stated that two “frontline personnel” had tested positive, while adding that another had come into close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19.

Because of this, the embassy will be closed today until further notice while the facility undergoes disinfection operations.

The statement further said that the embassy’s personnel “will undergo 14-day self-quarantine, in compliance

with the health precautionary measures of the Kingdom of Bahrain against the spread of COVID-19”.

The embassy said that those who have confirmed appointments for passport renewal and other consular services will be informed by telephone and/or e-mail of their new schedules.

For any urgent matters, the embassy advised Philippine nationals to call or send a WhatsApp message to the Embassy hotline on 39953235.

Meanwhile, the POLO-Bahrain and OWWA-Bahrain offices will also be closed today.

For any urgent concerns related to these offices, call POLO-Bahrain on 17740951/38072476 or e-mail polobahrain@yahoo.com; or call OWWA-Bahrain on 34673268/38270741 or e-mail bahrain@owwa.gov.bh.

Worker injured as parked cars catch fire

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A worker was injured after two parked vehicles near a workshop in Salmabad caught fire, the Ministry of Interior reported.

The worker was welding when the incident took place, the ministry said.

The injured individual received medical treatment at the scene upon arrival of an ambulance. He was later brought to a hospital.

Negligence during welding was the reason for his injuries, the ministry said.

Civil Defence forces extinguished the fire in the vehicles.

Bahrain takes part in IPU webinar on COVID-19, climate change

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Bahrain’s efforts to combat the coronavirus (COVID-19) were highlighted during a webinar held under the theme “Webinar for Parliamentarians: COVID-19 and Climate Change”.

A parliamentary delegation hailed the high level of cooperation between the Kingdom’s executive and legislative branches to curb the pandemic, lauding the royal directives to deliver social and economic packages in support of citizens and residents.

Council of Representatives speaker and Parliamentary Executive Committee chairperson Speaker Fawzia bint Abdulla Zainal directed the delegation to take part in the virtual session, which was held by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The participants who took part in the webinar discussed the impact of the pandemic on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including climate change and the environment.

Bahrain’s Permanent Representatives to the IPU first deputy speaker Abdulnabi Salman, Shura Council first and second deputy chairmen Jamal Fakhroo and Jameela Salman, and other MPs and Shura Council members also took part in the webinar.

The delegation urged international concerted efforts to overcome the challenges resulting from the pandemic outbreak, and put in place global plans to mitigate the fallout on vital sectors related to the world economy.

It stressed the importance of ensuring the flow of basic commodities and exchanging information and results of medical research, in addition to supporting countries in need of help to combat COVID-19.

The delegation reiterated Bahrain’s keenness on strengthening cooperation with relevant international organisations, stressing the importance for all countries to continue implementing their SDGs.

Four arrested for robbery, assault

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Four individuals have been arrested for forced robbery and physically assaulting an Asian, the Ministry of Interior has reported.

The Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science director-general announced the detention of the quartet, who were between the ages of 22 and 28,

for stealing BD610 from their victim and physically assaulting him.

The director general said that an investigation into the assault led to identifying and arresting the suspects within 24 hours of the case being reported.

Legal proceedings were taken and the case has been referred to the Public Prosecution.

Fight pushes on against Iran’s terrorism financing

Bahrain’s Ambassador to the US highlights Kingdom’s war against terror through transparent banking laws

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Bahrain’s investigation discovered that Future Bank had hidden payments from established methods of regulatory scrutiny through a measure called “wire stripping”. Wire stripping refers to the falsification or removal of material identifying information from SWIFT messages in order to conceal the involvement of specific Iranian parties and banks in the underlying payment. Concealing this information often causes banks in other countries to violate their own regulatory obligations.

In some cases, Future Bank induced other foreign banks to engage in the illicit practice. In total, Future Bank “wire stripped” at least 5,051 payments with a total value of more than \$5 billion.

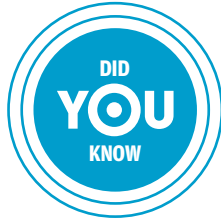
Furthermore, from 2008 to 2012, Future Bank concealed certain money transfers through the illicit use of an Alternative Messaging System (AMS). Without exception, the Iranian financial institutions identified in Future Bank’s AMS records had been sanctioned by the EU, the UN or the US. In total, more than 1,000 messages were transmitted through AMS in order to hide payments totalling an additional \$5 billion.

Between 2004 and 2015, Future Bank also actively worked with its customers to defeat sanctions. In one example, the bank conspired with the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines to “de-flag” and



Bahrain is under no illusion that it continues to be a target for Iran and other operators seeking to exploit its openness for nefarious purposes; for this reason, we have taken notice and we will not sit by the wayside, but rather double down on measures that prevent abuse while at the same time facilitating investment.

BAHRAIN AMBASSADOR TO THE US SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN RASHID AL KHALIFA



Bahrain is regarded as one of the oldest and most reputable financial capitals in the Middle East, being home to roughly 400 financial institutions including more than 114 licenced banks. Total banking assets reached \$201 billion in 2019, and financial services account for 16.5 per cent of gross domestic product

imposed additional fines of \$37 million on Future Bank and three other banks.

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Capital Governorate conducts sanitisation operation in Block 338

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The Capital Governorate conducted a sanitisation operation along Block 338 in Adliya as part of national efforts to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) disease.

The operation was conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the Capital Governorate Police Directorate, and the General Directorate of Civil Defence.

It was conducted in the presence of the Capital Governorate’s Social Programmes and Community Affairs Department director Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa.

Thirty-five volunteers from



Volunteers carrying out the sanitisation operation at Block 338

the Shabab Al Naim team carried out the operations. They had previously done the same in several other areas of the capital, including in Jid Ali, Juffair and Um Al Hassam.

Shaikh Isa praised the role of the community partnership that exists between residents, government agencies and civil society institutions in the sanitisation of the capital, with

the aim of creating a growing awareness in combatting COVID-19.

He praised the role played by all parties in overcoming this crisis and their efforts to attain the title of a healthy city.

The participation of volunteers in the sanitisation process comes after they enrolled in a training programme held by the governorate in cooperation with the Health Ministry. They were advised on how to properly carry out inspection and sanitisation campaigns and to assess the status in various facilities on their adherence to the health requirements and procedures issued by the authorities in the fight against the coronavirus.

Derasat to launch field study on economic expertise, practices

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The Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat) said it was launching an extensive field study to benefit from exceptional economic expertise and best practices, derived from experiences of member states of the Organisation of Economic

Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The study will involve interviewing Bahraini citizens currently working or having previously worked in OECD countries, and utilise their opinions to enrich developmental decisions in the Kingdom, Derasat said.

Candidates willing to participate in the study have been

urged to register on survey-monkey.com/r/derasat_study, to enable the Derasat team to reach out to them and schedule an appointment for a phone or online video interview.

The interviews, not exceeding 60 minutes, will start in August, and personal and intellectual data are subject to safety and security guaran-

tees, it added.

Derasat said it aspired to benefit from the candidates’ experiences as a qualitative addition to the research.

Candidates should be Bahraini citizens with professional expertise in economics and should have worked for at least one year in an OECD member state.