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 Rafael Nadal overcomes tough Diego Schwartzman test to reach last four | P12

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BUSINESS 5 Musk, Bezos, other billionaires avoid US income taxes: report

Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Getting vaccinated, booster shots and vaccines for 12-17 year olds protects everyone

Register now

healthalert.gov.bh

Embassy campaign to vaccinate all Indian expatriates

TDT | Manama

The Indian Embassy has come up with a campaign to fully vaccinate all the Indians living in Bahrain.

It includes those who have not been able to get themselves vaccinated due to varied reasons including but not limited to non-availability of an appropriate visa, CPR card, valid passport, or on visit visa.

The campaign will be conducted soon in association with the Indian community through the Indian Club, Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam (BKS), ICRF and World NRI Council.

The vaccination is scheduled to be conducted for adults above 18 years of age, either at the Indian Club or BKS premises.

It is requested to identify such individuals and pass on their relevant details

Also they can register in the following link: <https://forms.gle/pMT3v-1g3o4yVgnES8>

Bahrain greets Portuguese President



HM the King



HRH Prince Salman

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, have sent cables of congratulations to the Portuguese President, Marcelo Re-

belo de Sousa, on Portugal Day. HM the King wished President de Sousa health and happiness on the national occasion.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister sent a similar cable to the Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Costa.

Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Individuals vaccinated

Last update - 9:00 pm
9 June 2021

(First dose)

1014105

(Second dose)

845480

'Trace, test and treat'

Bahrain strategy working wonders to control spread of COVID-19; Daily number of cases declines

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's expansive contact tracing, testing and quarantining have reduced the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The "trace, test and treat" strategy has significantly reduced the infection cases and the country's death rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

According to the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the decision announced on 27 May to close non-essential businesses for two weeks has proved to be effective.

By 8 June, the number of cases had decreased to 19,238, down from 28,798 cases registered on 29 May.

The Taskforce said that after 25 June, various sectors will be gradually reopened, in compliance with necessary precautionary measures.

Taskforce member Lt. Col. Dr Manaf Al Qahtani stressed the importance of receiving a booster shot when required, as every vaccination has a finite period of effectiveness.

He explained that those who are vaccinated with the Sinopharm vaccine, can choose from



Taskforce members speak at a press conference held at BDF Hospital's Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research yesterday

two options for their booster dose, either a booster of Sinopharm or of Pfizer-BioNTech.

All other vaccines will eventually require a booster dose,

with timings to be announced at a future date.

Highlighting the effectiveness of all vaccines, Dr Al Qahtani noted that the percentage of

vaccinated people with active COVID-19 is very small, ranging from 1% to 2%.

Individuals who have received a Sinopharm vaccine, and are considered high-risk, will be eligible for a booster dose after three months from receiving their second dose. A six-month interval will apply to all those not considered high risk.

Dr Al Qahtani said that individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 in 2020, and who have received two doses of the Sinopharm vaccine, are eligible

for a booster dose 3 months from recovery. Those recovering in 2021, who have received two vaccination doses, do not require a booster dose.

Starting yesterday, active cases subject to home isolation, and in need of medical care can directly head to the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Center.

Meanwhile, the Health and Foreign Affairs Ministries are coordinating with Bahraini embassies abroad to ensure all citizens living abroad would be fully vaccinated.

Bahrain supports 'safe' world

P2

BAHRAIN COVID-19

ACTIVE CASES

17448

DEATHS

1171

DISCHARGED

236301

NEW CASES

1041

CRITICAL

316

210 fils (includes VAT)

6 084010 110021 >



The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments yesterday closed a mosque in the Southern Governorate for two weeks after discovering positive COVID-19 cases. Two community centres (maatams) in the Northern Governorate were also closed for two weeks for the same reason.

Two-month municipal fees reduced for 151 Bahraini families

TDT | Manama

Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Minister Essam bin Abdullah Khalaf yesterday issued an edict on reducing municipal fees for 151 Bahraini families living in rented houses for the months of April and May.

Khalaf said that the edict is in line with the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to alleviate the burden on the citizens.

It is also within the framework of the Cabinet's decision to help the citizens who live in rentals and home owners.

The Minister said that the move is based on His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's constant keenness to provide the requirements of decent living for all citizens, through reduced municipal fees, exempting low-income citizens from paying fees in the future, or dropping their



Minister Khalaf

unpaid debts.

He pointed out that the Ministry seeks to harness all its potentials and resources to improve the standard of living of citizens and reduce municipal fees on them.

He indicated that there is ongoing coordination between the Municipalities Affairs Department and the Customer Service Directorate at the Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) to reduce municipal fees in electricity and water bills for those families.

Support for 'safe' world

Bahrain maintains tough stance against weapons of mass destruction

● Keen to boost cooperation with international community in achieving regional and global security and stability

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is committed to boosting cooperation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in tackling the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

This was emphasised by Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah bin Faisal bin Jabur Al Doseri, as he met virtually yesterday with OPCW Director-General Fernando Arias.

During the meeting, Al Doseri praised the efforts exerted by Arias in promoting international cooperation and the organisation's prominent role in providing all means of support to all countries to achieve security and stability.

Al Doseri is also chairman of the National Committee on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapon and on their Destruction.



Al Doseri meets Arias remotely

“Bahrain's policy is consistent in supporting efforts aimed at eliminating weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and preventing their spread.”

- ABDULLAH BIN FAISAL BIN JABUR AL DOSERI

He noted that the world today is going through challenges and exceptional circumstances due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic but the Kingdom is

the agreement, stressing that Bahrain's policy is consistent in supporting efforts aimed at eliminating weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and preventing their spread.

The OPCW Director-General expressed his pride and appreciation for the constructive relations of cooperation with Bahrain, and on the implementation of international agreements to achieve desired goals.

He lauded the efforts of Bahrain in implementing the agreement at the national level through the enactment of legislation and training of its national cadres in all fields and sectors.

Arias hailed the commitment of the Assistant Foreign Minister to follow up on the work of the National Committee.

He also expressed thanks and appreciation to Bahrain for the continuous support since the organisation's inception.

Arias praised Bahrain's positive attitudes towards international and regional issues to ensure a world free of chemical weapons and weapons of mass destruction, wishing the kingdom further progress and prosperity.

The two sides also reviewed a number of issues of common interest during the meeting.

Bolstering Bahrain and Sri Lanka cooperation

● Al Zayani holds call with Regional Cooperation State Minister

TDT | Manama

Industry, Commerce and Tourism Minister Zayed bin Rashid Al Zayani yesterday held a phone call with Sri Lankan State Minister of Regional Cooperation Tharaka Balasuriya as they discussed ways to bolster cooperation between the two countries.

Al Zayani highlighted Bahrain's distinguished economic capabilities, which entitled it to be a favourable destination for regional and international investors.

This is the fruitful outcome of the successful policies adopted by the government,



Minister Al Zayani

including easy procedures to boost the economic sector and attract more investments and value-added mega projects, he said.

They also discussed areas of joint cooperation in many sectors, particularly entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Topics related to the tourism sector and other issues of mutual interest were also discussed.

Foreign Minister meets Brazil's Ambassador-Designate



Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani yesterday met through video conference the Ambassador-Designate of Brazil to the Kingdom of Bahrain, residing in Kuwait, Francisco Holanda. The meeting was also attended by the Ministry's Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Dr Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, and the Head of the Americas Affairs Sector, Ambassador Shaikh Abdullah bin Ali Al Khalifa. The two sides expressed their pride in the course of the distinct friendly relations between Bahrain and Brazil, which are based on mutual respect. They also stressed the desire to consolidate bilateral cooperation relations and further develop them.

Foreign Ministry Undersecretary meets with Jordanian Ambassador



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Consular and Administrative Affairs, Ambassador Tawfeeq Ahmed Al Mansoor, met virtually yesterday with the Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Rami Saleh Al Adwan, in the presence of Chief of the Arab Affairs Sector, Ahmed Mohammed Al Tarifi. During the meeting, they stressed the depth of strong fraternal relations between Bahrain and Jordan, in light of the constant keenness of the two countries on developing bilateral relations. They also reviewed a number of topics of common concern as well as ways to promote joint cooperation.

Foreign Minister receives IISS-Middle East Executive Director



Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani yesterday received in his office at the Ministry Executive Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in the Middle East (IISS-Middle East), Sir Tom Beckett. They discussed joint efforts of the Foreign Ministry and IISS-Middle East to organise the Manama Dialogue conference, which is hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain every year, and the necessary preparations to hold it at the highest standards.

Interior Minister receives British Ambassador



Minister of Interior, General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, received yesterday British Ambassador to Bahrain Roderick Drummond. They reviewed bilateral relations and issues of common interest.

Water and electricity projects worth \$1.53b

They are aimed at upgrading power supply systems across Bahrain and sustaining economic growth

● Deputy Prime Minister chairs Ministerial Committee meeting

● EWA planning and implementing various strategic projects

TDI | Manama

More than \$1.53 billion worth projects have been implemented in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the past decade, and more are underway, to boost the water and electricity services.

This was emphasised by Deputy Prime Minister and Ministerial Committee for Development and Infrastructure Projects Chairman Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa as he chaired the Ministerial Committee for Development and Infrastructure Projects meeting.

Shaikh Khalid said Bahrain's positive and rapid economic growth has been accompanied by a strong drive to provide high-standard infrastructure



The ongoing East Hidd water transmission networks project

through strategic projects, especially in the electricity and water areas.

The government's belief in the importance of electricity and water as sources of energy, and the backbone of services for various sectors, prompted it to instruct EWA to plan and implement quality projects.

EWA Minister Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak briefed the meeting on the projects to develop the electricity and water networks.

Shaikh Khalid thanked Al Mubarak and EWA Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer Shaikh Nawaf bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa and the personnel for their efforts to implement the government's programme for the 2019-2022 related to the development of electricity and water networks.

The programme is aimed at securing a supportive environment for sustainable development, enhancing the readiness of energy and water infrastructure, and raising the efficiency and sustainability of the services provided.

Shaikh Khalid said the EWA projects also aim to ensure that

energy reaches all regions of the Kingdom and that it is regularly and sustainably supplied with this vital service to meet the current and future needs of the residential, investment, commercial, industrial and other sectors.

"We have the right to be proud of the EWA high completion rates of 78% as an average of implementing its projects within the current government programme until May," he said.

Projects reviewed during the meeting include the 400 kV Electricity Transmission Network



“We have the right to be proud of the EWA high completion rates of 78% as an average of implementing its projects within the current government programme until May.”

- DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SHAIKH KHALID BIN ABDULLA AL KHALIFA

Development Project at a cost of \$740 million (Completed).

Others include the following: A 220-kV electricity transmission network development project (Phase 1) at a cost of \$200 million (96% completed).

It is scheduled to be completed in 2021 and aims to develop the 220- and 66-kV electrical transmission network to meet the growing demand for electricity and the transmission of electrical energy generated from power plants to industrial, commercial and residential centers

in Bahrain.

The 220- and 66-kilovolt electricity transmission network development project for housing projects - (Phase Two) at a cost of \$200 million (52% completed).

The construction of electricity transmission stations for Al Ramli housing project at a cost of \$50 million (55% completed).

The infrastructure development project on Hawar Islands at a cost of \$193 million (40% completed). It aims to provide Hawar Islands region with the electricity it needs for future urban development and all vital facilities on the islands.

The project to construct a water distribution station for the Ramli housing project at a cost of \$30 million. The project is 30% completed and is expected to be finished in 2023.

The project to develop water transmission networks in Salman Town, Khalifa Town and East Hidd at a cost of \$70 million. Started in 2021, it is expected to be completed in 2023. It is currently 30% completed.

The project to develop a water transmission network (Bustaiteen and Juffair) at a cost of \$50 million. It was completed in 2020.

Private sector's unity key to GCC economic growth: Nass



Nass with officials of GCC chambers and federations of chambers

TDI | Manama

Unifying efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council private sector and aligning them to the vision of their leaders are important to reinforce regional and international economic standing and competitiveness and enable the GCC to withstand threats and fluctuations.

This was emphasised by Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) chairman Sameer Nass yesterday during a keynote address at the 131st board meeting of the Union of Arab Chambers in Dubai.

Nass, also chairman of the Bahrain Chamber Chairman of the Federation of GCC Chambers, stressed the vital role of the private sector in shaping GCC's common economic decisions and laying the foundation of the region's economic integration in translation to the GCC leaders' aspiration.

He also underlined the importance of achieving food security for the region and launching the GCC common

market.

The event was attended by GCC's Secretary General Dr Nayef Al Hajraf and the chairmen of GCC member chambers and federations of chambers, in the presence of the Secretary-General of the Federation of GCC Chambers Dr Saud Al Meshari.

Commencing the meeting, Dr Al Hajraf stressed on the importance of consolidating efforts and focusing on achieving long-term strategic goals that serve the aspiration of the GCC member states of achieving economic integration such as the GCC common market, customs union, and the GCC railway as endorsed by the leaders during the late Summit of Sultan Qaboos and Shaikh Sabah held in Al Ula, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Dr Al Hajraf underlined the importance of encouraging and supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as they constitute a key component of the economy of the region and contribute to enhancing the region's economic diversity and vigour.

Woman on trial for marrying three men

TDI | Manama

An Arab woman, in her 30s, is standing trial for getting married to three men, all of whom were friends, simultaneously, the High Criminal Court heard.

The woman managed to deceive the three friends, who believed that she was single and convinced them to get married to her.

According to court files, all the three victims paid a dowry worth a combined total of BD4,500, and the woman embezzled the money.

The woman was able to fool them after she forged her personal information providing a different identity to each victim. She stayed with her first victim for four months, during which she tied the knot with the second victim.

The woman told the Public Prosecution that she was a divorcee when she married each one of them, but such allegations were deemed untrue following investigation.

Largest central solar energy system project deal signed

● It will provide clean energy for The Bahrain Mall

TDI | Manama

Majid Al Futtaim Company and Yellow Door Energy Company signed an agreement virtually to install the largest central solar energy system with a maximum production capacity of 6.2 megawatts to provide clean energy for The Bahrain Mall.

It is under the patronage of Sustainable Energy Authority (SEA) President Dr Abdulhussein bin Ali Mirza.

The event was attended by Chief Sustainability Officer at Majid Al Futtaim Holding Ibrahim Al Zu'bi, Carrefour Bahrain Director at Majid Al Futtaim Retail Jerome Eckel, Chief Commercial Officer at Yellow Door Energy Rory McCarthy, CIO of Economic Development



An artist's impression of the project

Board Mahmood Al Aradi and a number of experts from the Sustainable Energy Authority (SEA) and representatives of Majid Al Futtaim, Carrefour Bahrain and Yellow Door Energy.

It is considered a pioneering project and a great initiative for the private sector to support the national efforts to imple-

ment the National Renewable Energy Plan by encouraging the use of clean energy and reduce electricity consumption costs, in addition to reducing the carbon footprint of buildings and major commercial facilities, thus contributing in achieving national goals related to renewable and sustainable energy resources.

RBAF participates in 25th meeting of GCC Air Armed Forces



Commander of the Royal Bahrain Air Force (RBAF) Air Vice-Marshal Shaikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Khalifa participated virtually in the 25th GCC Air Force and Air Defense Commanders of the Armed Forces. The meeting reviewed a number of topics related to joint military action among the GCC states regarding the air force and air defense, and ways to enhance military cooperation.

'Spoiled and expired' food products seized

More than 94,000 kept in two warehouses in Hamala and Juffair; Public Prosecution issues order to destroy them at Askar landfill

● **Individuals behind business operation slapped with jail terms and fines, and ordered to be deported**

TDT | Manama

Huge quantities of spoiled, adulterated and expired food products were seized and destroyed at the Askar landfill in a successful crackdown on commercial fraud.

The move came following a decision issued by the Public Prosecution assigning the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism to destroy more than 94,000 unsafe items that were stored in two warehouses, in Hamala and Juffair.

The Ministry's Inspection Department officials carried out the process of confiscating and disposing them in coordination with competent authorities from the Interior Ministry, Health



An inspection team at a Hamala warehouse before the spoiled food products were disposed at the Askar landfill

Ministry and Municipality of the Southern Region.

Assistant Undersecretary for Control and Resources Abdulaziz Muhammad Al Ashraf said that the court had slapped those individuals who are involved in the business operation with jail

terms and fines ranging from BD2,000 to BD5,000, as well as deportation.

According to court files, the validity dates of the "spoiled, adulterated and expired" food products were deliberately altered to extend shelf life and

make them appear safe and fit for public consumption.

Transporting and destroying the goods required great efforts due to the huge quantities and poor storage. The main warehouse in Hamala stores more than 80,000 expired products



According to court files, the validity dates of the "spoiled, adulterated and expired" food products were deliberately altered to extend shelf life and make them appear safe and fit for public consumption.

14,000

Expired products such as rice, lentils, chickpeas, black pepper, turmeric, pickles, tomato paste, grape leaves, corn and coconut powder, among others, were stored in a warehouse in Juffair



of 80 brands.

A warehouse in Juffair keeps around 14,000 expired products such as rice, lentils, chickpeas, black pepper, turmeric, pickles, tomato paste, grape leaves, corn and coconut powder, among others.

The Assistant Undersecretary expressed his thanks and

praise to the Public Prosecution specialists for their diligent follow-up and continuous support, and to the Interior and Health Ministries for their cooperation in cracking down on any type of commercial fraud that affects the security and health of people, and in taking all legal measures against violators.

New traffic light installed on northern Shaikh Zayed Road

● **The project will ensure a consistent flow of traffic and make the roads safer**

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning has opened a new traffic light on the northern Shaikh Zayed Road at its intersection with Street 8.

It is one of the important strategic development projects on the main road network in the Kingdom.

It represents the main ar-



The new traffic light at the intersection

tery for transporting traffic from the villages of Aali and Salmabad and Madinat Zayed towards Shaikh Khalifa bin

Salman Street to Manama and vice versa.

The project will ease access to the educational district in

Isa Town and solve the traffic jams in front of the Driving School and Bahrain National Stadium.

The total value of the project is BD23,400,000, funded by the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. First phase of work on the traffic light within the Shaikh Zayed Road development project started in August 2019. The first part was opened on 16 December Street according to the time plan in November 2020, while the second part was opened last February.

The traffic light on the same street with the southern intersection of the Al Ramli entrance was also opened early this month.

Bahrain takes part in remote OIC preparatory meeting



Dr Shaikha Rana at the online meeting

TDT | Manama

Higher Education Council Secretary General Dr Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Dajj Al Khalifa participated yesterday in the preparatory meeting for the second summit of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) which is set to be hosted by the UAE on June 16 under the theme "Science, Technology and Innovation: Opening New Prospects".

The preparatory meeting, which will continue today, cast light on the proposal of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation's Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation for the promotion and cooperation of science and technology activities among the OIC member states (COM-STECH).

It also reviewed and approved the concluding document of OIC's second summit on science and technology as well as preparations for the summit.

Dr Shaikha Rana, who is also the Deputy Chairperson of the Higher Education Board of Trustees, voiced appreciation for participating in the preparatory meeting, which reflects Bahrain's support to OIC's continuous efforts to boost relations among the member states and promote cooperation between the organisation and the world.

She praised OIC's keenness to enhance cooperation between the member states in science and technology given their role in ensuring sustainable development.

She also affirmed the importance of sharing experiences and bolstering cooperation between the organisation's higher education establishments and well-reputed international universities to establish fruitful academic and research partnerships. Dr Shaikha Rana wished the second summit on science and technology every success in achieving forecast goals and enhancing joint cooperation among OIC member states.

Inmate dies of COVID at SMC

TDT | Manama

A 48-year-old male inmate died of coronavirus (COVID-19) yesterday at Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC).

Hussein Ahmed Issa Barakat was being treated at SMC under the supervision and care of the Health Ministry. His condition required his placement on a respirator in recent days.

A review of the deceased's medical records has confirmed that he was vaccinated in February and March this year.

In accordance with COVID-19 procedures for inmates, the deceased was isolated following a positive COVID-19 test and placed under the care of the Ministry prior to his transfer to the SMC on 29 May.

The deceased was in regular contact with his family throughout his illness, via video and voice calls.

The General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation expressed its sincere condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.

Capital Municipality official visits Manama Central Market

TDT | Manama

The Director General of the Capital Municipality, Eng. Muhammad Saad Al Sahli, made an inspection visit to the Manama Central Market to make sure the precautionary measures against the coronavirus (COVID-19) are being followed strictly, and the smooth flow of commercial activities in its various sections.

Al Sahli said that the Municipality is keen to continue operating the Manama Central Market and the rest of the markets in accordance with the regulatory requirements. The Municipality is committed



Eng Al Sahli during his visit

to implementing precautionary and preventive measures to prevent the spread of the virus, with the aim of sustaining service provision at the Manama Central Market.

During the visit, Al Sahli listened to a number of traders and investors who promised to adhere to the health protocols for the safety of everyone.

Alba scoops best corporate governance award

TDT | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain yesterday announced receiving the 'Best Corporate Governance Award' in Bahrain by Ethical Boardroom for 2021.

The Ethical Boardroom Corporate Governance Awards recognise companies for their exceptional leadership in governance to include gender diversity.

Commenting on the Award, Alba's Chairman of the Board of Directors, Shaikh Daij bin Salman bin Daij Al Khalifa, said: "Corporate Governance is about the way we do business in Alba, incorporating it in every business activity we have, and this award is a statement that our people participation is the essence of our strong governance. Environment, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) matters sit at the top of Alba's Board and Management priorities and ESG is fully integrated into our



Shaikh Daij bin Salman bin Daij Al Khalifa

vision, mission and values."

As a dual-listed company both on Bahrain Bourse and London Stock Exchange, Alba operates in line with a set of Board-approved Corporate Governance principles in line with The Code of Bahrain (2018) and is monitored by Alba's Board Nomination, Remuneration and Corporate Governance Committee.

Alba will release the fifth edition of its Sustainability Report by the end of Q2 2021.

BDB continues to support SME Sector

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Development Bank, a specialist Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises, emphasized its commitment to continue supporting the SME sector on the path to recovery from the global pandemic.

The bank announced that during the first quarter of 2021 that it has extended 153 financing facilities to new and existing SMEs. These facilities, totalling BD 6.09 million, are poised to facilitate the creation of 100 new jobs. Included in this are facilities totalling BD 371k under the "BDB-Riyad Scheme" to support women-owned enterprises. Additionally, the bank provided facilities totalling BD 157k under the Fisheries & Agriculture Scheme.

In line with Central Bank of Bahrain directives, the bank also said it deferred payment instalments falling due from January 1, 2021, to June 30, 2021, for all eligible applicants of this programme.

The bank reported a net profit for Q1 2021 of BD 301k and maintains a healthy Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) of 62.45%. The bank also announced having a prudent credit impairment coverage to ensure sustainability over



Sanjeev Paul

the long term.

Commenting on the performance, Sanjeev Paul, Group Chief Executive Officer of BDB Group, said: "The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on all businesses. The impact has been especially severe for SMEs, which tend to be the most vulnerable. With the support of its various stakeholders, BDB continues to strive to support SMEs and entrepreneurs to weather this difficult environment".

"The group was quick to respond to changing market and customer needs and its fast-tracking its digital transformation strategy, which is expecting completion during 2021. This will further enhance our ability to support the SME community and improve our banking experience."

In a world first, El Salvador makes bitcoin legal tender

Reuters

El Salvador has become the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender after Congress approved President Nayib Bukele's proposal to embrace the cryptocurrency.

With 62 out of 84 possible votes, lawmakers voted in favour of the move to create a law to adopt bitcoin, despite concern about the potential impact on El Salvador's program with the International Monetary Fund.

Bukele has touted the use of

bitcoin for its potential to help Salvadorans living abroad to send remittances back home, while saying the U.S. dollar will also continue as legal tender.

"It will bring financial inclusion, investment, tourism, innovation and economic development for our country," Bukele said in a tweet shortly before the vote in Congress, which is controlled by his party and allies.

The use of bitcoin will be optional for individuals and would not bring risks to users, Bukele said.

United Insurance joins project for new BIBF building in Bahrain Bay

TDT | Manama

The United Insurance Company announced joining hands with the Bahrain Institute of Banking & Finance as part of a corporate sponsorship project within the BIBF new building in Bahrain Bay.

The agreement sees a study hall named after the United Insurance Company at the BIBF's new state-of-the-art building, with an expected inauguration later this year to serve the training needs of the financial sector in Bahrain and beyond.

On this occasion, the Manager of United Insurance Company, Maysa Al Kooheji, stated, "This initiative comes in line with our vision to prepare well-educated



Officials during the deal signing

generations, with specialised skills to continue advancing the Insurance sector in Bahrain."

On his part, BIBF Director, Dr Ahmed Al Shaikh said, "This national project represents a

pivotal stage in the journey of human capital development, providing the right training infrastructure for learners to support various sectors in Bahrain and the national economy as a

whole."

The construction of the BIBF's new landmark, which commenced last year, has a total structural area of 25,000 square meters.

Musk, Bezos, other billionaires avoid US income taxes: report

- The bombshell report showed Amazon Chairman Jeff Bezos paid no income tax in 2007 and 2011, while Tesla chief Elon Musk avoided all payments in 2018

- ProPublica says the billionaires did nothing illegal in their tax declarations, but employed tax-avoidance strategies "beyond the reach of ordinary people."

- The report comes days after G7 finance ministers endorsed a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 percent

AFP News

Several of the richest Americans have paid zero income tax in some years, according to an investigative report published Tuesday that comes as Washington weighs new proposals to address tax avoidance by the wealthiest individuals and companies.

The bombshell report, by New York-based journalism nonprofit ProPublica, showed Amazon Chairman Jeff Bezos paid no income tax in 2007 and 2011, while Tesla chief Elon Musk



ProPublica says it has seen the tax returns of some of the world's richest people, including Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk and Warren Buffett.

avoided all payments in 2018.

Some of the richest Americans "pay little in income tax compared to their massive wealth -- sometimes, even nothing," said ProPublica, which did not disclose how it obtained the confidential tax data.

Others who paid nothing to the Internal Revenue Service in some years included news industry billionaire and former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, activist investor billionaire Carl Icahn, and philanthropist and financial giant George Soros.

ProPublica says the billionaires did nothing illegal in their tax declarations, but employed tax-avoidance strategies "beyond the reach of ordinary people."

They also benefited from the way taxable income is defined in the US tax code, since it does not take into account the growing value of assets like stock and property, and only taxes proceeds from sales of those items.

The report comes days after G7 finance ministers endorsed

a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 percent, one of several tax proposals aimed at ensuring profitable multinationals pay their fair share.

Other efforts include Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren's initiative to tax the super-wealthy, including the value of their stock holdings and homes, rather than focusing on income alone.

"Our tax system is rigged for billionaires who don't make their fortunes through income, like working families do," Warren said as she published the ProPublica article on Twitter.

"It is time for a #WealthTax in America to make the ultra-rich finally pay their fair share."

Demolishing the myth

ProPublica's report is based on IRS tax returns of extremely wealthy people over more than 15 years.

"Taken together, it demolishes the cornerstone myth of the American tax system: that everyone pays their fair share and the richest Americans pay

the most," the article said.

The Treasury Department and other authorities are investigating the release of the tax returns.

"The unauthorised disclosure of confidential government information is illegal," Treasury spokeswoman Lily Adams told AFP.

The issue has been referred to Treasury's inspector general, as well as the FBI and federal prosecutors in Washington, "all of whom have independent authority to investigate."

Bezos in 2011 reported that his investment losses exceeded his income, meaning he could report a loss for the year. He also received a \$4,000 tax credit for his children that year, according to the report.

Queries to staff for Bezos, Musk, Bloomberg, Icahn and Soros did not garner an immediate comment.

A spokesman for Soros told ProPublica that Soros did not owe taxes between 2016 and 2018 because his investments lost money, however, he supports higher taxes for the wealthy -- something he has spoken about publicly.

Bloomberg and Icahn told the publication they had paid all taxes they owed.

ProPublica found that the rich pay far below the official 37% rate on the highest incomes if their taxes are compared to how much Forbes magazine reports their wealth has increased in a given year.

What ProPublica calls the "true tax rate" means that Buffett, for example, paid only 0.1% in taxes between 2014 and 2018.

Biden embarks on 8-day trip to Europe

Reuters

US President Joe Biden departs for Britain on Wednesday on his first trip abroad since taking office, an eight-day mission to rebuild trans-Atlantic ties strained during the Trump era and to reframe relations with Russia.

The trip represents a test of the Democratic president's ability to manage and repair re-

lationships with major allies who grew disenchanted with then-President Donald Trump's trade tariffs and withdrawal from international treaties.

"Will the democratic alliances and institutions that shaped so much of the last century prove their capacity against modern-day threats and adversaries? I believe the answer is yes. And this week in Europe, we



have the chance to prove it," Biden said in an opinion article

published in the Washington Post.

His summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 16 in Geneva is the capstone to the trip, an opportunity to raise US concerns directly with Putin about ransomware attacks emanating from Russia, Moscow's aggression against Ukraine and a host of other issues.

News in brief

◆ **President Joko Widodo said on Wednesday he hoped Indonesia's COVID-19 vaccination rollout will hit one million shots a day by July**, as authorities opened up inoculations to anyone aged over 18 in Jakarta to contain increased transmission in the capital. Health officials in the world's fourth most populous country, which aims to vaccinate 181.5 million people by next year, are trying to speed up the rollout after facing some supply issues. During a visit to Depok, south of Jakarta, the president said he wanted vaccinations to hit a targeted 700,000 doses a day this month and then rise again.



Indonesia aims to speed up vaccinations as Jakarta opens to over 18s

◆ **Gunmen shot dead 10 Afghans working for the international demining organisation** the Halo Trust in an attack on their camp in the north of the country, Halo said yesterday. Halo did not attribute blame for Tuesday's attack, saying only that an "unknown armed group" carried it out. Afghan officials blamed it on Taliban insurgents. Reuters had earlier erroneously reported that Halo had said the Taliban were responsible for the killings.



Gunmen kill at least 10 Afghans working for mine-clearing agency

◆ **One of the top universities in China is under fire for using women to lure applicants in a sexually suggestive online advertisement, with critics saying the college is objectifying women.** Nanjing University (NJU) posted the advertisement on Weibo on Monday, the first day of the gaokao exams, China's national college entrance tests. The advertisement featured six photos of current students holding up signs in front of different parts of the campus. Two of the photos attracted the most criticism. One included a pretty woman holding up a sign that read, "Do you want to live at the library with me, from morning till night?" and the other said, "Do you want me to become part of your youth?"

Top Chinese university under fire for using sex to sell school



◆ **A US pharmacist has been jailed for three years after pleading guilty to tampering** with hundreds of Moderna coronavirus vaccines, the Justice Department said on Tuesday. Steven R. Brandenburg, 46, "purposefully removed" vaccine vials from their refrigerator unit even though they must be stored at a certain temperature until used, court documents said. The pharmacist was also ordered to pay \$83,800 in compensation to the Wisconsin hospital where he worked. He removed the vials on two overnight shifts in December, leaving them outside for hours before returning them to be used on recipients the following day. A total of 57 people received vaccines with the vials that Brandenburg had tampered with, the Justice Department statement said.

US pharmacist jailed for 3 years after tampering with Covid vaccines



Wisconsin hospital where he worked. He removed the vials on two overnight shifts in December, leaving them outside for hours before returning them to be used on recipients the following day. A total of 57 people received vaccines with the vials that Brandenburg had tampered with, the Justice Department statement said.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths
1 USA	34,242,866	613,052
2 India	29,089,069	353,557
3 Brazil	17,038,260	477,307
4 France	5,719,937	110,137
5 Turkey	5,300,236	48,341
6 Russia	5,156,250	124,895
7 UK	4,528,442	127,854
8 Italy	4,235,592	126,690
9 Argentina	4,008,771	82,667
10 Germany	3,712,595	90,084
11 Spain	3,711,027	80,309
12 Colombia	3,611,602	92,923
13 Iran	2,990,714	81,519
14		

Global tally

174,822,809

Deaths

3,764,741

Recovered:

158,276,479

New cases

+87,125

New deaths

+2,159

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	269,527		15,437		197,832	56,258
Saudi Arabia	461,242	+1,274	7,503	+15	443,810	9,929
UAE	587,244		1,704		566,677	18,863
Kuwait	320,257		1,801		303,637	14,819
Oman	228,579	+1,931	2,448	+14	206,844	19,287
Qatar	218,980		570		215,899	2,511

Three killed in Russian COVID-19 ward blaze, official blames ventilator



A view shows firefighting vehicles following an accident at a hospital in the city of Ryazan, Russia

Reuters

Three people were killed yesterday in a blaze that broke out at a Russian hospital treating patients with COVID-19, the authorities said, with one official suggesting a faulty ventilator was to blame.

Since the start of the pandemic, Russia has reported several fires at intensive care units that doctors said were caused by malfunctioning ventilators used to treat patients severely ill with the virus.

The fire broke out in the early hours of Wednesday at a hospital in the city of Ryazan, some 180 kilometres (112 miles) from Moscow, in a ward

treating COVID-19 patients.

The region's governor, Nikolai Lyubimov, told state television that a ventilator in the ward had overheated and caught fire, the Interfax news agency reported.

Nurses attempted to extinguish the blaze, but were unsuccessful in doing so, with some of them sustaining severe burns, the governor said.

The Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said it had opened a criminal case to determine whether the fire had been caused by negligence. It said the investigation was considering different possible causes of the blaze.

Iraq releases Iran-aligned commander arrested on terror charges



Qasim Muslih, who commands the Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF) is seen after being released in Kerbala, Iraq

Reuters

Iraq has released an Iran-aligned militia commander arrested in May on terrorism-related charges after authorities found insufficient evidence against him, in the latest blow to government attempts to rein in armed groups.

Security forces arrested Qasim Muslih, an Iran-aligned paramilitary leader who operates mostly in Iraq's western Anbar province and is from the southern holy city of Kerbala, on May 26.

The military had said the charges were terrorism-related but did not give details.

Security officials said at the time the arrest was linked to attacks on US forces stationed in Iraq. Some media and an-

alysts said it was because of Muslih's alleged involvement in the killing of peaceful pro-democracy activists.

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has placed himself publicly in opposition to Iran-backed militias and parties, and Muslih's arrest was a major attempt to rein in their power.

His release without prosecution is a blow to those efforts and one of a number of unsuccessful attempts to crack down on armed groups.

The two most high-profile moves against Iran-backed factions - the arrest of Muslih in May and the detention in June 2020 of fighters allegedly involved in rocket fire against U.S. targets - have each resulted in no prosecutions and all those arrested being released.

UAE bars entry for travellers from Zambia, DR Congo, Uganda

Reuters

The United Arab Emirates will suspend entry for travellers coming from Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda starting June 11, as part of efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus, the state news agency WAM said yesterday.

Malaysia king meets politicians as discontent rumbles over virus crisis

Reuters

Malaysia's king started a series of meetings with leaders of political parties on Wednesday, amid public discontent over the government's handling of a coronavirus crisis that has forced the nation into a third lockdown.

Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's administration imposed strict COVID-19 measures from June 1-14 to address a surge in infections and deaths, on top of an ongoing national emergency to curb the spread of the disease.

But those have led to public frustration over a perceived slow rollout of vaccinations, haphazard policymaking and uneven enforcement of coronavirus curbs that critics say royalty and elites have been allowed to skirt.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, who spent an hour on Wednesday with King Al-Sultan Abdullah, said the national emergency has done more harm than good.



Malaysia's King, Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah, inspects an honour guard during the 62nd Merdeka Day (Independence Day) celebrations in Putrajaya, Malaysia

Man he...
medie...



Still images taken from a video show a man...

● A police source identified the suspect as 28-year-old Damien Tarel

● Macron was on a tour to take the pulse of the country before the next presidential election

Reuters

The man alleged to have slapped French President Emmanuel Macron in the

Israel appeal Charles over

Reuters | Jerusalem

Israel's president appealed to Prince Charles yesterday to help bring to Israel a 2-year-old Israeli girl with a serious brain injury, after the High Court in London ruled that her life-sustaining care in a British hospital be withdrawn.

The family of Alta Fixsler say their Ultra-Orthodox Jewish faith means they cannot agree with any course of action that would bring her death any closer. They have sought to appeal the May 28 ruling.

In its decision, the court found that no action could improve Alta's condition and that the transfer procedure itself could cause her suffering.

In a letter on Wednesday, Israeli

Elephants in India t

AFP | Coimbatore, India

Twenty-eight elephants have been tested for Covid-19 at a forest reserve in southern India, officials said yesterday, after the reported death of a rare Asiatic lion from the virus.

In what is believed to be the first known death of an animal in India from the coronavirus, a nine-year-old lioness at a zoo in Chennai in Tamil Nadu state passed away in early June, local media reported.

The feline was among nine lions that had tested positive for the virus, including two who were in critical condition, Chennai's The New Indian Express newspaper reported last week.

1786

A landslide dam on the Dadu River caused by earthquake ten days earlier collapses, killing 100,000 in the Sichuan province of China

1963

US Equal Pay Act signed into law by President John F. Kennedy

1977

Apple Computer ships its first Apple II computers



2003

The Spirit Rover is launched, beginning NASA's Mars Exploration Rover mission

World over Macron slapping was medieval martial arts enthusiast



Man, later identified as 28-year-old Damien Tarel, slaps French President Emmanuel Macron in the face during a visit in Tain-L'Hermitage, France



face ran a club for enthusiasts of medieval swordsmanship and had no previous criminal record, sources close to the investigation said on Wednesday.

A police source identified the suspect as 28-year-old Damien Tarel. He is under investigation for assault against a public official, the local prosecutor said.

Macron, who has been on a tour to take the pulse of the country after the pandemic and less than a year before the next presidential election, was hit on Tuesday during a walkabout in southern France as he greeted a small crowd of onlookers.

Tarel, dressed in a khaki T-shirt, then shouted "Down with Macronia" and "Montjoie Saint Denis", the battle cry of the French army when the country was a monarchy.

A source close to the investigation described him as someone who was "a bit lost, a bit geeky, a bit of a gamer".

Tarel and a second man were still in police custody yesterday, the source added. The charge of assault against a public official carries a maximum sentence of three years in jail and a 45,000 euro fine.

Tarel managed a local club of martial arts enthusiasts focused on the practice of historical European martial arts, including traditional swordsmanship.

Macron said he had not feared for his safety, and continued shaking hands with members of the public after he was struck.

In an interview with the Dauphine Libere newspaper after the incident, Macron said: "You cannot have violence, or hate, either in speech or actions. Otherwise, it's democracy itself that is threatened."

Macron said he had not feared for his safety, and continued shaking hands with members of the public after he was struck.

Macron has been targeted before by disenchanted citizens. In 2016, when he was economy minister, he was pelted with eggs by hardleft trade unionists over labour reforms and two years later was left shaken after he was heckled by anti-government protesters.

BETTER
YOU
KNOW

Macron has been targeted before by disenchanted citizens. In 2016, when he was economy minister, he was pelted with eggs by hardleft trade unionists over labour reforms and two years later was left shaken after he was heckled by anti-government protesters.

UK govt slams students for ditching 'colonial' queen portrait



London (AFP)

The UK government has criticised graduate students at the University of Oxford who removed a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, claiming it represented a colonial past that many found offensive.

The move comes as students across the country have played a leading role in protests against historical figures with links to the British empire or slavery.

The queen "has become the latest victim of cancel culture", or ostracism of those whose opinions are deemed unacceptable, the right-leaning Daily Telegraph wrote on Wednesday.

Graduate students at Magdalen College took down the coloured print of the queen from their recreation room after a majority vote, because "for some students, depictions of the monarch and the British monarchy represent recent colonial history", The Times reported.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson reacted angrily Tuesday night, calling the move "simply absurd".

"She is the head of state and a symbol of what is best about the UK," he tweeted.

Hanging portraits of the queen is not customary in state educational institutions, but some colleges at Cambridge and Oxford universities have portraits on display.

"It was decided that the room should be a welcoming, neutral place for all members, regardless of background, demographic, or views," said Matthew Katzman, head of the Middle Common Room committee at Magdalen.

Parents to Britain's Prince Charles for terminally-ill Israeli girl



An Israeli father asks for his critically ill daughter to be sent to Israel, in Manchester

President Reuven Rivlin urged Charles, the heir to the British throne, to help to fulfill Alta's parents' request to bring her to Israel.

"Their religious beliefs directly oppose ceasing medical treatment

that could extend her life and have made arrangements for her safe transfer and continued treatment in Israel," Rivlin wrote.

"It would be a tragedy if these parents' wishes could not be accommodated in a way that respects both the law and their religious beliefs."

Israel's health minister appealed to Britain's government last week on the family's behalf to say that Israel wished to take her in for treatment.

Alta's father, Avraham Fixsler, said he had Israeli doctors who were willing to come to Manchester, where she is in hospital, and give the family their options for treating her.

"We believe she is not suffering and we want to have the right to keep her," he said.

Havana Zoo introduces Yanek, a rare white tiger, Cuba's first

Reuters

A Havana zoo has introduced the country's first-ever white Bengal tiger, a rare type not known to exist in the wild.

Mother Fiona gave birth to four cubs -- including white tiger Yanek -- at the National Zoo of Cuba in March; but only now, it said, are the cubs independent enough to be presented to the public as they play and swim in their special zoo pool.

"We are very happy that a white tiger has been born in Cuba; it is the first time that this has happened," said the animals' caretaker Angel Cordero.

They were also the first tiger cubs born on Cuban soil in more than 20 years.

Along with Yanek, Fiona and fellow Bengal tiger Garfield are the proud parents of sisters Melissa and Gaby, and brother Miguel.



Elephants tested for coronavirus after rare lion's death



"After lions in Vandalur Zoo tested positive for Covid-19, we were asked to test the camp elephants as a precautionary measure," a forest ranger at Mudumalai Tiger Reserve in the south of Tamil Nadusaid yesterday.

Nasal and anal samples were taken from 28 elephants, including two calves, on Tuesday, and sent to the Indian Veterinary Research Institute in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. The animals' handlers lifted their trunks to collect a sample from a nostril, according to video shared by the reserve.

Elephants at a reserve in southern India have been tested for Covid-19 after a lion died of the virus

serve. They also inserted swabs into the elephants' rectums. The results are expected to arrive in a week.

"The animals had no symptoms, it was just as a precaution," the ranger said.

"There was no difficulty in taking the sample swabs themselves as these are all trained elephants."

Some 21 tigers in a zoo in the eastern state of Jharkhand underwent virus tests last week after a 10-year-old tiger with a fever died, local media reported.

The tiger had returned a negative rapid antigen test but officials said they were also awaiting results from an RT-PCR test, the Press Trust of India reported.

TOP 4 TWEETS

01

Here is an interesting opportunity for youngsters to harness their writing skills and also contribute to India's intellectual discourse. Know more... <https://innovateindia.mygov.in/yuva/>

@narendramodi

02

Unequal vaccine distribution risks mutations forming and prolonging the #COVID19 pandemic. @G7 and all governments must cooperate on vaccine roll-out and breaking down vaccine trade barriers in order to simultaneously suppress the virus. [#VaccineEquity #G7UK](http://bit.ly/ukg721)

@DrTedros

03

Climate risks keep rising - we must act decisively. With control over 35 trillion USD of assets, insurance is a major player in the global economy. Today I called on the insurance sector to direct their investments towards climate solutions, not pollution.

@antonioGuterres

04

May global temps are out for the @CopernicusECMWF ERA5 dataset. It was the 5th warmest May on record, after 2020, 2016, 2017, and 2019. May temperatures have risen around 0.7C in the past 40 years, and was 1.2C above the temperatures of the late 1800s.

@hausfath

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

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THE DAILY **tribune**

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Israel says Gaza tower that housed AP doubled as Hamas eWarfare site

Reuters

Israel's military said on Tuesday that a tower block in Gaza housing the US-based Associated Press which was destroyed in an Israeli air strike was also used by the enclave's Islamist rulers Hamas as an electronic warfare site.

Israel's destruction of the 12-storey tower, which also housed Qatar-based media group Al Jazeera, during last month's fighting with Hamas and other militants drew international condemnation and calls by Israel's main ally the United States to protect journalists.

The al-Jalaa building in Gaza City had been evacuated after its owner received advanced warning of the May 15 strike. But the AP says it has received no evidence of a Hamas presence that posed a threat, and



A tower housing AP, Al Jazeera offices collapses after Israeli missile strikes

has called for an independent investigation.

AP executives met Israel's ambassador to Washington and the United Nations, Gilad Erdan, on Monday to discuss the building's destruction.

"Israeli authorities maintain that the building housing our bureau was destroyed because of a Hamas presence that posed an urgent threat. We have yet to receive evidence to support these claims," the AP said in a

statement.

"AP continues to call for the full release of any evidence the Israelis have so that the facts are public."

In a statement, Erdan reiterated an Israeli claim that the building housed Hamas military intelligence, saying its personnel there were "developing an electronic jamming system to be used against the Iron Dome defense system".

Israel's Iron Dome intercept-

tors shot down most of the more than 4,300 rockets fired from Gaza during the 11-day conflict, during which Israeli air strikes and Gaza rocket fire left more than 250 Palestinians and 13 in Israel dead.

The Israeli military said the purpose of the strike "was to curtail these enemy capabilities, including destroying special equipment, and preventing their use during the operation... The strike was designed to collapse the building in order to ensure the destruction of the special means."

Erdan said Israel did all it could to avoid civilian harm.

"AP is one of the most important news agencies in the world and Israel doesn't think that AP employees were aware it was being cynically used in this way by Hamas for a secret unit," he said.

US to Iran: mess with IAEA monitoring and put talks at risk

Reuters

The United States told Iran on Tuesday that it must let the UN atomic agency continue to monitor its activities, as laid out in an agreement that has been extended until June 24, or put wider talks on reviving the Iran nuclear deal at risk.

The International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran reached a three-month agreement in February cushioning the blow of Tehran's decision to reduce its cooperation with the agency by ending extra monitoring measures introduced by the 2015 deal.

Under that new side agreement, which on May 24 was extended by a month, data continues to be collected in a black-box-type arrangement, with the IAEA only able to access it at a later date. It is unclear whether the agreement will be extended again; the IAEA has said such negotiations are getting harder.

"We strongly encourage Iran to avoid any action that would prevent the collection of or

IAEA access to the information necessary for it to quickly re-establish ... continuity of knowledge," a US statement to a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation Board of Governors said.



Indirect US-Iran talks on reviving the deal are due to resume in Vienna this week. The data covered by the separate IAEA-Iran agreement includes real-time uranium enrichment levels as well as whether centrifuges, machines that enrich uranium, remained in storage and the production of centrifuge parts.



Pandemic shakes up rankings of world's most liveable cities

AFP News

The pandemic has shaken up the rankings of the world's most liveable cities, a study released on Wednesday showed, with metropolises in Australia, Japan and New Zealand leaping ahead of those in Europe.

Auckland tops The Economist's annual survey of the world's most liveable cities in 2021 followed by Osaka and Tokyo in Japan, Adelaide in Australia and Wellington in New Zealand, all of which had a swift



response to the Covid pandemic.

"Auckland rose to the top of the ranking owing to its successful approach in containing the Covid-19 pandemic, which allowed its society to remain open and the city to score strongly," the Economist Intelligence Unit said.

In contrast, "European cities fared particularly poorly in this year's edition."

"Vienna, previously the world's most liveable city between 2018-20, fell to 12th. Eight

of the top ten biggest falls in the rankings are European cities," according to the study.

The biggest fall overall among the European cities was the port city of Hamburg in northern Germany, which fell 34 places to 47th.

The trend was motivated by a "stress on hospital resources" which the study said increased for most German and French cities and resulted in a "deteriorated healthcare score".

Pressure on European health

systems also had a knock-on effect on culture and overall liveability because of restrictions on movement, the Economist said.

The most notable rise was recorded by Honolulu, Hawaii, in the United States, which came 14th in the ranking and moved up 46 places because of its containment of the pandemic and fast vaccination programme.

Damascus remains the city where life is most difficult because of Syria's ongoing civil war.

CELEBS

celebs

Gabrielle Union set to star in 'The Inspection'

ANI | Washington

Gabrielle Union and Jeremy Pope will star in the A24 movie 'The Inspection', based on the life of filmmaker and Marine Corps veteran Elegance Bratton.

As per Variety, Bratton is writing the screenplay and directing the film in his feature debut. It will begin shooting later this summer.

Pope will portray a young gay man who enlists in the Marines. Union will play the mother whose approval he seeks.

Bratton began making films as a US Marine after spending a decade homeless because he was kicked out of his house for being gay. He recently won an Independent Spirit Award for his documentary 'Pier Kids', and has previously directed the short films 'Walk for Me' and 'Buck'.

A24 will handle the worldwide distribution of 'The Inspection' and will co-finance the movie with Gamechanger Films.

Effie T. Brown will produce on behalf of Gamechanger Films. Chester Algernal Gordon will also serve as a producer via their Freedom Principle shingle.

Commenting on the



Gabrielle Union is currently working on the 'Cheaper by the Dozen' remake for Disney+, which she is also executive producing

casting of Union and Pope, Brown said, "Elegance brings authenticity, heart and a fresh perspective to this compelling autobiographical story and we are thrilled to have Jeremy Pope and Gabrielle Union on board to bring it to life."

Pope had received Tony Award nominations for 'Ain't Too Proud' and 'Choir Boy', as well as Emmy recognition for Ryan Murphy's miniseries 'Hollywood'.

Next up, Pope is set to play Sammy Davis Jr. in 'Scandalous!' from director Janet Mock.

Union is currently working on the 'Cheaper by the Dozen' remake for Disney+, which she is also executive producing.

Gabrielle Union

Tom Hiddleston talks about Owen Wilson's portrayal of Mobius in upcoming 'Loki' series

ANI | Los Angeles

Hollywood star Tom Hiddleston, who is set to return as the stubborn, arrogant, God of Mischief in Marvel's upcoming 'Loki' series, recently opened up about his experience of working with Owen Wilson.

The highly anticipated series showcases the journey of the popular anti-hero, Loki, as he steps out of his brother, Thor's shadow, post the events of 'Avengers: Endgame', where when the Avengers went back in time to collect all the Infinity stones, he escaped with the Space Stone.

In the series, Owen is playing a character named Mobius

M. Mobius', who appears to be rather similar to that of his comic counterpart. According to promotional footage from the show, Mobius is repeatedly seen at Loki's side.

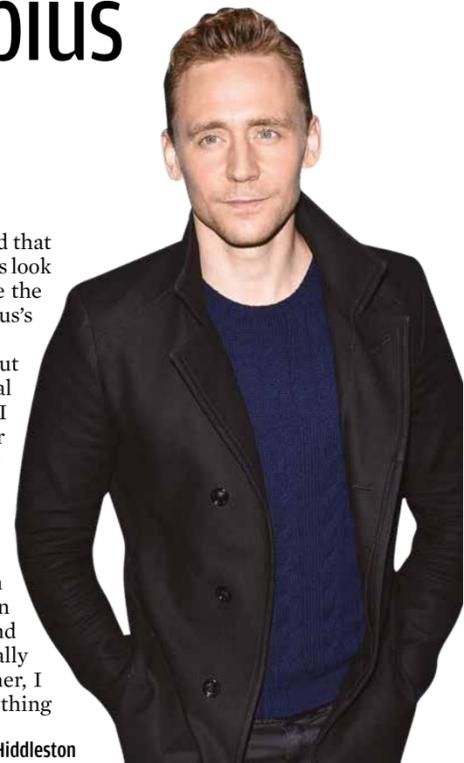
He's the one who seems to tell Loki about his past, and possibly what his future was supposed to be. It appears this will lead to Mobius and Loki working together throughout the series.

Speaking about his experience of working with Owen, Tom said, "Owen has a natural intelligence and a natural curiosity about the world, which is very unique to him, and he brings it all into his character, Mobius. Mobius can be light and bright, fun and curious, but he

can also be intense. I loved that Owen wanted to change his look as well - helping to create the world of the TVA and Mobius's history within it."

Tom further talked about Owen's onscreen portrayal of Mobius and added, "I think audiences have never seen Owen like this. What Owen has done in bringing Mobius to life is brilliant: he's intelligent, compassionate, fun and original. I've loved working with him. He's such a broad man of such a range of tastes and talents. We connected really early on. And then together, I hope we've created something really interesting."

Tom Hiddleston



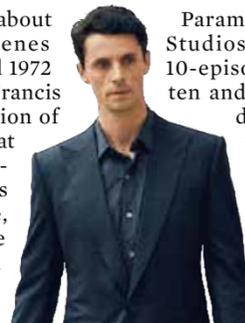
Matthew Goode cast in Paramount Plus 'The Offer'

ANI | Washington

American actor Matthew Goode has been cast to play film producer and studio exec Robert Evans in the Paramount Plus limited event series 'The Offer', about the making of 'The Godfather'.

According to Variety, 'The Offer' is based on the experience of Oscar-winning produc-

er Albert S. Ruddy, about the behind-the-scenes events of the original 1972 film from director Francis Coppola, an adaptation of Mario Puzo's novel that starred Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan, John Cazale, Robert Duvall, Diane Keaton, and Talia Shire.



Paramount Television Studios is behind the 10-episode series written and executive produced by Nikki

Toscano, who is also serving as showrunner, alongside creator and writer Michael Tolkin. The limited

event series has a straight-to-series commitment at the ViacomCBS-owned streaming service.

Miles Teller was recently cast as Ruddy in the drama series, replacing Armie Hammer, in the wake of sexual abuse allegations that surfaced against Hammer, who exited the production in January, as Variety reported exclusively.

Matthew Goode

Blake Shelton jokes that he lives off of Gwen Stefani, hides inside while in Los Angeles

Fox | Los Angeles

Blake Shelton is out of his element in Los Angeles.

The 44-year-old country crooner famously spends his time on a ranch in Oklahoma, where he and his fiancée Gwen Stefani quarantined during the coronavirus pandemic.

The "God's Country" singer recently spoke

Blake Shelton

"I should never go to a restaurant on a day where I'm not up to someone approaching me. That's on me ..."

BLAKE SHELTON

with Apple Music's Zane Lowe about his life with Stefani in L.A., how his time as a coach on "The Voice" has thrust him into the

spotlight and how he makes it in the City of Angels.

"I should never go to a restaurant on a day where I'm not up to someone approaching me. That's on me ..." said the star of becoming more famous after the musical competition show debuted, noting that he's seen other artists turn down fans' requests for interactions, which ultimately makes him feel bad.

"Because this person, it's their one chance in their life that they're going to get a chance to

say something that they wanted to say to this person. Yeah, and it's hard for them too," he admitted. "And so I always just feel like, hey, look, if I go somewhere, then it must mean that I'm ready to high-five some people when I get out there."

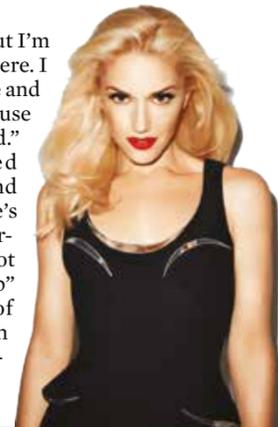
Shelton also said that the show "did take over" his life in that manner

"But you know what, I'm weird anyway. I live out in the middle of nowhere in Oklahoma," the singer added. "And I mean, I am in

L.A. half the time, but I'm pretty much a slug here. I live off of Gwen here and I just hide in the house so I got it pretty good."

He then gushed over Stefani, 51, and said that though he's worked with on several songs, he's "still not really over that hump" of the excitement of having worked with the lauded singer-songwriter.

Gwen Stefani



SUDOKU

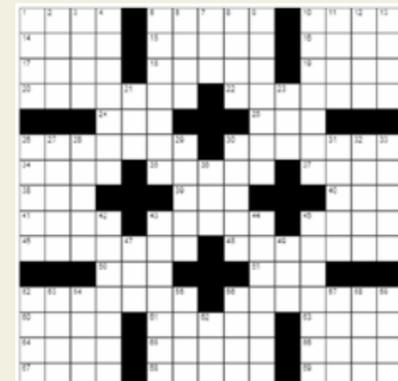
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Yesterday's solution

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

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- Basics; 5- Biblical brother; 10- Headland; 14- Hit with an open hand; 15- Part of LED; 16- Mind; 17- Andean country; 18- Allow to enter; 19- Dangerous weapon; 20- Group within a group; 22- Voted into a seat; 24- Rebellious Turner; 25- de France; 26- Hits; 30- Captain; 34- Durable wood; 35- Long arm; 37- Baht spender; 38- Cartoon Chihuahua; 39- Meadow; 40- CIA forerunner; 41- South American Indian; 43- Loose coil of yarn; 45- Dagger of yore; 46- Smokers receptacle; 48- Coins; 50- Rocky peak; 51- Peg used on the first in golf; 52- Died out; 56- Expression of objection; 60- Pull an all-nighter; 61- Main artery; 63- What confused people don't have; 64- Racer Yarborough; 65- European ermine; 66- Jealous wife of myth; 67- Sight organs; 68- 1980s attorney general; 69- Planetary revolution;

Down

1- Serpents; 2- cheese; 3- Low- diet; 4- Soviet satellite; 5- Power plug transformer; 6- Adjutant; 7- CD- ; 8- Comics canine; 9- Reticular; 10- General idea; 11- Touch on; 12- Short dog for short; 13- Watched warily; 21- Tibetan beast; 23- Biblical high priest; 26- Ridge; 27- Mail frequenter; 28- Cattle spot; 29- Like corn tassels; 30- Killed; 31- Call; 32- Art supporter; 33- Ascends; 36- Charge; 42- Occasionally; 43- Bitter derision; 44- Chilean natural resource; 45- Incomplete; 47- Jockey Turcotte; 49- Corporate VIP; 52- Behold, to Brutus; 53- Radiograph; 54- Story; 55- Carry; 56- School orgs; 57- Gen. Robert ; 58- Chapter of the Koran; 59- Shred; 62- Caviar;

Yesterday's solution

F	L	A	K		C	O	S	T	S		R	E	N	O
L	O	N	I		O	N	E	A	T		I	L	I	A
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P	I	L	L		M	O	N	O	P	L	A	N	E	
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I	C	E			M	I	A	M	I		T	I	L	E
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India's Chhetri says no comparisons with Messi



Sunil Chhetri reacts during a match (file photo)

AFP | New Delhi

India's Sunil Chhetri said yesterday comparisons with Lionel Messi are misplaced after overtaking him in number of goals, and added he remains a huge fan of the Argentine star.

Chhetri surpassed Messi's tally of 72 international goals in India's 2-0 win over Bangladesh on Monday to stand behind top-ranked Cristiano Ronaldo (103) among active players.

"The fact is there is no comparison whatsoever (with Messi)," Chhetri, who has scored 74 international goals, said from Doha.

"When anyone sees those (top goal scorer) chart, be happy for five seconds as an Indian and that's about it. Forget about me and Messi because the whole world, including me, is a fan of Messi."

Chhetri, 36, scored all two goals in India's victory in the qualifying match for the 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

The fact is there is no comparison whatsoever (with Messi). When anyone sees those (top goal scorer) chart, be happy for five seconds as an Indian and that's about it. Forget about me and Messi because the whole world, including me, is a fan of Messi

SUNIL CHHETRI

With 73 strikes Ali Mabkhout, of the United Arab Emirates, is also above Messi -- a six-time Ballon d'Or winner widely regarded as the greatest player of the modern era.

India, who are ranked 105th in the FIFA team rankings, are already out of the race to qualify for the World Cup but can make it to the Asian Cup in China.

Spain sets up 'parallel' Euro 2020 team over virus worries

Spain expand parallel squad after second player tests positive for COVID-19

● Spain coach Luis Enrique now has a shadow squad of 17 players to call on for Euro 2020

AFP | London

Spain expanded its parallel squad yesterday after Diego Llorente became the second player infected with the coronavirus ahead of the European Championship.

Coach Luis Enrique called up 11 players from Spain's under-21 squad to train separately from the main team in a parallel bubble. They will join six other players who had already been called up after captain Sergio Busquets tested positive and was put into isolation on Sunday. Llorente tested positive on Tuesday and also had to leave the team's training camp.

No other players have tested positive so far, the Spanish soccer federation said. Llorente's positive result was made public not long after Spain's under-21 squad beat Lithuania 4-0 on Tuesday night in Madrid in a match that was supposed to be played by the senior team as its final warm-up before "La Roja" opens its Euro 2020 campaign against Sweden on Monday in Seville.

All but one of the 20 players



Spain's coach Luis Enrique attends Spain's national football team's training session

called up for that match — Bryan Gil — had played for the senior national team before. The friendly counted as a first-team match, with players getting caps and an official debut for coach Luis de la Fuente with the main squad. The last time Spain had 10 players on debut for a senior international was in 1941, against Portugal, after the team had not played since Spain's Civil War broke out in 1936.

The Spanish federation did not say whether Busquets or Llorente would be cut from the squad.

Luis Enrique had earlier called up six players to practice separately at the team's training camp: Kepa Arrizabalaga, defender Raúl Albiol, Rodrigo

Moreno, Pablo Fornals, Carlos Soler and Brais Méndez.

Luis Enrique has until Saturday to make changes to his initial list in case of injuries or COVID-19 cases. He only selected 24 players instead of the 26 allowed for each national team at Euro 2020, saying he didn't want to call up too many players who would not likely be used at the tournament.

Among those left out was veteran captain Sergio Ramos — a defender like Llorente — who had been sidelined for most of the second part of the season because of injuries and a spell with COVID-19.

Players who test positive must stay in isolation for at least 10 days, meaning both Busquets

BETTER YOU KNOW

The last time Spain had 10 players on debut for a senior international was in 1941, against Portugal, after the team had not played since Spain's Civil War broke out in 1936

and Llorente will miss the opener against Sweden. It would also be unlikely they would be fit for Spain's second match against Poland on June 19. The team's final Group E match will be against Slovakia on June 23, also in Seville.

Spanish media said the national team players could be vaccinated against COVID-19 in the coming days. There had been some criticism for the delay in getting players vaccinated, contrary to what happened to the Spanish athletes competing at the Tokyo Olympics.

There was also criticism for possibly allowing the soccer players to be vaccinated before other Spaniards who were in line for the coronavirus vaccine.

New Zealand captain Williamson out of 2nd Test against England

AFP | London

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson has been ruled out of the second and final Test against England at Edgbaston with a left elbow problem, team management announced yesterday.

However, the Blackcaps are confident he will be fit to lead the team in the inaugural World Test Championship final against India starting on June 18.

Williamson, who captained New Zealand in last week's drawn first Test against England at Lord's, has been managing the injury since first missing matches in March.

The world's top-ranked Test batsman was ruled out of the second Test yesterday, a day before the match is due to start at Birmingham's Edgbaston ground.

"It's not an easy decision for Kane to have to miss a Test, but we think it's the right one," New Zealand coach Gary Stead said in a statement.

"He's had an injection in his elbow to relieve the irritation he's been experiencing when he bats and a period of rest and rehabilitation will help maximise his recovery."

Stead added: "The decision has been made very much with the ICC World Test Championship final at Southampton in mind and we are confident he will be ready for that match starting on June 18."

Tom Latham will captain the side in Williamson's absence,



New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson (L) speaks with Tom Latham during a match (file photo)

It's not an easy decision for Kane to have to miss a Test, but we think it's the right one

NEW ZEALAND COACH GARY STEAD

with Will Young, who has made two first-class hundreds for English county side Durham this season, coming into the side at number three.

"Someone of his (Williamson's) leadership, his calibre as a player, it's obviously disappointing that he's been ruled out to nurse his elbow injury," Latham told reporters.

"He's fantastic as a captain. I think it's well-documented how his personality, his calm nature out in the middle, has been vital to this group. He's very

relaxed."

"He doesn't get too high, and doesn't get too low, which has been great for this side over recent years... He'll certainly be missed," added Latham, looking to lead New Zealand to their first series win in England since 1999.

'Big gun'

England captain Joe Root said Williamson's absence represented a "huge loss" for New Zealand.

"He's a big gun, number one in the world," said Root. "He's one of those players you spend a lot of time thinking about how you're going to keep him quiet and get rid of him early."

"It will be a huge loss for them but we're also very respectful that New Zealand have a strong squad and are involved in the World Test Championship final

BETTER YOU KNOW

Tom Latham will captain the side in Williamson's absence, with Will Young, who has made two first-class hundreds for English county side Durham this season, coming into the side at number three

because they have strength in depth.

"We saw last week a debutant (Devon Conway) coming in and getting a double hundred."

New Zealand will also be without spinner Mitchell Santner, who was previously ruled out with a cut finger.

But experienced left-arm quick Trent Boult is set to come back into the XI after missing the Lord's match, having opted to spend time with his family following the suspension of the Indian Premier League.

"It's great to have someone of his calibre come back in," said Latham of Boult.

"The way he can swing the ball, his leadership as well. He's been to this part of the world before and he knows how to perform (in England)."

No smoke without fire: Lazio hints at hiring Sarri



Then Juventus' head coach Maurizio Sarri holds the Champion's trophy (file photo)

AFP | Milan

While Lazio have not officially announced a new coach, a cryptic tweet yesterday made clear that the Serie A club was planning to hire former Chelsea and Juventus boss Maurizio Sarri.

Sarri is a former banker and a notorious chain smoker who wears a track suit on the sideline. The Lazio tweet showed a hand holding a cigarette, track suit tops and a simple drawing of a bank.

The club has not officially announced the signing of the former Napoli, Chelsea and Juventus coach, but Italian media reported that the two sides agreed to a two-year deal

earlier in the week.

Sarri would succeed Simone Inzaghi, who left for Inter Milan after five years at Lazio.

The appointment continues a tumultuous off-season summer in Italy's top flight. So far 12 clubs have changed coaches with only AC Milan and Atalanta in the top 10 keeping their coach.

Sarri, 62, became famed for his 'Sarriball' at Napoli from 2015-18. He joined Chelsea where he spent one season, winning the Europa League, his first trophy as a coach, before moving to Juventus in 2019.

In Turin he won Serie A, but was fired last August after one season in charge.

BRAVE CF's inaugural event in Belarus leaves indelible milestone in MMA history

BRAVE CF 51 witnessed 11 outstanding bouts, including a pivotal three-round super welterweight encounter



Denis Maher is victorious at home

● **The event brought back fond memories of Belarus' peak in the all-encompassing sport**

TD | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation was out in full strength this past Friday, June 4th at the promotion's latest event—BRAVE CF 51: THE FUTURE IS HERE.

It was an unforgettable evening of world-class mixed martial arts (MMA) at the state-of-the-art Falcon Club Arena in Minsk, Belarus, and several victors made some major statements inside the cage.

11 outstanding bouts, including a pivotal three-round super welterweight encounter, captivated the global audience from start to finish. The host country of Belarus has plenty to be proud of as three of its hometown heroes walked away with their hands raised in triumph.

Denis Maher kept his undefeated professional record intact by stopping previously-unbeaten standout Rinat Sagyntay of Kazakhstan in the opening salvo to extend his impressive winning streak to eight matches.

On the other hand, Vadim Kutsyi put the entire super welterweight division on notice by turning in a masterful performance against fellow debutant Daniyar "Doni" Abdibaev of Kyrgyzstan via unanimous decision. Meanwhile, Vadim Rolich authored a highlight-reel knockout at the expense of Kurbonsho Jamolov, shutting the lights out on the Tajikistani stalwart courtesy of a spinning back-kick and follow-up punches with 25 seconds left on the clock in the final round.

Now that the final bell has rung, it's time to ruminate on all that transpired and consider what it means moving forward for Belarus and BRAVE CF's strategic expansion in Europe.

Belarus has bred some of the most exciting and fearless



An Athlete celebrates after winning a bout



Since its inception in 2011, BRAVE CF has taken the sport to greater heights, becoming the first MMA company to hold 51 shows in 22 different countries—seven of which are European nations such as Northern Ireland, England, Sweden, Russia, Slovenia, Romania and Belarus

athletes in MMA history at the height of the nation's emergence during the early 2000s. With the organization hosting its first live event on Belarusian soil last Fri-

day, it brought back fond memories of the country's peak in the all-encompassing sport.

In restoring the old glory of Belarus in MMA, Kutsyi believes that BRAVE CF 51: THE FUTURE IS HERE is a step in the right direction, especially with the stamp of approval that it gained from luminaries such as UFC women's flyweight champion Valentina Shevchenko, Brazilian actor Caio Castro and football legend Alexander Hleb.

"The event last Friday garnered a significant reception from fans in my home country as well as the entirety of Europe. There were a lot of event posters around Minsk, and people were constantly talking about the fights that transpired," he said. "It's a good sign because even people who were not interested in MMA before are now watching."

"We see this as a huge development, for the first time in years. This is an indicator that BRAVE CF has done a great job



Denis Maher lands uppercut on Rinat Sagyntay

”
The event last Friday garnered a significant reception from fans in my home country as well as the entirety of Europe. There were a lot of event posters around Minsk, and people were constantly talking about the fights that transpired. It's a good sign because even people who were not interested in MMA before are now watching

VADIM KUTSYI

to put Belarus back in the MMA limelight. I think this is just the beginning, and I am excited for things to come," Kutsyi continued.

Since its inception in 2011, BRAVE CF has taken the sport to

greater heights, becoming the first MMA company to hold 51 shows in 22 different countries—seven of which are European nations such as Northern Ireland, England, Sweden, Russia, Slovenia, Romania and Belarus.

In line with its mission to unearth more talents in the continent, BRAVE CF president Mohammed Shahid guarantees the same commitment that the promotion exerted in terms of development when it held events in Belarus' neighbouring territories.

"We have visited so many countries throughout our journey to help facilitate a global ecosystem for MMA. Our goal, apart from national sports development, is also to bring a positive change to MMA that will see the best talent from each country becoming global stars with talent being the only variable," the head honcho declared.

"We are confident that MMA in Belarus will have a big rise in popularity and development after this event," Shahid added.



Athletes in action during a bout



Athletes in action during a bout



Athletes in action during a bout

Sam Patterson speaks out on BRAVE CF 51 performance, puts division on notice

TD | Manama

Sam Patterson continued his path towards the top of the BRAVE CF Lightweight division with a dominant unanimous decision win over Ylies Djiroun at the BRAVE CF 51 co-main event of the evening. Despite the positive result, his third consecutive promotional victory, Patterson is convinced that his best is yet to come.

"As I spoke with my coach afterwards, he said that I should be proud of myself and enjoy the victory but I'm tough on myself



Sam Patterson in action during a bout

”
We're living tough times in general but I personally had to overcome a lot of adversities in order to make it to the cage. So, in that sense, I'm happy that I got the win regardless

SAM PATTERSON

and I know that wasn't my best performance", Patterson said in

a post-fight interview in Minsk, Belarus. "Even when I got a first-round knockout against Felipe Silva I knew that I still had much more to show, let alone now".

"I don't mean to give excuses but I went through a lot over the last days and all of that, of course, built up to fight night", he continued. "We're living tough times in general but I personally had to overcome a lot of adversities in order to make it to the cage. So, in that sense, I'm happy that I got the win regardless"

"The Future", as he's also

known as, knows that the competition in the deepest division in the BRAVE CF roster is fierce but made sure to leave a message to all 70kg watching him.

"I believe I can beat anyone in this division out there, I'm coming for that gold", he finished.

With a professional record of 7 wins, a single loss, and one draw, Sam Patterson is quickly rising through the ranks of BRAVE Combat Federation. The British youngster is currently on a 7-fight undefeated streak, which includes six wins and one draw.

Phil Bauhaus sprints to first stage victory in Slovenia tour



Team Bahrain Victorious' Phil Bauhaus celebrates after crossing the first stage's finish line in first place

TDI | Manama

Team Bahrain Victorious rider Phil Bauhaus sprinted to a fine victory yesterday in the first stage of the 27th Tour of Slovenia cycling race.

The event is part of the 2021 UCI Europe Tour and it is being held across five stages.

On the opening 151.5km stage yesterday, Bauhaus and his teammates showed Team Bahrain Victorious' strength.

The race started in Ptuj and it took riders through the hilly land of Stajerska to Rogaska Slatina. Team Bahrain Victorious controlled the race from the start, managing the day's breakaway of seven riders, who were caught with the help of Jan Tratnik a few kilometers before the technical sprint in the final.

Bauhaus was delighted with the win. He said: "The finish was extremely fast with a slight downhill in the last km. It was key to be in front at the roundabout 700m to go, and the team did a great job today. We were in the forefront all the time, we controlled the events all the time, I came to the finish in an excellent position, and as a sprinter, I couldn't be more satisfied."

"It's fantastic. The team was



It's fantastic. The team was super strong. We took control from the beginning. My teammates did a perfect lead-out for me, and I am very proud. And I also take a win for them today.

- PHIL BAUHAUS

super strong. We took control from the beginning. My teammates did a perfect lead-out for me, and I am very proud. And I also take a win for them today. In the following days, there are still more opportunities to win the races, and as you have seen how our team is strong, we expect more wins."

Bauhaus along with Bauhaus, the team in Slovenia consists of Heinrich Haussler, Kevin Inkelaar, Jonathan Milan, Marcel Sieberg, Matej Mohoric and Jan Tratnik.

The race is the biggest cycling event in Slovenia. The fight for the green jersey will end in Novo Mesto. Riders will race across 803.7 km over the five days.

Nadal drops set but reaches 14th French Open semi-final

Rafael Nadal overcomes tough Diego Schwartzman test to reach last four

● Nadal is now 105-2 for his career at Roland Garros

AFP | Paris

Rafael Nadal's French Open set streak is over. His pursuit of a record-breaking 21st Grand Slam title — including 14 at Roland Garros — remains very much intact.

Nadal shrugged off dropping a set in Paris for the first time in two years and regained control yesterday, whipping violent forehands punctuated with first pumps and yells of "Vamos!" en route to a 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 victory over 10th-seeded Diego Schwartzman to reach the semifinals at the clay-court major tournament.

After taking the last nine games against Schwartzman, No. 3 seed Nadal will play in Friday's semifinals against either No. 1 Novak Djokovic, in what would be a rematch of last year's final and their 58th meeting anywhere, or No. 9 Matteo Berrettini. The Djokovic-Berrettini quarterfinal was scheduled for late yesterday night.

The other men's semifinal will be No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas vs. No. 6 Alexander Zverev.

Nadal, who turned 35 last



Spain's Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Argentina's Diego Schwartzman

week, is now 105-2 for his career at Roland Garros.

He is just two wins from eclipsing the men's mark for most total Grand Slam singles championships that he currently shares with Roger Federer.

In addition to his 13 trophies at Roland Garros — four in a row from 2005-08, five in a row from 2010-14 and another four in a row so far since 2017 — the Spanish left-hander won four titles at the US Open, two at Wimbledon and one at the Australian Open.

There are four first-time Grand Slam semifinalists left in the women's bracket, something that last happened at the 1978 Australian Open.

In yesterday's quarterfinals,

No. 17 seed Maria Sakkari ended Iga Swiatek's title defense by beating her 6-4, 6-4, and unseeded Barbora Krejckikova stopped the run of 17-year-old Coco Gauff 7-6 (6), 6-3. So Sakkari faces Krejckikova on Thursday, when the other semifinal will be No. 31 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova against unseeded Tamara Zidanksek.

Nadal entered his quarterfinal with a 35-set run at Roland Garros that began during the 2019 final. That grew to 36 yesterday, before Schwartzman outplayed him for a stretch, surprisingly winning more of their exchanges that lasted at least nine strokes.

Ah, but what matters is who wins the match, and Nadal as-



In addition to Rafael Nadal's 13 trophies at Roland Garros — four in a row from 2005-08, five in a row from 2010-14 and another four in a row so far since 2017 — the Spanish left-hander won four titles at the US Open, two at Wimbledon and one at the Australian Open

serted himself quickly after Schwartzman was ahead 4-3 in the third.

Nadal would not drop another game, breaking to go up 5-4, before holding at love to take the third set. Then he broke again to open the fourth and really remove any remaining sense of suspense.

Schwartzman — now 1-11 against Nadal, including a loss in the 2020 French Open semifinals — started muttering to himself and bounced his racket off the clay a moment before getting broken again to trail 3-0 in fourth.

Al Ahli add veteran Manny Harris to bolster GBA bid

● Manny Harris replaces fellow-American Chris McCullough on the Ahli roster

● Bahraini club to feature Manny Harris and Mike Harris as professionals for competition

TDI | Manama

Bahrain champions Al Ahli have tweaked their roster ahead of their participation in the 40th edition of the Gulf Basketball Association (GBA) Championship with the signing of veteran American guard Manny Harris.

Harris replaces countryman Chris McCullough for the competition, a team member has confirmed.

The tournament is scheduled to take place later this month in Dubai, and it also acts as the GBA qualifier for this year's FIBA Asia Champions Cup.



Manny Harris...new addition to Bahrain's Al Ahli

Harris will be teaming up with fellow-American Mike Harris to bolster the Ahli roster. They are the Bahraini club's two imports for the event.

Manny Harris is a six-foot, five-inch guard who played most recently in China. He had also suited up in his career with teams in Israel, Greece, Lithuania, Turkey, Ukraine and the Philippines, among others.

The 31-year-old had short stints in the NBA as well as in

the NBA G League.

Mike Harris, meanwhile, already has experience with Ahli, having helped them secure this past season's titles in both the national league as well as the prestigious Khalifa bin Salman Cup.

They boost an already formidable Ahli squad that features top Bahraini talents Mohammed Qurban, Maitham Jameel, Hesham Sarhan, Ahmed Aldurazi, Subah Hussain, and others.

Sakkari, Krejckikova into French Open last four

AFP | Paris

Maria Sakkari stunned defending champion Iga Swiatek to become the first Greek woman to reach a Grand Slam semi-final at the French Open yesterday.

World number 18 Sakkari triumphed 6-4, 6-4 over Polish eighth seed Swiatek and will face 33rd-ranked Barbora Krejckikova of the Czech Republic for a place in the final.

Thursday's other semi-final sees Russian 31st seed Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova tackle unseeded Tamara Zidanksek of Slovenia.

For the first time in the Open era, the French Open semi-finals will feature four women who have never previously got this far at the Slams.

"I am speechless. It is a dream coming true. It's a very nice feeling and I could not have done it without my team and their support," said the 25-year-old Sakkari.

"We have a long way to go but we made a huge step today."

Swiatek had gone into the match on the back of 22 consecutive sets won at the French Open but her challenge was hobbled by a right thigh injury which needed taping during a medical timeout early in the second set.

Her defeat means that Jus-



Maria Sakkari of Greece hits a return to Poland's Iga Swiatek



I never really imagined I'd be standing here one day on this court, especially in singles, and being able to win

BARBORA KREJCKIKOVA

tine Henin remains the last player to defend the women's title in Paris in 2007.

Greece will have two players in the semi-finals this year after Stefanos Tsitsipas made it to the last four on Tuesday.

Krejckikova knocked out American 17-year-old Coco Gauff 7-6 (8/6), 6-3 after saving five set points in the opener and

then needing six match points to finish the job.

Gauff, the 24th seed and the youngest quarter-finalist at a major in 15 years, was undone by seven double faults and 41 unforced errors.

"I never really imagined I'd be standing here one day on this court, especially in singles, and being able to win," said Krejckikova, who had been so paralysed by fear before her last 16 victory over Sloane Stephens that she locked herself in a stadium office and wept.

Krejckikova, now on a 10-match winning streak, is having a busy week. She is also in the semi-finals of the women's doubles.