

## HM King congratulates US President Biden

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa sent a cable of congratulations to new US President Joe Biden on his inauguration yesterday, wishing him good health, happiness and success in his presidential duties to lead the friendly American people to achieve further progress and prosperity.

HM the King expressed deep pride in the longstanding historic relations and solid partnership spanning 120 years, based on strong friendship and



HM the King mutual respect.

HM the King looked forward to further consolidating strategic relations binding the Kingdom of Bahrain and the US and bolstering joint cooperation.

## His Majesty receives more cables of congratulations

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received more cables of congratulations on being conferred the Legion of Merit, Degree of Chief Commander by former US President Donald Trump, in recognition of his efforts to further consolidate historic relations of friendship and cooperation between Bahrain and the US, consolidate security and stability and promote peace in the region.

Members of the royal family, ministers, lawmakers, diplomats and senior officials, among others expressed pride and appreciation of the high-profile legion which asserts His Majesty's tireless efforts and contribution to promoting peace and security.

Cables of congratulations came from the following:

Deputy Prime Minister Jawad bin Salem Al Arayyad.

Head of the Prime Minister's Court and the Cabinet Secretary General Hamad bin Faisal Al Malki, Cabinet Affairs Undersecretary His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, President of the Constitutional Court Shaikh Khalifa bin Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Advisor to HRH the Prime Minister His Highness Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Advisor to HRH the Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Abdulla bin Hassan Saif, Advisor for Legislative Affairs, Dr. Mohammed Ali bin Shaikh Mansour Al Sitri, Parliament Minister Ghanim bin Fadhl Al Bouainain.

Education Minister Dr. Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi, Defence Affairs Minister Lieutenant-General Abdulla bin Hassan Al Nuaimi, Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, Transportation and Telecommunications Minister Kamal bin Ahmed Mohammed, Minister of Housing, Bassim bin Yaqoob Al Hamar, Labour and Social Development Minister Jameel bin Mohammed Ali Humaidan, Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Minister Essam bin Abdulla Khalaf.

BDF Chief-of-Staff Lieutenant-General Theyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities Shaikha Mai bint

Mohammed Al Khalifa.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Highness Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashid bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Highness Shaikh Nawaf bin Rashid bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Highness Shaikh Salman bin Rashid bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Highness Shaikh Ibrahim bin Rashid bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Rashid bin Isa Al Khalifa, Shaikh Salman bin Ahmed bin Salman Al Khalifa, HH Shaikh Salman bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, HH Shaikha Noora bint Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

Bahrain's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Shaikh Humood bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Arab Emirates, Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

Special Envoy for Climate Affairs and CEO of the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE) Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Northern Governor, Ali bin Al-Shaikh Abdul Mohsin Al Asfoor, Capital Governor, Shaikh Hesham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA) Chairman Shaikh Abdulrahman bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Khalifa.

Attorney General Dr Ali bin Fadhul Al Buainain, Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) Hala Al Ansari, President of the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) Ahmed bin Zayed Al Zayed, National Intelligence Agency (NIA) President Lieutenant-General Adel bin Khalifa Al Fadhel, Supreme Council for Health (SCH) President, Chairman of the National Taskforce for Combating COVID-19, Lieutenant-General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa.

Bahrain Horse Racing Affairs Deputy President His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Ali bin Isa Al Khalifa, Board Chairman of Bahrain Telecommunications Company (Batelco) Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Riffa Club Deputy President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Isa Al Khalifa, Survey and Land Registration Bureau (SLRB) President Shaikh Salman bin Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, President of the National Financial and Administrative Audit Office (NAO) Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

# 'Complacency is the biggest risk to community health'

Taskforce reiterates importance of complying with public health measures

● The Ministry of Health will continue to conduct inspections in public establishments in coordination with relevant authorities

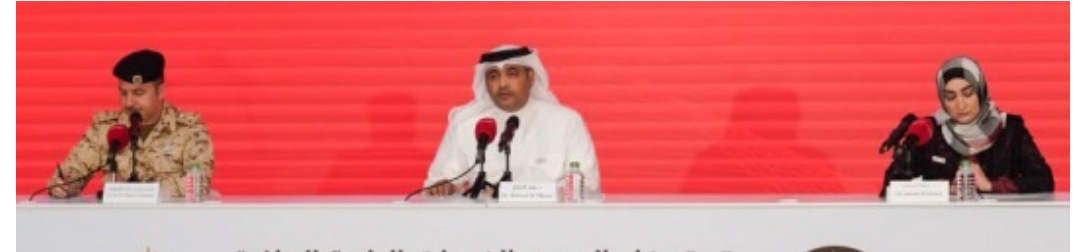
● Administrative and legal action will be taken against those who will commit violations in industrial or commercial establishments

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The virus does not rest, and so the Kingdom of Bahrain is intensifying its efforts to prevent its spread.

Ministry of Health Undersecretary Dr Waleed Khalifa Al Manea stressed the importance of continued and full adherence to public health measures to keep the community safe.

Also a member of the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus (COVID-19),



The taskforce providing an update on the Kingdom's COVID-19 response during a press conference

Dr Al Manea warned that complacency is the biggest risk to community health.

He was speaking during the taskforce's press conference held yesterday at the Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research at the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital.

The Kingdom has witnessed a 43 per cent increase in active cases between 1 and 18 January from the period between 14 and 30 December last year. Significantly, 18 per cent of cases registered during that period are of children 17 years and below.

Dr Al Manea said the "spike" in the number of active cases this month is a direct consequence of individuals not following public health measures.

The Ministry of Health will continue to conduct inspections, in coordination with relevant authorities, on restaurants, cafes, beauty salons, barber shops and gyms, to ensure that all health measures are followed.

Administrative and legal action, Dr Al Manea emphasised, will be taken against those who will commit violations in industrial or commercial establishments.

Mobile vaccination units have been launched to provide vaccinations to the elderly and those with special needs in the comfort of their homes.

Dr Al Manea noted that social distancing remains an important measure to be followed at all times. Gatherings should also

be limited to members of the same household or close social circle, and outdoor open spaces should be utilised rather than closed places.

Currently, the capacity of the Kingdom's isolation and treatment centres is 5,202 beds, of which 2,241 are occupied, representing 43.1% of the capacity.

Taskforce member Lt. Col. Dr. Manaf Al Qahtani, Infectious Disease Consultant & Microbiologist at the BDF, highlighted the importance of vaccinations, which protect the community from diseases and reduce infection rates.

Another taskforce member, Dr Jameela Al Salman, reiterated the importance of adhering to all preventative measures aimed at combating the COVID-19.

## Bahrain e-transactions volume grows 48% to reach BD230 million

● HH Deputy Premier chairs Supreme Committee for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) meeting

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The volume of e-transactions in the Kingdom of Bahrain last year exceeded BD230 million, marking an increase of 48 per cent compared to 2019.

A report by Supreme Committee for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) also showed that 83 e-services have been developed last year, an increase of 108 per cent compared to previous years.



HH Deputy Premier during the virtual discussion

These findings were presented during the committee's 17th meeting held remotely yesterday and chaired by its chairman, His Highness Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa.

The committee reviewed a report on the digital transformation of government services following its directives to public entities to expedite preparing

their electronic transformation plans in coordination with the Information and e-Government Authority (iGA).

The report revealed that more than 500 e-services and e-payment services have been provided.

This contributed to reducing government costs by 82 per cent and transactions' time by 76 per cent, as well as increasing the number of transactions by 26 per cent, the panel was told.

iGA also developed an integrated government system covering the Interior Ministry, the Health Ministry, iGA, the National Medical Taskforce for Combating Coronavirus, the National Communication Centre and the Government Services Call Centre in order to be able to deal with the requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic through

the BeAware Application.

The Deputy Premier commended the tremendous efforts exerted by iGA to put in place an integrated system of e-services in order to be able to deal with the exceptional requirements imposed by the pandemic.

Also participating in the meeting were Deputy Premier, HH Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and Deputy Premier, HH Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, and members of the Committee participated in the meeting.

The panel reviewed the latest developments of the National Digital Economy and Artificial Intelligence Strategy. iGA presented a report on the findings of the study it had conducted in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

## Foreign Minister receives Ambassador Shaikh Rashid



Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani received yesterday at the Ministry's General Court, the Chairman of the Committee on Archiving the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Decisions, Ambassador Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulrahman bin Rashid Al Khalifa, as well as members of the committee. Ambassador Shaikh Rashid gave a presentation on the efforts made by the committee in inventorying, classifying and documenting the decisions, procedures and instructions issued at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also briefed the Minister about the mechanism that the committee had followed in monitoring and documenting all decisions and archiving them in a central record whose electronic system was developed in cooperation with the Information Systems Directorate of the Ministry.