

Olympic excitement reaching fever pitch

Bahrain's Olympians count the days down to the start of the much-anticipated Tokyo Olympic Games | P12

WORLD 6 Pilgrims stone the devil with 'pre-packed' pebbles

THE DAILY tribune



Halsey welcomes first child with boyfriend Alev Aydin

9 CELEBS

BUSINESS 5

IMF urges countries to shift from economic rescue to reforms



Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)



Preventative measures reduce the spread of COVID-19



VACCINATE AND STAY SAFE

Bahrain condemns terrorist bombing at packed Iraq market

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain has condemned the terrorist bombing that targeted a market in Sadr City in Iraq, killing and injuring a number of people.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed Bahrain's solidarity with Iraq in its war against terrorism, reiterating the Kingdom's firm stance against violence, extremism and terrorism of all forms.

Tunisia health minister sacked over virus surge

Tunis

Tunisia's Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi yesterday sacked Health Minister Faouzi Mehdi amid spiralling coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in the North African country.

The ministry said earlier this month that Tunisia's health system had "collapsed" under the weight of the pandemic, which has caused more than 17,000 deaths in a population of around 12 million inhabitants.

The prime minister sacked Mehdi amid an exchange of accusations over performance in the fight against a COVID-19 surge and the slow pace of the vaccination campaign.

US attacks Al Shabab in Somalia

Washington

The US military conducted an air strike against Al Qaeda affiliated Al Shabab fighters yesterday, the first since President Joe Biden took office, the Pentagon said.

The US military command for Africa (AFRICOM), in coordination with the Somali government, "conducted one airstrike in the vicinity of Galkayo, Somalia today against Al Shabab," Pentagon spokeswoman Cindi King told AFP.

The strike, 700 kilometres (430 miles) northeast of Mogadishu, targeted Shabab Islamists, King said.

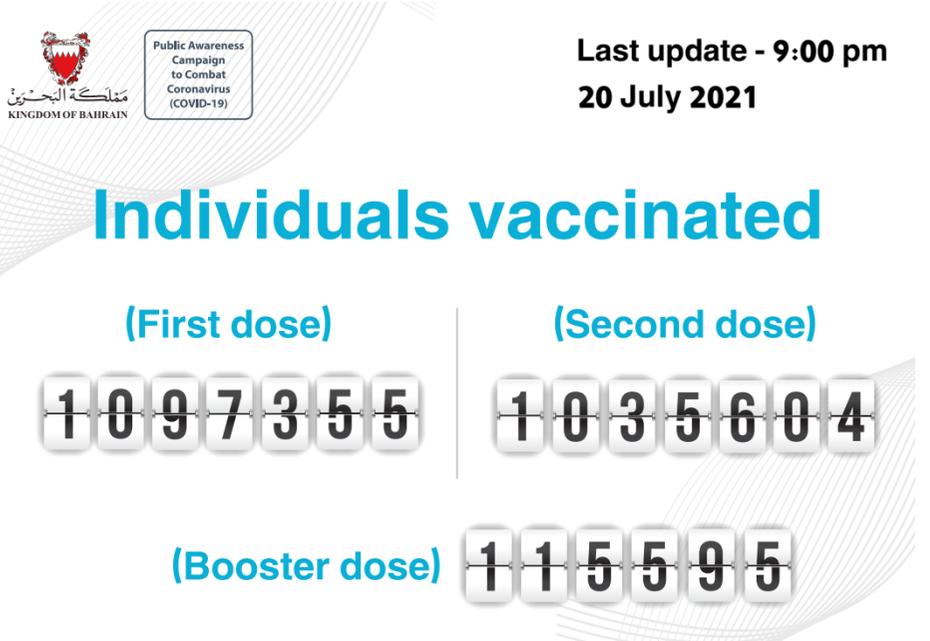
"A battle-damage assessment is still pending due to the ongoing engagement between Al Shabab and Somali forces,

however the command's initial assessment is that no civilians were injured or killed as a result of this strike," she added.

The strike is the first conducted by the US military in Somalia since January 19, when AFRICOM announced it had killed three Shabab jihadists in two strikes in Jamaame and Deb Scinnele.

Biden was inaugurated the next day. As soon as he arrived at the White House, he limited the use of drones against jihadist groups outside US theaters of war.

That reversed the policy of his predecessor Donald Trump, who had given the US military carte blanche in countries such as Somalia and Libya.



Roadmap to defeat COVID

His Majesty King's unwavering support for Team Bahrain hailed by top lawmakers

Chairman Al Saleh: HRH Prince Salman key in success against pandemic

TDT | Manama

Shura Council Chairman Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh and Council of Representatives Speaker Fawzia bint Abdulla Zainal have lauded His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's unwavering support for the efforts of Team Bahrain to battle the coronavirus (COVID-19).

They also praised His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for



HM the King



HRH Prince Salman

his major role in the Kingdom's continued success in cushioning the impact of the pandemic.

The Shura head said HM the King's kind gesture reflects the appreciation of all citizens and residents for all the Team Bahrain members, and everyone who has contributed to defeating the pandemic.

He added that HM the King's interest and sound directives to provide health services and vaccines to the citizens and residents, as well as the launch of the financial stimulus package, which has fortified the national economy, have enabled the Kingdom to achieve remarkable success in significantly decreasing the number of active cases.

Al Saleh paid tribute to the government, led by HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and frontline heroes, including medical and nursing staff, as well as allied teams and those responsible for the national vaccination campaign, for their keenness to implement the royal directives

to fight the pandemic, enabling the Kingdom to curb the spread of COVID-19 and reach the green level.

He extended sincere congratulations to HM the King and HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister on Eid Al Adha, wishing them and the Bahraini people many happy returns of the blessed occasion.

The Shura Chairman valued highly HM King Hamad's directives to continue providing Team Bahrain with all necessary support aimed at enabling Bahrain to successfully overcome the pandemic, affirming the Council's full support for all the measures taken by the National Medical Taskforce for Combating Coronavirus.

(Continued on Page 2)

Definitive account of his life

Prince Harry to share 'highs and lows' in memoir

London

Prince Harry, who fled Britain complaining about media coverage, has signed a book deal as the latest part of an effort to control his own narrative.

Penguin Random House said it will publish a literary memoir by Harry late next year that will offer a "definitive account" of his life, from his childhood to the present. Harry said he was "excited for people to read

a firsthand account of my life that's accurate and wholly truthful." "I'm writing this not as the prince I was born but as the man I have become," Harry, 36, said. "I've worn many hats over the years, both literally and figuratively, and my hope is that in telling my story — the highs and lows, the mistakes, the lessons learned — I can help show that no matter where we come from, we have more in common than we think."



Prince Harry

BAHRAIN COVID-19

ACTIVE CASES

815

DEATHS

1380

DISCHARGED

265832

NEW CASES

78

210 fils (includes VAT)



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HM King congratulates Belgium and Colombia
TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday sent a cable of congratulations to HM King Philippe of Belgium on the occasion of his country's National Day.

HM the King wished the Belgian Monarch good health and happiness and his friendly people further progress and prosperity.

His Majesty also sent a cable of congratulations to the Columbia President Ivan Duque Marquez on the occasion of his country's Independence Day. HM the King extended deepest congratulations to the Colombian leader, wishing him good health and happiness on this national occasion.

Six restaurants closed for violating health protocols
TDT | Manama

The Health Ministry's Public Health Department yesterday announced the closure of six restaurants for a week after being found to have violated the precautionary measures listed under the Orange Alert Level. Necessary measures were taken to refer their cases to the legal authorities.

Royal support 'catalyst' for more achievements: Speaker

Bahrain success stories in fighting COVID-19 acclaimed locally and globally

● **Speaker Zainal lauds sound royal directives to help Kingdom overcome pandemic**

● **Praise for people's sense of responsibility, commitment to community partnership**

TDT | Manama

(Continuation from Page 1)

Council of Representatives Speaker Fawzia bint Abdullah Zainal stressed that the royal support is a catalyst for more landmark achievements, noting that Team Bahrain's accomplishments and success stories

in fighting the coronavirus have been acclaimed locally and globally.

The Speaker pointed out that the outstanding results achieved thanks to the well-thought-out plans and appropriate precautionary measures have led to a significant drop in the number of active cases, noting that Team Bahrain's successes are the outcome of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's sound directives and the close follow-up of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

She expressed sincere congratulations to the Bahraini people on Eid Al Adha, paying tribute to the frontline heroes, Team Bahrain members and all those responsible for the national vaccination campaign for



HM the King and HRH Prince Salman are spearheading the Kingdom's fight against the COVID-19

Team Bahrain's successes are the outcome of HM the King's sound directives and the close follow-up of HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister

FAWZIA BINT ABDULLA ZAINAL, COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES SPEAKER



their dedicated efforts.

Zainal affirmed the Representatives Council's support for Team Bahrain's efforts aimed at ensuring Bahrain's success in overcoming the pandemic and reinstating normalcy, expressing confidence in the Bahraini people's ability to overcome the current crisis thanks to their sense of responsibility and commitment to community partnership.

She prayed to Allah the Almighty to protect HM the King and HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and to bless them with abundant health, happiness and long life.

She also wished Bahrain further progress, and the citizens and residents health and well-being.

Philippine Embassy vaccination programme in full swing

● **Undocumented Filipinos urged to get vaccinated for their own protection and the safety of all**

TDT | Manama

The Philippine Embassy continues to encourage members of the Filipino community in the Kingdom of Bahrain to get vaccinated for their own protection and the safety of all.

It is part of the Embassy's vaccination programme called "Bakuna Para Kay Juan at Juana" to support the government's national vaccination campaign against the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The vaccination programme was launched on 12 June as part of the Embassy's Kalayaan 2021 celebration where 204 individuals had received their first dose.

A big number of undocumented Filipino expatriates have al-



Ambassador Ver supervising the Embassy's vaccination programme

ready registered to have their vaccination at the Sitra Mall Vaccination Center and more are expected to heed the call of the Embassy.

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

The green shield or proof of

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

The Embassy advises those who were vaccinated during the first batch of the vaccination programme, but were not able to get their second dose last Friday, to proceed to Al Hoorah Health Centre in Manama to complete their vaccina-

tion shot.

Last week, a total of 151 undocumented overseas Filipinos received their second dose of AstraZenica vaccine at Sitra Mall.

Philippine Ambassador to Bahrain Alfonso A. Ver, together with other Embassy officials and staff, were also present during the event to guide the recipients of the programme and assist them in their registration with the BeAware app of the Kingdom.

They were also reminded to follow required health protocols despite receiving the complete dose of the vaccine.

Together with the second shot, the 151 individuals are now able to register in the comprehensive BeAware health app and avail of all features of the app including an electronic vaccination certificate "green shield" which is required for entry into office buildings, government institutions, malls, restaurants, schools, among others.

Ambassador to US meets Jewish community in New York



The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the US, Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashid Al Khalifa, met during his visit to New York City a number of Bahraini-Jewish families residing in New York, and several members of the Jewish community in New York who had previously lived and worked in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The discussion revolved around the concept of a culture of peace, freedom of religions and beliefs, and peaceful coexistence. The Ambassador expressed his great pride in the lively environment and openness in Bahrain, stressing that the Kingdom has become a role model for promoting the concept of the culture of peace, freedom of religions and beliefs and peaceful coexistence.

Capital Governor briefed on needs to develop infrastructure



Capital Governor Shaikh Hisham bin Abdul Rahman Al Khalifa received dignitaries and representatives of civil societies in the Sanabis area, in the presence of Hassan Abdullah Al Madani, Deputy Governor, and Brigadier General Ibrahim Al Najran, Director General of the Capital Governorate Police. The Governor was briefed on the needs to develop the infrastructure in the region and upgrade its facilities. He affirmed the governorate's work to follow up on the implementation of these requests in cooperation with the concerned government agencies.

Foreign Minister receives NIHR Chairman



Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullah bin Rashid Al Zayani yesterday received the President of the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), Ali Ahmed Al Derazi. The Foreign Minister commended the royal order appointing members of the NIHR's Board of Commissioners, congratulating him on being elected by the Board of Commissioners as President of the Institution, and lauding the efforts made by the NIHR to promote human rights in Bahrain.

BDF Chief of Staff attends graduation ceremony

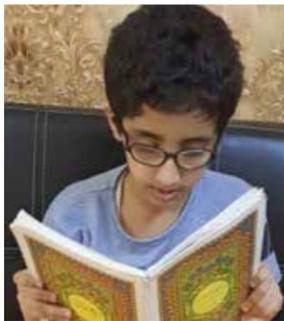


Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Dhiab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi attended today a graduation ceremony of a specialised session for officers at a Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) unit. After a recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran, a briefing was given on the session and its theoretical and practical programmes. The BDF Chief of Staff presented the graduates and top achievers with their certificates and prizes of appreciation and congratulated them on their success. The graduation ceremony was attended by BDF senior officers.

Child with autism excelling academically

● **Parent is proud that his son is defying health conditions**

TDT | Manama



Ibrahim ... source of inspiration

Great joy has filled the heart of Othman Yahya after his son Ibrahim, who has been diagnosed with autism, excelled academically at Al Khwarizmi Primary School for Boys aside from his remarkable brilliance in memorising the Holy Quran.

In a meeting with the guardian, features of happiness and pride were visible on the father's face.

"I am proud that a government school embraced my son," said Othman, who praised the policy of the Ministry of Education to integrate people with special needs to society.

He noted that his son had excelled remarkably in his studies since he was transferred from the private class to one of the regular classes, lauding the close and continuous follow-up by his teachers, and their great role in raising his academic achievement.

Othman added that the school had a major role in nurturing Ibrahim, as a positive change has been observed in him every year on the personal

and academic levels.

This support is provided by the school administration and all the teachers who embraced the student and contributed to his reaching high academic, personal and social levels, he noted.

Othman talked about the family's cooperation with the school, especially during this time of pandemic, which resulted in the daily follow-up and the creation of the appropriate atmosphere for reviewing and solving assignments.

The school's encouragement enabled his son to get involved his son in Holy Quran memorising competition.

He extended his thanks and gratitude to his teachers, especially the programme coordinator, teacher Rabab Fateel, who contributed to developing Ibrahim's knowledge and personal development.

Stay cautious against COVID-19

Strictly follow public safety protocols despite decline in new and active cases

● **Don't abandon all health measures just because you have been vaccinated**

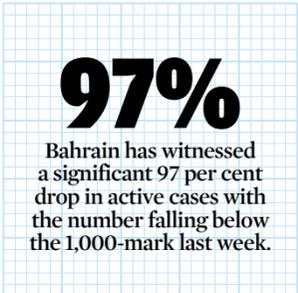
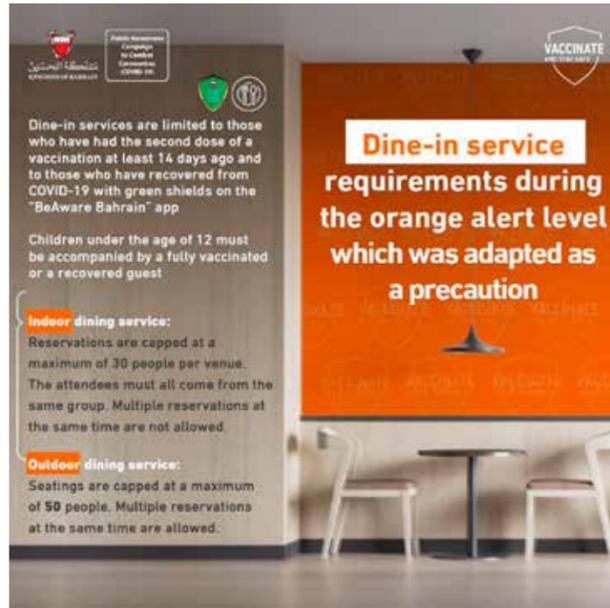
TDT | Manama

More than 18 months since the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic emerged, the Kingdom of Bahrain's strategy to control its spread appears to be paying off. In fact, the COVID-19 infections are declining by the day in the Kingdom.

It has also witnessed a significant 97 per cent drop in active cases with the number falling below the 1,000-mark last week.

Despite the positive developments, health authorities are urging the public to follow health guidelines strictly to protect oneself, loved ones and the entire community from the deadly respiratory disease.

They have been constantly making this appeal to citizens and residents in the Kingdom to contain the spread of the virus.



They remind people to not abandon all public health measures just because they have been vaccinated. Those fundamentals include: wearing of face masks, maintaining physical distance, avoiding large crowds, doing

more outdoor activities and washing hands frequently.

In addition, the protective effect of a vaccine may take at least one month, if not slightly longer, according to health experts.

This is the reason why one should wear a mask. Properly wearing a mask can help keep one safe.

As we've learned throughout this pandemic, the most common way COVID-19 spread is through person-to-person contact. When an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, they produce respiratory droplets that can travel about six feet and can land in the mouths or noses of those nearby.

COVID-19 can also be spread by people who don't know they

have the virus since they aren't experiencing any symptoms. Because of this, health professionals recommend wearing masks or cloth face coverings to help slow the spread of the virus. In these circumstances, a mask can add an extra layer of protection.

While wearing a mask may not keep you from getting COVID-19, it can help lower the odds.

If you're sick, a mask can help keep your germs from infecting others. If you're healthy, a mask can help keep respiratory droplets from someone who is sick from landing in your nose and mouth.

And remember, social distancing and hand washing are still very important safety precautions too that everyone should follow in addition to facial protection.

Studies show that even a distance of three feet significantly decreases the spread of the coronavirus from one person to another. At six feet, the risk decreases even further, at nine feet even further than that, and so on, particularly in an indoor setting.

Indeed, prescribed protective measures help prevent people from spreading COVID-19, and from being infected themselves.



Wear face mask even after getting vaccinated

Converting park and walkway play areas into rubber floors

TDT | Manama

An integrated plan has been developed to replace a number of sandy floors for play areas in parks and walkways with rubber floors.

The approach comes in line with the directives of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Minister Eng. Essam bin Abdullah Khalaf to work on the continuous development of parks and walkways

for the public.

According to Undersecretary for Municipal Affairs, Engineer Shaikh Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the aim is to replace some of the floorings to high-quality rubber that takes into account the elements of security, safety and the character of modernity, as well as meets the needs of its users and encourages them to walk or run. Minister Khalaf explained:



A new-look, rubber-coated park play area floors

"The rubber floors used in public facilities and gardens have

many characteristics that make them better than the ground space.

"In the latter play areas, they are affected by several factors, including the movement of children, the movement of wind and rain, and therefore they are subject to constant displacement and changing characteristics, which requires replacement and redistribution constantly."

Riffa road development project completed ahead of schedule

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning has completed the development work on Complex 914 in Riffa ahead of schedule.

The Director of Roads Projects and Maintenance Department at the Ministry, Eng. Sayed Badr Alawi, said the project will serve the residents of the complex and the users of these roads in the region as it will improve the internal road network in the area.

He explained that the project included the rehabilitation of a group of roads in the complex, and the construction and implementation of a rainwater drainage network.

It will reduce rainwater accumulations on roads 1401 and 1412 by laying channels and un-



The well-paved road on Complex 914 in Riffa

derground pipes with a diameter of 500 mm, with the implementation of ground drains and the establishment of ground tanks to collect for rain water.

Alawi said: "Works also included the reconstruction and paving of some internal roads by removing the old asphalt layer and replacing it with new

asphalt layers, and the replacement of the buried layers with new suitable materials, in addition to re-paving these roads with a new layer of asphalt, con-

structing new sidewalks and the necessary maintenance work for the sidewalks."

The old side roads within the complex were also developed and the level of traffic safety enhanced.

The project has been awarded to JASCO by the Tender Board to implement civil works and storm water drainage works, and to the Eastern Asphalt Company to implement the asphalt works, at a total cost of BD160,000.

The Municipal Council member representing the Sixth District in the Southern Governorate, Khaled Janahi, thanked the Works Ministry for the cooperation that contributes to achieving the needs and requests of citizens and residents.

He pointed out that the project will contribute to facilitating the movement of citizens, on addition to solving the problem of rainwater collection.

“The project will serve the residents of the complex and the users of these roads in the region as it will improve the internal road network in the area.”

- ENG. SAYED BADR ALAWI, DIRECTOR OF ROADS PROJECTS AND MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT AT WORKS MINISTRY

Rainwater drainage project in full swing



Construction of rainwater drainage networks is underway

● **Completion rate has reached 56%**

● **Main line to drain rainwater in Al Aker**

TDI | Manama

The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning has completed 56% of work on the construction of a main rainwater drainage line to connect the housing project in blocks 624 and 626 in Al Aker area.

Capital Municipality Council head Saleh Tarada said that the project aims to mitigate rainwater accumulations in that area.

It comes as part of a series of joint efforts between the Works Ministry and Amanah for the Capital to develop the infrastructure in the Capital Governorate and rehabilitate the most affected areas during the rainy season.

The areas were identified by the Rainy Committee, which was formed by the Ministry, in coordination with the Capital

“The project includes the construction of approximately one kilometre of main lines. The extension of 595 metres of those lines has been completed, and a pumping station is built, in addition to the construction of 17 inspection rooms

SALEH TARADA, CAPITAL MUNICIPALITY COUNCIL HEAD



Municipality Council and the Municipal Councils.

Tarada stressed the keenness of the Capital Municipality Council to follow up on all projects being implemented, including projects to establish rainwater drainage networks to provide the best infrastructure services for citizens and residents during the rainy season.

“The project includes the construction of approximately one kilometre of main lines. The extension of 595 metres of

those lines has been completed, and a pumping station is built, in addition to the construction of 17 inspection rooms,” Tarada said.

“We call upon the residents of the area to cooperate and abide by the warning signs during the completion of the work of all phases of the project.”

Tarada thanked the Works Ministry for its efforts to follow up and meet the needs of the people of Al Aker and the Capital Municipality.

Call for Filipinos to register for overseas voting

● **Registration will run until September 30, 2021**

● **Personal appearance is required at Embassy**

TDI | Manama

Filipinos who have not registered yet for the May 2022 Philippine national elections must visit the Embassy of the Philippines located in Mahooz as personal appearance is required.

Details or biometrics will be captured and those who want to register must bring along a photocopy of valid passport. For seafarers, seaman's book is required aside from a copy of the Philippine passport.

Overseas registration started in December 2019 and will run until September 30, 2021.

The registration is part of the embassy's efforts to gradually shift back to normal consular operations while strictly following the required safety precautions and protocols within its premises.

All qualified Filipino citizens residing and working abroad – better known as the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) – should contact the embassy



Filipino voting registration is ongoing at the Embassy

for details on how to proceed. More details can also be found on the embassy's official website: <https://manamape.dfa.gov.ph/>

Filipinos in the Kingdom have expressed their gratefulness to the embassy for the resumption of the registration, in which they have the chance to exercise their right and duty to choose the next leaders of the country, particularly the president.

Today, there is an estimated 60,000 Filipinos living and working in Bahrain, and they include professional, skilled and semi-skilled workers as well as household service workers. Many of them bring their families here.

To encourage Filipinos to register, the embassy is utilising its social media accounts by

posting infomercials and posters to increase the awareness in Bahrain.

In October last year, the embassy resumed the activity following a five-month suspension due to the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The next Philippine general elections – set to take place on May 9, 2022 – will select the successor of current President Rodrigo Duterte.

According to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) in Manila, overseas voters may cast their votes in Philippine embassies, consulates, and other posts for one month, from April 10 to May 9 next year.

Qualified Filipino voters residing and working abroad will choose the next president, vice-president, 12 senators and a party-list representative.

Tightening control over food delivery motorcycles

TDI | Manama

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and National Security is studying a parliamentary proposal to tighten control on motorcycles designated for delivering restaurant orders in terms of traffic and health.

The proposal was submitted by the Chairman of the Services Committee, Representative Ahmed Al Ansari, while it was signed by Representatives Ali Zayed, Issa Al Dosari, Abdul Razzaq Hattab and Ibrahim Al Nafiee.



MP Al Ansari

The proposal comes in response to reports of abuses committed by food delivery motorcycles.

It aims to tighten control over them by putting an end to traffic violations committed by them, as well as by setting

health requirements on food carrying boxes installed at the back of the bike.

The explanatory memorandum provided a number of justifications, in which it stated that many traffic violations have been witnessed recently involving motorcyclists designated for transporting and delivering restaurant orders.

The most prominent of the violations is the use by drivers of sidewalks and pedestrian paths as shortcuts, which endangers the lives of pedestrians, road users and cyclists alike.

Tenders are awarded for roads, sanitation and building projects

● **Aimed at keeping pace with urban expansion and advancing economic development**

TDI | Manama

The Tender Board has awarded four tenders for roads, sanitation and buildings projects with a total cost of BD3,327,997.

It also offered 12 tenders with an estimated value of BD4,843,318 for the three sectors' development projects.

Eng. Ahmed Abdulaziz Al Khayyat, Undersecretary for Works Affairs at the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, said that these tenders reflect the government's interest and keenness to implement development projects.

They are aimed at meeting the needs of citizens, keeping pace with the urban expansion in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and advancing economic development.

The most prominent projects that were awarded last month was the first phase of the improvement of Raya Street, at



The Tender and Auction Board members

a cost of BD1,118,044, which includes developing the street from its intersection with Arad Street to its intersection.

With Street 13 of 1.2 km long, and the opening of its intersection with Street 38 with a length of approximately 140 metres, the project will also include converting it into a dual street with two lanes in each direction, in addition to developing existing intersections by creating a traffic light, establishing a network for rainwater drainage, and improving the level of lighting.

The time contract for the

maintenance of bridges (2021-2022) was awarded at a total cost of BD850,000, which aims to preserve it and keep it within the technical level and construction and functional performance, in addition to awarding the time contract for cleaning and maintenance of optical signals at a cost of BD234,976.

Among the most prominent projects that were put up for tender in the road sector were the project to develop the roads of Isa Town for Complexes 805 and 807, and the development of internal roads in Souq Waqif at Complex 1203 in Hamad City.

With the aim of facilitating traffic movement and developing traffic safety standards in the region to provide security and safety for road users, citizens and residents, and in the sanitation sector, one of the most prominent projects that was put up for tender is the project of operating the triple treatment plant in the Tubli wastewater treatment plant.

The most prominent projects that were put up for tender in the buildings sector were the comprehensive maintenance work for six government schools for Al Rawda Primary School for Boys, Al Maameer Primary School for Boys, Salah El Din Al Ayoubi Primary School for Boys, East Riffa Boys School, Zallaq Elementary School for Boys and Belqis School Elementary School for Girls.

They are aimed at preserving the integrity of the buildings' structure, improving the internal environment in them, prolonging their life span, ensuring their sustainability, raising their value and efficiency in the operational and economic terms, in a way that supports educational needs while preserving the facilities and their contents and the safety of building users.

Sehla sewage project hits 75% completion rate



Sewage work in progress

TDI | Manama

Work on the first phase of a sewage network construction project in Block 441 in Al Sehla area has reached 75% completion rate.

The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning had completed the construction of 1,500 metres of main lines, 600 metres of branch lines, and 150 inspection rooms.

The Director of Sanitary Drainage Planning and Projects Department at the Ministry, Eng. Fathi Abdullah Al Farea noted that work had begun to connect 100 homes to the main sewage network.

He said that the project and the completion of the sewage network in the village of Al Sahla falls within the work programme of the Ministry to develop sewage services in the northern governorate.

Eng. Al Farea noted that it is working on the implementation of important projects that contribute to the expansion and development of facilities of this sector for the largest number of beneficiaries.

It is part of the national strategic plan set by the Ministry for sanitation and water treatment as a basis for planning, developing and expanding networks and treatment systems in Bahrain.

Nasdaq partners with major banks to spin out trading platform for pre-IPO stocks

Reuters

Nasdaq Inc yesterday partnered with big US banks, including Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley, to separate its platform that allows people to trade in shares of private companies, which have seen strong interest from investors seeking lofty returns on investments.

Since interest rates were slashed to near-zero across the globe at the start of the coronavirus pandemic, investors have sought out

other sources of yield, making investments in private entities an attractive option.

As part of the deal, Nasdaq Private Market will become a standalone, independent company that will receive investments from SVB Financial Group, Citigroup Inc, Goldman Sachs Group Inc, and Morgan Stanley, the stock exchange operator said yesterday.

Financial terms of the venture were not disclosed.

The platform will manage



The New York Stock Exchange is the largest stock exchange in the world, with an equity market capitalization of just over 24.4 trillion U.S. dollars as of May 2021. The following three exchanges were the NASDAQ, the Shanghai Stock Exchange and Hong Kong Exchanges.



private company stock transactions such as tender offers, auctions and investor block trades, Nasdaq said.

A number of companies, including BlackRock Inc and JPMorgan Chase & Co, are looking to give their clients a wider access to investing in private companies.

BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, said last month in an investor presentation that it was

pushing more aggressively into private market investments, which recorded an 18% growth last year, twice the rate of the broader industry.

In February, JPMorgan invested in fintech startup Zambato in an effort to create a presence in private stock trading. Nasdaq Private Market, which was established in 2014, will retain its core operating teams, Nasdaq said, and will maintain its presence in New York and San Francisco.

IMF urges countries to shift from economic rescue to reforms

● IMF said that the COVID-19 pandemic delayed and reversed some pro-growth reforms and restoring these can help make up for output lost during the pandemic

Reuters | Washington

The International Monetary Fund's No. 2 official yesterday called on countries to pivot from saving their economies from collapse to reviving growth-oriented policy reforms to boost their recovery prospects and make them more sustainable.

IMF First Deputy Managing Director Geoffrey Okamoto said in a blog posting on the IMF website that the COVID-19 pandemic delayed and reversed some pro-growth reforms and restoring these can help make up for output lost during the



A participant stands near a logo of IMF at the International Monetary Fund - World Bank Annual Meeting 2018 in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia

pandemic.

Reforms that allow for faster restructurings and resolution of unviable businesses and labor policies to help retrain workers and line them up with job openings can help shift workers and capital to more promising, dynamic parts of the economy, Okamoto said.

Improved competition policy frameworks such as those being debated in Europe and the

United States can reduce the concentration of market power among a few firms and create more dynamic competition and innovation.

"Using this moment for some of these difficult reforms means that the monetary and fiscal stimulus still flowing will serve as a springboard to a brighter and more sustainable future rather than a crutch to a weaker version of the pre-COVID-19

economy," Okamoto said. "Seizing the opportunity could deliver years of solid post-COVID-19 growth and progress in living standards."

The call for a renewed focus on reforms comes as the IMF is shifting from non-conditional emergency COVID-19 pandemic financing toward the negotiation of more traditional IMF loan programmes, which require recipient countries to meet policy reform benchmarks.

The Fund last week approved a new, \$1.5 billion, three-year Extended Credit Facility arrangement for the Democratic Republic of Congo, which includes reforms to boost revenue collections, improve natural resource management governance and strengthen the country's monetary policy framework to ensure central bank independence.

The IMF is also negotiating a new Extended Fund Facility with Argentina, which has struggled under a \$57 billion IMF loan, arranged in 2018, the Fund's largest-ever.

Running low on battery power: Brexit Britain faces an acid test

Reuters | London

Britain has set a fast pace in the electric vehicle race with its 2030 ban on sales of new fossil fuel-powered cars and has offered 1 billion pounds (\$1.4 billion) to jump start its battery industry and associated supply chain.

But the cash and the headline-grabbing deadline - which is sooner than many other nations by several years - still leaves it trailing the European Union's drive to create a supply chain and far behind China, the electric vehicle (EV) battery leader.

The stakes are high for Brexit Britain. To keep selling into the 27-nation EU without tariffs, Britain's car industry, which employs 170,000 people, must ensure electric vehicles and the batteries that power them meet stringent rules of origin - with up to 70% of input in value terms coming from Britain or inside the EU.

With its 2030 deadline looming followed by its 2035 cut off



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson visits the Envision AESC Holding Ltd. battery manufacturing facility inside the Nissan Motor Co. plant in Sunderland, Britain

for hybrids, Britain needs more battery factories - and fast.

Yet, even Nissan's plans for a 9 gigawatt hour (GWh) battery plant in Britain - hailed by the government when it was announced in July - are dwarfed by two plants being built in Germany alone, Tesla's 50 GWh plant near Berlin and Volkswagen's 40 GWh factory near Wolfsburg.

"We have come rather late to the party," said Douglas Johnson-Poensgen, chief executive of Britain's Circular, who has

worked with Volvo Cars and others on building sustainable supply chains.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), at the heart of Britain's EV investment drive, says it is ensuring Britain remains a world leader in the auto industry.

"We remain dedicated to securing UK gigafactories, and continue to work with investors to progress plans to mass manufacture the batteries needed for

the next generation of electric vehicles," a spokesperson said in an emailed statement.

EU BILLIONS

Meanwhile, the EU is powering ahead to catch up with China and transform its car industry, a major employer across the bloc, including in heavyweights Germany and France.

The bloc, which has proposed an effective ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2035, has allocated 2.9 billion euros (\$3.4 billion) from 12 EU states to support new battery plants. European climate group Transport & Environment says the EU has 38 plants planned or being built, many benefiting from other support measures from the EU or individual governments.

The bloc has identified 42 companies, including U.S. company Tesla and Germany's BMW, for specific roles in the battery supply chain and lifecycle, ranging from supplying raw materials to producing cells or recycling them.

EU court to rule on Google's \$2.8 bln EU antitrust fine on Nov. 10 - sources

Reuters | Brussels

Europe's second-top court will rule on Alphabet unit Google's challenge against a 2.4 billion euro (\$2.8 billion) EU antitrust fine on Nov. 10, the first of a trio of cases, people familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

The European Commission issued the fine on the world's most popular internet search engine in 2017 for favouring

its own price-comparison shopping service and giving it an unfair advantage against smaller European rivals.

Google told the Luxembourg-based General Court at a hearing last year that making innovative products was the core of its business model rather than helping rivals. It denied favouring its own service.

The court and Google did not respond immediately to requests for comment.

Israel PM warns Unilever of 'severe consequences' from Ben & Jerry's decision

● Palestinians welcomed the Ben & Jerry's announcement

● Israel's economy minister, posted a video of herself throwing a tub of Ben & Jerry's into the trash

Reuters | Jerusalem

Israel warned consumer goods giant Unilever Plc yesterday of "severe consequences" from a decision by subsidiary Ben & Jerry's to stop selling ice cream in Israeli-occupied territories, and urged U.S. states to invoke



An ice cream of Ben & Jerry's, a Unilever brand, is seen at their shop in London, Britain

anti-boycott laws.

Monday's announcement fol-

lowed pro-Palestinian pressure on the Vermont-based compa-

ny over its business in Israel and Jewish settlements in the West Bank, handled since 1987 through a licensee partner, Ben & Jerry's Israel.

Ben & Jerry's said it would not renew the licence when it expires at the end of next year. It said it would stay in Israel under a different arrangement, without sales in the West Bank, among areas where Palestinians seek statehood.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's office said in a statement that he had complained to Unilever Chief Executive Alan Jope about the "glaring anti-Israel measure".

"From Israel's standpoint, this action has severe consequences, legal and otherwise, and it will move aggressively against any

boycott measure targeting civilians," Bennett told Jope in a phone conversation, according to the premier's office.

Unilever did not immediately respond.

Avi Zinger, CEO of Ben & Jerry's Israel, said he was unwilling to refuse to sell the ice cream to Israeli citizens in settlements and was legally prevented from doing so.

"So when they (Ben & Jerry's) realised that there is no way that I will stop it, they decided not to renew my contract," he told Reuters. Gilad Erdan, Israel's ambassador to Washington, said he had raised the Ben & Jerry's decision in a letter to 35 US governors whose states legislated against boycotting Israel.

"Rapid and determined action

must be taken to counter such discriminatory and antisemitic actions," read the letter, tweeted by the envoy, which likened the case to Airbnb's 2018 announcement that it would delist settlement rental properties.

Airbnb reversed that decision in 2019 following legal challenges in the United States, but said it would donate profits from bookings in the settlements to humanitarian causes.

Palestinians welcomed the Ben & Jerry's announcement.

Orna Barbivai, Israel's economy minister, posted a video of herself throwing a tub of Ben & Jerry's into the trash. Ayman Odeh, an opposition lawmaker from Israel's Arab minority, tweeted an image of him smiling as he dug into his own tub.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

I FIND THAT THE HARDER I WORK, THE MORE LUCK I SEEM TO HAVE
THOMAS JEFFERSON

News in brief

◆ **British Prime Minister Boris Johnson sought to avoid a second lockdown last autumn, arguing that most of those dying were over 80, according to his former aide-turned bitter foe Dominic Cummings.** In a BBC interview



UK PM resisted 2nd lockdown as 'most dying over 80': ex-aide

airing on Tuesday, the mastermind of Johnson's anti-EU Brexit campaign said his former boss "put his own political interests ahead of people's lives". In the latest of a series of attacks on the government following his resignation as chief Downing Street advisor in November, Cummings shared WhatsApp messages apparently from Johnson. In one message shown by Cummings to the BBC, the prime minister allegedly wrote in October that most people were dying from the virus at an age above the average life expectancy.

◆ **Stabbing attempt on Mali interim president**



◆ **Two armed men, including one who wielded a knife, attacked Mali's interim president Assimi Goita yesterday in the great**

mosque in the capital Bamako, a journalist saw. The attack took place during prayers for the Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha. Goita has since been taken from the scene, according to the journalist, who said it was not immediately clear whether he had been wounded. Religious Affairs Minister Mamadou Kone told AFP that a man had "tried to kill the president with a knife" but was apprehended.

◆ **A confidante of deposed Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi and stalwart**



◆ **Confidante of Myanmar's Suu Kyi dies after contracting Covid in junta jail**

democracy campaigner died Tuesday after becoming infected with Covid-19 in prison, authorities said. Nyan Win, a veteran senior member and former spokesperson of the National League for Democracy (NLD) party -- led by Suu Kyi -- was 78. He had been arrested after the February 1 coup removed the NLD from power and was held in Yangon's notorious Insein prison on charges of sedition.

◆ **A man in China has died after contracting a rare infectious disease from primates, known as the Monkey B virus, Chinese health officials revealed in a**



◆ **China reports its first death of a human from rare Monkey B virus**

report Saturday. The victim, a 53-year-old veterinarian based in Beijing, was the first documented human case of the virus in China. According to the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the man worked in a research institute that specialized in nonhuman primate breeding and dissected two dead monkeys in March. He experienced nausea, vomiting and fever a month later, and died May 27. His blood and saliva samples were sent to the center in April, where researchers found evidence of the Monkey B virus. Two of his close contacts, a male doctor and a female nurse, tested negative for the virus, officials said.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	35,018,753	624,983	191,897,948
2 India	31,181,493	414,657	
3 Brazil	19,391,845	542,877	
4 Russia	6,006,536	149,922	4,116,137
5 France	5,871,881	111,492	Recovered:
6 Turkey	5,537,386	50,604	174,697,664
7 UK	5,473,477	128,727	New cases
8 Argentina	4,769,142	101,955	+199,006
9 Colombia	4,655,921	116,753	New deaths
10 Italy	4,289,528	127,874	+3,499
11 Spain	4,161,850	81,119	
12 Germany	3,753,835	91,921	
13 Iran	3,576,148	87,624	
14 Indonesia	2,950,058	76,200	

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	283,762		16,452		224,299	43,011
Saudi Arabia	512,142	+1,273	8,103	+14	493,240	10,799
UAE	664,027	+1,541	1,904	+4	641,750	20,373
Kuwait	386,869		2,238		368,420	16,211
Oman	289,042		3,498		263,752	21,792
Qatar	224,402		599		222,257	1,546

Pilgrims stone the devil



Reuters | Jamarat, Saudi Arabia

pilgrims hold stones before casting them at a pillar symbolizing Satan

Restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 during the Hajj in Saudi Arabia have also reduced the risk of the deadly crowd crushes that have marred the pilgrimage's symbolic stoning of the devil in past years, worshippers said yesterday. Before the pandemic, the annual Hajj rite typically drew more than two million faithful from around the world, with crowding regularly leading to dangerous incidents, most recently a 2015 stampede that killed hundreds. But only a limited number of mask-clad pilgrims hurled pebbles at a wall in a symbolic renunciation of the devil - historically the Hajj's riskiest ceremony - during Tuesday's Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice). For the second year running Saudi Arabia has banned worshippers from abroad and has allowed only 60,000 citizens and residents to participate in the Hajj. "In the past it was overly

Suicide attack in Iraq's Sadr City kills at least 35, wounds dozens



Iraqi security forces inspect the site of an explosion in Sadr City district of Baghdad, Iraq

Reuters | Baghdad

A suicide bomber killed at least 35 people and wounded dozens in a crowded market in the Sadr City neighbourhood of Baghdad on Monday, the eve of the Eid al-Adha festival, security and hospital sources said. More than 60 people were wounded, a police source said. Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, the group's Nasheer news agency said on Telegram. It said one of its militants blew up his explosive vest among the crowds. Hospital sources said the death toll could rise as some of the wounded were in critical condition. Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi held an urgent meeting with top security commanders to discuss the attack, the premier's office said in a brief statement. President Barham Salih posted a tweet saying: "With an awful crime they target civilians in Sadr city on the eve of Eid ... We will not rest before terrorism is cut off by its roots." In April, the Sunni Muslim militant group Islamic State claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack on a market in Sadr City, Baghdad's main Shi'ite Muslim neighbourhood, that killed four people and wounded 20. Islamic State also claimed responsibility for a bomb attack last January that killed more than 30 in the crowded Tayaran Square market in central Baghdad - Iraq's first big suicide bombing for three years. Large bomb attacks were once an almost daily occurrence in the Iraqi capital but have dwindled since an Islamic State invasion of northern and western Iraq was defeated in 2017.

Subway passengers trapped waist-high in floodwaters as Chinese river banks burst



A resident wearing a rain cover stands on a flooded road in Zhengzhou, Henan province, China

Reuters | Beijing

Heavy rain pounded the central Chinese province of Henan yesterday, bursting the banks of major rivers, flooding the streets of a dozen cities and trapping subway passengers waist-high in floodwaters. Henan, a populous province double the size of Austria, has been hit by storms since the weekend in an unusually active rainy season. No deaths or casualties have been reported, but the daily lives of the province's 94 million people have been upended by transport closures. In Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan on the banks of the Yellow River, more than 200 mm of rain fell in one hour on Tuesday, forcing the city to stop all subway train services. Dramatic video shared on social media showed commuters waist-deep in murky floodwaters on a subway train and an underground station turned into a large, churning pool. Henan is a major logistics hub but train services were suspended, while many highways were closed and flights delayed or cancelled. In Ruzhou, a city southwest of Zhengzhou, streets have been turned into torrents, sweeping away cars and other vehicles, footage on social media showed. A rising Yi River also threatened to hit the Longmen Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage site featuring millennium-old Buddhist statues etched into limestone cliffs near the city of Luoyang. Like the Longmen Grottoes, the Shaolin Temple in Dengfeng city, famous in the West for its martial arts, has been temporarily shut. Also in Dengfeng, an aluminium alloy plant exploded on Tuesday as water from a river surged into the factory. At least 31 large and medium-sized reservoirs in the province have exceeded their warning levels. From Saturday to Tuesday, 3,535 weather stations in Henan saw rainfall exceed 50 mm, of which 1,614 registered levels above 100 mm and 151 above 250 mm.

Herostratus sets fire to the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus, one of the Seven Wonders of the World

Crete Earthquake followed by tsunami around the Eastern Mediterranean allegedly destroys Alexandria

Apollo 11: Neil Armstrong becomes the first person to step on the Moon at 2:56:15 AM (GMT)



Aswan High Dam opens in Egypt, enables human control of the flooding of the Nile

Oil with 'pre-packed' pebbles



Worshippers will return to Jamarat over the next two days before continuing onto Mecca to pray at the Grand Mosque at the end of Hajj, a once-in-a-lifetime duty for every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it.

A pilgrim casts stones at a pillar symbolizing Satan during the annual Hajj pilgrimage

crowded and people were jostling and scrambling at Jamarat and some were hurt," said Mohammed Salehi, a Syrian living in Saudi Arabia, referring to the site of the stoning ceremony. "Now the place is very spacious." Some pilgrims shaved their heads after casting stones. In a speech marking Eid al-Adha, King Salman lauded measures taken by the kingdom to ensure a safe Hajj "in the shadow of this pandemic" including deploying technology to allow physical distancing. With the coronavirus the main

concern, authorities have restricted access to pilgrims aged 18 to 65, who have either been fully vaccinated or have recovered for the virus and do not suffer from chronic diseases. This year, face-masked pilgrims clad in white robes signifying a state of purity walked in small groups, each at their own pace and socially distanced. "They had pre-packed stones for us," said Pakistani pilgrim Urooj Qasmi. "I'm not scared. Everything is very clean and well-organised."

Global quest underway to speed COVID-19 vaccine trials



Vials labelled "Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccine" are seen in this illustration picture

Reuters | Chicago

Scientists are working on a benchmark for COVID-19 vaccine efficacy that would allow drugmakers to conduct smaller, speedier human trials to get them to market and address a huge global vaccine shortage.

Researchers are trying to determine just what level of COVID-19 antibodies a vaccine must produce to provide protection against the illness. Regulators already use such benchmarks - known as correlates of protection - to evaluate flu vaccines without requiring large, lengthy clinical trials.

"You could use it to predict efficacy from a vaccine, which will be more important as we are less able to conduct placebo-controlled trials," said Stanley Plotkin, inventor of the Rubella vaccine and an expert on correlates of protection.

"The information is flowing in," he said. "By the end of this year, I think there will be enough data to convince everyone." An established benchmark for COVID-19 would allow drugmakers to conduct

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With an established correlate, drugmakers could test blood samples from a smaller number of trial participants who receive an experimental vaccine to see whether they produced that benchmark level of protective antibodies.

vaccine trials in just a few thousand people, about one-tenth the size of the studies conducted to gain authorization for currently widely-used coronavirus shots, researchers and drugmakers told Reuters. Researchers at Oxford University late last month proposed a potential correlate of protection based on antibodies found in people who had received the AstraZeneca vaccine. The work awaits peer reviewed by other scientists.

'We lost': Some US veterans say blood spilled in Afghan was wasted

Reuters | Gardem Grove, California

Jason Lilley was a special operations forces Marine Raider who fought in multiple battles in Iraq and Afghanistan during America's longest war. As Lilley, 41, reflects on President Joe Biden's decision to end America's military mission in Afghanistan on Aug. 31, he expresses love for his country, but disgust at its politicians and dismay at the blood and money squandered. Comrades were killed and maimed in wars he says were unwinnable, making him rethink his country and his life.

"A hundred percent we lost the war," Lilley said. "The whole point was to get rid of the Taliban and we didn't do that. The Taliban will take over."

Biden says that the Afghan people must decide their own future and that America should not have to sacrifice another generation in an unwinnable war.

Al Qaeda's 9/11 attacks on America triggered a nearly 20-year conflict that led to more than 3,500 U.S. and allied military deaths, the deaths of more than 47,000 Afghan civilians, the killing of at least 66,000 Afghan troops, and over 2.7 million Afghans fleeing the country, according to the nonpartisan Costs of War project at Brown University.

"Was it worth it? It's a big ass question," said Lilley, who was on the front lines of America's Global War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan for almost 16 years.

He said he deployed believing troops were there to defeat the enemy, stimulate the economy and uplift Afghanistan as a whole. They failed, he said.

"I don't think one life was worth it on both sides," Lilley said as he described his service and his perspective in an interview at his home in Garden Grove, southeast of Los Angeles.

Lilley is not alone in reflecting on the U.S. withdrawal after nearly 20 years of war. Many Americans are. The perspectives of Lilley and other veterans can help inform the country about the costs of entering war and the lessons to be learned from Afghanistan.

Lilley's opinions are his own and some veterans differ, just as Americans generally have different estimations about a war that improved women's rights and led in 2011 to U.S. Navy SEALs killing al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan.

Lilley and other Marines who served in Afghanistan and who spoke to Reuters compared it with the conflict in Vietnam. They say both wars had no clear objective, multiple US presidents in charge, and a fierce and non-uniformed enemy.



A U.S. special forces veteran Jason Lilley is shown during his deployment in Farah, Afghanistan in 2009.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



On the auspicious occasion of Ashadhi Ekadashi, my greetings to everyone. On this special day, we pray to Lord Vitthal to bless us with abundance of happiness and good health. The Varkari movement represents the finest of our traditions and emphasises on harmony and equality.

@narendramodi

02



Eid Mubarak! My warmest wishes to everyone celebrating. All of us can draw inspiration from the values of solidarity, empathy and compassion that are celebrated during

@antonioguterres

03



Glad to be in #Japan to address the International @Olympics Committee. I've come with a simple but urgent message: we can defeat #COVID19, but only if everyone plays their part. May these #Tokyo2020 Olympics be a source of hope & unity to achieve #VaccineEquity & end the pandemic.

@DrTedros

04



This pandemic is far from over and that is why it is essential to keep up the system of Test, Trace & Isolate. We will protect crucial services by making sure that a very small number of fully vaccinated, critical workers can leave isolation solely for work.

@BorisJohnson

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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'Best day ever': Bezos has successful first space jaunt

● **Branson got to space first, but Bezos flew higher - Virgin Galactic managed an altitude of 53 miles (86 km) - in what experts called the world's first unpowered space flight with an all-civilian crew.**

Reuters | Van Horn, Texas

Jeff Bezos, the world's richest man, soared about 66.5 miles (107 km) above the Texas desert aboard his company Blue Origin's New Shepard launch vehicle on Tuesday and returned safely to Earth, a historic suborbital flight that helps to inaugurate a new era of private commercial space tourism.

"Best day ever," Bezos said after the space capsule touched down, kicking up a cloud of dust on the desert floor.

The 57-year-old American billionaire, wearing a blue flight suit and donning a cowboy hat, was joined by three crewmates for a trip to the edge of space lasting about 10 minutes and 20 seconds. After landing and exiting the space capsule, Bezos and the other crew members exchanged hugs and popped champagne, spraying each other.

"Astronaut Bezos in my seat - happy, happy, happy," Bezos said in response to a mission control status check after the crew members buckled back in aboard New Shepard's capsule following a few minutes of



The capsule carrying billionaire businessman Jeff Bezos and three crew members returns by parachute



Billionaire Jeff Bezos, founder of ecommerce company Amazon.com Inc, and his brother Mark

weightlessness in space.

Bezos, founder of ecommerce company Amazon.com Inc, and his brother Mark Bezos, a private equity executive, were joined by two others. Pioneering female aviator Wally Funk, 82, and recent high school graduate Oliver Daemen, 18, become the oldest and youngest people to reach space.

The fully autonomous 60-foot-tall (18.3-meters-tall) gleaming white spacecraft, with a blue

Billionaire businessman Jeff Bezos is launched with three crew members aboard a New Shepard rocket on the world's first unpowered suborbital flight from Blue Origin's Launch Site 1 near Van Horn, Texas, U.S.

feather design on its side, ignited its BE-3 engines for a liftoff from Blue Origin's Launch Site One facility about 20 miles (32 km) outside the rural town of Van Horn. There were generally clear skies with a few patchy clouds on a cool morning for the launch.

The flight came nine days

after Briton Richard Branson was aboard his competing space tourism company Virgin Galactic's successful inaugural sub-orbital flight from New Mexico.

Bezos gave a thumbs-up sign from inside the capsule after landing on the desert floor. He stepped out to cheers from family members and Blue Origin

employees and gave high-fives to some of the roughly two dozen people on hand.

He founded Blue Origin two decades ago. This was the company's first crewed flight to space.

New Shepard was designed to hurtle at speeds upwards of 2,200 miles (3,540 km) per hour



The flight coincides with the anniversary of Americans Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin becoming the first humans to walk on the moon, on July 20, 1969. New Shepard is named for Alan Shepard, who in 1961 became the first American in space.

to an altitude reaching the so-called Kármán line - 62 miles (100 km) - set by an international aeronautics body as defining the boundary between Earth's atmosphere and space.

After the capsule separated from the booster, the crew unbuckled for the few minutes of weightlessness. The capsule then returned to Earth under parachutes, using a retro-thrust system that expelled a "pillow of air" for a soft landing.

The mission was part of a fiercely competitive battle between Bezos' Blue Origin and Branson's Virgin Galactic to tap a potentially lucrative space tourism market the Swiss bank UBS estimates will be worth \$3 billion annually in a decade.

Russia expected to unveil stealth fighter jet at air show attended by Putin

Reuters | Moscow

Russia is expected to unveil a new Sukhoi fifth-generation stealth fighter jet at an air show near Moscow attended by President Vladimir Putin.

A brief promotional video released ahead of the MAKS air show featured pilots from UAE, India, Vietnam and Argentina, suggesting that Moscow wants to pitch the plane for export.



Checkmate, new Sukhoi fifth-generation stealth fighter jet is seen during an opening ceremony of the MAKS-2021 air show in Zhukovsky, outside Moscow, Russia

Oleg Panteleyev, head of the Aviaport analytical agency, said it would be touted as a rival to the U.S. F-35 stealth fighter.

It is not known when the plane might be ready for serial production. It is unlikely to take to the air when it goes on show.

In May, an unnamed defence source cited by state news agency RIA said that Rostec was working on a fifth generation light multi-role fighter jet with

a single engine.

The aircraft was expected to have a maximum speed of more than twice the speed of sound, to weigh no more than 18 tonnes, and to have reduced radar visibility and high manoeuvrability, that source said. Sergei Chemezov, Rostec's chief, said last December the conglomerate was looking at producing a light single-jet fighter for export.

Russia already has fourth-gen-

eration fighter jets - the heavy-class Sukhoi Su-27 and light-class Mikoyan MiG-29. It only has one heavy-class fifth generation fighter jet, the Su-57, but no light-class equivalent, Panteleyev said.

"Light-class fighter jets are more in demand in the world than heavy-class ones - they are cheaper and more suitable for states that don't have large territories," he told Reuters.

CELEBS

Hailey Baldwin clears up pregnancy speculation on Justin Bieber's Instagram

Fox | Los Angeles

Hailey Baldwin is clearing the air. Speculation that the 24-year-old model was pregnant began on Monday when her husband Justin Bieber took to Instagram to share a photo of himself and his wife.

"Mom and dad," he captioned the pic, leading many to believe that the two were preparing to become parents.

"YALL having kids?!" one follower commented. Another added: "Wait what? MOM AND DAD?!"

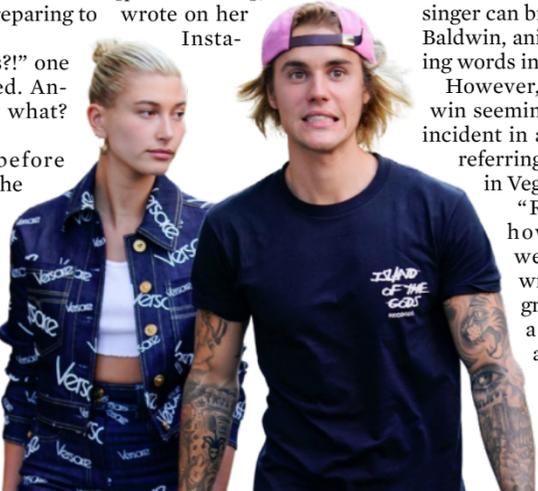
It wasn't long before Baldwin shut down the speculation.

"I think you should maybe change this caption to *Dog Mom and Dad* before anyone gets it twisted," she said alongside a laughing emoji.

Bieber, 27, and Hailey Baldwin

Baldwin married in 2018. They've had to fend off pregnancy rumors before, when the model took to Instagram in Nov. 2020 to slam a news publication for a story she alleged they were planning to run about her being pregnant.

"Since I know you guys were about to break your lil story [publication]," she wrote on her Insta-



gram story at the time, per Just Jared. "So please stop writing false stories from your 'sources' and focus on what's important, aka the election."

Much more recently, Baldwin and Bieber made headlines when a video that appeared to show Bieber yelling at his wife in public went viral.

In the clip, the "Peaches" singer can briefly be seen with Baldwin, animatedly exchanging words in Las Vegas.

However, days later, Baldwin seemingly addressed the incident in an Instagram post referring to their weekend in Vegas.

"Reminiscing on how amazing last weekend was," she wrote on her Instagram story alongside a picture of herself and Bieber sharing a smooch. "Had the best time surrounded by so much love."

Justin Bieber

Matt Damon reveals why his daughter refuses to watch 'Good Will Hunting'

ANI | Washington

Hollywood star Matt Damon recently revealed the reason why his 15-year-old daughter, Isabella won't watch 'Good Will Hunting', which led him and co-screenwriter Ben Affleck to the Oscars.

According to E! News, the 50-year-old 'Ocean's Eleven' star while appearing on a news show was asked whether fans still associate him with 'Good Will



Matt Damon

She just likes to give me s--t. My daughter said, 'Yeah, remember that movie you did, The Wall?' I said, 'It was called The Great Wall.' She goes, 'Dad there's nothing great about that movie'

MATT DAMON

Hunting'. His response included a surprising reveal about his daughter, whom he shares with his wife Luciana Bar-

roso.

Replying to the question, Matt said, Sure, yeah--fewer and fewer. You know, younger people don't know it as much. You know, my 15-year-old refuses to see it. She doesn't want to see any movies that I'm in that she thinks might be good."

When asked to clarify what he meant, the star offered an example by citing Isabella's take on his poorly received 2017 film 'The Great Wall'.

He said, "She just likes to give me s--t. My daughter said, 'Yeah, remember that movie you did, The Wall?' I said, 'It was called The Great Wall.' She goes, 'Dad there's nothing great about that movie.'" Matt cracked up as he finished recalling this. He summed it up by saying, "She keeps my feet firmly on the ground."

Halsey welcomes first child with boyfriend Alev Aydin

Fox | Los Angeles

Months after announcing her pregnancy to surprised fans, Halsey finally welcomed her baby into the "New Americana."

The "Without Me" singer, 26, gave birth to her first child with boyfriend Alev Aydin, named Ender Ridley Aydin, on July 14.

"Gratitude. For the most 'rare' and euphoric birth. Powered by love," she wrote on her Instagram page Monday.

While Halsey did not reveal the sex of the newborn, Ender is

a popular male Turkish name that means "rare."

The Grammy nominee surprised fans in January after she shared photos from a maternity shoot featuring her baby bump. In two of the portraits by photographer Sam Dameshek, the expectant mother posed completely topless while wearing a pair of baggy denim jeans.

Halsey first confirmed her relationship with Aydin, 38, after tagging the producer in her pregnancy announcement, to which he commented, "Heart so full, I love you sweetness."

Halsey

He is best known for writing films and TV shows such as "Small Shorts" on Netflix.

Since her pregnancy announcement, Halsey has taken fans along with her through her journey, sharing photos of her sonogram and snaps showing off her baby bump.

In March, she told fans that her pregnancy was "100% planned" and that she had "tried very hard for this [baby]."

It's unclear how long Halsey and Aydin have been together, but the pair did get coordinating tattoos of the word "Seeds" in each other's handwriting in June 2020. At the time, the singer told Amanda Owley, the California-based artist who inked the couple, that she and Aydin had been friends for "a long time."



Sarah Ferguson talks how she 'made friends with past mistakes'

Fox | Los Angeles

Sarah Ferguson has spent the majority of her adult life in the spotlight as a member of the British royal family.

The Duchess of York, 61, was married to Prince Andrew, Queen Elizabeth's second son, from 1986 to 1996 and shares two daughters Princess Eugenie, 31, and Princess Beatrice, 32, with her ex.

"Someone asked me, 'If you were an astronaut and you could take all the pressure off you, would you leave behind Fergie and Sarah and the Duchess and your past mistakes and failings?'" Ferguson told People magazine while promoting her new novel, "Her Heart for a Compass."



Julia Roberts video on environment conservation generates buzz again

SIANS | Los Angeles

An old video of actress Julia Roberts on environment conservation has started generating buzz again as it trended on social media.

The video, which was uploaded on the YouTube channel of the organization Conservative International six years ago has got people discussing the issue once again.

Incidentally, the video had gone viral in April 2020, too.

In the video, which is one minute and 58 seconds long, the actress speaks from the point of view of Mother Earth.

She says in the video: "Some call me nature, others call me mother nature. I have been here for over four and a half billion years -- 22,500 times longer than



you. I don't really need people but people need me. Yes, your future depends on me. When I thrive, you thrive. When I falter, you falter, or worse."

She goes on to make a powerful statement on behalf of earth as strong visuals add impact to her voice.

"But I have been here for eons. I have fed species greater than you and I have starved species greater than you. My oceans, my soil, my flowing streams, my forests, they all can take you or leave you," she says.

Julia Roberts

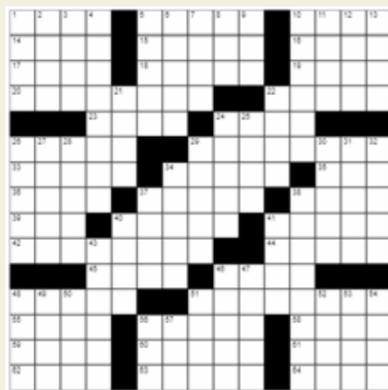
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How to play
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD



Across

1- Estimator's phrase; 5- Snow conveyances; 10- Ton, for one; 14- Stead; 15- Training group; 16- Walkman maker; 17- Rat; 18- Follows orders; 19- Kind of collar; 20- 8th president of the U.S.; 22- Flaming; 23- Winder for holding flexible material; 24- Computer list; 26- Utopian; 29- Uneasy; 33- Born yesterday, so to speak; 34- Aids; 35- Triple; 36- Team; 37- Choreographer Alvin; 38- In the Black?; 39- Before, poetically; 40- Bandleader Shaw; 41- Pick up; 42- Despot; 44- Rendezvous; 45- Underground part of a plant; 46- It's used to walk the dog; 48- From the top; 51- Cat's stomach accumulation; 55- Optical device; 56- Egg exterior; 58- Intestinal sections; 59- Start the pot; 60- Aggregate of qualities that make good character; 61- Cat's nail; 62- How sweet; 63- Cupressus; 64- Enervates;

Down

1- Norwegian king; 2- Comic Rudner; 3- Actor Connerly; 4- Stand up to; 5- Cross the goal line; 6- Trademark; 7- Garden of; 8- Boring; 9- Paris possessive; 10- Handy; 11- Words of denial; 12- Are you out?; 13- Actress Daly; 21- River to the Ubangi; 22- Farm dwellers; 24- Scuffle; 25- Catch a view of; 26- Atlas feature; 27- Pyramid category; 28- Duck with soft down; 29- Museum piece; 30- Short literary composition; 31- Prophets; 32- Meager; 34- Command to the band; 37- Florence's river; 38- Vigorous exercises; 40- By and by; 41- Interstellar dist.; 43- Comes to mind; 46- Seaport in the Crimea; 47- Fuel transport; 48- Jai; 49- Fellow; 50- Not pro; 51- Attention; 52- breve; 53- Jump; 54- Rules; 56- Pouch; 57- Charlemagne's realm; Abbr.;

Yesterday's solution

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Tokyo 2020 chief doesn't rule out cancelling Games

Toshiro Muto says organisers ready for talks if COVID cases spike



General view of the Olympic Rings outside The National Stadium

● Major sponsors to skip opening ceremony

● More Games athletes test coronavirus-positive

AFP | Tokyo

The chief of the Tokyo 2020 organising committee yesterday did not rule out cancelling the Olympics if COVID-19 cases spiked, as more athletes tested positive for the virus and sponsors ditched plans to attend Friday's opening ceremony.

Asked at a news conference if the global sporting showpiece might still be cancelled, Toshiro Muto said he would keep an eye on infection numbers and liaise with other organisers if necessary.

"We will continue discussions if there is a spike in cases," said Muto.

"We have agreed that based on the coronavirus situation, we will convene five-party talks again. At this point, the coronavirus cases may rise or fall, so we will think about what we should do when the situation arises."

A spokesman for Tokyo 2020 later said organisers were "concentrating 100% on delivering successful Games".

Rising COVID-19 cases in Tokyo have cast a large shadow over an event that, having already been postponed last year because of the pandemic, will now take place without spectators. Japan this month decided



A volunteer is seen in a stand during training

"We will continue discussions if there is a spike in cases. We have agreed that based on the coronavirus situation, we will convene five-party talks again. At this point, the coronavirus cases may rise or fall, so we will think about what we should do when the situation arises"

TOSHIRO MUTO



The first major test of how an Olympics can be held in the midst of a pandemic may well come in the men's soccer tournament, when Japan face a South Africa side that could struggle to field 11 players due to the coronavirus

that participants would compete in empty venues to minimise health risks.

There have been 67 cases of COVID-19 infections in Japan among those accredited to the Games since July 1, when many athletes and officials started arriving, organisers said yesterday.

Japan, whose vaccination programme has lagged that of most other developed nations, has recorded more than 840,000 cases and 15,055 deaths and Games host city Tokyo is experiencing a fresh surge, with 1,387 cases recorded yesterday.

Muto, a former top financial bureaucrat with close ties to Japan's ruling party, is known for his careful choice of words, while officials are facing a domestic public angry about coronavirus restrictions and concerned over a possible spike in cases triggered by Games attendees arriving from abroad.

Organisers, for whom International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach said cancelling the event had never been an option, have promised to keep the Games "safe and secure".

But experts see gaps in an Olympic "bubble" that mandates frequent testing and has been designed to limit participants' movements.

Seiko Hashimoto, who sits alongside Muto as organising committee President, said that safety measures introduced to reassure the Japanese public had not necessarily done so, and that she was aware that popular support for the Games had dropped.

"I really want to apologise from my heart for the accumulation of frustrations and concerns that the public has been feeling towards the Olympics," Hashimoto told the same news conference.

'Unprecedented challenges'

The first major test of how an Olympics can be held in the midst of a pandemic may well come in the men's soccer tournament, when Japan face a South Africa side that could struggle to field 11 players due to the coronavirus.

That match is due to take place on Thursday, a day before an opening ceremony that top sponsor Panasonic Corp. as well as Fujitsu Ltd and NEC Corp will

skip. Toyota Motor Corp dropped all TV ads linked to the Games on Monday.

Bach, who Kyodo news agency said would meet Japan's Emperor Naruhito on Thursday, said yesterday organisers could never have imagined the "unprecedented challenges" of bringing the global event to Tokyo, praising the "heroic efforts" of medical personnel and volunteers around the world amid the pandemic.

Two members of Mexico's Olympic baseball team tested positive for COVID-19 at the team hotel before their departure for Tokyo, the country's baseball federation said yesterday.

The athletes, Hector Velazquez and Sammy Solis, who tested positive on Sunday, have been isolated, as have all team members pending results of more tests, it said.

Kenji Shibuya, former director of the Institute for Population Health at King's College London, said that the organisers' bubble system was already "kind of broken."

"My biggest concern is, of course, there will be a cluster of infections in the (athletes') village or some of the accommodation and interaction with local people," he added.

Organising committee President Hashimoto said members of the public were concerned "because they feel that the current situation appears to show that the playbooks that were meant to guarantee security is not providing a sense of safety."

In a poll in the Asahi newspaper, 68% of respondents expressed doubt about the ability of Olympic organisers to control coronavirus infections, with 55% saying they were opposed to the Games going ahead.

Olympics chief admits 'sleepless nights' over troubled Tokyo Games

Reuters | Tokyo

Olympics chief Thomas Bach revealed "doubts" and "sleepless nights" over the postponed Tokyo Games yesterday as the opening ceremony nears after a year's delay and coronavirus chaos that has made them deeply unpopular with the Japanese public.

Bach, speaking at the International Olympic Committee session in Tokyo, said the unprecedented step of postponing the Games had proved more complicated than he thought.

The build-up to Friday's opening ceremony has been exceptionally rocky, with Tokyo still under a state of emergency and public opinion consistently against the Games, which will be held largely without spectators.

"Over the past 15 months we had to take many decisions on very uncertain grounds. We had doubts every day. We deliberated and discussed. There were sleepless nights," said Bach.

"This also weighed on us, it weighed on me. But in order to arrive at this day today we had to give confidence, had to show a way out of this

"This also weighed on us, it weighed on me. But in order to arrive at this day today we had to give confidence, had to show a way out of this crisis"

THOMAS BACH

crisis," he added.

Bach has drawn scattered protests during his visit to Japan, where the latest poll in the Asahi Shimbun newspaper showed 55 percent of respondents opposed holding the Games this summer.

Four people have tested positive in the Olympic Village, heightening fears that the influx of thousands of athletes, officials and media will add to a spike in cases in Japan.

A teenage US gymnast staying outside the Village was also among the 71 Games-related cases reported so far. Olympic and Japanese officials have staunchly defended the Games, which are being held in a strict biosecure "bubble" with daily testing. Eighty percent of athletes at the Games have been vaccinated.



'Fully vaccinated' US women's 3x3 basketball's Samuelson out due to COVID-19

Reuters | Tokyo

US Women's 3x3 basketball player Katie Lou Samuelson said she was devastated after being forced to pull out of the Olympics due to a positive COVID-19 test, despite being fully vaccinated.

USA Basketball said on Monday that Samuelson was placed under their health and safety protocols at the weekend, with Jackie Young taking her place in the squad alongside Stefanie Dolson, Allison

Gray and Kelsey Plum. "I am devastated to share that after getting sick with COVID-19, I will not be able to go and compete in Tokyo," she wrote on Instagram.

"Competing in the Olympics has been a dream of mine since I was a little girl and I hope someday soon, I can come back to realize that dream. I am especially heartbroken as I am fully vaccinated and took every precaution."

3x3 basketball is making its Olympic debut in Tokyo. The three-a-side event runs from July 24-28.

Tunisian double gold medallist to 'boycott' Tokyo Games

Reuters | Tokyo

Tunisia's double Olympic swimming gold medallist Oussama Mellouli has announced his international retirement, saying he had decided to "boycott" Tokyo despite qualifying for his sixth Games.

The 37-year-old won 1,500m gold in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the open-water marathon in London four years later, when he also claimed a 1,500m bronze medal in the pool. He qualified for Tokyo at an event in Portugal in June.

"After a month of suffering, I lose all hope of reconciliation or of winning my case. So I decided to retire from international competitions and boycott the Tokyo Games," he posted on Instagram.

Mellouli did not give details but media reports referenced a long-running legal dispute with

the Tunisian swimming federation.

Competing in Tokyo would have made Mellouli, who in Beijing beat Australia's Grant Hackett to become Tunisia's first gold medallist in nearly half a century, only the fourth swimmer to compete in six Games.

He was already the first swimmer to win gold in both the pool and open water.

The Tunisian had planned to retire in 2020 but delayed that decision when the Tokyo Olympics were postponed a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mellouli was suspended for 18 months in 2007 after a positive dope test for the banned substance Adderall.



Magical Monza for Toyota Gazoo Racing

Toyota crew of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Jose María Lopez in #7 GR010 Hybrid overcame challenges, strong Hypercar competition for first win of 2021

● **6 Hours of Monza marks midway point of 2021 season, with final three rounds set for Le Mans and then Bahrain's first-ever WEC double-header**

● **Toyota's win extended their lead in the manufacturers' World Championship and tightened the drivers' title fight between their two crews**

AFP | London

Toyota Gazoo Racing extended its 100 per cent winning record with the new GR010 Hybrid Hypercar with a hard-earned victory in an enthralling 6 Hours of Monza, the third round of the 2021 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

The meeting marked the midway point of the current WEC campaign, which now heads to the 24 Hours of Le Mans next month before the final two



The Toyota Gazoo Racing #7 GR010 Hybrid Hypercar in action at Monza

races in Bahrain, set to be held on back-to-back weekends at Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir.

Toyota's Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Jose María Lopez in their #7 GR010 Hybrid overcame challenges and strong Hypercar competition to earn their first victory of 2021, beating the

#36 Alpine by 60.908secs after 204 laps to end their run of misfortune this season.

Teammates Sebastien Buemi, Kazuki Nakajima and Brendon Hartley saw their winning run come to an end due to technical issues on their #8 GR010 Hybrid. The Spa-Francorchamps 6 Hours and Portimao 8 Hours

victors finished 33rd overall.

With that result, Toyota extended their lead in the manufacturers' World Championship to 30 points over Alpine.

Meanwhile, the fight for the drivers' crown has tightened, with the #8 crew now leading by only six points from their #7 teammates, who are also the



To come home with our first win of the season is great. It's a pity for the #8 car, they had a bruising day, but I'm really happy with the job we did on our car

MIKE CONWAY

reigning world champions.

"It's great to get a win here in Monza because it's a great track and the fans were back as well," said Conway. "The car felt solid all weekend and, as the weekend went on, it just kept getting better.

"To come home with our first win of the season is great. It's a pity for the #8 car, they had a bruising day, but I'm really happy with the job we did on our car"

Kobayashi added: "We were strong all weekend, as we have been in the first two races of the season. Obviously we had bad luck up until now, and even today we had some problems, but still we managed to win.

"I think this weekend shows



The two WEC races in Bahrain will take place on October 30 and November 6. The first event will be over six hours, while the second will be an eight-hour race

we still need to work hard for Le Mans, because we can't have reliability problems there. I think the #7 car is really getting stronger and we are working well with the team, so I think we are going to have a big chance at Le Mans."

Following Le Mans, the two races at BIC will take place on October 30 and November 6. The first event will be over six hours followed by the second, an eight-hour race.

It is the first time ever that a WEC double-header will be held in Bahrain.

Bangladesh's Tamim defies pain to set up Zimbabwe ODI whitewash

AFP | Harare

Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal defied a knee injury to score 112 and set up a five-wicket victory and a 3-0 one-day international whitewash of Zimbabwe yesterday.

The hosts posted 298 in 49.3 overs and the visitors reached 302-5 with 12 balls to spare at an overcast Harare Sports Club.

Tamim missed the one-off Test against Zimbabwe earlier this month because of the injury, but played in all the ODI internationals, saying he could "manage" the pain.

After scoring 20 and being out for a duck in the first two matches, the skipper let loose at the third attempt, scoring at a rate of more than a run a ball to record his 14th ODI century.

He faced 97 balls in a 149-minute stand and struck eight fours and three sixes before becoming one of four Bangladeshis caught by wicketkeeper Regis Chakabva, off a Donald Tiripano delivery.

Tamim will miss three Twen-



Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal plays a shot

ty20 internationals against Zimbabwe, starting on Thursday, and also home T20 series against Australia and New Zealand after being advised to rest for up to eight weeks.

He departed with the tourists on 204-3 and they seemed set for victory entering the final 10 overs, needing 51 runs from 60 balls with six wickets in hand.

An unbeaten sixth-wicket partnership between Nurul Hasan (45) and Afif Hossain

(26) assured Bangladesh's clean sweep.

Wesley Madhevere (2-45) and Tiripano (2-61) were the most successful home bowlers and Luke Jongwe (1-44) was the other wicket-taker.

Exceeded expectations

Put in to bat after Tamim won the toss, Zimbabwe exceeded the expectations of captain Brendan Taylor by posting their highest total of the series.

Taylor set his team a target



The three-match series was part of the World Cup Super League, a feeder tournament that determines which seven teams, along with hosts India, earn direct qualification to the 2023 World Cup

of 280 as they strove to prevent three consecutive losses having fallen by 155 runs and three wickets in the previous matches.

Opening batsman Chakabva laid the foundations with a brisk 84, including seven fours and a six, before being bowled by Taskin Ahmed when attempt-

Pedrosa to make MotoGP return in Styria as KTM wildcard

AFP | London

Dani Pedrosa is coming out of retirement aged 35 to ride for KTM at next month's Styrian Grand Prix, the MotoGP team announced yesterday.

The Spaniard, who won three world titles in lower categories and competed for 13 seasons in MotoGP winning 31 races and finishing second overall three times, retired at the end of 2018.

He has been working as a development rider for KTM.

The Austrian team said Pedrosa would ride "an adapted development version of the KTM RC16 to gain further valuable data in Grand Prix conditions".

The KTM RC16 is the model being raced by KTM and its satellite team, Tech3, this season.

"It has been a long time since my last race and, of course, the mentality for a GP is very different to a test," said Pedrosa



Dani Pedrosa

on the KTM web site.

"My focus for the GP is to try to test the things we have on the bike in a race situation."

"It's difficult to talk about my expectations after being so long away from competition. It might all click into a racing mentality or it might not."

Pedrosa will race as a wildcard entry, alongside KTM's two regular factory riders, Miguel Oliveira, who is seventh in the championship, and Brad Binder, who is 10th.

"It will be curious to see Dani in MotoGP again," said Mike Leitner, the KTM Race Manager.

Daredevil Chahar's heroics guide India to thrilling win over Sri Lanka

AFP | London

Deepak Chahar played one of the most memorable knocks to steer India to a thrilling win over Sri Lanka in the second ODI here at the R Premadasa Stadium yesterday.

Chahar (69*) smashed a gusty fifty and stitched an unbeaten 84-run stand with Bhuvneshwar Kumar (19*) to take India home after the visitors were reduced to 193/7 in the second ODI. India were down and almost out in their chase but Chahar made sure India get home in the final over.

India needed 16 runs to win in the last three overs and the duo ensured the visitors do not lose any wickets and then guided the Shikhar Dhawan-led side to win with five balls to spare. With this victory, India have



India's Deepak Chahar plays a shot

taken an unassailable 2-0 series lead.

Chasing 276, India got off to flying start but were soon put on the backfoot as opener Prithvi Shaw and Ishan Kishan departed in quick successions to reduce visitors at 39/2.

Skipper Shikhar Dhawan and Manish Pandey stitched a 26-run stand but Wanindu Hasaranga trapped the opening batsman in front of the stumps in the 12th over.

India breath on short partnerships as Suryakumar Yadav gave the visitors a glimmer of hope. However, the right-handed batsman departed after scoring his half-century as India got reduced to 160/6.

After losing Hardik and Krunal Pandya India were in a spot of bother before Deepak Chahar revived the visitors' innings.

Chahar slammed a magnificent fifty and took India close to the target along with vice-captain Bhuvneshwar Kumar. Chahar and Bhuvneshwar then did the honours as India sealed the series 2-0 with one match to go.

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