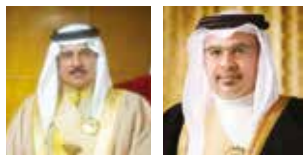


His Majesty, HRH CP, PM extend Christmas greetings to leaders of friendly nations



TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday sent congratulatory cables to Their Majesties and Excellencies, including Kings, Presidents, Crown Princes, and Prime Ministers of several countries, on the occasion of Christmas.

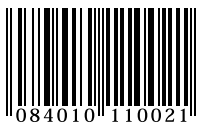
In their messages, His Majesty and the Crown Prince extended wishes for good health and happiness, and for continued progress and prosperity for their countries and peoples. HM and HRH, CP, PM also expressed hope for peace, security, and prosperity throughout the world for the benefit of all humanity.



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HM King attends closing of virtual national exercise



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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, attended the conclusion of the national virtual exercise "Azm Al Watan 1" at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Defence Council. The exercise was led by the Royal Guard of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF).

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa,

the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Prime Minister, followed the exercise via video conference.

Upon arrival, His Majesty was received by Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the BDF; Lieutenant General His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Adviser, Commander of the Royal Guard, Secretary-General of the Supreme



Defence Council and Director of the Exercise; and Colonel His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Commander of Royal Guard Special Operations.

Lieutenant General His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad briefed His Majesty on the objectives and outcomes of the exercise. During a video call with HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, His Majesty expressed his appreciation for the efforts that contributed to

the success of this important national exercise. He also received a detailed briefing on the exercise. The King emphasised that unity of purpose remains the Kingdom's foremost strength, and that effective integration is vital to safeguarding Bahrain's security and stability. He stressed the importance of building on the lessons learned and outcomes achieved to further enhance national readiness and strengthen teamwork across all sectors.

A moment of faith, unity and celebration



Christians in Bahrain celebrated Christmas Mass and prayers yesterday evening at the Church of Our Lady of the Arabian Peninsula in Awali, the largest Catholic cathedral in the Arabian Gulf, with a large congregation of believers from diverse communities across the Kingdom.

Bahrain condemns terrorist attack on police patrol in Pakistan

TDT | Manama

Bahrain has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a police patrol in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which claimed the lives of several security personnel.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Bahrain's firm rejection of all forms of violence and terrorism aimed at undermining security, stability, and targeting innocent civilians

Fire at Al-Naeem restaurant storage extinguished, no injuries reported

TDT | Manama

Civil Defense teams quickly brought under control a fire that broke out in a restaurant storage area in the Al-Naeem district, with no injuries reported.

Preliminary investigations indicate the blaze was caused by an electrical short circuit in a transformer. Authorities are continuing to implement safety measures and preventive procedures in line with established regulations.

First-home utility subsidies to continue

Executive, Legislative authorities continue joint meetings

TDT | Manama

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, yesterday reaffirmed that electricity and water subsidies for citizens' first homes will continue, as the government and legislature met to discuss initiatives aimed at strengthening public finances while maintaining vital social support.

The meeting was chaired by Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam on behalf of the Council of Representatives, Chairman Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh for the Shura Council, and Shaikh Salman for the government team.

The discussions reflected the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to enhance social services, strengthen support programmes, mobilise national resources for citizens, preserve

The meeting agreed on initiatives, including:

1. Introducing a tax on corporate profits.
2. Increasing natural gas prices for factories and companies.
3. Introducing sewage fees, with first homes exempt.
4. Continuing employment programmes for citizens and gradually increasing fees on foreign labour, excluding domestic workers.
5. Increasing the selective tax on soft drinks.
6. Introducing fees on undeveloped investment land with existing infrastructure.
7. Launching initiatives to further reduce government administrative spending.
8. Increasing contributions from government-owned companies to the state budget.
9. Simplifying government procedures to support investment, attract foreign capital and enhance the private sector.



the middle class, and prioritise Bahrainis in accessing services

and entitlements.

Speaker Al Musallam reaffirmed the Council of Repre-

sentatives' commitment to constructive discussions on public finance, offering proposals that serve the interests of the nation, citizens, and Bahraini families, while ensuring the sustainability of national resources. Chairman Al Saleh highlighted the Shura Council's ongoing role in enhancing policy efficiency, safeguarding national achievements, and serving the supreme interests of the country and its people.

Shaikh Salman said the meeting reached consensus on several initiatives and reaffirmed the government's commitment to continuing and developing social services, strengthening support programmes, and effectively utilising national resources. He stressed the importance of protecting public funds, preventing waste, improving spending efficiency, ensuring support reaches those entitled, and preventing misuse by financially capable individuals.

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