

Barca in new turmoil after Messi says he wants to leave

Lionel Messi's lawyers reportedly sent Barcelona a fax in which they announced his desire to rescind his contract by triggering a release clause | **P 08**

WORLD 5 Flash floods kill more than 70 in Afghanistan

THE DAILY tribune

BDF chief receives Pakistani military delegation

3 LOCAL

BUSINESS 5 LIC makes H1 profit of US\$9.98m

Zero COVID-19 deaths

TDT | Manama

There were zero deaths from the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Bahrain yesterday, while 317 new cases were reported by the Ministry of Health along with 376 additional recoveries.

Out of 9,398 COVID-19 tests conducted yesterday, the new cases included 116 expatriate workers and 201 contacts of active cases. The new recoveries brought the Kingdom's overall number of discharged to 47,049. Active cases reduced to 3,158, while Bahrain's total tests conducted increased to 1,067,907.

Four injured in balcony collapse

TDT | Manama

Four Asians were injured and taken to hospital while two vehicles were damaged after a balcony collapsed in a building in East Riffa last night, the Ministry of Interior said.

210 fils (includes VAT)



Bahrain-US deep-rooted ties hailed

HM the King receives US Secretary of State in presence of HRH the Crown Prince, National Security Advisor

● Means of developing bilateral cooperation in various fields discussed

● Intensifying efforts stressed to end Palestinian-Israeli conflict

● US role praised in confronting Iranian interference in regional affairs

TDT | Manama



HM the King, HRH the Crown Prince and Pompeo during their meeting yesterday

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa affirmed Bahrain's pride in its deep-rooted historical relations and close partnership with the US that reflect a long history of mutual understanding, cooperation and coordination, in a way that enhances shared interests at all levels.

HM the King stressed Bahrain's pride as he received yesterday at Sakhir Palace US Sec-

retary of State Mike Pompeo, in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, and National Security Advisor and Supreme Council for Youth and Sports president His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Pompeo is currently on a tour

to several countries in the region.

HM King Hamad welcomed the secretary and reviewed with him bilateral relations and the means of developing and boosting them and enhancing the frameworks for bilateral cooperation and joint action, especially in political, economic and other fields.

HM the King stressed Bah-

rain's constant keenness to strengthen its strategic partnership and its aspiration to consolidate coordination and cooperation with the US to achieve mutual benefits for the two friendly countries and peoples.

The meeting discussed the latest developments in the region and the initiatives and efforts to achieve stability and peace as well as regional and international

developments. The two sides exchanged views on issues of common interest.

In this regard, HM the King stressed the importance of intensifying efforts to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict according to the two-state solution that achieves just and comprehensive peace, which leads to the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with legal international resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

HM King Hamad lauded the pivotal role of the US administration and its tireless efforts to advance the peace process, establish security and stability in the Middle East, confront Iranian interference in the region's affairs, and promote international peace. HM the King affirmed Bahrain's support for these efforts and endeavours.

Pompeo expressed his gratitude to HM King Hamad for the gracious welcome and stressed the depth of the distinguished historical friendship and cooperation between the two countries.



OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST 31



Modern Art Studio

Rolex Boutique - Bahrain City Centre

HRH the Crown Prince meets US Secretary of State

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, met yesterday with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo at Sakhir Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince highlighted the depth of the historic relations between Bahrain and the US, which are based on strategic cooperation, strong partnerships, and continuous coordination at all levels, delivering the shared interest of both countries and their peoples.

HRH the Crown Prince welcomed Pompeo's visit, during which both reviewed the bilateral relationship and examined opportunities to further strengthen it. HRH the Crown Prince under-

Pompeo meets UAE counterpart

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo discussed the Libyan conflict and countering Iranian regional influence with his Emirati counterpart during a brief visit to the UAE yesterday.

Pompeo sought to build on the momentum of the UAE-Israel agreement for regional peace, he said in a tweet after

arriving in the UAE following his Bahrain visit. Pompeo and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan spoke about support for "de-escalation and a lasting ceasefire in Libya, Gulf unity and countering Iran's malign influence in the region", the state department said.

scored the Kingdom's commitment to continuing the advancement of Bahrain-US strategic ties.

During the meeting, ongoing efforts towards achieving stability and peace in the region were examined, in addition to discussions on regional and international developments, as well as issues of common concern.

HRH the Crown Prince welcomed steps made by the US to reach an agreement between the UAE and Israel to stop the annexation of Palestinian lands. HRH the Crown Prince noted the importance of re-doubling efforts to realise a just solution which utilises peace as a strategic option to end the Palestinian-Israeli



In his discussion with Pompeo, HRH the Crown Prince is seen wearing a McLaren F1 Team face mask, branded with Formula 1's #WeRaceAsOne initiative, aimed at tackling the biggest issues facing the sport and global communities, including the fight against COVID-19 and the condemnation of racism and inequality

raeli conflict.

HRH the Crown Prince noted the importance of the international community's solidarity in combatting terrorism and support towards efforts aimed at tackling the promotion and financing of terrorist groups and eradicating them at their source.

In this regard, HRH stressed the need to adhere to good neighbourly relations and mutual respect for the sovereignty and independence of states and to reject Iranian threats, including the launch of ballistic missiles on countries in the region.

HRH the Crown Prince pointed to the need to activate measures which rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, whilst emphasising Bahrain's support for the production, development and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with international law.

For his part, the US Secretary of State expressed his thanks and appreciation to HRH the Crown Prince for his commitment towards strengthening bilateral relations, and noted the long-standing depth of strategic relations

between the US and Bahrain.

His Majesty the King's Charity Works and Youth Affairs representative, National Security Advisor and Supreme Council for Youth and Sports chairman His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Finance and National Economy Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, and US Special Representative for Iran and Senior Policy Advisor to the US Secretary of State Brian Hook were also in attendance.

Bahrain's COVID-19 testing rate 'among world's highest'



Speaking at yesterday's conference were, from left, Dr Al Ansari, Dr Al Manea and Dr Al Salman

● **More than 2,300 volunteers signed up so far for phase three vaccine trial, more urged to participate to meet 6,000 target**

● **No doubling of total cases has occurred during past 25 days, while other coronavirus indicators have been steady**

● **Inactivated vaccine being used in Bahrain trial is most widely used type and safest method of vaccination**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's "Trace, Test and Treat" strategy in its fight against the coronavirus (COVID-19) has resulted in one of the highest testing rates in the world, a top health official said yesterday.

Ministry of Health undersecretary Dr Waleed Khalifa Al Manea highlighted the significant milestone of conducting over one million COVID-19 PCR diagnostic tests in the Kingdom, explaining further that 707 tests per 1,000 people have been done.

Dr Al Manea was speaking

during the press conference of the National Taskforce for Combatting COVID-19, held yesterday at the Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research at the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital.

He was joined by fellow-national taskforce member Salmuniya Medical Complex Infectious and Internal Diseases consultant Dr Jameela Al Salman, and Supreme Council of Health Public Hospital Autonomy project manager Lt Col Dr Ahmed Mohammed Al Ansari.

Dr Al Manea noted that, alongside testing and treatment, the Health Ministry continues to welcome volunteers for the phase three clinical trials for a COVID-19 inactivated vaccine, in collaboration with UAE-based artificial intelligence company G42 Healthcare.

Dr Al Manea urged those who are interested to participate to come forward and register. He said that more than 2,300 volunteers have signed up so far, but more are needed as soon as possible to be able to reach the target of 6,000 volunteers and achieve the trials' goals within the set timeframe.

He noted that the largest number of participants so far are adults aged between 18 and 40, while there are also a few who are above 60.

Turning to patient outcome, Dr Al Manea explained that the recovery rate in Bahrain is currently at 93.2 per cent, with a 0.4 per cent death rate. Isola-

tion centre capacity stands at 19.5 per cent, with 1,589 out of 8,158 beds occupied, and 1,383 asymptomatic cases are under optional home self-isolation after meeting the set criteria.

Dr Al Manea reaffirmed that the national taskforce is diligently monitoring data on health systems and COVID-19 policy responses to ensure their effectiveness, and asked citizens and residents to comply with precautionary measures during Ashura to limit the spread of the virus.

Indicators

Meanwhile, Dr Al Ansari reviewed COVID-19 indicators in the Kingdom. He said the doubling time—the time that it takes for twice as many people to become infected with the virus—for total cases stood at 42 days until July 31, with no doubling occurring during the past 25 days.

The doubling time between Bahrainis stood at 25 days on July 8, with no doubling occurring during the past 48 days; while the doubling time between expatriates stood at 34 days on July 4, with no doubling occurring also during the past 48 days.

The ratio of new to recovered cases stood at 0.7 and 1.6 in the period between August 10 and 24, in comparison to 0.5 and 1.6 between July 26 and August 9.

The average percentage of positive tests in the period between August 10 to 24 ranged

between 3.0 per cent and 4.4 per cent, compared to 3.5 per cent to 5.2 per cent for the period between July 26 and August 9.

The basic reproductive ratio from August 10 to 24 was between 1.5 and 1.9, compared to 1.4 and 1.8 between July 26 and August 9. A ratio of one is necessary in order for Bahrain to successfully overcome all COVID-19 challenges.

Also during yesterday's conference, Dr Al Salman spoke about Bahrain's phase three clinical trials, and explained the different types of vaccines.

These include mRNA vaccines, which is a new technology that is not widely used that works by developing nucleic acids that are genetically engineered in laboratories to stimulate cells to form proteins similar to those from COVID-19, in order to generate an immune response.

There are also live attenuated (LAV) vaccines, which use an attenuated form of the virus to create a strong and long-lasting immune response.

The third type is the inactivated vaccine, which is the one being trialled in Bahrain, which uses a method that relies on a killed version of the virus. It is the most widely used and safest method of vaccination.

Dr Al Salman stressed that the vaccination process starts with a medical screening to determine eligibility. Eligible candidates will then receive two doses, three weeks apart, and will be closely monitored throughout.

Mosques in Bahrain to re-open gradually

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments announced yesterday to gradually open mosques by allowing the performance of the Fajr (dawn) prayers daily, starting from tomorrow.

Mosques all over Bahrain will be opened for men to per-

form Fajr prayers only, under the supervision of the relevant endowments directorate, and those that fail to meet organisational and health requirements will be closed.

The Friday prayer will remain suspended, except for the Ahmed Al Fateh Mosque, where it will be performed with the participation of a limited number.

The Justice Ministry outlined the necessary health precautionary measures to be followed for the gradual reopening of mosques and resumption of collective worship, as follows:

- Preventing gatherings and crowding at the gates of mosques during the entry and exit process, while leaving a distance of not less than two metres between each person
- Opening mosques 10 minutes before the prayers, and closing them 10 minutes after their end, and ensuring that the worshippers leave mosques after they finish the prayers in a gradual and orderly manner without any delay or crowding
- Prohibiting worshippers from staying in mosques after prayers and advising them to perform Sunnahs at home
- Requesting people to perform prayers in the mosques closest to their homes
- Preventing the sick, women, and under-15 children from entering mosques, while urging the elderly to perform prayers at home
- People whose presence may cause harm to them or to others are strictly forbidden from entering mosques, and deterrent penalties will be inflicted on violators
- People will have to perform ablution (Wudu) before going to the mosque as ablution places, bathrooms, toilets, refrigerators and water taps will be closed
- Worshippers shall bring their personal prayer rugs with them, and not leave them at mosques after prayers
- Wearing face masks and sanitisation are mandatory for worshippers
- Measuring the temperature of the worshippers before entering the mosque to make sure that they show no symptoms
- Keeping mosques' doors wide open before and after prayer to facilitate entry and exit, so that no one touches them, in addition to making sure that the handles are disinfected after each prayer continuously
- Removing all Holy Quran books, and requesting people to read the Quran from their own Quran books or mobile phones
- Ensuring physical distancing between worshippers from all directions
- Sterilisation of chairs at mosques, and making sure that only the right number is used
- Hand-shaking will be forbidden

Police sword-attacker gets three-year jail term

TDT | Manama

A Bahraini man, who assaulted a policeman using a sword while resisting arrest, was sentenced by the First Criminal Court this week to three years behind bars.

The details of the case show that the defendant, who is in his 20s, was wanted for his involvement in a couple of security cases.

Police received a tip that he was hiding in an apartment in East Eker village in the Capital Governorate.

On January 9 earlier this year, a police force raided the flat, where they faced strong

resistance from the defendant, who used a sword to attack them.

One of the policemen sustained several injuries as a result of the attack. However, the man was controlled, handcuffed, and taken into custody.

The man was later referred to the Public Prosecution, where he was interrogated and accused of assaulting an on-duty policeman and causing the injuries mentioned in the medical report, as well as possessing a weapon, the sword, without permission from authorities in the Interior Ministry.

BDF chief receives Pakistani military delegation

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa received a Pakistan Armed Forces military delegation, headed by Brigadier General Tawfiq Ahmed.

Defence Affairs Minister Lieutenant-General Abdullah bin Hassan Al Nuaimi and Chief-of-Staff Lieutenant-General Theyab bin Saqer Al Nuaimi were also present.

The commander-in-chief praised the historical relations between Bahrain and Pakistan, noting the existing cooperation in various sectors, including the exchange of experiences and cooperation in the military field.



The BDF chief with Brigadier General Ahmed

Drug-traffickers get jail terms

Two Gulf nationals sentenced to life imprisonment, issued BD10,000 fines for peddling through King Fahd Causeway

● Other gang members get three years' jail and fined BD1,000 each for drug abuse, possession

TDT | Manama

The Fourth High Criminal Court yesterday sentenced two Gulf nationals to life in prison and fined them BD10,000 each for trafficking drugs through King Fahd Causeway.

The two men were part of a gang that also consisted of Bahraini defendants and is responsible of trafficking, selling, and distributing hashish and marijuana in the Kingdom.

The court also sentenced both defendants to deportation, while the remaining gang members were punished each with three years of imprisonment and fined BD1,000 for drugs abuse and possession.



One kilogramme of hashish was found to be professionally stashed in the air filters of the Bahraini defendant's vehicle during the drug bust

The case was initially formed when the investigations of a lieutenant in the Anti-Narcotics Department at the Interior Ministry led to the first defendant, a Bahraini man, who was caught red-handed last year while selling BD300 worth of hashish to a secret police informant.

The first defendant cooperated with the police and led them to one of his Bahraini accomplices, after arranging a deal to buy a piece of hashish worth BD3,900.

An ambush was set up by the police to arrest the second defendant, who attempted to escape, but was eventually caught.

The piece of hashish was found in his possession when the car was searched.

According to court files, the second defendant, also a Bahraini man, was taken to the directorate's building in Adliya for interrogation, and while he was there, he received a call on the Snapchat app from the third defendant, one of the two Gulf nationals sentenced to life.

While on loudspeaker, the third defendant was heard by the lieutenant saying that he had received an order from the fourth defendant, the second Gulf national, to deliver a kilogramme of hashish to the

second defendant, who was in police custody.

A meeting was arranged and police surprised the third defendant, who was waiting in his car for the second defendant to come and collect the quantity from him.

When asked, he denied any knowledge of a drug deal. However, a thorough inspection of his vehicle revealed that the drugs were professionally stashed in the air filters of the vehicle.

The man confessed in the interrogation that he trafficked the piece through King Fahd Causeway, as per the instructions of the fourth defendant, in order to deliver to a dealer here (the second defendant).

Further investigations showed that the fourth defendant regularly provides the drugs and hands them over to the third defendant, who takes the responsibility of trafficking into Bahrain and delivering them to the second defendant here.

Three jailed in work permits forgery case

TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Court this week sentenced three Bahrainis, including two sailors, to one year in jail each for their involvement in a case of forgery.

The three defendants were found guilty of counterfeiting official documents and submitting them to the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), in order to issue additional work permits for expatriate fishermen.

The first defendant was caught in 2017 when an employee at the Agriculture and Marine Resources Affairs at the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning discovered that the defendant had forged his (the ministry's employee) signature in an application form and submitted it to the LMRA.

The matter came to light when the LMRA cross-checked

a copy of a work permit issuance application with the ministry's employee. The application was reportedly submitted by the defendant, who was applying for the issuance of three work permits for foreign fishermen.

The second and third defendants were detected while submitting similar applications to the LMRA to issue three fishermen work permits.

The employee at the Agriculture and Marine Resources Affairs notified the Public Prosecution, which launched a probe into the matter and heard the statements of all the individuals involved in the case, including the LMRA officials. The prosecution charged the defendants with forging official documents that are attributed to the the Agriculture and Marine Resources Affairs and entering false information into the electronic system of an official body, the LMRA.

Southern Governor receives civil defence official

TDT | Manama

Southern Governor His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa received newly appointed Riffa Civil Defence Centre Chief Captain Mohammed Khan.

He hailed the active role of outgoing Riffa Civil Defence Centre Chief Captain Walid Al Thawadi, stressing partnership in adopting security and social initiatives.

He wished Capt Khan success in his new duties, commending the role of servicemen in maintaining community security and strengthening partnership.



The Southern Governor with other officials during their meeting

Bahraini trucks allowed to transit through causeway

TDT | Manama

Customs Affairs Land Ports director Mohammed Hassan Al Isa announced yesterday that through cooperation with the Saudi General Customs

Authority, it was decided to allow Bahraini trucks (transit) with products to drive through Saudi Arabia to their destination countries via King Fahd Causeway.

This was implemented starting yesterday.

Legal steps taken for illegal recruitment

TDT | Manama

Fifty-three workers, including four run-away maids, have been arrested after being illegally recruited, the Ministry of Interior announced.

The ministry said that the Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science director-general reported that, in cooper-

ation with the Labour Market Regulatory Authority, legal steps have been taken against 29 organisations for supplying domestic workers without licences.

This has resulted in the apprehension of the 53 workers.

The director-general added that legal proceedings are being taken in the case.

Lanes closures on Saar, Jasra interchanges, Avenue 35 near Zinj



An image provided by the ministry of the work to be done at Saar interchange

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning announced yesterday that maintenance work on expansion joints on Saar Interchange necessitate the closure of some lanes in stages.

They are as follows: In stage one, the closure will be of the slow lane for northbound traffic going to Manama, with two lanes being provided for traffic movement tomorrow at midnight to 11.30pm; in stage two, the closure of the slow lane for southbound traffic going to Riffa, with two lanes being provided for traffic movement starting from Saturday at midnight to Tuesday at 5am.

The ministry also said that improvement work of Jasra Interchange necessitates the closure of some lanes in stages.

They are as follows: In stage

one, the closure will be of the ramp between Isa Bin Salman Highway and Janabiyah Highway for northbound traffic going to Budaiya and the closure of the ramp between Wali Al Ahed Highway and King Fahd Causeway starting from tonight at 11pm until tomorrow at 11pm; in stage two, the closure will be of the fast lane on Al Jasra flyover, with one lane being provided for traffic movement starting from tomorrow at 11pm to Sunday at 5am.

The ministry further announced yesterday that installation work of electrical cables on Avenue 35 near Zinj necessitates the closure of two lanes for southbound, with one lane being provided for traffic movement.

The closure will be effective from tonight at 10pm to Monday at 5am.

Bahrain first Gulf country to host BPW International affiliate

TDI | Manama

The Bahrain International Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW-Bahrain) congratulates BPW International for its 90th anniversary.

BPW International has become one of the most influential global networks of business, serving all society members and professional women, and entrepreneurs in particular.

Founded in 1930, today it owns affiliates in over 95 countries in five continents around the globe, including the Bahraini affiliate represented by BPW-Bahrain, spearheaded by Shaikha Hind bint Salman Al Khalifa.

BPW International's mission focuses on developing the business, professional and leader-



BPW-Bahrain board members, with Shaikha Hind, fifth from right

ship potential of women on all levels through advocacy, education, mentoring, networking, skill-building, and economic

empowerment programmes and projects around the world.

On this occasion, Shaikha Hind stated: "BPW International has

made tremendous strides that have been brought to fruition in the field of redefining feminine entrepreneurship, plus empow-

ering gender equality in all sectors of commerce, productivity, and economic development.

"BPW-Bahrain is proud to celebrate with other BPW International affiliates this very special occasion, taking into consideration Bahrain's leading role hosting the first BPW affiliate in the Gulf, owing to the Kingdom's mastery of women empowerment, establishing a strong base to economic incubators to ramp up entrepreneurs and paving the way for them to build up promising entities supporting the national economy."

BPW-Bahrain was formed in December 2012 by a group of Bahraini women leaders, entrepreneurs and business owners. Led by Shaikha Hind, who was elected BPW-Bahrain president, the initial board of directors con-

sisted of all the founding members, including Shaikha Hind, first vice-president Nabeela Al Khayer, second vice-president Shaikha Mariam bint Hamad Al Khalifa, general secretary Khairiya Aldashti, deputy general secretary Amina Janahi, finance controller Amaal Alhayki, public relations committee chairman Zahraa Taher, economic and projects chairman Najah Alkhuder, Shohraa Al Shariff, Nadia Almulla and Nahla Almahmood. Two new members were added to the board, namely Shaikha Marwa bint Abdulrahman Al Khalifa and Laila Mohammed Janahi.

BPW-Bahrain owns 35 business incubators, 18 incubators based in its new premises at Al Andalus Park in Gudaibiya, and 17 incubators located at Al Frieih Dar Al Fonooj Gallery.

Commemorating Ashura guidelines

National taskforce stresses full compliance with specific rules to mitigate COVID-19 spread

TDI | Manama

The National Taskforce for Combatting the Coronavirus (COVID-19) stressed the significance of full compliance with precautionary measures to mitigate the spread of the disease and set specific rules during the commemoration of Ashura.

The medical taskforce made the decision based on its national commitment to protecting the health and safety of Bahrain and on the outcome of its meeting with the Jaafari Endowments.

The medical team also referred to the commitment of the community centres' (maatam) leaders and officials to all preventive procedures and precautionary measures, and to their suggestions regarding the commemoration of Ashura.

The decisions approved by the national taskforce stipulated: The attendees, while listening to the speaker, will sit on chairs placed outside the community centre and spaced two meters apart in both directions as per the area available.

Participants will not leave their places as they mark the commemoration.

Precautionary measures welcomed

The precautionary measures set by the National Taskforce for Combatting the Coronavirus (COVID-19) during the commemoration of Ashura have been welcomed by Al Ajam Grand Community Centre (Matam Al Ajam Al Kabeer), noting that they reflect appreciation for the Ashura rituals and show keenness to perform them within a secure health atmosphere.

In a statement, Al Ajam Grand Community Centre chairman Mohammed Abbas Biljeek urged full commitment to the measures aimed at protecting public health and safety. He noted that community centres' leaders and officials must ensure full commitment to the preventive measures.

If the Hussainite Commission, the community centre officials or organisers see the possibility to form a procession, it will be confined to the area adjacent to

Community centres' cooperation praised

TDI | Manama

Northern Governor Ali bin Al Shaikh Al Asfoor praised the cooperation of the Hussaini community centres in enforcing the precautionary measures and adhering to the regulations put in place by authorities regarding Ashura season.

This came during a visit paid by the Northern Governor, alongside officials from the governorate, to a number of community centres in the villages of Maqaba, Janabiyah, Bouri, Maqsha and Jad Al Hah, where he was informed about the centres' commitment to health regulations put in place by the National Taskforce for

the centre. Participants have to be fully committed to the social distancing rule to ensure the health and safety of all people. All precautionary measures will be upheld under the supervision of the community centre committees.

The community centre's lead-



Officials during a visit to one of the community centres

Combatting the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and recommended by the Jaafari Endowments Directorate.

ers and officials must ensure full commitment to the preventive measures and a committee must make sure that everyone is wearing a face mask and complying with the social distancing rule, and that necessary disinfection operations are carried out regularly.

Children, the elderly and people with underlying medical conditions are not allowed to attend.

Sanitisers containing at least 70 per cent alcohol should be available in different parts of the area and tissue papers should be provided.

He revealed that the governorate has drawn up mechanisms to ensure success of Ashura season and perform the rituals securely. He stressed the importance of coordination with religious institutions to facilitate celebrating religious occasions in the governorate.

The Northern Governor underlined keenness to choose religious clerics who provide guidance and advice, thanking the community centres' directorates for their commitment to regulations to ensure the safety of all.

The community centres' officials affirmed the importance of awareness and social commitment to applying the needed preemptive measures.

Attendees must commit to commemorate Ashura in their areas and in their designated community centres, so that their movement does not contribute to the spread of infection. There is also a commitment to prevent the distribution of food and water.

Health centres' Ashura holidays working hours announced

TDI | Manama

The Ministry of Health announced yesterday the working hours of the Kingdom's health centres during the Ashura commemoration holidays.

Muharrraq Northern Health Centre, Hamad Kanoo Health Centre in Riffa, and Youssef

Engineer Health Centre in Isa Town will deliver round-the-clock services.

The Mohammed Jassim Kanoo Health Centre in Hamad Town (Roundabout 17) will be open from 7am to 11pm throughout the week.

Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC)'s Accident and Emergency Department and its pharma-

cy will provide their services to the public around the clock, while the outpatient clinics will be closed during the Ashura holidays.

Visits to patients will be allowed on Saturday, Monday and Wednesday only, in accordance with the circular regulating those visits during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Council of Representatives to go hi-tech

TDI | Manama

The Council of Representatives will be going hi-tech during the coming legislative session. Speaker Fawzia bint Abdulla Zainal said that the full digital switch would cover the

council and general-secretariat. "The next legislative session will be electronic par excellence," the Speaker said.

She added that modern technology would be optimised to submit parliamentary proposals and questions and get rid of

paperwork.

The Speaker cited the keynote speech of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa at the opening of the previous legislative session, describing the royal address as a roadmap for parliamentary work.

NCC organises media and risk management webinar

TDI | Manama

The National Communication Centre (NCC) has organised a webinar on "Media and Risk Management", presented by media expert Dr Lulwa Budalamah.

In her virtual presentation, Dr Budalamah discussed the role of communication departments in risk management, which is based on measuring and evaluating risks to develop the appropriate strategies in dealing with them.

She highlighted the importance of communication departments' awareness of risks and crises, stressing the need to identify and evaluate them, develop plans for their man-



Dr Budalamah during the webinar

agement, and measure their performance in order to develop them in the future.

She also emphasised the

need to devise media scenarios for all potential risks.

The participants from the Government Communication Network interacted with the symposium's themes, discussed them, and commended the efforts made by the NCC to organise forums that contribute to developing government media work and strengthen the communication network among all official bodies.

The webinar was one in a series of knowledge seminars and workshops launched by the NCC since June, in line with its strategic objectives of unifying government media discourse, and strengthening the communication system in an effective and sustainable manner.

Classifieds

THE DAILY **tribune**

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Prime Projects International Construction W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250725 or georgina@prime-projects.com

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Flash floods kill more than 70 in Afghanistan

● A general view of the aftermath of flooding in Parwan, Afghanistan

● Washed away men, women and children and destroying 300 homes

Reuters | Kabul

A violent flash flood killed more than 70 people and destroyed hundreds of homes just north of Afghanistan's capital yesterday, officials said.

The floods swept through Parwan province, which borders Kabul, in the early hours of the morning, washing away men, women and children and destroying 300 homes, according to Ministry of Disaster Management spokesman Tamim Azimi.

Rescuers searched through mud throughout the day for bodies, with the confirmed death toll at 72, and at least 90 injured, Azimi added.

Floods had also swept through eight other northern provinces, killing two in Maidan Wardak and two in Nangahar, according to the Ministry of Disaster Management spokesman, who added that climate change was exacerbating the amount of flooding hitting the country.

A spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani said on Twitter that his office had instructed authorities to provide emergency disaster relief to survivors, adding the floods were causing severe financial losses.



Men carry an injured person out of a house after floods in Charikar, capital of Parwan province, Afghanistan



A general view of the aftermath of flooding in Parwan, Afghanistan



The disaster comes as the war-torn nation already faces a sinking economy due to the coronavirus pandemic and as violence continues despite the United States attempting to usher peace talks between the Afghan government and insurgent Taliban.

News in brief

◆ **Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister Hassan Diab said on Wednesday the country was at risk of losing its control** over the country's coronavirus outbreak after a spike in the number of cases following the massive explosion in Beirut on Aug 4. "The number of cases is increasing greatly, and if this continues, we will lose control of this epidemic," Diab was cited as saying in a statement issued by the Supreme Defence Council.



Lebanon could 'lose control' of outbreak: PM Diab

◆ **The United States is set to execute Lezmond Mitchell, a convicted murderer and the only Native American on federal**

US to execute only Native American on federal death row

death row, on Wednesday, despite opposition from the Navajo Nation, which says the government is infringing tribal



sovereignty. Mitchell, a Navajo, is set to be killed with lethal injections of pentobarbital, a powerful barbiturate, at 6 p.m. in the Department of Justice's execution chamber in Terre Haute, Indiana.

◆ **Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha on Wednesday issued his sternest warning** yet to protesters seeking his resignation, saying they were creating deeper divisions that could cause the collapse of the country.

Thai PM warns nation could be 'engulfed in flames'

"If we want to overcome each other politically, the nation will collapse," Prayuth told reporters. "If that happens, just wait, everybody will be on



fiery land, engulfed in flames." His comments come after a month of near-daily rallies led by students calling for his ouster, a new constitution and fresh election, with some drawing over 10,000 protesters.

◆ **Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden saw no bounce** in popular support after last week's Democratic National Convention, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Wednesday, pointing to Americans' hardened political views.



Biden gets no convention bounce after Democratic gathering

Biden held his lead over President Donald Trump in the national opinion poll taken Aug. 19 to 25, with 47% of registered

voters backing the Democratic challenger and 40% supporting the Republican incumbent. That was a similar edge to what Biden had before his party's convention, a scaled-back, virtual event because of the coronavirus pandemic.

◆ **France is joining military exercises with Italy, Greece and Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean** amid a worsening dispute between Turkey and Greece over energy resources in the region, Armed Forces Minister Florence Parly said yesterday. Tensions between Turkey and Greece escalated after Ankara sent its Oruc Reis survey vessel to disputed eastern Mediterranean waters this month, a move Athens has called illegal. Three Rafale fighter jets and a warship equipped with a helicopter will be part of the joint military exercises, she said.



Suicide bombers in Philippine attack were militants' widows: army

AFP News

Two female suicide attackers who carried out a double bombing in the southern Philippines were the widows of militants who had worked for the Islamic State-linked Abu Sayyaf group, the army chief said Wednesday.

The pair blew themselves up in a coordinated attack on Jolo island in Muslim-majority Sulu province on Monday, killing or wounding scores of security forces and civilians in the country's deadliest attack this year.

The death toll from the blasts has risen to 15 with 74 wounded, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said in a statement, blaming Abu Sayyaf for the attack.

"The Abu Sayyaf Group will not deter us from nor shake our resolve to bring an end to their violence," AFP Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Gilbert Gapay said.

"Our troops on the ground continue to be on high alert to deter similar attacks."

No group has claimed responsibility. Army chief Lieutenant General Cirilito Sobejana identified the female bombers as Inda Nay and Nanah.

In a text message to report-



Suicide attacks were once very rare in the Philippines, but since July 2018 there have been five

ers, Sobejana said Nanah was the wife of Norman Lasuca, who is considered the Philippines' first homegrown suicide bomber.

Lasuca and another attacker blew themselves up outside a military camp on Jolo in June 2019, killing several soldiers and civilians.

Inda Nay was the wife of Talha Jumsah, also known as Abu Talha, who acted as liaison between Abu Sayyaf and the Islamic State group. He was killed in November in a shoot-out with security forces on Jolo.

Authorities are checking if Nanah was Indonesian.



Monday's explosions happened near a Catholic cathedral on Jolo where two suicide bombers blew themselves up in January 2019 killing 21 people. That attack was blamed on a group linked to Abu Sayyaf.

Global		Countries worst affected			
Country	Total cases	new cases	New deaths	Total Deaths	
1 USA	5,967,798	+12,070	182,832	+428	
2 Brazil	3,683,224	+9,048	116,964	+298	
3 India	3,288,446	+56,692	60,291	+679	
4 Russia	970,865	+4,676	16,683	+115	
5 South Africa	613,017		13,308		
6 Peru	607,382		28,001		
7 Mexico	568,621	+4,916	61,450	+650	
8 Colombia	562,128		17,889		
9 Spain	426,818	+3,594	28,971	+47	
10 Chile	402,365	+1,380	10,990	+32	
11 Iran	365,606	+2,243	21,020	+119	
12 Argentina	359,638		7,661	+98	
13 UK	327,798		41,449		
14 Saudi Arabia	310,836	+1,068	3,755	+33	

Middle East								Figures as of closing
Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases	Serious, Critical	Tot cases/1m pop
Egypt	97,619		5,298		67,717	24,604	41	951
Saudi Arabia	310,836	+1,068	3,755	+33	284,945	22,136	1,601	8,908
UAE	68,020	+399	378	+1	59,070	8,572		6,865
Kuwait	82,271	+698	521	+2	73,906	7,844	92	19,222
Oman	84,818	+166	646	+4	79,409	4,763	148	16,549
Qatar	117,742	+244	194		114,558	2,990	63	41,934

India building collapse toll rises to 16

- Local officials had initially feared up to 200 residents of 47 flats were buried
- But many were spared, having fled the town weeks earlier to wait out the coronavirus pandemic
- A four-year-old boy found alive on Tuesday afternoon

AFP News

The death toll from a collapsed apartment block in India rose to 16 overnight as rescuers said yesterday they didn't expect to find anyone else trapped dead or alive in the rubble.

Local officials had initially feared up to 200 residents of 47 flats were buried when the block collapsed late Monday in Mahad, south of Mumbai.

But many were spared, having fled the town weeks earlier to wait out the coronavirus pandemic in their home villages.

"We are in the final stages and don't expect anyone (else) trapped under the debris," Shiv Kumar, a spokesman for India's National Disaster Response Force, said.

Emergency workers rescued



Rescue workers search for survivors in the rubble of the collapsed five-storey apartment building in Mahad

nine people from the wreckage, with the loudest cheers reserved for a four-year-old boy found alive on Tuesday afternoon.

Shell-shocked residents said they had previously complained to the builder about the condition of the complex, with police launching an investigation against him and four other people in connection with the tragedy.

Local politician Manik Motiram Jagtap told TV9 Marathi that the building was 10 years old and built on "weak" foundations.

"It fell like a house of cards,"

1,200

The death toll from monsoon-related disasters this year has topped 1,200, including more than 800 in India.

he said.

Building collapses are common during India's June-September monsoon, with old and rickety structures buckling after

days of non-stop rain.

In another incident, a three-storey residential building collapsed in central Madhya Pradesh state on Tuesday following heavy rains.

Emergency workers -- using shovels and in some cases their bare hands to remove debris -- rescued nine people, reports said.

The monsoon plays a vital role in boosting harvests across South Asia, but also causes widespread death and destruction, unleashing floods, triggering building collapses and inundating low-lying villages.

India to hold national college tests

Reuters | Mumbai

More than 2 million Indian students will sit for admission tests to medical and engineering schools next week, the government said on Wednesday, despite growing concern that the move could fuel a jump in coronavirus infections.

India reported more than 60,000 infections, maintaining the world's highest single-day caseload since August 7, a Reuters tally showed. With 3.2 million cases, it ranks after

the United States and Brazil, though its 59,449 deaths are far fewer.

"We are very mindful of the safety of our students, we will take full precautions," Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal told state radio, adding that the tests had to be held to ensure students did not lose a year.

Already twice postponed this year, the tests will be spread over several days and held at more centres than usual, to ensure there is no crowding.

Russia readies for approval of second COVID-19 vaccine: official

Reuters | Moscow

Russia is preparing to approve a second vaccine against COVID-19 in late September or early October, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said yesterday.

Speaking at a televised government meeting, Golikova told President Vladimir Putin that early-stage clinical trials on the vaccine, developed by the Vector virology institute in Siberia, would be completed by the end of September.

"As of today there have been no complications among those vaccinated in the first and second stages of testing," she said.

Earlier this month Russia became the first country to grant regulatory approval to

a COVID-19 vaccine after less than two months of human testing.

The approved vaccine, called "Sputnik V" in homage to the world's first satellite launched by the Soviet Union, has been hailed as safe and effective by Russian authorities.

But Western experts have been sceptical about Russia's approval of "Sputnik V", warning against its use until all internationally approved testing and regulatory steps have been taken. RDIF, Russia's sovereign wealth fund, said the final phase of clinical trials on "Sputnik V" were beginning. It said 40,000 people would take part in the final trials and that similar trials would also be carried out in five other countries.

Vietnam condemns new Chinese military drills in South China Sea

Reuters | Hanoi

Vietnam yesterday accused China of violating its sovereignty by conducting military drills in a disputed part of the South China Sea and said Beijing's actions were "complicating" negotiations on establishing a code of conduct in the region.

China this week began six days of exercises in waters near the Paracel Islands, where Vietnam has competing claims, according to the Maritime Safety Administration of Hainan, an island off China's southern coast. It was the second set of drills in the area by Beijing in two months.

"China's repeated military exercises in (the Paracel Islands) violate Vietnam's sovereignty, complicating negotiations for a Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea between China and ASEAN," foreign ministry spokeswoman Le Thi Thu Hang said in a statement.

Vietnam is this year chairing the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which has had long drawn-out negotiations with Beijing over a code of conduct in the South China Sea.

China's defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

'Butcher of Bosnia' personally led Srebrenica massacre, prosecutors say

- Mladic, 78, is appealing against his 2017 conviction and life sentence

- The former general is dubbed the "Butcher of Bosnia"

- Mladic was captured in 2011 after years on the run, and convicted following a three-year trial.

AFP News

Prosecutors urged UN judges yesterday to uphold former Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladic's genocide conviction, saying he personally oversaw the 1995 Srebrenica massacre of some 8,000 Muslim men and boys.

Mladic, 78, is appealing against his 2017 conviction and life sentence by a tribunal in The Hague for genocide over the massacre and for crimes against humanity and war crimes throughout the 1992-95 Bosnian war.

The former general dubbed the "Butcher of Bosnia" resorted to "genocide, extermination and murder" to rid the UN-protected area of Croats and Muslims as part of the wider pursuit of a Serb-only state, prosecutor Laurel Baig said.

"Mladic was in charge of the Srebrenica operation, Srebreni-

Ratko Mladic

Dubbed "The Butcher of Bosnia"



ca was Mladic's operation. And the chamber was right to conclude that he was responsible for these crimes," Baig told the court.

"He used the forces under his command to execute thousands of men and boys," she added, describing the slaughter as being on "a scale not seen on European

100k

In all about 100,000 people were killed and 2.2 million displaced during the conflict.

soil since the Second World War."

Mladic will be allowed to speak for 10 minutes later on Wednesday at the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals -- which handles cases left over from the now-closed UN tribunal that convicted him.

Lawyers for Mladic urged the court on Tuesday to overturn his conviction, saying that the "charge of genocide was made out of thin air".

The Srebrenica massacre was the bloodiest single episode from the Bosnian war, which erupted as communal rivalries tore apart Yugoslavia after the fall of communism.

In all about 100,000 people were killed and 2.2 million displaced during the conflict.

Killings 'by the truckload'

The Bosnian Serb general was "personally overseeing" the operation to take Srebrenica, the prosecution said.

Baig said Mladic carried out a "victory walk" through Srebrenica after his forces seized it on July 11, 1995, saying that "now the time has come to take revenge on the Turks" -- a disparaging term used during the war for Muslims.

Around 25,000 civilians, mainly women, children and the elderly, were forced onto buses and moved out of Srebrenica under harrowing conditions, despite the presence of Dutch UN peacekeepers in the area.

Thousands of men and boys from Srebrenica meanwhile set out on a doomed walk through surrounding forests to reach the safety of Muslim-held territory -- only to be picked off by Serb forces.

Victims "were executed by the handful, by the dozen, by the truckload, by the hundred and ultimately by the thousand, by gunfire and grenade, irrespective of their status as civilians, purely because they were Bosnian Muslims," said Baig.

The Srebrenica massacre was the bloodiest single episode from the Bosnian war, which erupted as communal rivalries tore apart Yugoslavia after the fall of communism.



Mladic was "key to the success of this operation", said Baig. "Not only was he present giving orders, supervising and directing, he also played a high-level role in keeping the international community from stopping this," the prosecutor said.

In a bid to cover up the crime after some mass graves were found later in 1995, Mladic ordered his forces to dig up other graves with heavy machinery and move remains to other areas, "commingling body parts from mixed victims," said Baig.

The prosecution are also appealing, seeking to overturn Mladic's acquittal on wider genocide charges.

NZ Mosque gunman waives right to speak at sentencing

● The Australian white supremacist, 29, is expected to become the first person in New Zealand imprisoned for life without prospect of parole.

AFP

New Zealand mosque gunman Brenton Tarrant waived his right to speak at his sentencing hearing in Christchurch on Wednesday, in a dramatic twist after the court heard more than 90 horrific victim statements.

Tarrant, who sacked his lawyers last month, had admitted 51 charges of murder, 40 of attempted murder and one of terrorism over the attacks at the Al Noor and Linwood mosques in Christchurch on March 15 last year.

Defendants in New Zealand have the right to address the court and there had been speculation Tarrant would use his sentencing to promote his ex-



Australian white supremacist Brenton Tarrant has remained impassive throughout his sentencing hearing

tremist views, leading to strict restrictions on media reporting the case. But when judge Cameron Mander asked if he wanted to speak -- after sitting through three days of anguished and angry testimonies from more than 90 survivors and bereaved fami-

lies in which he was frequently called "a loser" and "a coward" -- Tarrant declined.

A court-appointed lawyer will make a brief statement on his behalf before Mander delivers his sentence on Thursday.

The Australian white suprem-

51
Tarrant had admitted 51 charges of murder, 40 of attempted murder and one of terrorism over the attacks at the Al Noor and Linwood mosques in Christchurch on March 15 last year.

acist, 29, is expected to become the first person in New Zealand imprisoned for life without prospect of parole.

Shortly before waiving his right to speak, Tarrant was face-to-face with Abdul Aziz, who was hailed a hero when he chased the gunman from the Linwood mosque.

"I saw the fear in his eyes when he was running for his life," Aziz told the court.

"You know the face, the one who chased you out," he told Tarrant who sat a few metres away, maintaining the same passive demeanour he had shown throughout the three days of harrowing testimony.

Over 1,500 human bones found at Osaka historical grave site

Reuters | Tokyo

An excavation in the western Japanese city of Osaka has unearthed more than 1,500 human bones at what is thought to be a burial site dating back some 160 years, city officials have said.

The site, dubbed the "Umeda Tomb", is believed to be one of seven historical grave sites from the late Edo and early Meiji periods around the 1850s to 1860s.

Researchers discovered 350 small graves at the site as well as the remains of animals including four piglets, horses, and cats, city officials announced earlier this month.



Burial ground containing the bones of people are seen at an excavations site called "Umeda Tomb", at a construction site for a train station, in Osaka, western Japan



The Osaka City Cultural Properties Association said people buried at the site were likely local residents from around Osaka Castle town, with many believed to be in their 30s or small children. Some looked to have had signs of disease on their hands and feet, it said.

Multiple bodies were found in some graves. Experts believe they were buried together due to deaths related to an epidemic disease, the association said.

Aussie penguin parade is live-stream hit

AFP News

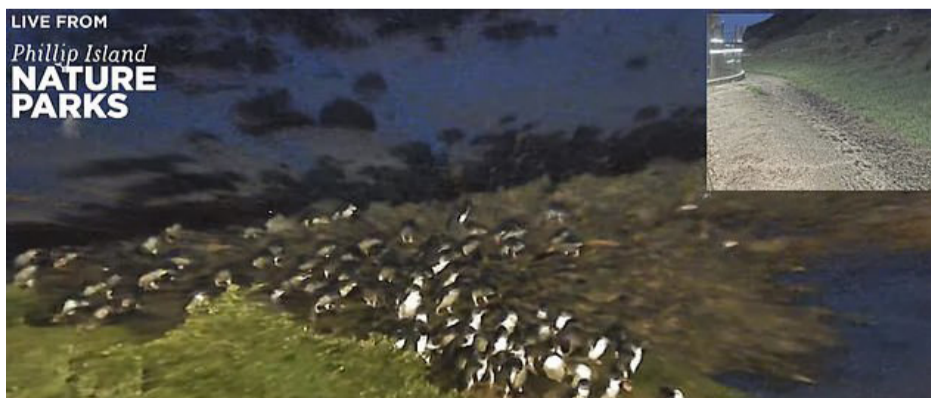
A nightly penguin parade live-streamed from a deserted Australian park has become an online lockdown hit, with hundreds of thousands tuning in to watch the cute creatures waddle back to their burrows from the sea.

Before the pandemic, going to watch the penguin colonies on Phillip Island, about two hours' drive from Melbourne, was a major tourist draw.

But with the region under lockdown after a resurgence in coronavirus cases, the island's conservation park launched "Live Penguin TV" on Facebook and YouTube -- attracting a first-night audience of nearly 800,000 on Tuesday, it said.

The island is home to the smallest species of penguin, fittingly called the Little Penguin and also known as the Fairy Penguin, and the live stream showed them frolicking together in the water and toddling back to dry land.

"This has given us something to look



Screen-grab of the live-streamed video

forward to in isolation, thanks so much," commented one Facebook user on Wednesday's edition of the evening spectacle.

The live sessions, which are about an hour long, will continue even after virus restrictions are lifted in the state of Victoria, the park said, for anyone who cannot go to the island. "We have seen pictures posted

on social media of entire families watching the parade on their computers and devices," said Catherine Basterfield, chief executive of Phillip Island Nature Parks.

"It is great to be able to put smiles on faces during these challenging times."

There were about 771,000 viewers on Tuesday, according to the park.

Navalny's poisoning in Russia spurs supporters to fight on



A supporter of Alexei Navalny holds up a picture of the Kremlin opponent after he was taken ill with suspected poisoning

AFP News

Sofiya Khaliulina joined dozens of other supporters for a 24-hour vigil outside the Siberian hospital where opposition leader Alexei Navalny was being treated for suspected poisoning before his transfer to Germany.

"I realised I had to be there, that I wouldn't sleep until this was over, until they put him on a plane," said the 22-year-old arts journalist.

She waited outside the hospital in the city of Omsk until Navalny was medically evacuated to Berlin on Saturday.

The Kremlin opponent whose Anti-Corruption Foundation publishes reports on high-level graft was rushed to an intensive care unit in Omsk on Thursday after falling ill on a flight from Siberia to Moscow.

He spent two days in Omsk as his family and allies wrangled with doctors who initially refused to allow his evacuation abroad and said they found no evidence of poisoning.

By Monday, medics at Berlin's Charite hospital declared test results "indicate poisoning".

Navalny's supporters have accused the Kremlin of trying to cover up a crime.

"This is terrible and a bit scary," said Khaliulina. "Being in the opposition is hard and it's even harder in the regions. But I don't think that (Navalny's poisoning) will affect ordinary people (in the opposition). The people at the top are the ones targeted," she said.

Navalny's illness appears to be the latest in a long series of attacks on critics and opponents of the Kremlin regime that have sent shockwaves through the opposition.

Navalny has already experienced several apparent attacks but has never come so close to losing his life.

Maldives former prez Gayoom tests positive for COVID-19



President of Maldives Gayoom smiles during an interview

Reuters | Male

The former president of the Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, said he had tested positive for COVID-19, as the tourist-dependent island nation reports a pick-up in cases since re-opening its borders last month.

"I have tested positive for COVID-19. May Almighty Allah bless me and all other sick people with a speedy recovery and good health," Gayoom said in a tweet on Tuesday night.

The 81-year-old former president was one of Asia's longest serving leaders, having ruled the Maldives for 30 years.

According to a family source, the former autocrat was tested for COVID-19 following a med-

ical consultation on Tuesday morning, after he developed a fever on Monday night.

The source said Gayoom is doing well and is expected to be admitted to the newly built Dharumavantha Hospital in the capital, Malé.

Heavily reliant on foreign tourism, the Indian Ocean archipelago lifted a lockdown in the capital in June and opened up its borders for tourists in July.

Since the end of the lockdown in June, the number of COVID-19 cases in the Maldives has tripled, while deaths have risen from five to 28.

The Maldives Health Protection Agency has confirmed a total of 7,047 COVID-19 cases in the country, out of which 2,580 cases are currently active.

Gaza man dies of coronavirus as enclave clamps down on outbreak



Gaza reports first COVID-19 cases outside quarantine areas, declares lockdown

Health officials said nine more cases were discovered yesterday

Reuters | Gaza

A 61-year-old man has died in the Gaza Strip after contracting the coronavirus, Palestinian authorities said yesterday as they clamped down on an outbreak of the pandemic in the enclave.

The man had suffered previous illnesses and had been on a respirator, the Health Ministry said. It was the first death among the general population since an infected woman died at a quarantine centre in March.

Health officials said nine more cases were discovered yesterday. Six of them were in the isolated Maghazi refugee camp where a first four cases had been confirmed on Monday, prompting Gaza's Hamas authorities to impose a full lockdown.

The three other cases were in northern Gaza Strip, indicating the virus has begun to spread into different areas of the enclave of two million people.

The outbreak outside Maghazi remains slow but it cemented concerns by local and international health organizations over the territory's potentially disastrous combination of poverty, densely populated refugee camps and limited hospital capacity.

With local authorities maintaining a lockdown in all cities,

people were instructed to stay home at all times and to wear face masks if, in cases of extreme necessity, they had to go out.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency UNRWA, which helps over half of Gaza's population, said it was looking into alternative plans to continue health, education and food services to beneficiaries should the lockdown be extended.

Adnan Abu Hasna, UNRWA spokesman in Gaza, said clinics remained open but physical presence was prohibited, instead staffers were providing medical consultation over the phone and some medication was delivered to patients at home.

"We are in constant consultation with the health ministry and we are also in discussion over the implementation of our own alternative plans in order to ensure the continuation of delivering services to refugees," Abu Hasna said.

Monday's cases were uncovered after a woman traveled to the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where she tested positive, the Gaza Health Ministry said. A ministry spokesman urged everyone who might have visited a supermarket outside a hospital in central Gaza to quarantine themselves and report to medics immediately.

Erdogan says Turkey won't compromise over rights at sea

Reuters | Istanbul

Turkey is determined to do whatever is necessary to obtain its rights in the Black Sea, Aegean and Mediterranean, President Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday.

"We will not compromise over what belongs to us ... We are determined to do whatever is necessary," Erdogan said, a day after Germany's foreign minister sought to ease tensions between Turkey and Greece in their dispute over control of eastern Mediterranean waters.

Speaking at an event commemorating the 11th century military victory by Seljuk Turks over the Byzantine empire at Malazgirt, Erdogan also called on Ankara's counterparts to avoid mistakes that he said would bring their destruction.

Tensions between Turkey and Greece escalated after



Erdogan

Ankara sent its Oruc Reis survey vessel to disputed eastern Mediterranean waters this month, a move Athens called illegal.

Turkey and Greece, NATO allies, vehemently disagree over claims to hydrocarbon resources in the area based on conflicting views on the extent of their continental shelves in waters dotted with mostly Greek islands.

"If there is anyone who wants to pay its price, they are welcome to confront us. If not then they should go away so we can handle our own business," Erdogan also said.

Afghanistan policewoman turned filmmaker wounded in gun attack

● Saba Sahar, 44, is one of Afghanistan's first female film directors

● Three gunmen opened fire at her in her vehicle

● Sahar has served in the police department for more than 10 years

Reuters | Kabul

A prominent female Afghan film director who is also an actress and senior police officer was recovering from bullet wounds on Wednesday after unidentified gunmen shot her as she was being driven through the capital, Kabul, her husband said.

Saba Sahar, 44, is one of Afghanistan's first female film directors who has used her training as a police officer to produce critically acclaimed documentaries and movies.

She has also been a vocal critic of the Taliban and the dominant role conservative men have over social and political institutions.

Three gunmen opened fire at her in her vehicle on Tuesday.

She was accompanied by two bodyguards, a child and a driver at the time. The bodyguards



Afghanistan policewoman turned filmmaker hurt in attack

She was in coma for almost 20 hours as she was hit with four bullets in the stomach ... now she's out of danger

EMAL ZAKI,
HER HUSBAND

were wounded while the child and driver were not harmed.

"She was in coma for almost 20 hours as she was hit with four bullets in the stomach ... now she's out of danger," said her husband, Emal Zaki.

Sahar has served in the police department for more than 10 years and was recently appointed deputy of special police forces overseeing gender issues.

A police spokesman said the gunmen escaped and officers were investigating.

This month, unidentified gun-

men shot at another prominent Afghan woman, Fawzia Koofi, a women's rights advocate and member of a team negotiating with the Taliban.

She sustained minor injuries in the attack in Kabul.

Rights group Amnesty International said there had been an "extremely worrying" rise in attacks on film actors, political activists and human rights defenders in Afghanistan in recent months.

Taste of success for Taiwan's street vendors with Michelin award



80-year-old Wu Huang-yi prepares his gua-bao -- flat steamed buns -- at the Huaxi Night Market in Taipei



AFP News

A cloud escapes into the air as 80-year-old Taiwanese street food vendor Wu Huang-yi lifts the lid on a giant steaming basket to unveil a piping-hot batch of two dozen buns.

It is lunchtime at Taipei's Huaxi Night Market -- the capital's oldest -- and a queue has already formed at Wu's stall, with diners eager to taste the pork belly whose aroma wafts from a steel pot bubbling in the cramped kitchen.

Self-taught chef Wu perfected

his meat marinade more than 20 years ago, and he still goes to the market at 5:00am every day to handpick the p*** belly, which he stews for hours in his special blend of ingredients. "My buns are different from others, it's all handmade. It's tasty because it's so soft and yet chewy," Wu says.

"Everything is done according to tradition, and that's the reason why it tastes good."

Also known in Taiwanese as ho-ga-ti (tiger bites P**), the gua-bao is a circular flat steamed bun, which is folded in half and stuffed with braised meat, salted vegetables, corian-

der and ground peanuts.

Its shape resembles the ancient Chinese boat-shaped ingot, so gua-bao signifies prosperity and is often served at wedding banquets and corporate functions.

But Wu sells his for less than US\$2 each at his stall, where his whole family, including his wife, three adult children and a grandson help out.

And his hard work and dedication have finally paid off -- this month he was recognised by Michelin and awarded a place on the food guide's Bib Gourmand list.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Bib Gourmand listing is given to eateries that serve a top-class three-course meal for less than NT\$1,000 (US\$34).

One dead, two injured in US protest shootings

● Footage posted online showed people running through the streets of Kenosha

● Blake was trying to get into his car, with his three children inside, when he was shot

● At least one small group of mainly white, heavily armed men was in the city

AFP News

One person was shot dead and another two were injured in the US city of Kenosha on Tuesday night, according to media reports, as groups clashed during protests over the police shooting of a black man. Footage posted online showed



The violence occurred as hundreds of protesters marched for a third night following the Jacob Blake

people running through the streets of Kenosha, Wisconsin, as gunshots rang out, while videos showed wounded men lying on the ground.

Sheriff David Beth of Kenosha County said three people had been shot and one was killed, according to the New York Times. The violence occurred as hun-

dreds of protesters marched for a third night in anger after Jacob Blake was seen in video being shot up to seven times at point-blank range by a white Kenosha

police officer on Sunday.

Blake was trying to get into his car, with his three children inside, when he was shot.

At least one small group of mainly white, heavily armed men was in the city on Tuesday night vowing to protect property.

The New York Times reported police were investigating whether the Tuesday night's shooting "stemmed from a conflict between self-styled militias guarding a gas station and demonstrators."

Clashes between a group of demonstrators and police had broken out earlier, with protesters shooting fireworks at law enforcement officers who responded with rubber bullets.

One video, verified and taken by photographer Alex Lourie, showed a man sitting on the ground bleeding heavily from a gunshot wound to his arm as law enforcement vehicles approached him with officers shouting: "Back it up" to on-

lookers.

The injured man was helped to his feet by the officers.

Another showed footage of a man, who appeared to be carrying a rifle, falling to the ground before several gunshots could be heard as people fled from the scene telling one another to take cover.

A reporter saw several civilians carrying weapons on Tuesday night, and little police presence in the city aside from the courthouse which was being guarded by the Kenosha County sheriff.

The violence occurred as hundreds of protesters marched for a third night in anger after Jacob Blake was seen in video being shot up to seven times at point-blank range by a white Kenosha police officer on Sunday.

Second wave of coronavirus could hit France in November: government advisor



A health worker, wearing a protective suit and a face mask, administers a nasal swab to a patient at a testing site for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) installed at the Bassin de la Villette in Paris, France

Reuters | Paris

A second wave of the coronavirus pandemic could hit France in November, a government advisor told local media yesterday, as the city of Marseille tightened restrictions to fight the outbreak.

Authorities in Marseille said late on Tuesday that bars and restaurants would have shorter opening times, and they also broadened mandatory mask-wearing in the southern port city between Aug. 26 and Sept. 30.

"There are fears of a second wave in November," Professor Jean-François Delfrayssy, who heads the scientific council that advises the government on the pandemic, told France 2 television on Wednesday.

Under the new measures, Marseille's bars and restaurants will have to close from between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. local time (2100-0400 GMT), having previously been able to stay open until normal closing time at midnight or 1 a.m.

Mandatory mask-wearing will now be compulsory out-

doors in public spaces in all districts of the city, having previously only been compulsory in some areas.

The French health ministry reported 3,304 new coronavirus infections on Tuesday, well below daily highs seen last week, though greater numbers of young adults are testing positive. The number of deaths in France from COVID-19 stands at 30,544 deaths, including 16 in the past 24 hours.



France has the seventh-highest COVID-19 death toll in the world, and the government is monitoring the figures closely to see if fresh restrictions or lockdown are needed.

'UFO' in Congo jungle turns out to be internet balloon

● Images shared on social media showed people inspecting a large silver-coloured contraption fitted with solar panels and wires

● Locals alerted the security services after the object fell to earth

● The mystery was solved on Tuesday afternoon when Loon, a subsidiary of Alphabet, claimed the object

● The mystery was solved on Tuesday afternoon when Loon, a subsidiary of Alphabet, claimed the object

Reuters | Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

An unidentified flying object parachuted into dense Congo jungle to the confusion of local authorities, who detained two people for questioning until a subsidiary of Google parent company Alphabet confirmed the device was an internet balloon.

Images shared on social media showed people inspecting a large silver-coloured contraption fitted with solar panels and wires, which had landed in the tropical forest of Bas-Uele province in the northern Democratic Republic of Congo, trailing a large deflated balloon.

Locals alerted the security services after the object fell to earth around 1 p.m. local time on Monday, Bas-Uele Governor Valentin Senga told Reuters after visiting the site around 10 km (6 miles) south of the provincial capital Buta.

"I'm not able to say exactly



This one Google balloon, #HBAL166 crash-landed in Congo. (picture shared on twitter by @Patty_Mayo_Jnr) Inset picture, courtesy of the Indian Express

what kind of device I observed," he said by phone on Tuesday. "What intrigues us is that neither the intelligence services nor the local aviation authorities claim to have any information on the overflight of Congolese airspace by this aircraft."

He said police had detained two people, a Congolese and a Pakistani national, who had arrived in Buta with the purpose of searching for the device.

The mystery was solved on Tuesday afternoon when Loon, a subsidiary of Alphabet, claimed the object. "I can confirm that Loon executed a controlled landing of one of our stratospheric balloons in this

region," a Loon spokesman said in a statement.

Loon's balloons travel 20 km (12 miles) above the earth's surface on the edge of space, acting as floating cell towers, to deliver internet services to people in remote areas around the world.

Loon said the landing was coordinated with local air traffic control officials and approved by the civil aviation authority.

In July, Kenya's Telkom launched mobile internet services via Loon technology. Flight-tracking software showed the HBAL166 balloon circling central Africa in recent months, with its last known location in northern Congo.



What is Google Internet balloons?

Google's plan is to create wireless networks via equipment-laden balloons floating in the stratosphere, high above the clouds. The balloons communicate with each other and with ground-based networking equipment and mobile devices to get people on the ground connected.

The balloons, made from sheets of polyethylene, are the size of tennis courts. They are powered by solar panels and controlled by software on the ground. While up in the air, they act as "floating cell towers," transmitting internet signals to ground stations and personal devices.



CELEBS

Kevin Hart reveals he tested positive for coronavirus

Fox | Los Angeles

Kevin Hart revealed he tested positive for COVID-19 several months ago.

The 41-year-old comedian talked about his diagnosis while performing at Dave Chappelle's comedy show "An Intimate Socially Distanced Affair" in Yellow Springs, Ohio, on Saturday.

"The problem is that I had it around the same time as Tom Hanks," Hart said, according to Page Six. "And I couldn't say anything because he's more famous than I am."

Chappelle reportedly spent \$100,000 on coronavirus rapid testing for the outdoor shows he held over the summer. Other performers included Questlove, Bill Burr and Michelle Wolf.

Meanwhile, Hanks, 64, and his wife, Rita Wilson, confirmed they tested positive for coronavirus on March 11

Kevin Hart

via Instagram while the actor was making a movie in Australia.

The couple spent time recovering in isolation at a hospital before returning to Los Angeles later that month. They have since donated their plasma to help doctors and scientists find a vaccine.

Hart has been spending most of his time during quarantine at home in Los Angeles. His wife, Eniko Hart, is expecting their second child together and is due this month. They welcomed son, Kenzo, two years ago.

The Harts just celebrated their baby girl with a boho-chic baby shower. "All things beautiful for baby girl. #ShoweringBabyK #bohochic," Eniko wrote on Instagram.

The "Jumanji" star also shares daughter Heaven, 15, and son Hendrix, 12, with his ex-wife, Torrei Hart. They were married from 2003 to 2011.

A rep for Hart did not immediately respond to Fox News' request for comment.

Cardi B claps back at critics of hit song 'WAP'

Fox | Los Angeles

The rapper, 27, released "WAP" earlier this month and it debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100, making it Cardi B's fourth song to fill the spot. The song also extended her record as the female rapper with the most No. 1 singles on the Billboard Hot 100.

Since its release, the song, which features Megan Thee Stallion and serves as a sexual empowerment anthem, has come under fire

for its expletives.

Despite the naysayers, Cardi stands by her song and has now spoken out in defense of the hip-hop tune during an appearance on the "Kyle & Jackie O" radio show.

"The people that the song bothers are usually conservatives or really religious, fake religious people," explained the rapper, per Daily Mail.

Furthermore, the Bronx native said she finds the song to be in line with modern hip-hop. "I grew up listening to this type of music, so to other people it might be strange and vulgar, but to me it's almost really normal," she said.

The star isn't exactly known for her censorship, as every song on her debut album, "Invasion of Privacy," comes with an expletive warning, including her breakout single "Bodak Yellow."

As such, the star said that the song wasn't meant for children, such as her own 2-year-old

daughter Kulture, to hear.

"It's like, no, of course, I don't want my child to listen to this song and everything, but it's like, it's for adults," said Cardi.

Despite some pushback from listeners, the song received massive critical praise.

The New York Times called the song "an event record that transcends the event itself" and called both Cardi and Megan "exuberant, sharp and extremely, extremely vividly detailed."

The Los Angeles Times expressed similar sentiments, calling the tune a "sex-positive triumph," again praising the rappers for their "exuberance."

The song's music video also featured Kylie Jenner, with some fans expressing their displeasure with her casting.

"Why did I put Kylie on my music video? She treated my sister [Hennessy] and daughter [Kulture] so lovely at her kid [Stormi's] bday party," Cardi previously clapped back.



Cardi B

Halle Berry files to represent herself in divorce with Olivier Martinez

Fox | Los Angeles

Halle Berry has moved to represent herself in her divorce proceedings with ex-Olivier Martinez, according to a new report.

The "Monster's Ball" star filed to represent herself instead of an attorney, according to Entertainment Tonight, citing court documents obtained Tuesday.

Berry's former lawyer, Marina Zakiyan Beck, signed off on the change on July 30 with the 54-year-old signing off on August 11, reports the outlet.

Martinez, also 54, is reportedly being represented by attorney Laura Wasser.

The Oscar-winner filed for divorce from Martinez after two years of marriage in 2015, confirming the split in a joint statement at the time. The former couple shares a son, Maceo, together.



Halle Berry

"It is with a heavy heart that we have come to the decision to divorce," they said. "We move forward with love and respect for one another and the shared focus for what is best for our son. We wish each other nothing but happiness in life, and we hope that you respect our, and most importantly our children's privacy, as we go through this difficult period."

A representative for Berry did not immediately respond to Fox News' request for comment.

TMZ previously reported that the pair's divorce was finalized in December 2016, with the two agreeing on sharing physical and legal custody of their son, who is now 6.

But in May 2018, the site noted that Berry and Martinez's case was still active because they reportedly never filed a formal custody arrangement and were due back in court.

Ryan Reynolds to star in, co-write Netflix comedy 'Upstate'

Variety | Los Angeles

Ryan Reynolds is teaming with John August to co-write and executive produce the Netflix feature comedy "Upstate," which is being developed as a starring vehicle for him.

Reynolds is executive producing through his Maximum Effort banner. August is also executive producing. Reynolds and August collaborated on the 2007 sci-fi thriller "The Nines," which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. August directed from his own script.

Reynolds, best known for starring in the two "Deadpool" movies, worked with Netflix on the action movie "6 Underground," and has been

shooting the streamer's "Red Notice" with Gal Gadot and Dwayne Johnson. Reynolds is also starring in Lionsgate's upcoming "The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard" with Samuel L. Jackson and Salma Hayek.

Earlier this month, Reynolds came on board to produce and star in the monster comedy "Everyday Parenting Tips" for Universal Pictures. The project is based on Simon Rich's New Yorker humorous short story from May 2020.

August has extensive screenwriting credits, including "Charlie's Angels," "Big Fish," "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "Dark Shadows" and Disney's live-action adaptation of "Aladdin." In 2016, he was awarded the Writers Guild of America West's Valentine Davies Award for his contributions to the entertainment industry and the community at large. He also wrote the novel "Arlo Finch in the Valley of Fire."



Ryan Reynolds

Keanu Reeves admits he 'wanted to play Wolverine' but jokes it's 'too late'

Fox | Los Angeles

Keanu Reeves is best known for his character Neo in the "Matrix" trilogy but the actor would have loved to have stepped into another role.

The actor, 55, revealed on Andy Cohen's SiriusXM radio show that he dreamed of playing Wolverine, the character from the X-Men superhero franchise portrayed by Hugh Jackman.

Reeves said, "I always wanted to play Wolverine."

Alex Winter, Reeves' co-star in "Bill & Ted Face the Music," chimed in, "It's not too late. It's not too late for Keanu to play Wolverine. I'm just going to leave that there."

Cohen asked, "Keanu is that real? Did you really want to play Wolverine?" "Frank Miller's Wolverine?" replied Reeves. "For sure."



Keanu Reeves

SUDOKU

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

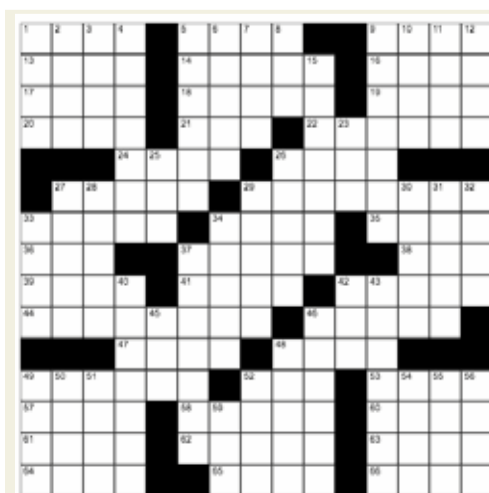
Yesterday's solution

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

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- Grad; 5- Mariners can sail on seven of these; 9- Fraternal org.; 13- Role for Lucy Lawless; 14- Ire; 16- Rod's partner; 17- "Shane" star; 18- Gravy, for one; 19- The eyes have it; 20- "The Time Machine" race; 21- Sault; Marie; 22- Tiny; 24- Ball; 26- It may be checked; 27- Healing plants; 29- Entirety; 33- Unpaid; 34- One and only; 35- Switch back?; 36- Stumblebum; 37- Sensational; 38- Assn.; 39- One hunted; 41- Architect Saarinen; 42- Capital of Yemen; 44- Sing for; 46- Cattail's locale; 47- Lo-cal; 48- Deeply moved; 49- Brewer Coors; 52- Always; 53- They're all charged up; 57- Gilpin of "Frasier"; 58- Ford flop; 60- Primer pet; 61- Enthusiastic vigor and liveliness; 62- Martini's partner; 63- Helper; 64- Squealed; 65- "Pure Guava" band; 66- Nair rival;

Down

1- Wheel shaft; 2- Sharon of "Boston Public"; 3- Word processing command; 4- 4th president of the U.S.; 5- Talks back to; 6- Related on the mother's side; 7- A shivering fit - often a precursor to malaria; 8- Not sweet; 9- Fragile; 10- Like a mix; 11- Trompe l'oeil; 12- Differently; 15- Associated; 23- This stickup; 25- Frat party staple; 26- Salk's conquest; 27- Onto; 28- One in prison for good; 29- Baseball manager Joe; 30- Golf clubs; 31- Law of Moses; 32- Eastern discipline; 33- Klutz's cry; 34- Glove material; 37- Skin of animal; 40- Shouting; 42- Sucker; 43- Craftsman; 45- Pinch; 46- Large saltwater game fish; 48- Actress Witherspoon; 49- Primates with short tails or no tail; 50- Boxer Oscar; Hoya; 51- Algerian seaport; 52- "quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 54- Mayberry moppet; 55- Network point; 56- Editor's note; 59- Market indicator;

Yesterday's solution

T	A	L	E	S		A	B	A	T		S	H	E				
A	W	A	S	H		T	E	L	E		A	K	I	N			
M	I	S	S	A		T	A	O	S		A	R	I	D	S		
E	L	S	E		M	E	D				L	L	A				
L	O	N	D	O	N		A	U	R	O	R	A					
						G	I	N	D	E	R		C	A	M	E	L
S	T	E	A	D		L	O	P		T	E	L	L				
P	A	O		L	A	Y	A	W	A	Y		G	I	S			
R	U	S	H		Y	E	N		I	S	A	A	C				
O	C	C	U	R		A	D	O	R	E	S						
S	E	A	B	E	E		P	E	R	S	O	N					
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T	U	T	U		A	R	U	N		A	R	B	O	R			
S	T	A	B		C	A	R	E		S	T	I	N	T			
E	E	R			T	W	A	S		E	S	T	E	S			

Flustered Williams crashes out

Serena Williams was sent spinning out of the Western and Southern Open by Maria Sakkari

● Djokovic cruises into quarter-finals with win over Sandgren

AFP | New York

An out-of-gas Serena Williams crashed out of the Western & Southern Open on Tuesday, losing in three sets to 13th seeded Maria Sakkari 5-7, 7-6 (7/5), 6-1 in New York.

The 23-time Grand Slam winner finished with a whimper at the end of the two-hour, 17-minute match as Sakkari clinched the victory with a backhand down the line that a dejected Williams just watched without making an effort to move.

At other points in the match, Williams flung her racket into the spectator-less stands and rebuked the chair umpire for slapping her with a time violation.

Sakkari, of Greece, advances to the quarter-finals of the no-spectator event where she will face Johanna Konta who cruised past Vera Zvonareva in straight sets 6-4, 6-2.

The joint WTA and ATP tournament was moved from Cincinnati to New York where the same quarantine bubble will house the US Open starting on August 31.

It was the second straight two-hour-plus match for Williams who at 38 was trying to become the oldest winner of the event. She still holds the record, having won this event in 2015 at age 33.

Williams survived a scare in her opening match, prevailing in a two hour, 48-minute marathon over qualifier Arantxa Rus. It was her longest match since 2012.



Serena Williams leaves the court after her match

"It is hard to play the way I have been playing and stay positive," Williams said. "To play nine hours in a week is too much. I don't usually play like that. It is all new for me."

Williams made seven double faults and won just 66 percent of her first serve points against Sakkari.

After losing the second set in a tiebreaker she tossed her racket over her shoulder into the empty stands behind her.

Williams, who has lost her cool at events in New York before, also admonished chair umpire, Aurelie Tourte of France, during a changeover for calling a time violation for slow play.

"I am walking all the way to get my towels... I mean, I am getting my own towels. That's

not fair," said Williams.

"You didn't give me a warning. I am actually a really fast player. Next time you warn me. I'm done."

The ball people usually get the towels for the players but not in the COVID-19 bubble.

On the men's side, world No. 1 Novak Djokovic won his 20th straight match of 2020 with a hard-fought 6-2, 6-4 victory over Tenny Sandgren.

Djokovic, who captured the Australian Open in February, needed six match points to tough out the straight sets victory and reach the quarter-finals of the hardcourt tournament.

Djokovic breezed through the final game by winning four straight points, closing it out with a cross-court forehand

winner to take it in 88 minutes on Tuesday.

"All in all it was a great performance," said Djokovic. "I felt better and played better than last night. I am going in a great direction."

American Sandgren, who is ranked 55th in the world, made the Serb work for the victory as he survived five match points in the ninth game of the second set.

Djokovic advances to the quarters where he will play German Jan-Lennard Struff, who defeated seventh seed David Goffin 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

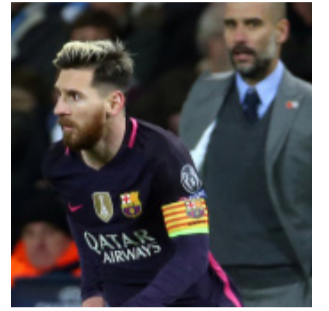
Djokovic had pulled out of doubles on Sunday with pain in his neck, but did not appear to be bothered by the injury against Sandgren.

"The neck is doing well," he



It was the second straight two-hour-plus match for Williams who at 38 was trying to become the oldest winner of Western & Southern Open. She still holds the record, having won this event in 2015 at age 33

Guardiola could build Manchester City around Messi - Rivaldo



Pep Guardiola watches Lionel Messi of during a match (file photo)

Reuters | London

Pep Guardiola could rebuild his Manchester City team around Lionel Messi if the Argentine gets his wish and leaves Barcelona, according to former Nou Camp great Rivaldo.

Rivaldo hopes the two parties can reach a compromise but while he would be sad to see Messi leave Barcelona after almost two decades, during which he has helped them win 10 La Liga titles and four Champions Leagues, he thinks City would be a good choice.

"Barcelona don't want to lose their best player for nothing, so they'll try to convince the player to stay or agree to let him leave if they receive a good offer from another club," Rivaldo said in an interview for bookmakers Betfair.

"It will be a sad ending for Messi's story with Barcelona if the things remain this way, but this is football and sometimes things don't run according to our expectations."

"Manchester City could be Messi's best option as his next club. He's 33 but his quality and talent are both unquestionable and I think he still has a few more years at the top."

Vardy signs contract extension at Leicester

AFP | London

Jamie Vardy has signed a one-year contract extension at Leicester City that will take him beyond his 36th birthday, the club announced yesterday.

The Foxes have rewarded the striker after he scored 23 goals to claim the Premier League's Golden Boot last season.

The deal will take Vardy, 33, to the end of the 2022/23 season.

Vardy said: "The journey that I've been on with this football club is hard to describe, and although we've accomplished so much together already, I know that I've got so much more to achieve with this team, so it's a special feeling to be able to commit my future to Leicester City once again."



Jamie Vardy

The forward was signed from then non-league Fleetwood Town in 2012.

He has scored 129 goals in 309 appearances for Leicester and is fourth on the club's all-time scoring charts.

Leicester finished fifth in the Premier League and will play in the Europa League next season.

Midfielder James Maddison signed a new four-year deal this week and Nampalys Mendy also agreed a contract extension.

But England left-back Ben Chilwell is expected to join Frank Lampard's Chelsea.

129 goals have been scored by Jamie Vardy in 309 appearances for Leicester and is fourth on the club's all-time scoring charts

Pakistan captain Azhar proud despite series defeat

AFP | London

Pakistan captain Azhar Ali insisted there were "lots of positives" for his side despite their 1-0 series loss to England.

A three-match contest in which both the second and third Tests at Southampton were weather-affected draws ultimately hinged on England's three-wicket win in the series opener at Old Trafford.

Pakistan who had not played international cricket for several months because of COVID-19, were the better side for much of the time in Manchester until, having reduced England to 117-5 chasing a target of 277, they were undone by a partnership of 139 between Jos Buttler and Chris Woakes.

But even though this was Pakistan's first series defeat by England in a decade, the like of opening batsman Shan Masood, who made 156 in Manchester, and the pace trio of Shaheen Afridi, Mohammad Abbas and Naseem Shah all impressed at different stages.

It was wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan, however, who was named Pakistan's man of the series following an outstanding campaign behind the stumps that also saw him score 336 runs, including two fifties, at an average of over 40.



Azhar Ali plays a shot during the match

"There is great regret (at losing the first Test) but congratulations to England," said Azhar following the finish of the third Test on Tuesday.

"There were lots of positives in our team -- we played competitive cricket throughout the series. There is room for improvement but as a team I am proud of how we fought."

'Under pressure'

Azhar, much criticised for his tactics during Buttler and Woakes' decisive stand, managed just 38 runs in the first

two Tests.

But the 35-year-old top-order batsman responded with an unbeaten 141 in the first innings of the third Test, keeping England at bay during a century-partnership with Rizwan after Pakistan had collapsed to 75-5 at the Ageas Bowl.

During his innings, Azhar became just the fifth Pakistani after Younis Khan (the current squad's batting coach), Javed Miandad, Inzamam-ul-Haq and Mohammad Yousuf to have scored 6,000 Test runs

"The first two Tests were

There were lots of positives in our team -- we played competitive cricket throughout the series. There is room for improvement but as a team I am proud of how we fought

AZHAR ALI

tough for me, I was under a lot of pressure, I tried to keep things simple and it worked," Azhar told the BBC. "I was getting stuck with my front foot a lot, committing too early, I worked on it with my coaches."

Meanwhile Azhar was proud of the way Pakistan, as the West Indies had in a 2-1 defeat by England that marked international cricket's return from lockdown last month, played their part in a behind closed doors campaign that might have been scuppered completely by the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's been a fantastic series under the circumstances, hats off to the organisers who did it in such a short time, at least we got cricket going and people could at least watch on TV," he said.

Versatile Spain forward Rodrigo signs for Leeds from Valencia



Rodrigo Moreno
Reuters | Madrid

Leeds United have agreed to sign Spain forward Rodrigo Moreno from Valencia ahead of their return to the Premier League after a 16-year absence, the Spanish side said on Tuesday.

The club's statement did not mention a transfer fee or how long the contract at Leeds would be, although reports in the Spanish media said the English club would pay Valencia around 30 million euros plus 10 million in variables.

"Valencia have reached an agreement in principle with Leeds United for the transfer of Rodrigo, subject to the player passing a medical and all documentation and formalities being completed," said the La Liga side.

Known by his first name Rodrigo, he scored 59 goals in 220 games for Valencia. He is the latest high-profile player to leave after captain Dani Parejo and Francis Coquelin left for rival Villarreal this month, sparking fresh protests against owner Peter Lim.

59

goals were scored by Rodrigo in 220 games for Valencia

Barca in new turmoil after Messi says he wants to leave

Lionel Messi's lawyers reportedly sent Barcelona a fax in which they announced his desire to rescind his contract by triggering a release clause

● **Messi has grown increasingly unhappy in the last 12 months with how the club is being run under president Josep Maria Bartomeu**

Reuters | Barcelona

Captain Lionel Messi has told Barcelona he wishes to leave the club immediately, a source confirmed, deepening the turmoil within the Catalan side less than two weeks after their humiliating 8-2 defeat by Bayern Munich.

The source said the club received a burofax from Messi's lawyers declaring that the player, who has spent his entire career at Barca, wished to leave. A burofax is a service used in Spain to urgently dispatch a document through a certified email, which issues a digital certificate with legal validity.

The club subsequently sent Messi a burofax, stating they wanted him to stay and finish his career at Barca, added the source.

A second source added that the burofax Messi's lawyers sent referred to a clause in the last contract the 33-year-old Argentine signed with the club in 2017 which allowed him to leave for free, a clause that expired on June 10 this year.



Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi walks on the pitch during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final football match between Barcelona and Bayern Munich

Under the terms of the contract which expires in 2021, the only way Messi can leave without the club's consent is if a rival side pays his release clause of 700 million euros (629.7 million pounds).

"The club considers that the contract is fully binding until 30 June 2021," added the second source.

The Argentine's request to leave Barca comes a day after Spanish media reported that new coach Ronald Koeman told Messi's close friend and strike partner, Luis Suarez, that he

does not wish the Uruguayan to stay at the club.

Other reports said that Chilean midfielder Arturo Vidal, Croatian midfielder Ivan Rakitic and French defender Samuel Umtiti have also been told they are no longer wanted.

Barca are in the midst of overhauling their squad following the 8-2 defeat by Bayern in the Champions League quarter-finals earlier this month, which condemned the club to a trophyless season for the first time in 12 years.

Messi, who has been named

world player of the year a record six times, has grown increasingly unhappy in the last 12 months with how the club is being run under president Josep Maria Bartomeu.

In February, he lashed out at then sporting director Eric Abidal on social media and a couple of months later turned his anger on the club hierarchy for the way in which players were forced to take a pay cut to cope with the financial hit of the coronavirus pandemic.

After Barca surrendered the



Under the terms of the contract which expires in 2021, the only way Messi can leave without the club's consent is if a rival side pays his release clause of 700 million euros (629.7 million pounds)

La Liga title to Real Madrid in July, Messi slammed the team as being "weak" and "vulnerable" during an uncharacteristically fiery post-match interview.

Former Barca captain Carles Puyol backed Messi's wish to leave the club by writing on Twitter: "Respect and admiration, Leo. You have all my support, friend."

Ex-Barca president Joan Laporta blamed Bartomeu for the stance taken by Messi.

"Bartomeu and his board should quit immediately. They have undermined Messi to save them from the sporting and financial mess they have created. If they quit there might be some hope that Messi stays at Barca," he tweeted.

Misbah hopes England visit Pakistan 'soon'

AFP | London

Pakistan coach Misbah-ul-Haq said he hoped England would tour the country "soon" after his side travelled to Britain during the coronavirus pandemic.

England have not visited Pakistan since 2005/06. An attack by armed militants on Sri Lanka's team bus in Lahore in 2009 ended major cricket tours for a decade.

But other countries have since made the trip, with England scheduled to return in 2022.

Pakistan Cricket Board chief executive Wasim Khan has urged England to tour even before then and Misbah, in a column for the PCB's website published yesterday, said: "Looking into the future, we would really appreciate England visiting Pakistan soon."

He pointed out the sides that had toured recently, including Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and said a number of England players had appeared in the Pakistan Super League, a Twenty20 competition.



Misbah-ul-Haq

"Players from all over the world now know about the levels of security Pakistan can provide and how much they will be welcomed," said Misbah, who is also Pakistan's chief selector.

A draw in the third Test at Southampton condemned Pakistan to a 1-0 series loss on Tuesday ahead of a three-match Twenty20 series starting later this week in Manchester, which will also be played behind closed doors.

Pakistan and the West Indies, who played a three-Test series in England last month, are two of cricket's financially poorer leading international sides.

Jose Mourinho told Harry Kane he could help make him 'movie star' footballer

AFP | London

Jose Mourinho told Harry Kane that he wanted to help make him a global superstar after the Portuguese manager's appointment at Tottenham.

Jose Mourinho told Harry Kane that he wanted to help make him a global superstar after the Portuguese manager's appointment at Tottenham.

Mourinho called England captain Kane into his office in his third day in the job after he replaced Mauricio Pochettino in the Spurs hotseat in November last year.

A scene in Amazon Prime Video's upcoming documentary "All or Nothing", which airs on Monday, shows Mourinho sitting down with his star striker, who was a close confidant of the sacked Pochettino, and telling him how they could be good for each other.

"I saw you training yesterday and I have no doubts that you are a leader," said Mourinho. "That is my feeling. The world looks to English football with



Tottenham Hotspur's head coach Jose Mourinho congratulates striker Harry Kane after a match (file photo)

an incredible respect but they still think that the movie stars of football belong to other places.

"We have to build also your status in that direction. My profile, I am little bit like that as a coach. My dimension is universal and by being with me I think I can help you."

Mourinho told Kane he had better players at his disposal than he had at his former club, Manchester United, saying Spurs had the potential to "explode".

The Amazon documentary begins with Spurs' poor start to the 2019/20 campaign, leading

"I saw you training yesterday and I have no doubts that you are a leader. That is my feeling. The world looks to English football with an incredible respect but they still think that the movie stars of football belong to other places"

JOSE MOURINHO

to Pochettino's sacking.

Chairman Daniel Levy, who had a close relationship with the Argentine, said there had been "a lot of heartache" over the decision to sack Pochettino. Mourinho did not let the cameras affect his management style.

In one of his early speeches to his team he accused them of being too nice, using a string of expletives to urge his players to show some mettle.