

Bahrain's Abdulla unlucky in Butterfly heats

Kingdom's 18-year-old swimming sensation makes Olympic debut in Tokyo, teammate Noor Yusuf Taha to follow today in Women's 50m Freestyle | P12

WORLD 6 Forest fires rage near Turkish resorts, killing three

THE DAILY tribune



9 CELEBS Ryan Reynolds loves 'hidden cameos' in 'Free Guy'

5 BUSINESS 'Exports continue to rise after crossing \$100m milestone'

Public Awareness Campaign to Combat Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Comply with all COVID-19 measures

Bolstering ties with US

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday stressed Bahrain's keenness to bolstering its strategic partnerships with the United States of America.

HRH Prince Salman told Dana Stroul, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, that stronger ties are essential for serving the common interest of both countries.

The talks held at Riffa Palace hailed the depth of Bahrain-US cooperation, which had continuous development, especially in bolstering military and defence.



HRH Prince Salman with Dana Stroul, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for the Middle East

His Royal Highness also commended the role of the US in furthering regional security and stability.

They also discussed regional and international issues of com-

mon interest. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, was also in attendance during the meeting.



Last update - 9:00 pm
29 July 2021

Individuals vaccinated

(First dose)

1 1 0 6 7 1 6

(Second dose)

1 0 5 1 2 8 7

(Booster dose)

1 3 3 4 3 8

Batelco's revenues, profits grow in 2021 P5



BAHRAIN COVID-19

TOTAL TESTED

5420582

ACTIVE CASES

955

DEATHS

1384

DISCHARGED

266635

NEW CASES

128

CRITICAL

3

210 fils (includes VAT)



Unite against COVID

HRH Prince Salman tells world nations



HRH Prince Salman during a meeting with Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the Pakistan Foreign Minister

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday urged nations around the globe to unite in the fight against the virus, citing the rising challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions.

"It is crucial to strengthening bilateral relations, including cooperation against COVID-19 pandemic, which requires strong coordination and solidarity with the international community," said the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

It is crucial to strengthening bilateral relations, including cooperation against COVID-19 pandemic, which requires strong coordination and solidarity with the international community

THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRIME MINISTER

HRH Prince Salman was ad-

ressing a meeting on the side-lines of the Bahraini-Pakistan Joint Ministerial Committee with Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the Pakistan Foreign Minister.

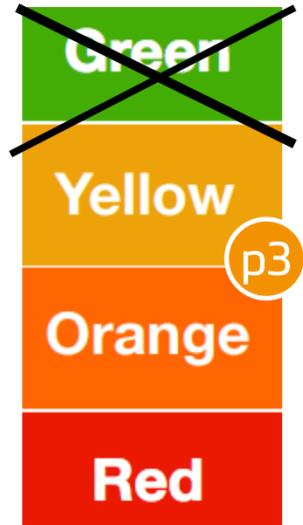
Welcoming Qureshi, His Royal Highness stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral ties to benefit the people of both countries before exchanging the greetings of the President of Pakistan, Dr Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Imran Khan, and HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Boosting ties p2



Shah Mahmood Qureshi expressed his appreciation for the support extended by His Royal Highness towards strengthened bilateral and COVID-19 cooperation.

Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, were also in attendance during the meeting.



National Medical Taskforce moves Bahrain to Yellow

Blinken says Iran negotiating process cannot go on indefinitely p6





“Justice must be combined with strength”

TDI | Manama

HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al-Khalifa yesterday dropped yet another Royal moment on his Instagram account, raking in several likes and shares in no time.

The picture showed HH Shaikh Nasser sharing a light moment with His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Giving the post a meaningful depth, he also wrote these words along with it.

“One of the lessons my father taught me is that justice must be combined with strength so that everything just becomes powerful, and all powers are just,” wrote HH Shaikh Nasser.

Social media users lapped up the post in no time, giving it a viral status.

They wished HM the King and HH Shaikh Nasser, HM the King’s Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, good health and wellness.

Bahrain, Pakistan to greater ties

TDI | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday underscored the depth of historical relations between Bahrain and Pakistan, which King Hamad said are based on mutual understanding, confidence, respect and cooperation.

His Majesty also praised the outcome of the Bahrain-Pakistan Joint Committee meeting, and said, “it will further enhance bilateral cooperation in various fields.” King Hamad also commended the role of the Pakistani community and their remarkable contribution to the Kingdom’s development.

HM the King was receiving at Safriyah Palace Pakistani For-



HM King meets Pakistan Foreign Minister

ign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. He is on an official visit to Bahrain for the Bahrain-Pakistan Joint Committee meeting.

Pakistani Foreign Minister conveyed the greetings of Pakistani President Dr Arif Alvi and

Prime Minister Imran Khan to HM King, and their best wishes of further growth and prosperity to the Bahraini people.

His Majesty asked the Pakistani Foreign Minister to convey his greetings to the Pakistani

President and Prime Minister and his best wishes to the Pakistani people of constant growth and development.

Discussions focused on regional and international developments of mutual concern.

COVID-19 jabs ready for Bahrainis in Jordan

TDI | Amman

Bahraini citizens in Jordan will start receiving their COVID-19 jabs soon, for which the Bahraini envoy to Jordan had signed a deal in Amman.

Ahmed bin Yousef Al-Ruwaie said he had signed an agreement with Abdali Hospital in Amman for starting the vaccination process for Bahraini citizens.

The move is as per the direc-



tives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to vaccinate Bahraini citizens abroad. Al-Ruwaie called on Bahraini citizens in Jordan who hadn’t taken their vaccines to get inoculated immediately.

Bahrain Ambassador to Amman signs agreement with Abdali Hospital

During the 12th International Economic Summit in Kazan

Nass: The private sector is keen on mirroring the high-level diplomatic tie between Bahrain and Russia

On the sidelines of the 12th International Economic Summit being held in Kazan- the capital city of Tatarstan of the Russian Federation, chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sameer Nass met the President of the Republic of Tatarstan Rustam Minnikhanov. The President expressed pride in the growing relation between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Russian Federation, and expressed confidence in the upward trajectory of business and trade. Mr. Nass reiterated pride in the Bahraini-Russian tie, and the high-level cooperation at all fields, expressing the keenness of the Bahraini private sector in reinforcing business cooperation and stepping-up the volume of trade and investments, while voicing optimism in the prospective outcomes of the recently signed MoUs between the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and its counterpart from Tatarstan and the International Association of Islamic Business, ushering way to making Bahrain the marketing arm for Russian products in the GCC and North Africa.



■ Mr. Sameer Nass, Chairman of Bahrain Chamber with President of Tatarstan

Mr. Nass accompanied President Rustam Minnikhanov in a tour in Kazan Expo -held as part of the summit.

Mr. Nass also met with the UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade H.E Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, and stressed on consolidating efforts to achieve the common goals of the GCC member countries and the aspirations of its leaders and people. He underlined the importance of intensifying efforts to achieve food and drug security.

As part of the participation of Bahrain Chamber’s delegation in the 12th International Economic Summit, board member Mr. Ahmed Al Saloom took part in a session themed “Russian-African Partnerships: A Modern Trajectory of Economic Cooperation.” Mr. Al Saloom touched upon the long-standing relation between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Russian Federation, particularly during the prosperous era of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa

Al Khalifa. He voiced pride in the cooperation between Bahrain sovereign wealth Fund “Mumtalakat”, Russia’s sovereign wealth fund “the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF)”, and Binnopharm Group on establishing a new vaccine production facility in the Kingdom of Bahrain to manufacture and distribute the Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine across the GCC and MENA region, which reflects the depth of cooperation and serves the common interest of

both friendly countries. Mr. Al Saloom also spoke about the growing business relations, and the pivotal role of Bahrain-Russia Joint Business Council. From his side the Chamber’s member of the Bureau Mr. Bassim Al Saie took part in a session titled “International Forum of Young Leaders” in which he shared the experience of the 29th board of directors in transforming the chamber, bolstering its role in economic decisions, and embracing young business owners and

entrepreneurs. He underlined the necessity of the Chamber as body that represents the private sector and shed light on the importance of having a clear vision, upgrading operations, keeping abreast of technological advancements, and opening communication with all members in a bid to succeed in empowering the private sector and enhancing its contribution to economic development alongside its public sector.



■ Bassim Al Saie, Member of the Bureau



■ Ahmed Al Saloom, Board Member

No green, just yellow, orange and red

National Medical Taskforce moves Bahrain to Yellow alert until all above 40 years of age take a booster dose

● **Booster dose recorded no side effects or adverse events**

● **Interval for receiving booster dose it trimmed to a month**

● **Out of 131,192 who took booster shots, only 71 people contracted the virus**

TDT | Manama

The COVID-19 alert levels of Bahrain modelled on the traffic light system will have its green light curtailed, bringing Bahrain to the yellow level until at least 80% of all those above 40 years of age, who have had two doses of the Sinopharm vaccine receive their booster doses.

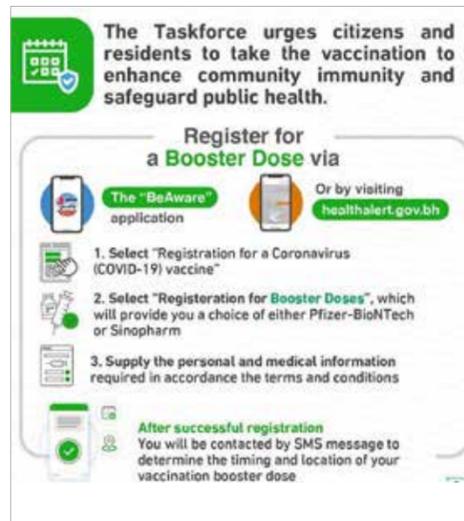
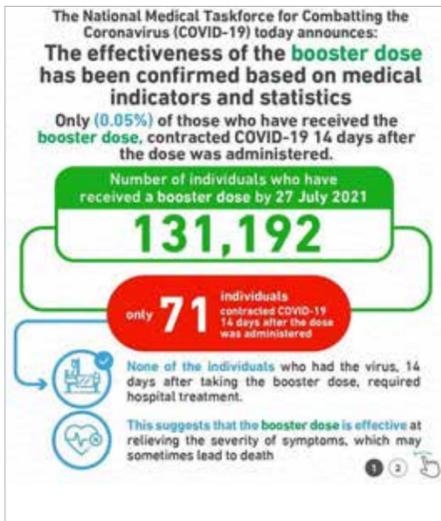
Bahrain had also cut down the interval between the second dose of Sinopharm and a booster shot to 1 month for individuals aged 40 and above.

Dr Waleed Khalifa Al Manea, the Undersecretary at the Ministry of Health and member of the National Medical Taskforce for Combating Coronavirus, announced these yesterday during a press conference held at the Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research at the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital.

The new system, Dr Al Manea said, comes into effect starting this Sunday.

Meaning, Bahrain will remain at the yellow alert level until the government completely vaccinates 80% of all eligible adults above 40 years of age with a booster dose.

Lt. Col. Dr Manaf Al Qahtani, the Infectious Disease Consult-



Officials during the press conference

The new move accounts for the increasing spread of the mutated Delta variant in countries worldwide, affecting the stability of the vaccination.

"This calls for a booster dose in enhancing immunity and ensuring protections from the repercussions of the virus," said Dr Al Manea.

How is it done?

Dr Al Manea said that the logo on the BeAware Bahrain app would turn yellow for all those eligible to receive booster doses on 31 August 2021.

"On 31 August 2021, the colour of the logo in the app will turn yellow automatically for adults aged 40 years and over, who meet the conditions of the booster dose," said Dr Al Manea.

"This indicates the call to take the booster dose," he said, adding that the logo will turn green again after taking the booster dose. He also called on all aged 40 years and above to register for booster doses through the BeAware Bahrain app or the Ministry of Health website.

Yellow level, according to the guidelines released earlier, kicks in when the rolling average percentage of new cases out of the tests carried out is between 2% and 5% for seven days.

However, the alert level could also get changed at the directives of the Taskforce, when it is necessary for ensuring the health and safety of all.

131,192 people took booster dose

Booster dose crucial for immunity: Dr Al Qahtani

TDT | Manama

Lt. Col. Dr Manaf Al Qahtani said the booster dose is necessary for strengthening immunity against the COVID-19 virus.

"While Bahrain is continuing its vaccination campaign, citizens and residents must take their booster doses to enhance the results reached by the Kingdom during the previous phase."

Booster does, he said, enhances the effectiveness of vaccination in relieving the severity of the symptoms.

He also stressed the importance of completing vaccination promptly.

Bahrain, he said, has not recorded any case of hospitalisation among those who have completed 14 days after receiving the booster dose, ensuring the effectiveness of the booster dose in preventing the various virus strains.

Al Qahtani also revealed that until the 27th of this month, Bahrain inoculated 131,192 people against the virus with booster doses.

"Only 71 people contracted the virus 14 days after receiving the booster dose, which makes their percentage as low as 0.05%," said Al Qahtani.

Bahrain, he said, could eliminate the COVID-19 virus only through concerted efforts and support for the national vaccination campaign.

Shed false sense of security: Dr Al Salman

TDT | Manama

Dr Jamila Al Salman said the National Medical Team has on top priority the health of citizens and residents when reviewing their decisions and making new recommendations.

Dr Al Salman also stressed the need for taking anabolic steroid dose during the current phase to reduce prevalence rates and protect against the complications of new mutations.

She also warned that reaching the current phase should be related to a victory against the virus.

"We warn against false safety feeling and make sure to adhere strictly to social distancing and call for taking booster dose," he added.

She pointed out that most of the existing

COVID-19 patients who did not take the booster doses required hospitalisation, and the death rate among them was also high due to symptoms that accompany their infection.

Dr Al Salman also warned against listening to rumours and urged to listen only to official sources.

"We are here to ensure the safety and effectiveness of vaccination to preserve the health and safety of all."

She also clarified that there are no side effects or complications recorded among the recipients of booster doses.

"Pain at the injection spot and headache are the possible symptoms, which could be relieved by using pain killers," said Dr Al Salman.

ant & Microbiologist at the BDF Hospital, and Dr Jameela Al Salman, the Consultant of Infectious and Internal Diseases, were present.

Money laundering: Court rejects Arab man's appeal

TDT | Manama

An Arab national has had his jail terms upheld by the Cassation Court in a money laundering case.

A court earlier awarded him a five-year jail term, a BD5,000 fine and ordered the confiscation of BD14,418,226 from him.

The man, however, challenged the verdict in the Cassation Court, Bahrain's highest court.

Case files say the man landed in police custody while attempting a suspicious banking transaction.

He was tipped off to the police by another person, who claimed the Arab national tried to recruit him.

Investigators found that the defendant searched for people looking to purchase top-up cards for prepaid mobile phones and sold them top-ups for a discount.

He reportedly was using stolen credit cards for the purpose.

Police said they found evidence against the man from his mobile phone.

Bahraini court orders hefty fines, jail terms in Billion-dollar sanctions-evading scheme

● **Bahraini officials had likened the bank to a Trojan horse operating inside the country**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's High Criminal Court handed down jail terms ranging between 5 to 10 years and fines of BD1 million to each of the defendants in a billion-dollar sanctions-busting scheme that aided Iran.

Total fines slapped in the case for all of the defendants amounts to BD19 million.

The case had in the dock officials of the Central Bank of Iran, the Future Bank in Bahrain and 13 associated Iranian banks.

The court tried all of the suspects in absentia, except for the sixth defendant.

The case, described as Bahrain's biggest money-laundering scam, involved legalising \$1.3 billion.



The court also ordered to confiscate laundered funds which include USD 148,071,818.039, and Euro976,937,627.013, and 53,350,000 Emirati Dirhams, and 235, 093,250,000 Iranian Riyals.

Bahrain's Attorney General

Dr Ali bin Fadhel Al Buainain said in a statement earlier that the unlawful banking practices carried out by the officials of Future Bank and associated Iranian Banks during the 2008-2012 period were uncovered following an intensive investigation.

Bahraini government audit had revealed that the now-defunct Future bank routinely altered financial documents to mask illicit trade between Iran and its foreign partners.

A Washington Post report earlier said that the case uncovered hundreds of bank accounts tied to individuals convicted of crimes, including money laundering, terrorism financing, and phantom loans provided to companies that operate as fronts for Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Bahraini officials had likened the bank to a Trojan horse operating inside the country, allowing Iran to buy and sell billions of dollars worth of goods in defiance of international sanctions intended to punish Tehran over its nuclear programme and support terrorist groups.

"Bahrain has never faced violations of this magnitude," the kingdom asserted in a written summation to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.



Dr Ali bin Fadhel Al Buainain

Al Buainain said the Central Bank of Iran issued instructions to Future Bank for an unapproved alternative transfer system to complete banking operations to conceal the source and movement of funds.

"This benefitted Iranian banks and circumvented international sanctions and restrictions on transactions imposed against Iranian entities."

Future Bank officials, in conjunction with other Iranian bank officials and the Central Bank of Iran, carried out the orders. They received more than \$1.3 billion via an alternative system.

**BAHRAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS
COMPANY (BATELCO) B.S.C.**

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS
FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

		2021	2020	Variation %
Gross revenue	BD million	198.2	189.8	4%
Expenses	BD million	148.9	142.4	(4.6%)
Profit attributable to Batelco shareholders	BD million	37.5	35.9	4.6%
Return on net worth (Annualized)	%	15.0	12.0	25%
Weighted average number of shares outstanding during the period	Million	1,655	1,656	(0.1%)
Basic and diluted earnings per share for the period	Fils	22.7	21.7	4.6%

**Condensed Consolidated Statement of Financial Position
As at 30 JUNE 2021**

		30 JUNE 2021 (REVIEWED)	31 DECEMBER 2020 (AUDITED)	BD'000
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Property and equipment			280,696	282,651
Right-of-use assets			50,530	50,970
Goodwill			137,716	137,504
Other intangible assets			131,824	137,821
Equity accounted investees			7,393	4,709
Deferred tax assets			8,971	8,642
Investments			27,749	20,071
Other non-current assets			5,361	1,850
Total non-current assets			650,240	644,218
Current assets				
Inventories			9,692	8,255
Trade and other receivables			150,855	143,887
Investments			150	497
Cash and bank balances			196,418	195,299
Total current assets			357,115	347,938
Total assets			1,007,355	992,156
LIABILITIES				
Non-current liabilities				
Trade and other payables			23,130	19,832
Lease liabilities			42,376	43,852
Loans and borrowings			223,737	201,290
Deferred tax liabilities			8,428	8,896
Total non-current liabilities			297,671	273,870
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables			170,155	176,680
Lease liabilities			7,429	7,185
Loans and borrowings			5,574	22,339
Total current liabilities			183,158	206,204
Total liabilities			480,829	480,074
Net assets			526,526	512,082
EQUITY				
Share capital			166,320	166,320
Statutory reserve			83,285	83,285
General reserve			44,001	44,000
Other reserves			(32,000)	(42,035)
Treasury shares			(3,885)	(2,792)
Retained earnings			230,216	224,390
Total equity attributable to equity holders of the Company			487,937	473,168
Non-controlling interest			38,589	38,914
Total equity			526,526	512,082

**Condensed Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the six months ended 30 June 2021**

	2021 (REVIEWED)	2020 (REVIEWED)	BD'000
Revenue	198,163	189,796	
Expenses			
Network operating expenses	(64,031)	(64,394)	
Staff costs	(26,154)	(22,800)	
Depreciation, amortization and tangible asset impairment	(36,150)	(34,391)	
Impairment loss on trade receivables and contract assets	(1,674)	(2,832)	
Other operating expenses	(20,880)	(17,941)	
Total expenses	(148,889)	(142,358)	
Results from operating activities	49,274	47,438	
Finance and related income	2,127	3,212	
Finance and related expenses	(5,769)	(8,574)	
Other income/ (expenses) (net)	625	546	
Share of loss from equity accounted investees (net)	(321)	(398)	
Profit before taxation	45,936	42,224	
Income tax expense	(4,133)	(2,246)	
Profit for the period	41,803	39,978	
Total Other comprehensive income			
Items that are or may be reclassified to profit or loss			
Foreign currency translation differences - foreign operations	709	(6,010)	
Investment fair value changes (debt securities)	57	(261)	
	766	(6,271)	
Items that will never be reclassified to profit or loss:			
Remeasurement of defined benefit asset including related tax	-	(4,414)	
Investment fair value changes (equity securities)	8,884	-	
	8,884	(4,414)	
Other comprehensive income, net of tax	9,650	(10,685)	
Total comprehensive income for the period	51,453	29,293	
Profit for the period attributable to:			
Equity holders of the Company	37,526	35,868	
Non-controlling interest	4,277	4,110	
	41,803	39,978	
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to:			
Equity holders of the Company	47,176	25,182	
Non-controlling interest	4,277	4,111	
	51,453	29,293	
Basic and diluted earnings per share (Fils)	22.7	21.7	

**Condensed Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the months ended 30 June 2021**

	2021 (reviewed)	2020 (Reviewed)	BD'000
Operating Activities			
Profit for the period	41,803	39,978	
Adjustment for:			
Non-operating items, including tax	7,150	7,062	
Share of loss from equity accounted investees	321	398	
Depreciation, amortization and tangible asset impairment	36,150	34,391	
Impairment loss on trade receivables and contract assets	1,674	2,832	
	87,098	84,661	
Working capital changes:			
Increase in trade and other receivables	(9,200)	(14,758)	
Increase in inventories	(1,434)	(1,056)	
decrease in trade and other payables	2,096	109	
Cash generated from operating activities	78,560	68,956	
Taxes paid	(3,798)	(3,484)	
Payment to charities	(528)	(4,117)	
Net cash from operating activities	74,234	61,355	
Investing Activities			
Acquisition of property, equipment and intangibles, net of disposal	(32,144)	(33,037)	
Net cash from (purchase) / sale of Investments	(32,969)	36,815	
Interest and investment income received	2,900	5,629	
Net cash (used in) / from investing activities	(62,213)	9,407	
Financing Activities			
Dividend paid	(31,912)	(31,929)	
Payment of lease liabilities	(6,652)	(4,596)	
Interest paid	(3,384)	(7,877)	
Borrowings / (repaid), net	5,561	(4,824)	
Acquisition of share-based payment treasury shares	(164)	(455)	
Purchase of market making shares	(929)	-	
Net cash used in financing activities	(37,480)	(49,681)	
(decrease) / Increase in cash and cash equivalents during the period	(25,459)	21,081	
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	143,457	86,410	
Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June	117,998	107,491	

**Condensed Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity
For the three months ended 30 June 2021**

	Equity attributable to equity holders of the Company									Non-controlling interest	Total equity	
	Share capital	Statutory reserve	General reserve	Foreign currency translation reserve	Investment fair value reserve	share based payment reserve	Market making shares	Share based payment treasury shares	Retained earnings			Total
At 1 January 2021	166,320	83,285	44,000	(13,228)	(28,807)	-	(2,076)	(716)	224,390	473,168	38,914	512,082
Profit for the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,526	37,526	4,277	41,803
Other comprehensive income												
Foreign currency translation differences	-	-	-	707	-	-	-	-	2	709	-	709
Investment fair value changes	-	-	-	-	8,942	-	-	-	(1)	8,941	-	8,941
Total other comprehensive income	-	-	-	707	8,942	-	-	-	1	9,650	-	9,650
Total comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-	707	8,942	-	-	-	37,527	47,176	4,277	51,453
Contributions and distributions												
Final dividends declared for 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(27,308)	(27,308)	-	(27,308)
Donations approved for 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(4,392)	(4,392)	-	(4,392)
purchase of market making share	-	-	-	-	-	-	(929)	-	-	(929)	-	(929)
Acquisition of treasury shares	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(164)	-	(164)	-	(164)
Equity-settled share-based payment	-	-	-	-	-	386	-	-	-	386	-	386
Transfer to general reserve	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	(1)	-	-	-
Dividends to non-controlling interest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(4,602)	(4,602)
Total contributions and distributions	-	-	1	-	-	386	(929)	(164)	(31,701)	(32,407)	(4,602)	(37,009)
At 30 June 2021 (reviewed)	166,320	83,285	44,001	(12,521)	(19,865)	386	(3,005)	(880)	230,216	487,937	38,589	526,526

The Condensed consolidated financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 29 July 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa
Chairman

Raed Abdulla Fakhri
Deputy Chairman

Mikkel Vinter
Chief Executive Officer

Batelco's revenues, profits grow in 2021



The development of Batelco's Data Centres remains high on the agenda and in line with world class standards in Data security, our teams worked hard to achieve PCI DSS 'Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard' compliance, for Batelco's three Data Centers, thus ensuring a reliable and highly secure data storage environment for our customers

MIKKEL VINTER, BATELCO CEO



Investments in growing our digital portfolio is in line with international trends and continues to be an important step in our strategic plans to ensure that Batelco is in a position to be a key player in the growth of Bahrain's digital economy

SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN KHALIFA AL KHALIFA,
BATELCO CHAIRMAN



● Approves interim cash dividend for shareholders of 13.5 fils per share or 13.5% of paid-up capital for the six months of 2021.

TDT | Manama

Batelco yesterday reported increases in its second-quarter and half-yearly profits, which Mikkel Vinter, Batelco CEO, said was "supported by fixed broadband, adjacent services and wholesale revenues."

Vinter said that Batelco's focus during the first half of 2021 was on "delivering exceptional speeds and innovative products for the enterprise, consumer, and global business sectors."

Key achievements included introducing new 5G Mobile Broadband packages to deliver speeds six times faster than 4G and redesigned Home Fiber Broadband packages as high as 1Gbps.

The board also approved an interim cash dividend for shareholders of 13.5 fils per share or 13.5% of paid-up capital for the six months of 2021.

Second-quarter results

Net profit attributable to equity holders of the company was BD17.8 million (US\$47.2m) compared to BD17.3m (US\$45.9m) in the year-ago quarter.

Earnings per share (EPS) was 10.7 fils compared to 10.4 fils in Q2 2020.

Total comprehensive income attributable to equity holders jumped 30% to BD17.3m (US\$45.9m) from BD13.3m

(US\$35.3m) in the prior-year quarter.

Revenues rose 7% to BD98.4m (US\$261.0m) from BD92.2m (US\$244.6m) in Q2 2020.

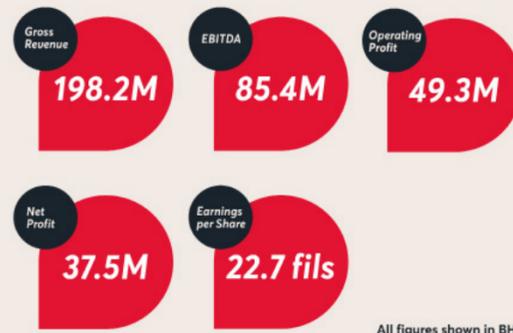
The increase in revenues is mainly due to YoY increases in fixed broadband, adjacent services and wholesale revenues of 18%, 16% and 5%, respectively.

Operating profit rose by 4% to BD23.8m (US\$63.1m) from BD22.9m (US\$60.7m) in Q2 2020.

H1 results

Net profits attributable to equity holders of the company for H1 2021 was BD37.5m (US\$99.5m), up 5% from BD35.9m (US\$95.2m) in the same period a year ago. The increase in net profit is mainly attributable to steady increases in revenues for the first six months. EPS was 22.7 fils compared to an EPS of 21.7 for H1 2020.

Batelco Half Year Financial Results 2021



Total comprehensive income attributable to equity holders of the company surged by 87% to BD47.2m (US\$125.2m) from BD25.2m (US\$66.8m) in H1

2020. Revenues were BD198.2m (US\$525.7m), an increase of 4% when compared to BD189.8m (US\$503.4m) in H1 2020.

Commenting, Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Batelco Chairman, said, "We're proud of being the first telecom company in the GCC to receive a license for Open Banking, with the establishment of Batelco's new licensed company, Batelco Financial Services. This step reflects the Board's aspirations to advance steadily towards digital transformation while enhancing and growing Batelco's core business."

"It's been rewarding to make good progress in converting key strategic plans in the digital space into actions, including the successful roll-out of key projects such as the launch of Batelco Financial Services, to provide both consumers and SMEs with a broad range of financial related services such as digital wallet creation and cards issuance services," said Mikkel Vinter.

US economy contracted 19.2% during COVID-19 pandemic recession

● Mandatory shutdowns in March last year left the economy reeling, throwing a record 22.362 million people out of work

Reuters | Washington

The US economy contracted at a record average annualised rate of 19.2% from its peak in the fourth quarter of 2019 through the second quarter of 2020, government data showed yesterday, confirming that the COVID-19 recession was the worst ever.

The pace of recovery from the pandemic downturn, the deepest going back to 1947, was equally stunning. The Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis said gross domestic product rebounded at a historic average rate of 18.3% between the second and fourth quarter of 2020.

Mandatory shutdowns of non-



Shoppers carry bags of purchased merchandise at the King of Prussia Mall, United States' largest retail shopping space, in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

essential businesses in March last year to slow the first wave of coronavirus infections left the economy reeling, throwing a record 22.362 million people out of work. The government provided nearly \$6 trillion in pandemic relief, while the Federal Reserve slashed its benchmark overnight interest rate to near zero and is pumping money into the economy through monthly

bond purchases.

The National Bureau of Economic Research, the arbiter of US recessions, declared last week that the pandemic downturn, which started in February 2020, ended in April 2020.

Massive fiscal stimulus, the Fed's ultra-easy monetary policy and vaccinations against COVID-19 have allowed economic activity to resume, with GDP

pulling above its pre-pandemic level in the second quarter. The government also said the economy shrank 3.4% in 2020, instead of 3.5% as previously estimated. That was still the biggest drop in GDP since 1946.

Revisions to growth in other years and quarters were minor. From 2015 to 2020, GDP increased at an average annual rate of 1.1%, unrevised from previously published estimates.

The BEA said in 2018 it had fully addressed a methodology problem, or residual seasonality, which analysts had argued tended to understate economic growth in the first quarter.

While growth likely peaked in the second quarter, economists see GDP increasing around 7% this year, which would be the strongest performance since 1984.

The International Monetary Fund on Tuesday significantly raised its growth forecasts for the United States to 7.0% in 2021 and 4.9% in 2022, up 0.6 and 1.4 percentage points respectively, from its forecasts in April.

UK's Sunak to give half-yearly budget update on Oct. 27

Reuters | London

British finance minister Rishi Sunak will give a half-yearly update on the public finances and economic outlook on Oct. 27, when he is also likely to outline longer-term public spending plans after his massive coronavirus pandemic stimulus.

Sunak told the Office for Budget Responsibility, the government's forecasters, yesterday to begin preparing new economic and fiscal forecasts for publication on Oct. 27.

The last OBR forecasts were announced on March 3, since when the near-term outlook for growth has brightened due to Britain's rapid roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines which has helped the government to borrow less, so far, than the OBR predicted.

However, it is less clear that the OBR will give an improved medium-term outlook for Britain's economy which will be key for determining public spending over the coming years.

The after-effects of the coronavirus pandemic and Brexit



Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak talks during a TV interview in London, Britain

are expected to weigh on Britain's growth potential in the coming years.

Sunak has said he wants to move Britain's public finances on to a more sustainable footing after borrowing hit a post-World War Two high of 14% of gross domestic product in the year to March. Public debt rose to its highest since 1961.

Due to COVID-19 the government postponed a multi-year spending review intended for last year and instead released a one-year plan in November alongside OBR forecasts.

Abu Dhabi hits record high, major Gulf bourses gain

Reuters

Major stock markets in the Gulf ended higher yesterday, amid rising oil prices, with the Abu Dhabi index hitting a record high.

Brent crude oil futures were up 39 cents, or 0.5%, at \$75.13 a barrel by 1254 GMT, as crude stockpiles in the United States, the world's top oil consumer, fell to their lowest since January

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 0.7% to 11,013
ABU DHABI	▲ 1% to 7,318
DUBAI	▲ 0.5% to 2,766
QATAR	▲ 0.4% to 10,753
EGYPT	▼ 0.3% to 10,742
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.1% to 1,597
OMAN	▲ 0.3% to 4,030
KUWAIT	▲ 0.8% to 7,165

2020. GCC stock markets opened in the black as US oil stockpiles continued decreasing, revealing strong consumption and an active economic recovery, said Daniel Takiiedine, senior market analyst at FXPrimus.

"The reduced stockpile has propped crude prices up which gave a boost to the region's stock markets."

Saudi Arabia's benchmark index rose 0.7%, with Al Rajhi

Bank increasing 1.1% and Saudi Telecom Company surging 3.4%.

The kingdom's oil exports value increased 147% in May to just over 60 billion riyals (\$16.00 billion) from a year earlier while non-oil exports rose by 70%, official data showed on Wednesday. In Abu Dhabi, the index advanced 1%, hitting a record high, buoyed by a 2% rise in First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB).

FAB, the United Arab Emir-

ates' largest lender, on Wednesday posted a net profit of 2.88 billion dirhams (\$784.14 million) in the quarter ended June 30, up from 2.4 billion a year earlier.

Dubai's main share index added 0.5%, with sharia-compliant lender Dubai Islamic Bank rising 1.7% and blue-chip developer Emaar Properties closing 1.8%.

The Qatari index rose 0.4%, with petrochemical maker Industries Qatar gaining 1.3%,

while Commercial Bank added 0.9%, extending gains from the previous session when it recommended a shareholder meeting to increase foreign ownership limit to 100%.

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index lost 0.3%, as most of the stocks on the index were in negative territory including Fawry for Banking Technology and Electronic, which was down 3.2%.

News in brief

Russia says US wants China included in arms control talks



Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said that the United States wanted China to be included in wider talks on nuclear arms control, the Interfax news agency reported. Ryabkov made the comments a day after senior US and Russian officials restarted talks in Geneva to ease tensions between the world's largest nuclear weapons powers.

The container ship Ever Given, which got stuck in the Suez Canal for six days in March, arrived in the Dutch port of Rotterdam after being released by authorities in Egypt.



It was scheduled to dock at Rotterdam's ECT Delta terminal for unloading until Aug. 3 before departing for Felixstowe, England, the port said. The vessel, one of the world's largest container ships, became jammed across the canal in high winds on March 23, halting traffic in both directions and disrupting global trade.

Ever Given, the ship that blocked the Suez Canal, arrives in Rotterdam

New Mexican vigilante group's sympathizers set fire to government offices, businesses



Mexican villagers sympathizing with a new indigenous self-defense group torched government offices, businesses and houses in a remote mountainous region in southern Chiapas state this week, protesting rampant insecurity in the area. The violence in the indigenous Tzotzil community of Pantelhó late on Monday and early

on Tuesday came less than two weeks after a group of hooded men, calling themselves El Machete, took up arms in nearby Chenalhó to confront drug-trafficking gangs. It was unclear how many members El Machete has.

The Tunisian presidency fired the head of the national television channel after two guests were briefly banned from entering its studios to take part in a programme.

Tunisian presidency sacks head of national TV channel



The dismissal of Wataniya's CEO comes after president Kais Saied suspended parliament and sacked the prime minister on Sunday, in what opponents have labelled a coup.

Paraguay seized more than 3,400 kilos of cocaine near the capital city of Asuncion as it was being stashed in a load of sugar for international shipment, police said, calling it the country's biggest-ever drug bust.

National Police Commander Luis Arias told reporters that the illegal stimulant, made with coca leaves grown in South America's Andean region, was found in a warehouse in the Asuncion suburb of Fernando de la Mora. It was being prepared to be shipped out disguised in a load of organic sugar, he said.

Blinken says nuclear talks with Iran 'cannot go on indefinitely'

AFP | Washington

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said yesterday that nuclear talks with Iran "cannot go on indefinitely" but that Washington was "fully prepared" to continue negotiations.

The US is indirectly involved in Iran's talks with world powers to revive a nuclear deal that gave Iran some relief from international sanctions in exchange for limits on its nuclear programme.

The deal was torpedoed in 2018 by then US president Donald Trump, who unilaterally withdrew from the agreement and imposed punishing sanctions.

"We're committed to diplomacy, but this process cannot go on indefinitely... we look to see what Iran is ready to do or not ready to do and remain fully prepared to return to Vienna to continue negotiations," Blinken said during a visit to Kuwait yesterday.

"The ball remains in Iran's court."

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's government has been holding talks with major powers in Vienna since April on bringing Washington back into the agreement.

But a deal now seems unlikely until after he hands over to President-elect Ebrahim Raisi early next month.

Raisi is an ultraconservative but has expressed support for the nuclear talks, arguing Iran needs an end to US sanctions.

Iran's ultraconservative camp, which deeply distrusts the United States, has repeatedly criticised Rouhani over the 2015 deal.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Wednesday that experience has shown "trusting the West does not



Secretary of State Antony Blinken exits his vehicle in Washington

"We're committed to diplomacy, but this process cannot go on indefinitely... we look to see what Iran is ready to do or not ready to do and remain fully prepared to return to Vienna to continue negotiations"

ANTONY BLINKEN

work", referring to the US withdrawal from the deal and its fallout.

Raisi has said his government will support talks that "guarantee national interests", but will not allow negotiations for the sake of negotiations.

One of the major criticisms of the 2015 deal raised by Trump was its failure to address Iran's ballistic missile programme or its alleged interference in regional affairs.

But Tehran has always rejected bringing non-nuclear issues into the agreement, which is known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Khamenei also criticised the US for refusing to "guarantee that (it) will not violate the agreement in the future" by pulling out unilaterally, as Trump did in 2018.

Trump's successor Joe Biden has signalled his readiness to return to the nuclear deal and has engaged in indirect negotiations with Iran alongside formal talks with the agreement's remaining parties, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia.

Iran's chief negotiator Abbas Araghchi said this month that the talks must "await our new administration" as Tehran is "in a transition period".

A sixth round of talks concluded on June 20 and dates for the next round have yet to be fixed.

Rouhani, in office since 2013 and preparing to leave after the maximum two consecutive terms, had repeatedly promised to secure relief from sanctions before the end of his term.

But earlier this month, he expressed hope that his successor can clinch a deal to lift sanctions, insisting that from his administration's side, "the work was ready" to be done.

Fore Turkish

Almost 60 wildfires



A man carries his dog he rescued from their

31 blazes contained, firefighters battling a remaining 17

Reuters | Istanbul

Three people died in a forest fire in southern Turkey yesterday where authorities were battling multiple blazes for a second day amid suspicions of arson, the country's AFAD disaster agency and the agriculture minister said.

Dozens of villages as well as some hotels were evacuated, and television footage showed burnt buildings and people fleeing across fields as firefighters on the ground and in helicopters tried to contain a blaze in Manavgat, 75 km (45 miles) east of the Mediterranean resort of Antalya.

Officials have said that more than 60 wildfires have erupted across 17 provinces on Turkey's Aegean and Mediterranean

COVID-19: Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths
1 USA	35,494,551	628,152
2 India	31,570,904	423,243
3 Brazil	19,797,516	553,272
4 Russia	6,218,502	156,977
5 France	6,054,049	111,735
6 UK	5,801,561	129,515
7 Turkey	5,682,630	51,184
8 Argentina	4,891,810	104,822
9 Colombia	4,757,139	119,801
10 Spain	4,422,291	81,442
11 Italy	4,336,906	128,029
12 Iran	3,826,447	90,074
13 Germany	3,771,050	92,114
14 Indonesia	3,331,206	90,552

Global tally

197,100,439

Deaths

4,210,081

Recovered:

178,372,436

New cases

+451,368

New deaths

+7,268

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	284,128		16,507		228,836	
Saudi Arabia	523,397	+1,289	8,212	+12	503,827	+1,299
UAE	677,801	+1,550	1,939	+5	655,183	+1,508
Kuwait	118,531	+813	721	+7	109,916	7,894
Oman	295,857	+322	3,814	+12	278,195	+563
Qatar	225,905	+158	601		223,494	+118

8.2 magnitude earthquake off Alaskan peninsula, tsunami warning

AFP | Anchorage

An 8.2 magnitude earthquake struck off the Alaskan peninsula late Wednesday, the United States Geological Survey said, prompting a tsunami warning.

The earthquake hit 56 miles (91 kilometers) southeast of the town of Perryville, the USGS said.

The quake struck at 0615 GMT yesterday. Perryville is a small village about 500 miles from Anchorage, Alaska's biggest city.

The US government's National Tsunami Warning Center immediately issued a tsunami alert for south Alaska and the Alaskan peninsula.

It initially warned of hazardous waves. About two hours later it gave an update that the forecast maximum height of any tsunami would be less than one foot (30 centimeters) above tide levels.

Tsunami warning sirens were broadcast across Kodiak, an island with a population of about



A dump truck and excavator work on a temporary fix of an off ramp that collapsed after an earthquake (file photo)

5 aftershocks were recorded within 90 minutes of the earthquake, the largest with a magnitude of 6.2

6,000 people, along Alaska's coastline.

The warning center said any potential tsunami would hit Kodiak about 11:55 pm.

That time passed without any

tsunami, according to a broadcaster on local radio station KMXT.

Videos posted on social media by journalists and residents in Kodiak showed people driving away from the coast as warning sirens could be heard.

A tsunami watch was initially issued for Hawaii, meaning residents were required to stay away from beaches, but was lifted about two hours later.

Five aftershocks were recorded within 90 minutes of the earthquake, the largest with a magnitude of 6.2, according to the USGS.

China accuses BBC

AFP | London

Beijing yesterday launched a scathing attack on the BBC, accusing it of broadcasting "fake news" and saying the organisation was "naturally unpopular" over its coverage of devastating floods in central China.

The broadside by the foreign ministry comes after the BBC called on Beijing to put a stop to the harassment of its journalists by nationalists who have accused foreign media of biased reporting.

Days of heavy rain last week sparked record flooding in the central province of Henan that has claimed the lives of at least 99 people.

The BBC said its reporters covering the deluge had been subjected to online vitriol, while other outlets had been harassed on the ground in "attacks which continue to endanger foreign journalists".

But Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian yesterday called the broadcaster a "Fake News Broadcasting Company" that has "attacked and smeared China, seriously deviating from journalistic standards".

Zhao said the BBC deserved to be "unpopular with the Chinese public" and "there is no such thing

1178

Frederick I (Barbarossa), Holy Roman Emperor, crowned King of Burgundy



1619

House of Burgesses Virginia forms, 1st elective American governing body

1869

The Charles, considered the world's first "oil tanker", departs from the United States headed for Europe with a bulk capacity of 7,000 barrels of oil

1935

1st Penguin book is published, starting the paperback revolution

Forest fires rage near resorts, killing three

Wildfires erupted by Turkey's Aegean, Mediterranean coasts this week



Burning house in a village



An aerial photo shows destroyed houses in a village

coasts this week, with the presidency vowing to hold to account those responsible for the "attacks".

Of those wildfires, 36 have been contained, but firefighting efforts for the remaining 17 continue, with more than 140 people requiring treatment or suffering property damage, according to AFAD.

Agriculture Minister Bekir Pakdemirli said an 82-year-old man had been found dead during the evacuation of Kepezbeleni, 16 kilometres northeast of Manavgat, and two people were found dead in Degirmenli, 20 kilometres east of Manavgat.

He said 18 villages and districts had been evacuated in Antalya, along with 16 others in neighbouring provinces of Adana and Mersin, as fires spread around Manavgat on Wednesday, fanned by strong winds in hot weather. Authorities also evacuated a Manavgat hospital.

Buildings including a hotel in the Aegean resort of Marmaris

were evacuated due to the blaze, state broadcaster TRT Haber said. Footage showed two separate fires near residential areas in the Aegean summer hotspots of Bodrum, where another hotel was evacuated, and Didim.

Pakdemirli said 35 aircrafts, 457 vehicles, and 4,000 personnel were involved in firefighting efforts, as separate wildfires raged in the provinces of Osmaniye,

Kayseri, Kocaeli, Adana, Mersin and Kutahya.

"Our struggle to contain (the fires) continues, and surely we will contain them. But this may take some time," he said.

The timing of the various wildfires has raised concerns of arson, with the presidency's communications director Fahrettin Altun saying investigations were launched to determine the cause of the fires.

"Those responsible will be held to account for the attacks they mounted on our nature and forests as soon as possible," Altun said on Twitter.

Turkey's southern Mediterranean coast is known for its scorching summer heat, which often causes wildfires. Officials have said the latest fires are the biggest to date.

Turkey has battled a series of disasters caused by extreme weather conditions this summer, including flash floods last week that killed six people in the Black Sea region.

BETTER
YOU
KNOW

Fires were raging with temperatures approaching 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) and wind gusts of 50 kilometres (30 miles) an hour

C of 'fake news' over floods reporting



BBC Beijing bureau office in Beijing

on its 1.6 million followers to track the movements of BBC reporters.

The comments by the Henan Communist Youth League spurred death threats against BBC correspondents from nationalistic internet users.

A year's rain was dumped on the city of Zhengzhou in just three days last week, leaving 14 people dead and more than 500 commuters trapped when the city's subway system flooded during rush hour.

City and provincial officials have faced calls for accountability, with the wife of one of the subway victims telling local media she would sue the metro operator for negligence.

as hatred without reason".

The war of words erupted after a youth branch of China's ruling Communist Party on Tuesday posted comments online calling

Palestinians clash with Israeli troops after boy's funeral

Reuters | Jerusalem

Israeli troops killed a Palestinian man in clashes that erupted yesterday during the funeral of a 12-year-old Palestinian boy shot dead by soldiers a day earlier, the Palestinian health ministry said.

Witnesses said hundreds of Palestinians confronted Israeli forces during the burial near the town of Hebron in the oc-



People are seen during a funeral procession for Mohamad al-Alami, who died after being shot by Israeli soldiers occupied West Bank.

The Israeli military said troops "responded with riot dispersal means, 22 caliber bullets and live fire into the air".

The Palestinian health ministry said Shawkat Awad, 20, was hit by the Israeli gunfire and died in hospital. They said another 12 protesters were wounded.

Palestinian officials said the 12-year-old, Mohammad Al Alami, was fatally shot in the chest by Israeli forces on Wednesday as he was riding in his car with

his father.

According to the Israeli military, a soldier shot at the vehicle's wheels after concluding it had been involved in suspicious activity earlier in the day. The military said the incident was being reviewed by senior officers.

The West Bank is among territories where Palestinians seek statehood. Violence has simmered there since US-sponsored talks between the Palestinians and Israel broke down in 2014.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Alami was the second young Palestinian killed by Israeli fire in days, after 17-year-old Mohammed Munir al-Tamimi died on Saturday of gunshot wounds suffered the day before in the Palestinian village of Beita

China's new ambassador arrives in US with words of optimism



Qin Gang speaking during an event in Beijing

Reuters | Washington

China's new ambassador to Washington, Qin Gang, wished the United States victory against COVID-19 and said great potential awaited bilateral relations, striking an optimistic tone as he arrived at his new post amid deeply strained ties.

Qin's arrival comes days after high-level talks in the northern Chinese city of Tianjin between US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman and senior Chinese diplomats ended with both sides signaling that the other must make concessions for ties to improve.

Qin, 55, a vice foreign minister whose recent past portfolios have included European affairs and protocol, is replacing China's longest serving ambassador to the United States, Cui Tiankai, 68, who last month announced his departure after eight years in Washington.

"I firmly believe that the door of China-US relations, which is already open, cannot and should not be closed," Qin told reporters at his residence in the US capital after arriving from the airport.

"The China-US relationship has come to a new critical

As two big countries different in history, culture, social system and development stage, China and the United States are entering a new round of mutual exploration, understanding and adaptation, trying to find a way to get along with each other

QIN GANG

juncture, facing not only many difficulties and challenges, but also great opportunities and potential," Qin said.

He said relations kept moving forward "despite twists and turns," and added that the US economy was improving under President Joe Biden's leadership.

"I wish the country an early victory against the pandemic," he added.

Qin, who did two stints as a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman between 2006 and 2014, has earned a reputation for often pointed public defenses of his country's positions.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



One billion doses of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine have now been supplied to 170 countries. This British vaccine, distributed at cost, is saving lives across the globe. Together we can vaccinate the world by the end of next year and build back better from coronavirus.

@BorisJohnson

02



America is on the move again, and today's new GDP numbers put our economy back at pre-pandemic levels. Make no mistake: this growth is no accident, it's a direct result of our efforts to deliver economic relief to families, small businesses, and communities across the country.

@POTUS

03



We must remain vigilant and forcefully condemn hate wherever and whenever we see it. Anti-semitism and bigotry should have no place in our country or in this world.

@VP

04



600 academics, artists and intellectuals from 45 countries issue a public declaration calling on the Israeli government to dismantle its regime of apartheid.

@KenRoth

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

Classifieds

THE DAILY **tribune**

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Malaysian PM urged to quit after rare royal rebuke



Malaysian PM Muhyiddin Yassin speaks at the start of a five-day parliamentary sitting on Monday

● **Malaysia's king Sultan Abdullah is disappointed that Law Minister Takiyuddin Hassan did not seek his assent to revoke the state of emergency he agreed to in January**

AFP | Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's embattled leader was accused of treason and urged to quit yesterday after the king denounced his crisis-hit government for misleading parliament, a rare public rebuke from the revered monarch.

Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin leads a scandal-plagued coalition that seized power last year without an election, but his government is on the verge of collapse after allies withdrew support.

Parliament convened this week after a months-long suspension under a virus state of emergency, which critics said was a bid by Muhyiddin to cling on to power.

On Monday, the law minister announced the emergency would end on August 1 and that several regulations enacted under it were being cancelled.

But rival MPs were furious, claiming Muhyiddin was just seeking to dodge a debate -- and it was not clear the monarch had agreed to revoke the emergency laws, as is required under the constitution.

Yesterday the royal palace

His Majesty states that the honourable minister's statement in Parliament on July 26, 2021, is inaccurate and has misled members of the house

MALAYSIA'S KING'S PALACE

confirmed the king, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, had not given his consent, and said that he expressed his "great disappointment".

The announcement about cancelling the regulations was "inaccurate and confused the members of parliament", said a statement from the palace.

It "did not just fail to respect the principles of the sovereignty of the law... but it undermined the functions and powers of his majesty as head of state," it said.

It is unusual for Malaysia's constitutional monarch, who is widely revered in the Muslim-majority country, to speak out so forcefully against the government.

After the royal statement was released, the legislature erupted in uproar with calls of "treason" and "resign" from the opposition benches.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim urged Muhyiddin to quit as his government had "gone against the constitution, insulted the institution of the constitutional monarchy and confused parliament".

There was no immediate reaction from the premier, and it was not clear whether the rebuke would have any impact.

Taliban surge poses 'existential crisis': US watchdog

AFP | Washington

The Afghan government faces an "existential crisis" after the Taliban doubled their attacks following the February 2020 US deal with the insurgents, a watchdog report said yesterday.

The report said Taliban attacks on Afghan targets surged from 6,700 in the three months up to the Doha agreement to 13,242 in the September-November 2020 period.

Attacks have stayed above 10,000 in each subsequent three-month period, according to the report by the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).

While the rise in attacks had long been clear, data had not previously been available to demonstrate how intense the rebels' offensive had become.

The United States agreed to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan in expectation the Taliban would negotiate a peace deal with the Kabul government.

Since then the Taliban-government talks have stalled but the US has steadily pulled out



Taliban delegates speak during talks between the Afghan government and Taliban insurgents in Doha (file photo)

The overall trend is clearly unfavorable to the Afghan government, which could face an existential crisis if it isn't addressed and reversed

JOHN SOPKO, SIGAR INSPECTOR GENERAL

troops to a level of only several hundred now, with an August

31 deadline for full withdrawal.

The SIGAR report makes clear that the Doha agreement, instead of propelling Taliban-Kabul talks, unleashed an offensive that caught government forces unprepared and increased the number of civilian deaths.

Over January-March of 2020, there were only 510 civilian deaths and 709 casualties, the report said, quoting data from the US-Nato joint force in Afghanistan.

After that the numbers surged, hitting 1,058 deaths and

YOU KNOW WHAT

The SIGAR report makes clear that the Doha agreement, instead of propelling Taliban-Kabul talks, unleashed an offensive that caught government forces unprepared and increased the number of civilian deaths

1,959 injured in the third quarter that year and continuing at high levels.

The latest data, for April and May this year, showed 705 civilian deaths and 1,330 casualties, the SIGAR report said.

"The overall trend is clearly unfavourable to the Afghan government, which could face an existential crisis if it isn't addressed and reversed," said the inspector general, John Sopko.

Floods make thousands homeless in Bangladesh Rohingya camps

AP | Dhaka

Days of heavy rainfall have pounded Rohingya refugee camps in southern Bangladesh, destroying dwellings and sending thousands of people to live with extended families or in communal shelters.

In the 24 hours until Wednesday afternoon, more than 30 centimeters (11.8 inches) of rain fell on the camps in Cox's Bazar district hosting more than 800,000 Rohingya, the UN refugee agency said. That's nearly half the average July rainfall in one day, and more heavy downpours are expected in the next few days and the monsoon season stretches over the next three months.

"The situation is further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is currently a strict national lockdown in response to rising cases across the country," the agency said.

It said six people died in the camps earlier this week -- five people in a landslide caused by the rains and a child swept away



Rohingya refugee children play in flood waters at the Rohingya refugee camp in Kutupalong, Bangladesh

by floodwaters.

Citing initial reports, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said more than 12,000 refugees were affected by the heavy rain and an estimated 2,500 shelters were damaged or destroyed. More than 5,000 refugees have been temporarily relocated to other family mem-

bers' shelters or communal facilities, the agency said in a statement.

Hannah Macdonald, a spokesperson for the UNHCR, said in an email that emergency response teams have been deployed to help affected families.

Refugees said they were struggling to eat and drink properly.

YOU KNOW WHAT

Cyclones, heavy monsoon rains, floods, landslides and other natural hazards are an annual difficulty in the camps

"Due to the continuous rainfall for the last four days, today my house is full of water," said Khatija Begum, who has five children. "We are not even able to eat." Begum said she fears her children will drown and die in their sleep.

The refugee agency said the bad weather, landslides and floods have further exacerbated the suffering and humanitarian needs of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

CELEBS

celebs

Ryan Reynolds loves 'hidden cameos' in 'Free Guy'

IAN S | Los Angeles

Hollywood star Ryan Reynolds feels that the audiences will love the "hidden cameos" in his upcoming sci-fi comedy film "Free Guy".

Asked for his favourite part of the movie, the 44-year-old star told CinemaBlend.com: "For me it's the Easter eggs, which there are so many Easter eggs in the movie. There's so many little hidden cameos, there's so many moments. I love movies that acknowledge and play with the cultural landscape, and ('Free Guy') does that in ways that are unexpected and expected, I think."

The "Deadpool" actor tagged the new motion picture as a "fastball of joy", reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He said: "The movie's a fastball of joy, and that's what I wish for people right now; is to just have a couple of hours of pure joy in their lives and leave a theatre the same way I used to leave movie

theatres. Just grinning from ear to ear at the experience."

His co-star Jodie Comer added that the movie is more than just "an action-comedy".

Comer said: "And I think for me as well, it's like 'an action-comedy', and everyone thinks, 'Oh I know what that's gonna be.'"

She added: "I think this film has an undertone and it has a message without kind of forcing it down people's throats, like, 'This is what you should take from this movie.' You end up coming away from it actually really moved, and feeling very connected."

Ryan Reynolds



Ana de Armas starrer Marilyn Monroe biopic to release in 2022

IAN S | Los Angeles

Actress Ana de Armas starrer "Blonde", which is a fictionalised telling of Hollywood star Marilyn Monroe's life will now release in 2022.

Directed by Andrew Dominik, who also adapted the novel by Joyce Carol Oates, "Blonde" was one of the year's most anticipated films by industry insiders and consumers, reports variety.com.

A specific release date in 2022 has not been set yet and is slated to release on Netflix.

In development since 2010, actresses like Jessica Chastain and Naomi Watts were once attached to the project.

Cuban actor de Armas has been a rising star in Hollywood for the past few years with memorable roles in "Blade Runner 2049" and "Knives Out," for which she received a Golden Globe nomination.



Marilyn Monroe



The film will also star Oscar-winner Adrien Brody, Emmy nominee Julianne Nicholson and Emmy winner Bobby Cannavale.

Netflix has an avalanche of projects waiting in the wings for awards consideration, many of which are undated but expected to drop in the calendar year.

It includes the directorial debuts of Halle Berry titled "Bruised", Rebecca Hall's "Passing", Jeymes Samuel's "The Harder They Fall" and Lin-Manuel Miranda's "Tick, Tick Boom!", among many others.

"Blonde" is produced by Dede Gardner, Jeremy Kleiner, Tracey London, Brad Pitt and Scott Robertson.

Ana de Armas

Bob Odenkirk 'in stable condition' after 'heart related incident' on 'Better Call Saul' set

ANI | Wash- ington

Hollywood actor Bob Odenkirk is now in stable condition at a New Mexico hospital, a day after suffering a heart attack while in production on the sixth and final season of AMC's "Better Call Saul".

According to The Hol- ly-

wood Reporter, representatives for the actor, in a statement, on Wednesday afternoon said, "We can confirm Bob is in stable condition after experiencing a heart-relat-

ed incident. He and his family would like to express gratitude for the incredible doctors and nurses looking after him, as well as his cast, crew and producers who have stayed by his side."

The statement added, "The Odenkirks would also like to thank everyone for the outpouring of well wishes and ask for their privacy at this time as Bob works on his recovery."

The 58-year-old star of the 'Breaking Bad' prequel series collapsed on the Albuquerque, New Mexico, set on Tuesday. Crew members immediately surrounded him and called an ambulance. Sources claim that production was a little more than halfway done on the final season at the time of Odenkirk's heart attack. Production remained halted on Wednesday as everyone involved with the series remained focused on Odenkirk's health.

It's unclear how long production will remain down.

AMC said in a statement, "Bob is someone we have known and been lucky enough to work with for a long time. The immediate outpouring of affection and concern from fans around the world is a clear reflection of his immense talents and ability to both move and entertain people. Like everyone else, we are so grateful to know he is in stable condition and receiving excellent care. We are holding him close in our thoughts and wishing for a fast and full recovery."

The statement further continued, "Bob has been a part of our Sony Pictures family for many years and we are fortunate to be able to work with such a uniquely talented, incredible human being," Sony Pictures Television said in a statement. "Along with the millions of fans and supporters around the world, we are keeping him and his family in our thoughts and wishing him all the best in his recovery."

We can confirm Bob is in stable condition after experiencing a heart-related incident. He and his family would like to express gratitude for the incredible doctors and nurses looking after him, as well as his cast, crew and producers who have stayed by his side

BOB ODENKIRK'S REPRESENTATIVES



Bob Odenkirk

Matt Damon shares he is glad for Bennifer's rekindled romance

ANI | Washington

Appears like 'all is well' in the world of superstars Ben Affleck, Jennifer Lopez, and even their BFFs, as Ben's best friend Matt Damon recently shared what he really feels about the Bennifer reunion.

E! News reported that Matt recently appeared in an interview with Jess Cagle on his Sirius XM show, where he opened up about his feelings for Bennifer 2.0.

While chatting with Jess, Matt jokingly expressed that he wouldn't be anything other than happy knowing that one of the much-loved celebrity couples has rekindled their romance.

"How else would I be? Like, would I be unhappy? Like, 'I hate true love,'" the "The Martian" star quipped about his feelings.

The 50-year-old actor also shared his best wishes for the duo by saying, "I wish them nothing, but you know, hardship."



Matt Damon

Tiffany Haddish, LaKeith Stanfield in talks with Disney to star in 'Haunted Mansion' remake

ANI | Washington

Hollywood actors Tiffany Haddish and LaKeith Stanfield are currently in talks to star in Disney's upcoming remake of "The Haunted Mansion", directed by Justin Simien, who previously helmed "Dear White People" and the horror film "Bad Hair".

According to Variety, "The Haunted Man-

sion' takes its roots from the spooky theme park ride, which first debuted at Disneyland in 1969. It took guests through a terrifying manor filled with ghosts, ghouls, and various other undead residents designed to give guests a fright. It was also one of the only attractions in which Disney employees were encouraged not to smile.



Tiffany Haddish

SUDOKU

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

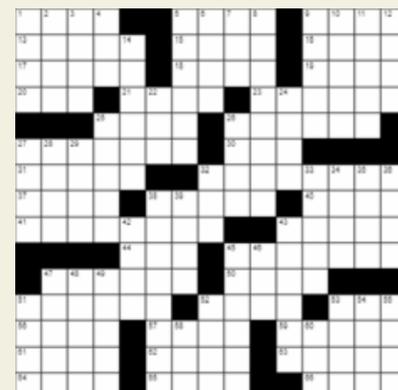
Yesterday's solution

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

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- Blues singer James; 5- Custardy dessert; 9- Exec's note; 13- Loincloth worn by Hindu men; 15- Thick cord; 16- Tiger's choice; 17- Herbert Hoover, for one; 18- Savvy about; 19- Go out with; 20- Ocean flier; 21- First-class; 23- Seed-bearing organ of a flower; 25- Overwhelmed; 26- Many; 27- Becomes visible; 30- Watched the kids; 31- In sorry shape; 32- Handicapped; 37- Rival rival; 38- Girder; 40- Ethereal; 41- Guns, knives, etc.; 43- Wash cycle; 44- Today; 45- Clad; 47- Man of superior strength; 50- Eastern discipline; 51- Silkworm covering; 52- A party to; 53- Visit; 56- Gillette brand; 57- Austen novel; 59- Argus-eyed; 61- Hammer end; 62- Rich soil; 63- Russian revolutionary leader; 64- Flat sound; 65- It's used to walk the dog; 66- Notion;

Down

1- Pop singer Brickell; 2- Red-bearded god; 3- Large village; 4- One time; 5- Palm leaves; 6- Single; 7- Well-put; 8- Tumor; 9- Center; 10- Muse of lyric poetry; 11- Recurring theme; 12- Like Nash's lama; 14- Sort of; 22- the land of the free...; 24- Scintilla; 25- Man of morals; 26- Bhutan's continent; 27- There oughta be _; 28- Tent stick; 29- Insect stage; 32- Susan of "L.A. Law"; 33- Monetary unit of Oman; 34- Contact, e.g.; 35- Gaelic language of Ireland or Scotland; 36- Colored; 38- Madly; 39- Muffin choice; 42- Anise-flavored liqueur; 43- Pertaining to a reign; 45- Electric generator; 46- Outback hopper; 47- Carryalls; 48- Lots of lots; 49- Some horses; 51- Hats; 52- If _ be so bold...; 53- Mail out; 54- Cleveland's lake; 55- Europe's highest volcano; 58- Sound of a cow; 60- Wreath of flowers;

Yesterday's solution

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

Bahrain team set for Spartan World Championship



The team members

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's obstacle course racing team continue their intensive training programme in preparation for the Spartan World Championship 2021, which will be held in Abu Dhabi from December 2 to 5.

The event will be held for the first time in the Middle East, confirming the Gulf's position as a host of leading global competitions.

The team has gradually increased the pace of training in order to ensure that they are fully ready for this important international participation and avoid fatigue and injuries.

Bahrain Obstacle Course Racing Club (BOCR) general secretary Seema Al Khraz was present yesterday at the training of the participating team, accompanied by BOCR competition's committee chairman Faisal Al Khalassi and the BOCR delegation head. She met the participants and conveyed to them the greetings of BOCR president Shaikh Khaled bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa.

Al Khraz commented: "Abu Dhabi is hosting the Spartan World Championship for the first time outside the USA, and the first time in the Middle East, in light of the great successes of this new type of sport, which is characterised by a global interaction in these races by all participants in different countries of the world."



Seema Al Khraz

Al Khraz noted that the venue features sandy desert nature and sand dunes, which in themselves are obstacles and interesting challenges for participants.

Al Khalassi, Sarah John, Mariam Al Khalassi, Abdullah Merheb and Abdulrahman Al Dosari will compete in the 21km and 13km elite competition as well as in the teams category.

The tournament is expected to see a total field of up to 5,000 participants in all competitions, with more than 2,000 having so far registered and confirmed their presence.

Faisal Al Khalassi pointed out the remarkable development in the performance of the team members through their preparations this year under the current circumstances.

It is expected that the organising committee will issue the final schedule of the competitions after approving the participating teams and players and distributing them according to international classifications.

BRX to unleash Prodrive Hunter T1+ at Dakar 2022



The all-new Hunter T1+ car

● **Redesigned Prodrive Hunter to meet the new T1+ regulations recently announced by FIA at world's biggest and most challenging multi-stage rally in Saudi Arabia set for January next year**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Raid Xtreme (BRX) has redesigned the Prodrive Hunter to meet the new T1+ regulations recently announced by the FIA, which is now the top class alongside T1-E.

The new regulations were introduced to help balance the performance of the four and two-wheel-drive cars in the T1 class.

The Hunter will run on larger tyres, with increased suspension travel and a wider track. Thirty-seven-inch tyres on 17-inch rims, replace the current 32-inch tyres on 16-inch

rims, with suspension travel increased from 280mm to 350mm and the body width increased from 2m to 2.3m to accommodate this.

These changes have necessitated some significant changes to the Hunter's drivetrain; suspension and bodywork. The suspension geometry has been reconfigured with longer wishbones and dampers, and there are larger brakes accommodated in the 17-inch wheels.

The larger tyre radius increases the load in the drivetrain so driveshafts, the propshaft and differentials have all been modified. The wider track has



We've learnt a huge amount on our debut this year and have put all this learning into improving the car and believe our new Hunter T1+ is a significant step forward

BRX TEAM PRINCIPAL GUS BETELI



BRX's first Hunter T1+ car is currently being built at Prodrive's headquarters in the UK and will run for the first time in September

also meant nearly half the bodywork has been redesigned with Callum restyling the Hunter to suit the new regulations, while keeping the same distinctive look.

Prodrive has taken the opportunity to increase the size of the windscreen and fit a new programmable wiper motor to improve the driver's visibility. The onboard jacks have been improved to not only be lighter and stronger, but to lift the car faster and can now be powered by an electric pump for addi-

tional reliability.

BRX team principal Gus Beteli said: "We are very pleased the organisers have addressed the disparity in regulations between the buggies and the four wheel drive T1 cars, where larger tyres had an advantage over rough terrain. We've learnt a huge amount on our debut this year and have put all this learning into improving the car and believe our new Hunter T1+ is a significant step forward. We are looking forward to returning to Saudi in January, where we will be looking to challenge for victory."

BRX competed with the T1 car for the last time at Baja Aragon last week, where the Hunter showed its pace setting fastest times on eight of the rally's 11 sectors.

The first Hunter T1+ car is currently being built at Prodrive's headquarters in the UK and will run for the first time in September. The new car is also available to customers to compete in FIA Cross Country events, Bajas and at the Dakar in 2022.

Middleweight world champ working to get his name written in BRAVE CF history

TDT | Manama

BRAVE CF Middleweight World Champion Mohammad "The Latest" Fakhreddine has learned plenty of lessons in his life so far, but the most important is that hard work makes dreams come true.

As a result of his dedication, he is now revered by many as one of the most recognizable faces in the burgeoning Arab mixed martial arts (MMA) circuit by becoming the first Lebanese to ever hold a major world title in the sport.

The 36-year-old knockout artist has an opportunity to write his name in history books by becoming a two-division world champion. He is set to face Mohamed "L'Ambiance" Said Maalem for the vacant BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight World Championship in the main event of BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood, which takes place in Milan, Italy on August 1.

Though betting odds tell Fakhreddine that he is the favourite to walk out with two gold-plated belts draped over his shoulders on fight night,



Mohammad Fakhreddine

complacency is a non-existing word in his vocabulary as he earned his stature in the world of MMA the hard way.

Nothing was ever handed to Fakhreddine, going through trials and tribulations both inside and outside the cage. The most painful of them all was when he lost his humble home in Beirut to a fire that took away 200 lives and affected thousands in their neighbourhood.

His family had no other choice but to migrate to the United States, where they found a new lease on life. Nothing

came easy for them, but they had come too far to give up on the American dream.

Fakhreddine pushed through language barriers and prejudice as he turned an unfamiliar place into his home.

Participating in athletics was one way for the then-youngster to ingratiate himself with the local community. Doing so broke the ice and allowed him to make new friends and stay active, but it wasn't until he discovered MMA that he truly began to shine. He went from being a run-of-the-mill practitioner to a prodigy.

Said Maalem aims to write his name as the next BRAVE CF world champion

TDT | Manama

A victory this Sunday, August 1 in the main event of BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood could transform the professional mixed martial arts (MMA) career of Mohamed "L'Ambiance" Said Maalem.

The Swiss-Algerian behemoth is set to square off against BRAVE CF Middleweight World Champion Mohammad "The Latest" Fakhreddine of Lebanon for the vacant BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight World Championship.

Said Maalem is one of the most lauded athletes in the sport today, racking up 11 victories out of 14 bouts with six wins by way of knockout.

The evident secret behind his tremendous run in MMA is his wrestling as the discipline holds all sorts of technical advantages, including the ability to dictate the pace of a bout.

Said Maalem was a natural at wrestling. He trained every single day at a very young age, dominated the competition, and became a national cham-



Mohamed Said Maalem

pion in his home country.

His caliber and credentials as a wrestler could have made him a regular fixture in the prestigious Summer Olympic Games, but he found his true calling when he met Brazilian coach Anderson Pereira in 2010.

The trainer invited him to spar with a pro MMA athlete, which turned out to be an eye-opener for him due to the all-encompassing nature of the sport. At that very moment, he

decided to continue competing, only now it would be inside the cage as a prizefighter.

Four years later, Said Maalem made his professional debut, and since then, he has never looked back.

When he inked an exclusive deal with BRAVE Combat Federation in 2019, he immediately established himself as one of the most exciting light heavyweights on the roster in his maiden appearance.

Pandemic casts pall on Games

New coronavirus scare causes jitters on eve of Tokyo Olympics athletics

Two pole vaulters out with Covid in fresh scare for Tokyo Olympics

AFP | Tokyo

Two pole vaulters were ruled out of the Tokyo Olympics and Australia's track and field team were briefly forced into isolation on Thursday in a jolting reminder of the risks facing athletes at the coronavirus-hit Games. On the eve of the athletics competition, 2016 bronze medallist Sam Kendricks and Argentina's German Chiaraviglio suffered heartbreaking disappointment when they both tested positive.

Kendricks' case triggered a panic in the Australian team, which went into precautionary isolation for more than two hours before all but three close contacts were released.

America's Kendricks, a two-time world champion, and Chiaraviglio are both in isolation and will miss the pole vault competition when it starts on Saturday.

"We knew this Olympic Games was different and with different rules, and here I am, it's my turn," Chiaraviglio wrote on Instagram.

"Living through this is very difficult, but it will also pass," he added.

Preparing for the Olympics has been tough in the pandemic and athletes are under extra pressure at the pandemic-delayed Games with strict biosecure measures and the constant threat of Covid.

OLYMPIC MEDAL TABLE				
				TOTAL
China	15	7	9	31
Japan	15	4	6	25
USA	14	14	10	38
ROC	8	11	9	28
Australia	8	2	10	20
Great Britain	5	7	6	18
South Korea	4	3	5	12
France	3	5	3	12
Germany	3	3	7	13
Italy	2	7	10	19
Netherlands	2	7	4	13
Canada	2	3	5	10
Hungary	2	1	2	5
Slovenia	2	1	1	4



Sam Kendricks in action during the USA Olympic Team Trials (file photo)

Dressel gold chase



Caeleb Dressel of the United States looks on after setting a new record

In Olympics action, US swim star Caeleb Dressel notched his second triumph of the Games to stay on track for a potential six golds.

Dressel arrived at the Olympics tipped to push for a Michael Phelps-style medal haul and already has two wins under his belt, with a potential four to come.

The 24-year-old powered to the wall in the men's 100m freestyle in a new Olympic record time of 47.02sec to dethrone Australia's Kyle Chalmers.

Dressel, who spearheaded the United States to the 4x100m relay title earlier this week, will also race the 50m freestyle and 100m butterfly and could feature in two other relays.

The swimmer, who won two relay golds in Rio, said he was proud to claim his first individual title.

"I didn't want to admit it but now I did it I can admit it, it's a lot different," he said.

Dressel's 13 world titles have prompted inevitable comparisons with Phelps -- winner of eight Olympic golds at the 2008 Beijing Games and 23 in total. Only Phelps, Mark Spitz and Kristin Otto have won six or more golds at a single Olympic Games in swimming.

Robert Finke won another gold for the United States in the men's 800m freestyle while Australia's Zac Stubblety-Cook claimed the men's 200m breaststroke gold in a new Olympic record time of 2:06.38.

USA's Sunisa Lee wins Olympic all-around gold as Biles cheers her on

American teenager Sunisa Lee won the women's gymnastics all-around Olympic gold yesterday, succeeding defending champion Simone Biles who withdrew over concerns for her mental health.

Lee, 18, won ahead of Brazil's Rebeca Andrade, with Russian women's team gold medallist Angelina Melnikova in the bronze medal position.

It was the fourth final in four days to go down to the final rotation, with Lee's polished floor exercise earning 13.7 to go into provisional gold, with Andrade unable to dislodge her.

Lee, from Minneapolis, added gold to the silver she won as part of the US women's team on Tuesday with a points tally of



Sunisa Lee of the United States in action on the balance beam

57.433, 0.144 clear of Andrade, with Melnikova 0.099 away in third. Biles, who stood down from

the Olympics during the women's team final, was in the stands to cheer on her compatriot.

Men against women in the pool as mixed relay makes Olympic debut



Britain's Adam Peaty reacts after his leg in a heat for the mixed 4x100m medley relay swimming event

Olympic swimming took a dive into the unknown yesterday as men and women competed against each other for the first time in the new 4x100m mixed medley relay in Tokyo.

Britain, led by Adam Peaty, and world record holders China won the two heats of the inaugural competition, which has its final on Saturday and makes its debut in Japan as part of a drive to boost gender equality.

Britain will be the favourites after their time of 3min 38.75sec was more than two seconds ahead of the rest of the field and only a shade outside China's world record 3:38.41 set last year.

"I haven't been part of many mixed relays so it is fun to get out with guys and girls," said Australia's Brianna Throssell.

"The lead changes so often and no-one knows each other's tactics. It was really fun to get out here and do the heat for Australia."

Djokovic romps into last four as Bencic reaches Olympic final



Novak Djokovic hits a return to Kei Nishikori

At a sweltering Ariake Tennis Park, world number one Novak Djokovic swept aside home hope Kei Nishikori 6-2, 6-0 to reach the semi-finals as he targets his first Olympic title.

The Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon champion, on course for the first men's Golden Slam of winning all four majors and

the Olympics, will face Germany's Alexander Zverev in the last four.

Switzerland's Belinda Bencic beat Elena Rybakina 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 6-3 to reach the final, and was overcome with emotion to secure a medal.

"I don't feel pressure right now. I just feel joy to have a medal," Bencic said.



Yang Junxuan of China, Tang Muhan of China and Zhang Yufei of China react

Chinese women smash world record

In a major shock, neither the United States nor Australia won the women's 4x200m relay for the first time since the event was added to the Olympic program in 1996.

Instead, China's Yang Junxuan, Zhang Yufei, Li Bingjie and Tang Muhan dominated,

leading all the way to clock an incredible 7:40.33 ahead of the United States (7:40.73) and Australia (7:41.29).

All three teams were under the previous world time of 7:41.50 set by Australia in 2019.

Li held off a charging Katie

Ledecky over the final leg to clinch the title.

"These girls swam their lights out and I got in a position where I thought I could take on those ladies next to us," said Ledecky. "I wish I had another half second in me but I gave it my all."

Japan's Hamada and Wolf win golds to match record haul

Japan's Aaron Wolf and Shori Hamada grabbed gold medals in judo finals, bringing the host nation's haul to 15, and boosting them past China, at 14, and the United States with 13.

Wolf, whose father is American and mother Japanese, threw South Korean Cho Gu-Ham to secure a dramatic ippon victory that ended more than five minutes of grueling sudden-death overtime in the men's 100kg final.



Aaron Wolf (R) of Japan in action



Shori Hamada (R) of Japan in action

Team Bahrain



Bahrain's Abdulla unlucky in Butterfly heats

Kingdom's 18-year-old swimming sensation makes Olympic debut in Tokyo, teammate Noor Yusuf Taha to follow today in Women's 50m Freestyle

● Bahrain's Abdulla Isa gets DSQ in final classification of Men's 100m Butterfly heat at Tokyo Aquatics Centre

● Noor Yusuf Taha set to compete among field of eight swimmers in fourth of 11 heats in Women's 50m Freestyle preliminary round



Bahrain's Abdulla Isa in action in the Men's 100m Butterfly yesterday



Following his race, Abdulla said that he gave his best performance and was proud to participate in the Olympics and represent Bahrain



Bahraini Noor Yusuf Taha in Tokyo

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Abdulla Isa was unlucky yesterday in the heats of the Men's 100m Butterfly at the Tokyo Olympic Games.

The 18-year-old completed his race in 58.83 seconds, which

was close to beating the national record which he owns, but he was later disqualified and his time disregarded on the final classification.

Salvador Gordo of Angola finished first in their heat in a time of 55.96s, while Yousif Bu Arish of Saudi Arabia came second in 56.29s.

A total of 59 swimmers were entered in the event. They were divided into eight heats and vying for just 16 places in the next round. Caeleb Dressel of the US was the top qualifier with a time of 50.39s, which tied the Olympic Record set by Singapore's Joseph Schooling in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. The last qualifier

was Jiajun Sun of China with a time of 51.74s.

Following his race, Abdulla said that he gave his best performance and was proud to participate in the Olympics and represent Bahrain.

The Kingdom's foray in the pool at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre continues today with Noor

Yusuf Taha set to compete in the Women's 50m Freestyle.

The 15-year-old is set to race in the fourth of 11 heats. She heads into the event with an entry time of 29.42s, and will be competing against seven other swimmers.

Aleka Persaud of Guyana has the best entry time of 28.10s

amongst the swimmers in their heat.

There are a total of 83 entrants in the Women's 50m Freestyle, but only the best 16 progress to the semi-finals.

This year's Games marks the sixth straight Olympics where Bahraini swimmers are competing, and seventh overall.

HH Shaikh Isa meets former Japanese Ambassador



HH Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa with former Japanese Ambassador to the Kingdom Kiyoshi Asako during their meeting

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In a pleasant coincidence, one of the volunteers working with Bahrain's delegation at the Tokyo Olympics is former Japanese Ambassador to the Kingdom Kiyoshi Asako.

Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) vice-president and delegation head in Tokyo His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa met yesterday with Asako and praised his efforts during his tenure

in Bahrain to strengthen relations between the two countries.

HH Shaikh Isa also thanked him for his role in facilitating the Bahrain mission at the Olympics.

On his part, Asako expressed his pride in the time he spent in the Kingdom as Ambassador and was thankful for the generous hospitality and warm welcome he received. He wished Bahrain further success in the future.

Koech begins Bahrain's athletics medal bid in Steeplechase

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Bahrain's star-studded athletics team at the Tokyo Olympic Games kick off their bid for medals today with John Koech in the Men's 3,000m Steeplechase.

Koech will be running in the first of three heats at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. He is one of 15 athletes entered in the race and will need to finish in the top three or be at least one of the six fastest losers in order to advance to the final.

The 25-year-old Bahraini heads into his event with a season's best time of eight minutes 45.75 seconds, which is far from his personal best of 8:09.62.

Lamecha Girma of Ethiopia has the best time this year amongst the heat's competitors of 8:07.75 and he also has the fastest individual mark of 8:01.36.

Koech's heat is scheduled for a 3.30am start, Bahrain time.

He is one of a 13-member athletes team flying the Kingdom's flag in Tokyo.



John Koech

The other men are Abdelrahman Mahmoud in the Shot Put, Al Siddique Mikho in the 1,500m, Dawit Fikadu and Birhanu Balew in the 5,000m, and the trio of Elhassan Elabbasi, Alemu Bekele and Shumi Dechasa are in the Marathon, all of whom are set to be in action on later days.

The five women competing at the Olympics for Bahrain are Aminat Jamal in 400m Hurdles, Winfred Yavi in the 3,000m Steeplechase, Kalkidan Gezahegne in the 10,000m, and the pair of Eunice Chebichii Chumba and Tejitu Daba in the Marathon.

Meanwhile, Bahrain Olympic



HH Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, standing third from right, with athletics team athletes and officials during their meeting yesterday

Committee (BOC) vice-president and delegation head in Tokyo His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa met yesterday with members of the Kingdom's athletics team.

A number of the participating athletes and officials were on hand, as well as BOC secretary general and Bahrain delegation deputy head in Tokyo Mohammed Al Nusuf.

HH Shaikh Isa conveyed the greetings of Supreme Council for Youth and Sports first deputy chairman, General Sports Authority president and BOC president His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa to the athletics team, and added

that they are a source of pride for all they have achieved at all levels in the sport.

Athletics is where Bahrain is most hopeful of clinching an Olympic medal this year.

The Kingdom has claimed three Olympic medals in the past, including two gold and one silver—all in athletics.

The gold medals were captured by Maryam Yusuf Jamal at the London Olympics in 2012 for the Women's 1,500m and Ruth Jebet at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016 for the Women's 3,000m Steeplechase. That same year, Eunice Kirwa claimed the Women's Marathon silver medal.

Bahrain in must-win to keep quarters hopes alive

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Bahrain face a must-win situation today when they take on hosts Japan in their penultimate Group B game of the men's handball preliminary round at the Tokyo Olympics.

The Bahrainis have yet to score a point on the group standings following their three losses previously to Sweden, Portugal and Denmark. They must now win their final two contests—first against the Japanese and then against Egypt on Sunday—to have any chance of advancing

to the knockout quarter-finals.

Japan also have yet to win at these Games and will be out in full force against their Asian counterparts. The Japanese's first three losses came against Denmark, Sweden and Egypt.

Bahrain are currently ahead of the home side on the group table with a superior goal difference.

Today's contest is scheduled for a 5am throw-off, Bahrain time. The Bahrainis will be wearing the red kits while Japan will sport white shirts and black shorts.

Meanwhile, the Bahrain dele-

Men's Handball Group B standings

(*qualified for quarter-finals)

	P	W	D	L	+/-	Pts
Denmark*	3	3	0	0	+32	6
Sweden*	3	3	0	0	+4	6
Egypt	3	2	0	1	+5	4
Portugal	3	1	0	2	-6	2
Bahrain	3	0	0	3	-12	0
Japan	3	0	0	3	-23	0

gation announced yesterday that handball star Kumail Mahfoodh has sustained an injury during training that will prevent him from suiting up for the national team.

According to the medical reports, Mahfoodh has suffered a muscle tear in his hand, which had prevented him from taking part in any of Bahrain's games so far.



Bahrain's Ahmed Almaqabi in action against Denmark in the national team's previous game