

HM King Hamad and HRH Prince Salman condole with His Holiness Pope Francis

World nations mourn the loss of the late Pope Benedict XVI

● His Majesty King and His Royal Highness Prince Salman offered sincere condolences

TDT | Manama

The leaders of Bahrain yesterday sent cables of condolences to His Holiness Pope Francis, following the passing of former Pope Benedict XVI, joining political and religious leaders across the globe in remembering the life and legacy of the late Pope.

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, offered sincere condolences and sympathy to His Holiness Pope Francis, the family and relatives of the deceased and all friendly countries, wishing the late Pope mercy and forgiveness.

HM King commended the efforts exerted by the late Pope Benedict XVI to promote the culture of peace, love and peaceful coexistence among peoples all over the world. Benedict XVI was hailed as one of the greatest minds and most influential figures of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

His Royal Highness highlighted the efforts and contributions of the late Pope Benedict XVI to foster peace, love and coexistence among people all over the world.

Yesterday, the Vatican released the first images of the late Benedict, showing him dressed in red and gold liturgical vestments and laying in state in the chapel of the monastery where he died.



The body of former Pope Benedict is displayed at the Vatican



In accordance with Benedict's wishes, his funeral on Thursday will be simple and solemn. It will be the first time in many centuries that a sitting pope will preside at the funeral of his predecessor. Benedict, who stepped down in 2013, had been the first pontiff in 600 years to resign.

His body will be moved privately to the basilica, unlike what followed the death in 2005 of Pope John Paul, whose body was moved in a solemn outdoor procession that was televised live around the world.

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Jan. 1 is also the feast of the Mother of God and in his homily, Francis asked the Madonna to accompany "our beloved" Pope Emeritus Benedict "on his passage from this world to God".

Benedict was also remembered in one of the prayers at the Mass.

On Saturday night the Vatican released Benedict's two-page "spiritual testimony" written in 2006, a year after his election as pope.

In it, he asked in a general, spiritual way, that God would

welcome him to internal life "despite all my sins and insufficiencies".

Francis on Saturday called Benedict a noble, kind man who was a gift to the Church and the world. While tributes to the former pope continued to be made by world leaders, and conservative members of the faithful, others were highly critical of his pontificate.

Some recalled the severe discipline he meted out to progressive theologians, particularly in Latin America, when he was head of the Vatican's doctrinal department under Pope John Paul II. Those actions prompted liberal Catholics to dub then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger "God's Rottweiler".

And while some have credited Benedict with taking important steps to formalise the Vatican's



HM King, HRH Prince Salman



A general view of the St. Peter's Basilica as Pope Francis celebrates Mass to mark the World Day of Peace at the Vatican

response to clergy sexual abuse, victims groups accused him of protecting the institution at all costs.

Like many Vatican officials who worked with Benedict, Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet said he believed the German

pontiff had left behind "a great legacy" as a man of God and a man of culture.

"I believe this is also a task for the future, to deeply rethink the Christian faith in the face of the challenges of our time," Ouellet told Reuters.

Oil and Environment Minister, and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak bin Daina, yesterday received the Indian Ambassador to Bahrain, Piyush Srivastava. The minister affirmed the depth of the Bahraini-Indian relations, commending the efforts exerted by the ambassador to further strengthen the deep-rooted bilateral ties. He also praised the two friendly countries' keenness to constantly enhance relations between them. The discussion focused on the oil and environment sectors and ways to increase investment opportunities in them in a way that would achieve the two countries' common interests.



The Inspection Department of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce is continuing its market visits in all governorates of the Kingdom. Officials yesterday visited several grocery stores and supermarkets to ensure the supply of basic commodities and prevent practices harming consumers. The ministry called on all customers to report violations and illegal commercial practices through the National Suggestions and Complaints System "Tawasul" or hotline: 80008001 or WhatsApp number 1711225 or e-mail inspection@moic.gov.bh.

System partially restored

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As of 0800 GMT, "the system has been partially restored thereby allowing limited flight operations", the Manila International Airport Authority said in a statement. By late evening, eight flight arrivals and eight departures had been allowed, according to the airport operator.

Video clips and photos posted on social media showed long queues at the airport and airline personnel distributing food packs and drinks to stranded passengers.

"We're told radar and navigation facilities at NAIA down.

I was on my way home from Tokyo - 3 hours into the flight, but had to return to Haneda," tweeted one passenger - Manuel Pangilinan, chairman of Philippine telecommunications conglomerate PLDT Inc.

"6 hours of useless flying but inconvenience to travelers and losses to tourism and business are horrendous. Only in the PH. Sigh."

Budget carrier Cebu Pacific (CEB.PS) and Philippine Airlines (PAL.PS) said they were offering passengers due to fly on Sunday free rebooking or the option to convert tickets to vouchers.



A foreign passenger wearing a face mask as a protection against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) arrives at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, in Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines