

Samson's 97 puts India into T20 World Cup semi-final against England

Defending champions chase 196 successfully to keep title defence alive at home | P16

WORLD 10 Blasts in Kabul as Afghan govt says responding to Pakistan attacks

THE DAILY tribune

Man United rise as Spurs struggle 15 SPORTS

BUSINESS 6 Shipping companies tell vessels to steer clear of Gulf

HM King hails solidarity and support for Bahrain

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received a telephone call from the US President Donald Trump.

During the call, President Trump condemned the recent Iranian aggression targeting the Kingdom of Bahrain.

He affirmed the US support and solidarity with the Kingdom and its readiness to provide all necessary assistance to safeguard its sovereignty, security, and stability.

His Majesty also received telephone calls from Sir Keir Starmer, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland,



HM the King



President Trump

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Iraq Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al Sudani, Pakistan Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, and Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides.

They expressed strong condemnation of Iranian mis-

sile attack and affirmed their steadfast support for Bahrain, and its backing of all measures undertaken to safeguard its sovereignty, security, and stability.

HM King Hamad expressed his deep appreciation and gratitude for their sincere solidarity and support for Bahrain.

Senior UAE official tells Iran 'your war is not with your neighbours'

Iran targets Crowne Plaza Hotel; no casualties



Manama

The Ministry of Interior announced that the Iranian aggression targeted the Crowne Plaza Bahrain hotel in the capital, Manama, resulting in material damage but no casualties.

Emergency personnel work to extinguish a fire in a building after an Iranian strike in the capital Manama

Iran president, 2 officials to lead transition after Khamenei's death: state TV

Bahrain downs 61 missiles, 34 drones as GCC condemns attack

Iran targets US bases in Iraq and Gulf for second day

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's air defence systems shot down 61 missiles and 34 drones yesterday as Iran launched a renewed wave of retaliatory strikes across the Gulf, with explosions reported in Dubai and Doha for a second consecutive day.

The General Command of

Kingdom's defense systems fully operational and at highest state of readiness, says General Command

Bahrain International Airport confirms flights suspended for second consecutive day

Iran Guards say targeted US aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln

Thousands of flights have been delayed or cancelled

Two ships attacked in Strait of Hormuz: maritime agencies

the Bahrain Defence Force confirmed that the Kingdom had

successfully intercepted hostile Iranian attacks, including Shahed-136 drones. It said the air defence systems remain fully operational and at the highest state of readiness to address any threats to national security.

The Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) added that its advanced defence units efficiently countered the threats, destroying the missiles and drones before they could reach their targets.

The General Command further noted that the use of ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles to target civilian infrastructure and private property constitutes a grave violation of

international humanitarian law, particularly the principles of distinction and proportionality. It said such indiscriminate and unlawful attacks pose a direct threat to regional peace and security. The Kingdom reaffirmed its legitimate right to take all necessary measures to defend its sovereignty and protect its people.

Residents and citizens were urged to exercise the utmost caution and vigilance, remain indoors, and venture outside only in cases of absolute necessity in order to safeguard public safety.

The Ministry of Interior announced that the Iranian strike

targeted the Crowne Plaza Bahrain hotel in the capital, Manama, and a maritime facility near Salman Port. It added that Civil Defence teams are carrying out operations to contain and extinguish the fire.

Meanwhile, The United States said it had destroyed the headquarters of Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard Corps, while also confirming the first US fatalities in the campaign aimed at toppling the Iranian government. US Central Command (CENTCOM) announced the destruction in a statement on X, accompanied by video showing missiles launched from a

US Navy ship striking an urban compound. As missiles continued to rain down on Tehran, President Donald Trump said the war could last up to a month, telling the Daily Mail that "it's always been a four-week process."

Oman's foreign minister, who mediated recent talks, said the "door to diplomacy remains open" even after the US and Israel launched a massive military campaign against the Islamic Republic.

"I want to be very clear — the door to diplomacy remains open," Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi said on X.

220 fils (includes VAT)



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Airspace stays closed

Bahrain International Airport suspends flights for second day amid drone attack

● **Causing material damage but no reported casualties**

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior has confirmed that Bahrain International Airport was targeted yesterday by an Iranian drone, causing material damage but no casualties, while authorities continue to secure the site.

Flight operations remain suspended for the second consecutive day as the Kingdom's airspace stays closed amid ongoing regional tensions.



Bahrain International Airport remains closed

The airport initially announced the suspension yesterday as a precaution, and a subsequent update confirmed the continuation of halted operations due to the evolving situation.

Updates

In a statement on its official X account, the airport emphasized that air traffic remains temporarily suspended, with further updates to be issued promptly through official channels.

Travelers were urged to monitor the airport's platforms and contact their airlines directly for flight information, while relying solely on approved sources under the current circumstances.

US Embassy issues security update after Manama hotel attack

TDT | Manama

The US Embassy in the Kingdom of Bahrain has issued Security Update No. 5 following the attack on the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Manama yesterday, which resulted in injuries.

In its advisory, the embassy urged American citizens in Bahrain to avoid staying in hotels in Manama, noting that such locations could be potential targets for future attacks.

As a precautionary measure, it announced that US government employees had been relocated from hotel accommodations.

The embassy called on US nationals to exercise extreme caution and strictly adhere to safety guidelines.

Shelter

It advised individuals to take immediate shelter upon hearing explosions or sirens, move to the lowest floor of a building away from windows and exterior walls, or seek a reinforced structure if outdoors.

If no suitable shelter is available, individuals were advised to lie flat on the ground and cover their heads.

The advisory also warned of the continued risk of falling debris, even in cases where missiles or drones are successfully intercepted.

Information

Citizens were urged to avoid approaching any remnants of attacks and to rely on official sources for verified information and guidance.

The embassy encouraged American nationals to monitor its website for updates and to enroll in the US State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive security alerts and facilitate communication during emergencies.

It noted that Bahraini emergency services can be reached



by calling 999, and that the embassy's Consular Affairs Section remains available through designated contact channels.

Citizens were further advised to avoid gatherings, demonstrations and areas with a heavy security presence, and to follow the instructions of local authorities.

Departure

In a separate update, the embassy confirmed that it has authorized the voluntary departure of non-emergency US government employees and their family members.

It also raised its travel advisory for Bahrain to Level 3, "Reconsider Travel," citing security risks.

The embassy stated that the decision follows regional developments that began on February 28, 2026, including ongoing threats of drone and missile attacks and significant disruptions to commercial air traffic.

Risks

It noted that security assessments indicate persistent risks related to terrorism, with the possibility of attacks occurring without prior or with limited warning, potentially targeting tourist sites, transportation hubs, markets, shopping centers, places of worship, as well as government and military facilities.

The embassy said it continues to closely monitor the situation and urged US citizens to consult the State Department's country information page for Bahrain for the latest updates.

Call for public to avoid criminal liability

TDT | Manama

The Public Prosecution has urged citizens and residents to avoid incurring criminal liability by refraining from publishing or circulating rumours, information or news not issued by the Kingdom's official authorities.

It also called on the public to avoid engaging in any conduct

that promotes hostile acts, undermines stability, harms national unity, intimidates citizens and residents, or weakens confidence in national capabilities.

The Public Prosecution affirmed that ongoing regional developments and the external aggression facing the Kingdom have not and will not hinder the full and strict enforcement of the law.



It stated that any practices harmful to the public interest, those that undermine the national spirit, or any actions that may materially or morally affect the official efforts undertaken to protect society and safeguard public interests, constitute criminal offences punishable by law in all forms and manifestations.

Justice Ministry suspends court sessions as precautionary measure

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments announced yesterday the suspension of all judicial sessions as a precautionary measure to safeguard the safety of employees and litigants amid current developments in the



Kingdom of Bahrain.

Sources told sister newspaper Al-Ayyam that the decision covers civil and criminal court sessions, as well as Sharia court hearings in Riffa.

The move forms part of temporary precautionary steps taken in response to ongoing security developments that be-

gan yesterday and continue to unfold. The Ministry stated that the measure aims to ensure public safety and protect visitors and staff at judicial facilities.

It added that the situation is being closely monitored and that any further updates will be communicated through official channels.

Two remanded over social media broadcasts that 'harmed social peace'

TDT | Manama

The head of the Cybercrime Prosecution announced that the Public Prosecution has ordered the pre-trial detention of two defendants pending investigation for broadcasting content on social media deemed harmful to social peace and likely to in-

cite panic among citizens and residents.

The case stems from two reports submitted by the General Directorate for Combating Cybercrimes at the General Directorate for Combating Corruption, Economic and Electronic Security.

The reports indicated that several individuals conducted live broadcasts on social media platforms, filming a fire at a building in the Kingdom of Bahrain that had been struck during recent hostile incidents.

The footage was subsequently

circulated widely in a manner authorities said could cause fear and undermine public order.

Upon receiving the reports, the Public Prosecution launched an immediate investigation, reviewed the circulated clips, and questioned the accused. During interrogation, the defendants

admitted to filming the incident via live streaming and publishing the footage through their social media accounts with the aim of increasing views and online engagement.

The prosecution subsequently ordered their remand pending further investigation.

Stay calm and proceed to safety

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior has called on all citizens and residents to remain calm and seek the nearest safe location, following the activation of the emergency siren in response to a potential hazard.

It also called on the public to avoid obstructing main roads unless absolutely necessary, in order to maintain public safety.

'Well stocked'



H.E. Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro and officials from the BCCI visit various locations

TDT | Manama

Industry and Commerce Minister, His Excellency Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, conducted field visits to several retail outlets, warehouses and major markets, where he also met with traders and suppliers in the food and consumer goods sector.

The visits, carried out in coordination with the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), form part of ongoing efforts to monitor market conditions, ensure the availability of essential commodities in sufficient quantities and maintain price stability amid current developments.



Legal action will be taken against any violations, including attempts to withhold goods, disrupt supply or manipulate prices under current circumstances.

During the inspections, markets were found to be well stocked with a wide range of consumer goods, with prices remaining stable and no evidence of unjustified increases.

Resilience

This, the Ministry noted, reflects the resilience of supply chains, the effectiveness of market oversight mechanisms and

the constructive role played by the commercial sector in supporting the local market and national economy.

The cooperation between the public and private sectors was described as a positive model of partnership.

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce affirmed that monitoring efforts will continue to be intensified to safeguard con-



Industry Minister inspects retail outlets, warehouses and major markets to ensure market stability

sumer interests and prevent any practices that could negatively impact the market.

Violations

It stressed that legal action will be taken against any violations, including attempts to withhold goods, disrupt supply or manipulate prices under current circumstances.

The Ministry also reiterated its commitment to maintaining adequate strategic stock levels to ensure readiness for any potential developments.

Stability

It confirmed the stability of supply conditions across the Kingdom and the continued availability of essential goods,

while emphasizing its dedication to delivering services efficiently and in the national interest.

Citizens and residents were

urged to report any concerns affecting supply continuity or product availability by contacting the Ministry's hotline at 80008001.



Bahrain food supply stable, officials reassure public

TDT | Manama

Several food companies and supply chain officials in the Kingdom of Bahrain have confirmed the stability of the local food supply.

They emphasised that supply chains are operating efficiently to ensure the continuous flow of goods.

In messages of reassurance to citizens and residents, officials highlighted that the Kingdom's strategic reserves of essential and alternative commodities are sufficient to meet national needs for the coming months.

They noted that this stability is supported by sound logistical policies and continuous government oversight from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

The public was urged to maintain normal purchasing patterns and avoid unnecessary stockpiling.

Goods

Shaker Al-Hali, CEO of Al-Hali Markets Group, confirmed that food supply chains are operating at a regular pace.

"The flow of goods reaches our warehouses and branches daily and without any interruption, making availability a prominent feature of the local market during this period," he said.

He added: "Our strategic stock includes quantities of basic and essential food commodities sufficient to meet the local market's needs for the coming months.

"There is therefore no jus-



Food company and supply chain officials

The Kingdom's strategic reserves of essential and alternative commodities are sufficient to meet national needs for the coming months.

consumer rights and provides a stable and secure shopping environment."

Commodities

Mohammed Nader Diwani, Head of the Import Department at Al Jazeera Company, confirmed that food commodities of all kinds are widely available in the Bahraini market.

"The Kingdom has sufficient experience in managing food security, which allows us to maintain market balance and meet demand with ease, in accordance with the highest quality standards," he said.

Diwani added that stock in logistics warehouses covers consumer needs for extended periods, with additional shipments arriving regularly through Bahraini ports.

He urged the public to maintain normal shopping habits, emphasising that "confidence in product abundance is essential, and goods are available at all

times."

Diwani also commended the Ministry of Industry and Commerce's monitoring efforts.

He stated that "cooperation with the private sector ensures the Bahraini market remains a model of stability and abundance, bringing reassurance to all consumers."

Import

Rashad Zainal, Board Member and General Manager of Maza Company, reaffirmed that Bahrain's food security remains robust.

"Our import operations continue without obstacles, and all goods, whether basic or supplementary, are available in ample quantities," he said.

Zainal explained that strategic storage policies, coordinated with relevant authorities, ensure sufficient stock for several months, safeguarding the market against global fluctuations.

He urged the public not to be influenced by rumors or engage in precautionary buying.

Zainal emphasised that "food supplies are available at usual prices, and there will be no shortages, God willing."

He further noted the Ministry of Industry and Commerce's active supervisory role in maintaining market balance.

"Field inspections ensure transparency, prevent monopolies, and enhance the efficiency of the local market, confirming that the interests of citizens and residents remain the top priority," Zainal added.

Sovereignty secured

Bahrain underscores readiness to protect security amid regional tensions

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama



MP Hassan Ibrahim Hasan

Bahrain has reaffirmed its ability to safeguard national security and defend its sovereignty, MP Hassan Ibrahim Hasan said.

He commended the high efficiency and advanced readiness displayed by the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) and the Ministry of Interior.

MP Hasan said the response to recent developments reflected professionalism and a strong sense of national responsibility.

Raising operational readiness, strengthening monitoring systems and activating preventive plans were clear assurances that the safety of citizens and residents remains a priority.

The MP noted that such preparedness results from continuous development in defensive capabilities and close coordination between institutions.

He stressed that the current stage requires unity and heightened national awareness.

Describing Bahrain's security as a red line, the lawmaker said protecting the nation's resources is a shared responsibility.

Held for posting videos affecting national security

TDT | Manama

A 35-year-old individual was arrested for misusing social media platforms.

The Ministry of Interior announced that the Anti-Cybercrime Directorate at the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security carried out the arrest.

The individual reportedly filmed and published videos related to the Iranian aggression targeting multiple



locations, sharing them on his social media accounts in a manner that constitutes a legal violation and is deemed harmful to security and public order.

Legal proceedings are being taken to refer the case to the Public Prosecution.

‘Cowardly attacks’

Dr. Al-Rumaihi strongly condemns Iranian targeting of Gulf Arab states

● **Bahrain will remain home of safety and stability for all**

TDT | Manama

Iran's targeting of Gulf Arab states with hostile attacks is "unjustified, cowardly, and inconsistent with the principle of good neighborliness".

This was emphasised by Dr. Ali bin Mohammed Al-Rumaihi, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee of the Shura Council, during his speech at the twenty-first session of the Council in the fourth session of the sixth legislative term yesterday.

He noted that the Gulf states have long been supporters of peace and security, adding that "the Kingdom of Bahrain has extended its hand of goodwill



globally and has remained a home of safety and stability for all peoples and residents living on its soil."

Violation

Dr. Al-Rumaihi emphasised that the attacks constitute "a blatant violation of state sovereignty and international law, representing a dangerous escalation threatening regional

The attacks constitute a blatant violation of state sovereignty and international law, representing a dangerous escalation threatening regional security and stability

DR. ALI BIN MOHAMMED AL-RUMAIHI, CHAIRMAN OF SHURA COUNCIL'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND NATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE

security and stability."

Praising Bahrain's immediate and decisive response to the missile attacks, he highlighted the high level of coordination and readiness across military and security sectors, which "contributed to protecting lives, safeguarding public and private property, and minimizing the impact of these attacks."

The lawmaker lauded the professionalism of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) and the vigilance of the Ministry of Interior, noting that rapid response and precise precautionary measures reflect the state's commitment to prioritizing the safety of citizens, residents, and visitors.

Unity

Dr. Al-Rumaihi further underscored the unity of citizens and residents around their leadership, stressing that "social cohesion remains the first line of defense against any attempts to destabilize security or spread misinformation."

He affirmed that Bahrain will remain strong in its institutions, capable of protecting its achievements, preserving its sovereignty, and ensuring continued security, while commending the dedicated efforts of all military and security sectors.

Social cohesion forms 'first line of defence'

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Sirens sounded in the Shura Council yesterday, briefly interrupting remarks by member Dr. Ali Al Haddad.

The incident came a day after Iran launched drones and missiles towards Bahrain and other Gulf Arab states, underscoring heightened regional tensions.

During the sitting, Dr Ali Al Rumaihi, a Shura Council member and head of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee, condemned the attacks and described them as "a blatant violation of states' sovereignty and the principles of international law".

He said Bahrain had taken "immediate and firm measures" to deal with the missile

attacks, citing high readiness and coordination across the military and security sectors, which he said helped protect lives and public and private property, and limit the impact.

Guidance

Dr Al Rumaihi also praised the public's adherence to guidance issued by the competent authorities, saying "social cohesion forms the first line of defence" against attempts to undermine security or spread rumours.

Shura Council chairman Ali Al Saleh said the council's statement backed Dr Al Rumaihi's remarks and called for unity with His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and the Government in condemning the attack.

Mosques to continue prayers amid precautionary measures

TDT | Manama

The General Directorate of Sunni Endowments has confirmed that the five daily prayers and Taraweeh prayers will continue to be held in its mosques as usual, in light of current developments.

This ensures that worshippers can perform their religious rites without interruption.

The administration emphasised the importance of adhering to instructions and direc-

tives issued by official authorities.

It also stressed taking necessary precautions to maintain safety and enhance the sense of reassurance and tranquility among worshippers.

Imams have been instructed to shorten the Taraweeh prayer, ensuring its duration does not exceed 25 minutes until further notice.

This decision takes into consideration the conditions of worshippers and aims to serve



the public interest, while maintaining the solemnity and reverence of the prayers.

Waiting time

It was also decided that the waiting time between the call to prayer and the start of the Isha prayer will be reduced to 10 minutes, with Taraweeh prayers commencing immediately after Isha.

The administration stressed that worshippers bear a shared responsibility to uphold their religious and national duties.

Digital government services amid current circumstances

TDT | Manama

The Information and eGovernment Authority (IGA) has confirmed that services for ID cards, civil registry, addresses, and birth and death certificates are fully accessible electronically.

This measure comes in light of ongoing developments and aims to ensure the safety of citizens and residents."

The Authority emphasised that these digital services enable individuals to complete their transactions safely and efficiently.

They also highlighted that the services minimise the need to visit physical offices while

ensuring the continuity of essential government services.

These services are available through the Kingdom of Bahrain's national portal, bahrain.bh, and via the MyGov application, downloadable from the eGovernment app store at bahrain.bh/apps.

The Authority urged the public to use these digital channels to complete their transactions safely and efficiently. For individuals facing difficulties with online services, IGA provides remote customer support.

Appointments can be scheduled through iga.gov.bh to receive assistance via video call from Authority representatives for all identity.

 المتحدة United		
SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025		
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025	31 DEC 2025	31 DEC 2024
Amounts are in Bahraini Dinars		
ASSETS		
Cash and Bank Balances	14,183,125	14,142,893
Statutory deposit	106,643	100,967
Prepayments and other receivables	910,800	939,473
Investment securities	21,120,756	17,875,173
Reinsurance contract assets	861,878	860,253
Investment property	555,481	538,357
Right-of-use assets	660,902	794,002
Property, plant and equipment	697,866	813,742
Total assets	39,097,451	36,064,860
Liabilities		
Insurance contract liabilities	14,213,762	12,896,974
Reinsurance contract liabilities	130,280	182,786
Lease liabilities	690,125	792,169
Other liabilities and provisions	4,221,462	3,775,023
	19,255,629	17,646,952
Equity		
Share capital	5,000,000	5,000,000
Statutory reserve	2,500,000	2,500,000
Investment Fair value reserve	181,850	81,802
Retained earnings	12,159,972	10,836,106
Total equity	19,841,822	18,417,908
Total equity and liabilities	39,097,451	36,064,860

These financial statements have been audited by KPMG

These financial Statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by:

Abdulaziz Alnowaiser
Chairman

Sameer Ebrahim Al-Wazzan
Vice Chairman

Maysa A. Al-Kooheji
Chief Executive Officer

Call for unity



MP Hamad Al Doy

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

MP Hamad Al Doy condemned the attacks targeting Bahrain, describing them as a clear violation of the Kingdom's sovereignty and an unacceptable escalation that threatens regional stability.

He said recent developments demand national unity and heightened awareness, praising the Bahrain Defence Force's readiness and the Ministry of Interior's professionalism in handling the situation.

Al Doy noted that swift precautionary measures, including remote work and distance learning, reflected responsible crisis management that prioritizes public safety.

He urged citizens and residents to rely on official sources for information and stressed that a united internal front remains Bahrain's strongest safeguard against any challenge.

BAB signs MoU with Kuwait Banking Association to Enhance Financial Collaboration

● The MoU provides a general framework to facilitate dialogue, information exchange, and engagement between the two associations

Manama

The Bahrain Association of Banks (BAB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kuwait Banking Association at the Associa-



tion's headquarters in the State of Kuwait. The MoU provides a general framework to facilitate dialogue, information exchange, and engagement between the two associations on matters of shared interest to their respective members.

The MoU was signed on behalf of BAB by Mrs. Zeeba Askar, Chief Executive Officer of BAB, and on behalf of Kuwait Banking Association by Dr. Yaqoub Al-Sayyid Yousef Al-Rifai, Secretary General of the Association.

Commenting on the signing, Mrs. Zeeba Askar, Chief

Executive Officer of BAB, said "The MoU reflects BAB's focus on maintaining constructive engagement with peer banking associations in the region and supporting structured dialogue and knowledge exchange in a manner that serves the interests of member banks."

Ms. Shaikha Al-Essa, Secretary General of the Kuwait Banking Association, welcomed the signing of the MoU, noting that it supports closer institutional engagement and continued exchange between the two associations.

OPEC+ hikes oil production by more than expected

Agreed a "production adjustment" of 206,000 barrels per day (bpd)

● A blockage of the strait could mean oil prices leaping from around \$72 before the war to \$120 to \$150 a barrel when trading starts on Monday

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Key members of the OPEC+ oil cartel announced a greater-than-expected increase to production quotas yesterday following US and Israeli strikes on Iran that triggered retaliation by Tehran across the Middle East.

The eight-strong V8 (Voluntary Eight) group in the alliance, which includes top oil producers Saudi Arabia and Russia -- as well as several Gulf states bearing the brunt of Tehran's missile strikes -- said they had agreed a "production adjustment" of 206,000 barrels per day (bpd).

"This adjustment will be implemented in April," they said in a statement.

The text did not mention the outbreak of the Iran conflict, instead citing "a steady global economic outlook and current healthy market fundamentals" as their reasons for the increase.

Before the weekend's meet-



An oil tanker is pictured offshore in Dubai

ing, experts had forecast a more modest increase of 137,000 bpd.

But Jorge Leon, an analyst at Rystad Energy, warned the agreed increase was potentially not large enough to prevent the Iran conflict causing a spike in oil prices when trading opens on Monday.

Leon pointed to the possibility

that Iran could target the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway through which around nearly a quarter of the world's seaborne oil supplies, in retaliation.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards have contacted ships to announce the strait was closed. On Sunday, Iranian state TV said an oil tanker in the strait was struck

while attempting to "illegally" pass through and was sinking, showing footage of a burning tanker at sea.

"If oil cannot move through Hormuz, an extra 206,000 barrels per day does very little to ease the market," Leon said, arguing that "logistics and transit risk matter more than produc-

tion targets right now".

The OPEC+ move "is unlikely to calm markets", he said.

"Prices will respond to developments in the Gulf and the status of shipping flows, not to a relatively small increase in output."

'Nightmare scenario'

Besides Russia and Saudi Arabia, the V8 group within OPEC+ includes Kuwait, Oman, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates, all of which were targeted by Iranian attacks for a second day on Sunday.

Algeria and Kazakhstan are also part of the group.

Another analyst, Stephen Innes, managing partner at SPI Asset Management, said that, with the fear of incoming missiles in the Strait of Hormuz, insurers cancelling contracts for vessels wanting to go through there, and jammed electronic signalling in the Gulf region, commercial shippers were scared.

They are "starting to act as if the route is compromised", he said.

"A full closure for more than a few days is the nightmare scenario," he said.

A blockage of the strait could mean oil prices leaping from around \$72 before the war to \$120 to \$150 a barrel when trad-

ing starts on Monday, he said, based on industry estimates.

He and other analysts pointed to land pipelines Saudi Arabia and the UAE could use to get around shipping through the strait, but noted that would still leave a shortfall of some eight million to 10 million bpd on the market.

"Those are meaningful pressure valves, but they are not a replacement for the full seaborne flow," Innes said.

While higher prices might seem a boon for OPEC+ countries, it in fact carries the risk of increasing competition from producers outside the cartel, such as the United States, Canada and Brazil.

Kpler analyst Homayoun Falakshahi told AFP that the cartel might "prefer prices of \$80-90, but around \$70 per barrel is the ideal price level" to cut the incentive for more investment by those rival producers.

He added that Russian production has been on a downward trend since November, leaving analysts to think that it was at its maximum output.

Leon, of Rystad Energy, said the only OPEC+ members "who can really boost their production are Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and, to a lesser degree, Kuwait and Iraq".

Conflict closes Dubai, Abu Dhabi stock markets 'until further notice'

AFP | New Delhi, India

The stock exchanges in Dubai and Abu Dhabi will be closed "until further notice" due to the ongoing conflict in the region, the UAE's financial regulatory authority announced Sunday. The Emirates have been hit by

Iranian strikes since Saturday in response to joint Israeli-US attacks on the Islamic republic. An initial statement said the closure would be for Monday and Tuesday, but that position was quickly revised. "The Authority confirms that it will continue to closely mon-

itor developments in the region and assess the situation on an ongoing basis, taking any further measures as necessary," said the statement. "All parties concerned are advised to follow official UAE Capital Market Authority, ADX and DFM channels.



Shipping companies tell vessels to steer clear of Gulf

AFP | Paris, France

Two major shipping groups on Saturday suspended navigation through the Gulf as conflict flared between the United States, Israel and Iran, piling onto a growing maritime slowdown in the region.

The announcements came as Iran's Revolutionary Guards had warned several ships that the Strait of Hormuz, the vital waterway for oil from the Gulf, was "basically closed", Iran's Tasnim news agency reported.

France's CMA CGM issued a statement telling its vessels in the Gulf to "take shelter" and also suspended passage through the Suez Canal because of the regional conflict.

"All ships currently in the Gulf, or on route to the Gulf, have received the instruction, with immediate effect, to take shelter," said the statement from CMA CGM, the world's third-largest container shipping company.

"Passage through the Suez

Ship off UAE coast reports fire after hit by 'unknown projectile': UKMTO

London, United Kingdom

A ship sailing off the UAE's coast near the Strait of Hormuz has reported being "struck by an unknown projectile causing a fire", the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) Centre said Sunday.

"UKMTO has received a report of an incident 17NM (nau-

tical miles) northwest of Mina Saqr, United Arab Emirates," the centre said in a statement.

"The Company Security Officer reported that the vessel been struck by an unknown projectile causing a fire. The fire has been extinguished and the vessel intends to continue on its voyage. Authorities are investigating."

is suspended until further notice and ships will be rerouted around the Cape of Good Hope," which would prolong the journey by thousands of kilometres, the statement added.

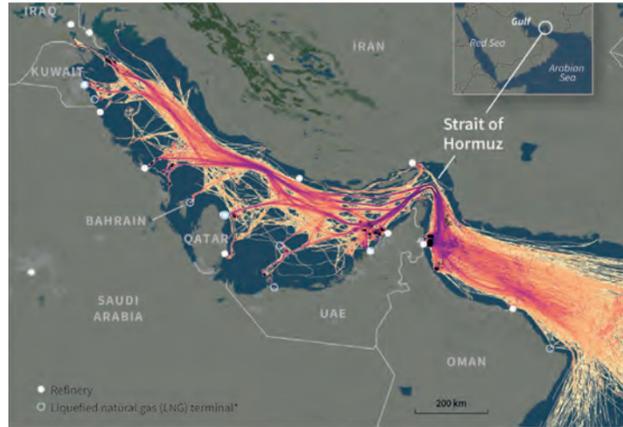
Hapag-Lloyd, the world's fifth-largest container shipping company, said it was suspending all transit through the Strait of Hormuz, which connects the

Gulf to the open seas, "until further notice."

Several shipping lines, including Danish giant Maersk, warned clients of possible delivery delays as ships re-routed.

The United States for its part warned ships to stay away from the Gulf due to ongoing military activity.

According to data from mar-



Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Airlines continued to suspend flights across parts of the Middle East on Sunday, as AFP reporters in Tehran said they heard fresh strikes in the Iranian capital -- the source of which was not immediately clear.



The Strait of Hormuz is frequently the scene of ship seizures and attacks. The vital corridor links the Gulf to the Indian Ocean and is situated between Iran and Oman's Musandam exclave, situated at the tip of a peninsula.

no formal closure order.

Shipping association BIMCO said that commercial ships with Israeli or American ties could be at risk of being targeted.

Approximately 20 million barrels of crude oil passed through the narrow waterway daily in 2024, equivalent to nearly 20 percent of global liquid oil consumption, according to the US

Airspace closed, flights cancelled

Major carriers from the Middle East, Europe, Asia-Pacific and the United States announced widespread cancellation

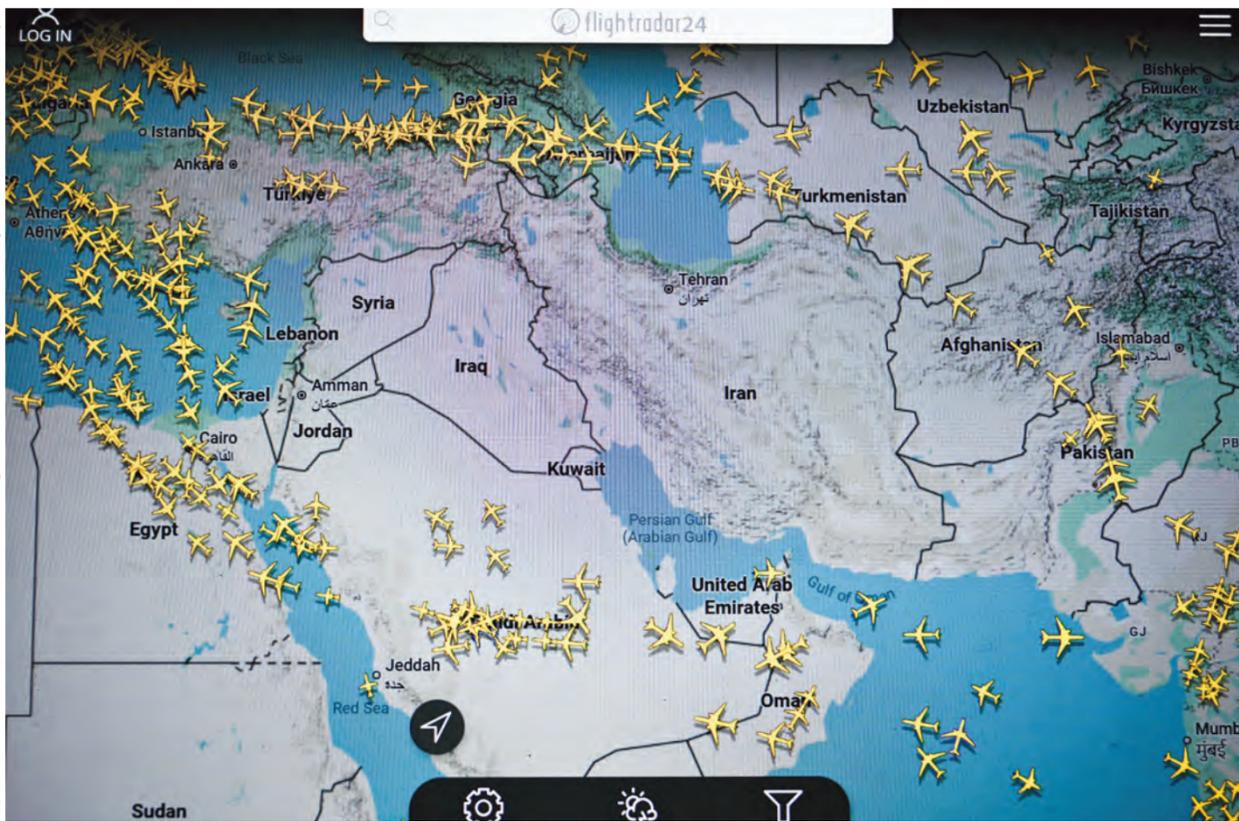
Notable airlines that cancelled services included Emirates, Etihad, Air France, British Airways, Air India, Turkish Airlines, and Lufthansa.

AFP | Paris, France

Thousands of flights have been delayed or cancelled in the biggest disruption to global air transport since the Covid pandemic as airlines suspend services to the Middle East following the US and Israeli attacks on Iran.

Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates all announced at least partial closures of their skies after Saturday's strikes and Iran launching missiles at capital cities around the wealthy Gulf region.

Major carriers from the Mid-



a page on the Flightradar 24 website that shows civilian flights avoidi

dle East, Europe, Asia-Pacific and the United States announced widespread cancellations, leaving thousands of

passengers stranded.

Notable airlines that cancelled services included Emirates, Etihad, Air France, British

Airways, Air India, Turkish Airlines, and Lufthansa.

According to aviation analytics company Cirium, of around

4,218 flights scheduled to land in Middle Eastern countries on Saturday, 966 (22.9 percent) were cancelled, with the figure

rising above 1,800 if also including outbound flights.

For Sunday, 716 flights out of 4,329 scheduled to the Middle East have been cancelled, Cirium said. Flight tracking website FlightAware meanwhile said more than 19,000 flights had been delayed globally and more than 2,600 were cancelled as of 0230 GMT Sunday.

Airspace closures

Iran swiftly closed its airspace as the strikes began "until further notice", said the spokesman of Iran's Civil Aviation Organisation, quoted by the Tasnim news agency.

Israel also closed its airspace to civilian flights, Transport Minister Miri Regev announced.

Qatar's civil aviation authority said it had temporarily closed the Gulf state's airspace.

Iraq shut down airspace, state media said.

The United Arab Emirates said it was closing its skies "partially and temporarily".

Syria closed part of its airspace in the south along the border with Israel for 12 hours, the Civil Aviation Authority said.

Jordan's air force was conducting drills to "defend the kingdom's skies", its military said. Kuwait closed its airspace.

Middle East and North Africa airlines

Gulf carriers Emirates and Etihad cancelled 38 percent and 30 percent of their flights respectively, Cirium said.

Qatar Airways suspended all flights from Doha. It cancelled 41 percent of total flights, according to Cirium.

Syria Air, the country's national carrier, cancelled all flights until further notice.

Egypt's national airline, EgyptAir, announced the suspension of its flights to cities across the Middle East, including Dubai, Doha, Manama, Abu Dhabi, Beirut and Baghdad among others.

European airlines

Russia's air transport authority Rosaviatsia said all commercial flights to Israel and Iran were cancelled "until further notice".

Turkish Airlines cancelled flights to Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Jordan until March 2.

Air France cancelled its Dubai, Riyadh and Beirut flights for Saturday, and flights to Tel Aviv until Sunday.

British Airways said it was not flying to Tel Aviv and Bahrain until March 4, and cancelled flights to

the Jordanian capital Amman on Saturday.

Swiss International Air Lines suspended flights to and from Tel Aviv until March 7, and cancelled flights from Zurich to Dubai scheduled for Saturday and Sunday.

Germany's Lufthansa, which comprises Swiss and ITA Airways, cancelled its flights to and from Tel Aviv, Beirut, Amman, Erbil and Tehran until March 7.

The airline group and its subsidiaries suspended flights to and from Dubai and Abu Dhabi until Sunday.

North America airlines

Delta Air Lines suspended New York-Tel Aviv flights until Sunday.

American Airlines "temporarily suspended" Doha-Philadelphia flights.

United flights to Tel Aviv are cancelled until Monday, and flights to Dubai until Sunday.

Air Canada said it cancelled flights from Canada to Israel until March 8 and to Dubai until March 3.

Asia-Pacific airlines

India's two largest private carriers IndiGo and Air India suspended flights to all destinations in the Middle East.

Pakistan International Airlines, the flag carrier of the country that borders Iran, said it had suspended flights to the UAE, Bahrain, Doha and Kuwait.

Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific suspended flights to Dubai and Riyadh.

Garuda Indonesia, Indonesia's flag carrier, temporarily suspended flights to and from Doha "until further notice", the company



said in a statement Sunday. Singapore Airlines and Singapore's Scoot cancelled six flight routes in the region until the end of Sunday, local media reported.

Philippine Airlines flights from Manila to Doha, Riyadh to Manila, and Dubai to Manila were cancelled on Saturday, as well as one Doha-Manila flight on Sunday.

Other major airlines including Australia's Qantas and Japan's All Nippon Airways did not announce any flight cancellations.

Africa airlines

Ethiopian Airlines cancelled its flights to Amman, Tel Aviv, Dammam, and Beirut.

Kenya Airways has suspended its flights to Dubai and Sharjah until further notice.



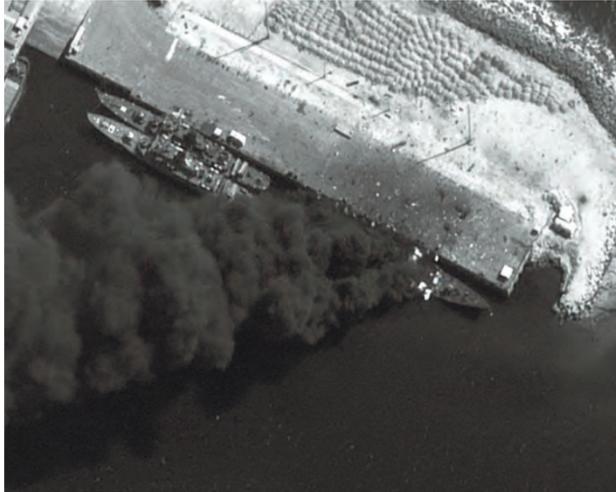
Who is running **Iran** now?

● Senior cleric Ayatollah Alireza Arafī will serve as Iran's interim Supreme Leader following the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a joint US-Israeli airstrike on Tehran, the state-linked ISNA news agency reported.

● Iran had activated Article 111 of its Constitution after Khamenei's assassination, triggering an emergency leadership arrangement in which a three-member council assumes the Supreme Leader's powers until a permanent successor is chosen.

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran has announced transition plans following the killing of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali



Smoke billowing from a naval base in Konarak, in southern Iran.

Khamenei in a joint Israeli-US attack of unprecedented scale.

The plans include the formation of an interim leadership council including the president, the head of the judiciary and a jurist from the Guardian Council, the body that oversees legislation and vets electoral candidates.

Also playing a central role is Iran's top security chief Ali Larjani.

Here is a look at the key figures overseeing the transition:

The president

President Masoud Pezeshkian, 71, is one of three members of the interim council leading the country until a new supreme leader is elected.

The reformist heart surgeon-turned-politician took office in June 2024 after his predecessor died in a helicopter crash.

Pezeshkian was born in 1954 to an Iranian father of Turkic origin and a Kurdish mother in the city of Mahabad in the

northwestern province of West Azerbaijan.

A technocrat known for his calm demeanour, Pezeshkian has overseen the government during turbulent times, including last year's 12-day war with Israel and mass protests over rising living costs that peaked in January.

On Sunday, he described Khamenei's killing as a "declaration of war against Muslims" and said Iran's response would be a "legitimate duty and right".

The judiciary chief

Shiite cleric Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, about 68, is also a member of the leadership council.

He was born in the village of Ejei in central Iran's Isfahan province.

A long-time figure within the Islamic republic's judiciary and security apparatus, he was appointed head of the judiciary in 2021 by Khamenei.

Ejei completed his Islamic studies in the Shiite holy city of Qom and holds a master's degree in international law, according to the judiciary's website.

He carries the clerical title of *hojatolislam* -- one rank below *ayatollah*.

In 2010, he was placed under US sanctions for "serious human rights abuses" linked to the crackdown on protests following then-president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's disputed 2009 re-election, when he was serving as intelligence minister.

"The evil regime of America and the humiliated and slanderous Zion should know that the great nation of Iran will never forgive the blood of its heroic leader," he said after Khamenei's killing.

The jurist

The interim leadership council includes 65-year-old cleric Alireza Arafī, who heads Iran's centre for managing Shiite seminaries.

He simultaneously serves as second vice president of the Assembly of Experts, the body responsible for appointing and overseeing the supreme leader.

He is also a member of the Guardian Council.

Arafī moved to the holy city of Qom in 1971 to study Islamic sciences and, according to his official website, was imprisoned at 16 for opposing Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

The youngest and least known of the three council members, he has generally adopted a cautious tone.

On Sunday, however, he struck a defiant note, saying: "The nation will continue along the path of the revolution... and will avenge the blood of the people, of the dear youth and of the dear students."

The security chief

Ali Larjani, 68, is currently the head of Iran's top security body, the Supreme National Security Council.

He is believed to have enjoyed Khamenei's confidence after a long career in the Islamic republic's military, media and legislature.

He was born in Najaf, Iraq in 1957 to a prominent Shiite cleric who was close to the Islamic Republic's founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

His family has been influential within Iran's political system for decades.

On Sunday, Larjani outlined Iran's post-Khamenei transition plans and, mimicking US President Donald Trump, vowed to hit Israel and the US with "A FORCE THAT THEY HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED BEFORE".

Missiles strike airports, seaports to residential buildings and even hotels

Three killed, dozens hurt in UAE since start of Iran's campaign

● Since Saturday the UAE detected 165 ballistic missiles, destroying 152, and intercepted two cruise missiles

AFP | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Iran's retaliatory missile and drone campaign in the Gulf has killed three people and wounded 58 in the United Arab Emirates since it began, Emirati authorities said on Sunday.

AFP correspondents heard repeated, powerful blasts in Dubai, Doha and Manama, with explosions also in Riyadh, as Iran pressed a second day of counter-strikes following US and Israeli attacks that killed its supreme leader and other top officials.

Iran's continued and unprecedented Gulf bombardment has raised fears of a wider conflict and rattled a region long seen as a haven of peace and security in the turbulent Middle East.

The three people killed in the UAE attacks were Pakistani, Nepalese and Bangladeshi nationals, Abu Dhabi's defence ministry said.

Since Saturday the UAE detected 165 ballistic missiles, destroying 152, and intercepted



A man walks in a parking area as smoke rising from the port of Jebel Ali after a reported Iranian strike in Dubai

two cruise missiles, the defence ministry said.

It added 506 of 541 Iranian drones were also shot down.

In Kuwait, the health ministry said one person had been killed and 32 others injured since Saturday.

In Oman, which helped mediate US-Iran talks and was the only Gulf state spared in the first day of the Iranian campaign, the port of Duqm was targeted by two drones, the Oman News Agency said in a social media post.

"One drone struck a mobile workers' accommodation, injuring one foreign worker, while debris from the other landed near fuel tanks, causing no casualties or material damage," it

said.

Hotels become targets

Shortly after, Oman said an oil tanker was targeted off the coast. Its crew was evacuated and four of them were injured, the news agency reported.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was to convene via video-link later Sunday for a unified response to Iran's attacks.

Across the Gulf, civilian infrastructure has been hit: to residential buildings and even hotels.

UAE presidential adviser Anwar Gargash on Sunday lashed out at Tehran, calling the attacks on the Gulf states a miscalculation.

"It isolated Iran at a critical



A plume of smoke rises from a reported Iranian strike in the industrial district of Doha

junction. Your war is not with your neighbours," said Gargash.

Gulf security analyst Anna Jacobs said: "The Gulf countries right now are really on the front lines of this brutal war."

"Gulf countries, as always, want to support de-escalation and diplomacy... But this commitment and these principles are being put to the test right now," she added.

"If Iran continues to hit these countries and escalates even more, it will be very difficult for them to just sit and do nothing."

Earlier Sunday, drones struck the airport in Bahrain's capital Manama, causing minor damage, authorities said.

The US embassy in Manama urged citizens to steer clear of

hotels in the Bahraini capital, warning they could become potential targets after the Crowne Plaza was hit.

On Saturday in Manama, drones and shrapnel slammed into residential buildings, with video on social media showing smoke and fire erupting from high-rises.

"We advise US citizens in Bahrain that hotels might be a target for future attacks, and encourage US citizens to avoid hotels in Manama," the embassy said in a post on X.

Earlier, an AFP correspondent saw damage at the hotel after hearing explosions.

Palm, Burj Al Arab

In the UAE, which has borne

the brunt of the attacks, two people were injured when debris from intercepted drones fell on homes in Dubai, authorities said.

And in the capital Abu Dhabi, a woman and child were injured after debris from an intercepted drone collided with a building facade at Etihad Towers, according to the Abu Dhabi Media Office.

On Saturday, the Iranian attacks sparked fires at landmarks such as The Palm seafont development and Burj Al Arab hotel.

At the airport in Abu Dhabi, at least one person was killed and seven wounded during what authorities called an "incident" and another died earlier in the day from falling debris.

Dubai airport, the world's busiest for international traffic, and Kuwait's airport, were also hit.

In Qatar, host of the region's biggest US military base, officials said Iran had launched 65 missiles and 12 drones towards the Gulf state, most of which were intercepted, but eight people were injured, with one in critical condition.

Smoke rose on Saturday from US bases in Abu Dhabi and Manama, home of the American navy's Fifth Fleet, witnesses said, with US bases also targeted in Kuwait.

The oil-and-gas-rich Arab monarchies host a clutch of US military bases.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

PEACE IS NOT ABSENCE OF CONFLICT, IT IS THE ABILITY TO HANDLE CONFLICT BY PEACEFUL MEANS
RONALD REAGAN

- Iraq declares three days of mourning over Iran's Khamenei
- Thai PM says preparing evacuation of citizens in Middle East
- Crowds in Iran's south call for vengeance over Khamenei killing: media
- Protesters try to storm Baghdad zone housing US embassy: AFP
- US embassy in Oman tells staff, citizens to take cover due to 'activity outside Muscat'
- Hundreds try to storm US consulate in Pakistan's Karachi: AFP journalist
- Iranian cultural center in Ecuador attacked amid Middle East tensions

● Iran police intelligence chief killed in US, Israeli strikes: media

● UN nuclear agency to hold extraordinary meeting on Iran Monday

● US embassy in Oman tells staff, citizens to take cover due to 'activity outside Muscat'

● Death toll from Iran missile attack on Israel rises to 8: first responders

● One dead, dozens injured in Kuwait since start of Iran strikes: ministry

● Netanyahu says 'these are painful days' after deadly Iranian strikes on Israel

● French FM condemns Iran's 'massive and unjustifiable' attacks on Gulf

Trump says 48 Iranian 'leaders' killed in US attack: Fox News



Smoke and flames rising from Dubai's landmark The Palm archipelago



Motorists drive past a plume of smoke rising from a reported Iranian strike in the industrial district of Doha

US military says it sank Iranian warship in Gulf of Oman

Cities under fire

More explosions heard in Dubai, Doha and Manama



A video grab image taken from footage released by the Israeli military shows what it says are large-scale strikes on "the headquarters of the Iranian regime" in Tehran

US military says it sank Iranian warship in Gulf of Oman

AFP | Washington, United States

US forces struck and sank an Iranian warship in the offensive against the Islamic republic, the US military said yesterday, calling on members of Iran's armed forces to "lay down your weapons." "An Iranian Jamaran-class corvette was struck by US forces during the start of Operation Epic Fury. The ship is currently sinking to the bottom of the Gulf of Oman at a Chah Bahar pier," US Central Command posted on X.



UAE says Iran drone attack caused fire at Abu Dhabi naval base

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

An Iranian drone attack on an Abu Dhabi naval base

caused a fire but no casualties, the defence ministry said Sunday, as Iran attacked the Gulf for a second day af-

ter a wave of US and Israeli strikes. "Specialised teams responded today to an incident resulting

from an attack by two Iranian drones on a warehouse at Al Salam Naval Base in Abu Dhabi. The attack caused a

fire in two containers of general materials, but there were no casualties," the ministry said.

Saudi intercepts missile attacks on airport, base

AFP | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia yesterday intercepted Iranian missiles targeting Riyadh's international airport and the Prince Sultan Airbase, which houses US military personnel, a Gulf source briefed on the matter told AFP.

A source said, requesting anonymity to discuss sensitive matters, adding that the interception did not disrupt navigation or cause any human or material losses. An eyewitness near the airport said they "saw and heard the air defence intercept the missile in the sky". Residents and AFP correspondents earlier reported hearing explosions in eastern Riyadh.

Iran Guards say 'struck' US aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln; Pentagon denies

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said yesterday that they had attacked the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln in the Gulf after US and Israeli strikes killed the country's supreme leader.

"The US aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln was struck by four ballistic missiles," the Guards said in a statement carried by local media, warning that the "the land and sea will increasingly become the graveyard of the terrorist aggressors". Meanwhile, The Pentagon yes-



a F/A-18E Super Hornet, attached to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 14, launching from the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln

terday denied Iran's claim to have struck the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln with ballistic missiles in the Gulf.

"The Lincoln was not hit. The missiles launched didn't even come close," US Central Command said on X.

Three people have been killed and 58 injured in the UAE since Iran began its retaliatory campaign

One person has been killed and 32 others injured in Kuwait, the health ministry said



Policemen walk past a burning armoured vehicle set on fire by Shiite Muslim protesters outside the US consulate in Karachi



Israeli emergency service officers search the scene of a missile attack near Bet Shemesh, some 30 kilometres west of Jerusalem



Mourners gather during a memorial rally held by supporters of Lebanon's Shiite Muslim Hezbollah movement a day after Iran's supreme leader was assassinated during a US and Israeli offensive on Tehran



A yacht sails past a plume of smoke rising from the port of Jebel Ali



Emergency personnel work to extinguish a fire in a building after an Iranian strike in the capital Manama

Diplomacy falls silent

Airspace closed, flights cancelled

Senior UAE official says attacks on Gulf a miscalculation isolating Iran



People gather to mourn the death of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in joint US and Israeli strikes, at a square in Tehran

Iran prepared for 'all scenarios' including Khamenei's death: parliament speaker

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran has prepared for "all scenarios", including the way forward, after the death of

supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei following US and Israeli strikes, its parliament's speaker said yesterday.

"We have prepared our-

selves for these moments and have considered all scenarios," Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said in a video carried on state TV, adding US President

Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have "crossed our red lines" and "will suffer the consequences".

Trump threatens Iran with force 'never been seen before' if they retaliate

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump said yesterday the United States would hit Iran with "force that has never been seen before" if the country retaliated against US and Israeli strikes that killed supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Iran indicated it was "going to hit very hard today, harder than they have ever hit before," wrote Trump, who has

vowed to seek regime change in the Islamic republic, on his Truth Social platform early Sunday.

"THEY BETTER NOT DO THAT, HOWEVER, BECAUSE IF THEY DO, WE WILL HIT THEM WITH A FORCE THAT HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE!" he said. Trump has said the US bombing will continue "as long as necessary" and noted Khamenei's killing gives Iranians their "greatest chance" for taking power from the current regime.

Three US military members killed

AFP | Washington, United States

The US military yesterday said three service members have been killed and five seriously wounded in the operation against Iran -- the first casualties of any kind announced on the US side.

The United States launched massive bombardments against Iran and killed its supreme leader Saturday, with attacks ongoing Sunday.

"Three US service members have been killed in action and five are seriously wounded as part of Oper-

ation Epic Fury. Several others sustained minor shrapnel injuries and concussions -- and are in the process of being returned to duty," US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement.

"Major combat operations continue and our response effort is ongoing. The situation is fluid, so out of respect for the families, we will withhold additional information, including the identities of our fallen warriors, until 24 hours after next of kin have been notified."

Oman port targeted by drones, one worker injured: state news agency

AFP | Muscat, Oman

Drones targeted an Omani port, injuring one worker, official media said on Sunday, marking the first attack on the sultanate -- which has mediated US-Iran talks -- since Tehran began its retaliation campaign in the Gulf.

"A security source reported that the commercial port of Duqm was targeted by two

drones. One drone struck a mobile workers' accommodation, injuring one foreign worker, while debris from the other landed near fuel tanks, causing no casualties or material damage," the Oman News Agency said in a post on X.

Blasts in Kabul as Afghan govt says responding to Pakistan attacks

Pakistan minister says killed 415 Afghan soldiers

● Months of cross-border clashes have flared again since Thursday

● Pakistan acknowledged bombing key cities Friday including Kabul and Kandahar

AFP | Kabul, Afghanistan

Explosions were heard in the Afghan capital Kabul yesterday, AFP journalists said, with the Taliban government saying they were responding to aerial Pakistan attacks.

A spokesman for Afghanistan's defence ministry said that "air defence strikes were carried out against Pakistani aircraft in Kabul".

Months of cross-border clashes have flared again since Thursday, when Afghanistan launched an offensive along the frontier, with Pakistani forces hitting back on the border and from the skies.

The renewed violence came after Afghan residents and officials said troops from both countries had been battling along the border, with the fighting coming alongside multiple strikes including the former US air base at Bagram.

Earlier, residents in multiple areas bordering Pakistan told AFP of fighting, while the Afghan



Taliban security personnel stand next to an artillery gun near the border area in the Jaji Maydan district of Khost province

government said three people were killed overnight in drone strikes and shelling.

North of the capital Kabul, air strikes "hit Bagram air base", according to a resident who AFP is not naming for security reasons.

A second resident said "it was very strong, which shook the area. There was smoke and fire coming out north of the airport", describing the dawn raid as "very terrifying".

The provincial spokesman, Fazl ul Rahim Maskin Yar, said Pakistani jets "attempted to bomb" the base, but there were no casualties or damage.

Pakistan acknowledged bomb-

ing key cities Friday including Kabul and Kandahar, which is home to Afghanistan's supreme leader, but has not commented on Sunday's strikes.

The presence of security forces was boosted in central Kabul on Sunday evening, with increased checks on cars, an AFP journalist said.

Before dawn, AFP journalists in the capital had heard an explosion followed by successive gunfire, with Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid saying anti-aircraft fire was being shot at Pakistani planes.

Drones were also heard by

an AFP journalist in the border province of Khost, while in Jalalabad city -- between Kabul and the border -- an AFP photographer saw a jet.

The Afghan government's deputy spokesman, Hamdullah Fitrat, said Pakistani fire had killed 36 civilians across multiple provinces since Thursday, which Islamabad has not commented on.

In Kunar's provincial capital Asadabad, an 18-year-old said his brother had been killed, a few months after getting married.

"When the fighting started, we told him to come with us and

leave the area, but he said: 'I will stay and look after the house,'" said Sajid, who only gave one name.

"He was martyred near the mosque while trying to leave," he told AFP.

Multiple residents in Afghanistan's Khost and Nangarhar provinces told AFP the two sides were engaged in sporadic clashes on Sunday afternoon.

At Torkham border crossing -- a key gateway for Afghans returning from Pakistan -- overnight fighting was reported by the Nangarhar province information department.

The spokesman for a military unit reported heavy fighting overnight in Paktia province.

Afghan officials said Thursday's border offensive was a response to earlier air strikes that killed civilians, which Pakistan said targeted militants.

Taliban government rejects.

Many attacks have been claimed by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a militant group that has stepped up assaults in Pakistan since 2021, the year the Taliban authorities returned to power in Kabul.

This week's escalation marked the first time that Pakistan has focused its air strikes on Afghan government facilities, analysts noted, a stark change from previous operations that it said targeted militants.

Pakistan's information minister, Attaullah Tarar, said 46 locations across Afghanistan had been hit by air strikes since its operation began.

Pakistan has killed 415 Afghan soldiers, the minister said.



The Afghanistan-Pakistan border, known as the Durand Line, stretches about 2,640 kilometres and has been a source of tension since 1893, as successive Afghan governments have refused to formally recognise it as an international border.

Mediator Oman's FM urges ceasefire on call with Iran's Araghchi



Badr Albusaidi

AFP | Muscat, Oman

Oman's foreign minister, who had been mediating US-Iran talks, yesterday urged a ceasefire on a call with his Iranian counterpart, as Tehran launched a second day of strikes in response to air raids.

Badr Albusaidi "affirmed the Sultanate of Oman's continued call for a ceasefire and a return to dialogue... in a manner that achieves the legitimate demands of all parties," Oman's foreign ministry said in a readout of a call with Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi.

Trump says 48 Iranian 'leaders' killed in US attack

AFP | Palm Beach, US

President Donald Trump said yesterday that 48 Iranian leaders have been killed in the US-Israeli bombardments of the country and that the offensive is "very positive."

"Nobody can believe the success we're having, 48 leaders are gone in one shot. And it's moving along rapidly," Trump was quoted as saying in an interview by Fox News.

Trump claimed overall success in the war, which

was launched Saturday with the goal of removing the Islamic republic's leadership and destroying its military. Iran has confirmed the death of its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"We're doing our job not just for us but for the world. And everything is ahead of schedule," Trump was quoted as saying in a separate interview with CNBC.

"Things are evolving in a very positive way right now, a very positive way," he said.

The interviews were conducted before the US military for the first time announced casualties in the war: three unidentified service members killed, five

seriously wounded and several others more lightly injured. Separately, Trump also said he would "be talking" to Iranian leaders but was vague on the timing and noted that much of the country's leadership was dead.

"They want to talk, and I have agreed to talk, so I will be talking to them. They should have done it sooner," Trump was quoted as saying by The Atlantic, as US and Israeli forces press a war against Iran for a second day.

Asked when such talks might take place, Trump said "I can't tell you."

Trump did not indicate with whom he hoped to speak.

Referring to the Iranian leadership which has been in years of on-and-off talks with US and other Western governments, Trump said "most of those people are gone."

"Some of the people we were dealing with are gone, because that was a big -- that was a big hit," Trump was quoted as saying, apparently referring to the strike that killed Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other top officials.

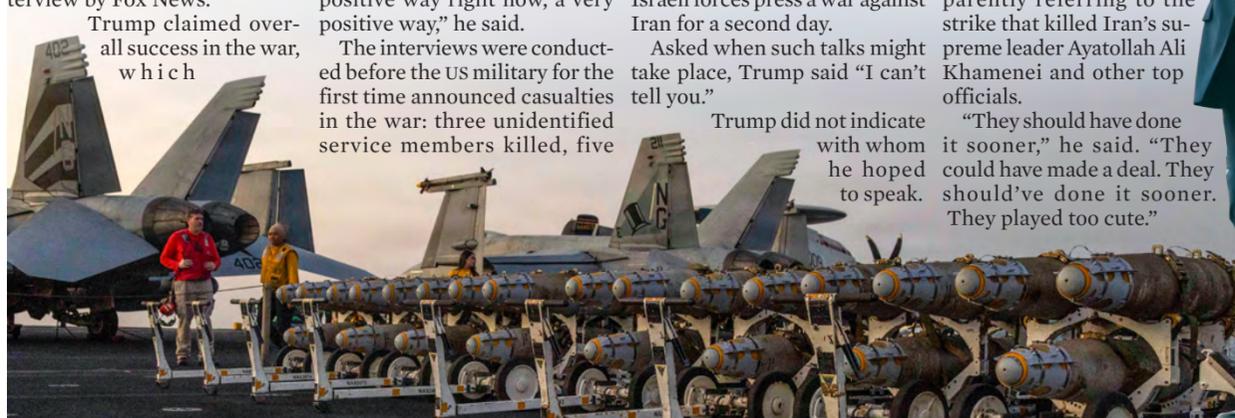
"They should have done it sooner," he said. "They could have made a deal. They should've done it sooner. They played too cute."

Iran insists 'no limit' its right to self-defense: minister

Washington, United States

Atop Iranian official yesterday rejected President Donald Trump's warning not to retaliate against massive US-Israeli bombardments, saying there would be "no limit" to the country's self-defense.

"Nobody can tell us that you don't have any right to defend yourselves. We are defending ourselves whatever it takes, and we see no limit for ourselves to defend our people, to protect our people," Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told ABC News. "What the United States is doing is an act of aggression. What we are doing is the act of self-defense. There are huge differences between these two," he said.



U.S. Sailors transfer ordnance on the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72)



Ramadan

Ramadan philanthropy in the Gulf: A season of expansive giving

Charity at the Heart of the Holy Month

As Ramadan unfolds across the Gulf region, generosity becomes one of the most visible expressions of faith. Beyond the spiritual discipline of fasting, the holy month is widely regarded as a season of giving, when acts of charity multiply and communities mobilize to support those in need. From large-scale humanitarian campaigns led by foundations and royal initiatives to neighborhood-level food drives, philanthropy during Ramadan reflects a deeply rooted cultural and religious tradition.

In Islam, charitable giving is not only encouraged but institutionalized through zakat, the obligatory almsgiving considered one of the Five Pillars of Islam. Ramadan, believed to be a time when good deeds are rewarded manifold, inspires many individuals and organizations to fulfill their annual charitable commitments. Across Gulf societies, this results in a surge of donations aimed at alleviating poverty, supporting healthcare initiatives and expanding educational opportunities both locally and abroad.

Leadership and Institutional Initiatives

Governments and royal charitable foundations across the Gulf often spearhead expansive Ramadan campaigns, distributing food aid, financial assistance and medical support to vulnerable populations. These initiatives frequently extend beyond national borders, reflecting the



A boy offers sweets at the start of Iftar, at the shrine of Imam al-Qasim, son of Imam al-Kadhim in in al-Qasim, Iraq

region's growing role in global humanitarian assistance.

Large-scale food distribution programs become a common sight, with trucks delivering essential supplies to low-income families and migrant communities. Ramadan tents offering free iftar meals operate nightly in major cities, welcoming thousands regardless of nationality or background. Such initiatives embody the Islamic principle of compassion while reinforcing social cohesion within increasingly diverse societies.

Observers note that philanthropy in the Gulf has evolved into a highly organized sec-

tor, supported by professional institutions that emphasize transparency, accountability and measurable impact. Digital donation platforms now allow contributors to track how their contributions are used, enhancing public trust and encouraging wider participation.

Community Spirit and Grassroots Giving

Alongside institutional efforts, grassroots charity plays an equally important role during Ramadan. Families prepare extra meals for distribution, youth groups organize volunteer drives, and mosques coordinate collections for struggling

households within their neighborhoods. These smaller acts of kindness often occur quietly, reflecting a cultural preference for humility in giving.

Volunteerism rises significantly during the holy month, with residents dedicating evenings to packing food parcels, serving meals or supporting charitable events. For many participants, these activities form an essential part of the Ramadan experience, reinforcing empathy and social responsibility.

In cities with large expatriate populations, community organizations also work to ensure that migrant workers — many of whom are far from their families

— are included in Ramadan celebrations through shared iftars and assistance programs.

Technology and the Digital Transformation of Charity

Technology has reshaped how philanthropy operates during Ramadan. Mobile applications and online platforms now allow donations to be made instantly, often within minutes of charitable appeals appearing on social media or television broadcasts. Crowdfunding initiatives have enabled smaller organizations to reach broader audiences, expanding the scope of charitable impact.

Artificial intelligence and data analytics are increasingly used by charitable organizations to identify areas of greatest need and optimize resource distribution. This modernization reflects a broader trend in the Gulf toward combining tradition with innovation, ensuring that charitable practices remain effective in a rapidly changing world.

Beyond Charity: A Culture of Responsibility

Ramadan philanthropy in the Gulf extends beyond financial giving to encompass social responsibility more broadly. Corporations launch community outreach initiatives, sponsor public iftar programs and partner with charities as part of corporate social responsibility strategies. Many businesses view Ramadan as an opportunity to reinforce ethical values and strengthen their connection

with society.

Religious scholars emphasize that the ultimate goal of charity during Ramadan is not only immediate relief but long-term social balance. By encouraging generosity and empathy, the month fosters a culture where wealth circulates more equitably and communal bonds are strengthened.

A Legacy of Compassion

While charitable activity peaks during Ramadan, its influence often lasts throughout the year. Many initiatives launched during the holy month evolve into permanent programs addressing education, healthcare and poverty alleviation. The sustained impact highlights how Ramadan serves as both a spiritual catalyst and a practical driver of humanitarian action.

In the Gulf, where rapid economic development has transformed societies within a generation, Ramadan philanthropy remains a powerful reminder of enduring values. It reflects a collective commitment to compassion, dignity and shared responsibility — principles that continue to shape the region's identity far beyond the fasting hours of the holy month.

As lanterns illuminate city streets and communities gather nightly to break their fast, acts of giving quietly weave a parallel narrative of hope and solidarity, defining Ramadan not only as a time of devotion, but as a season of expansive generosity.



Thousands of Muslims gather to break their daily fast at a Mass Iftar event in the Bo Kaap, the city's oldest Muslim settlement, in Cape Town

Ramadan Recipe

Time: 1 hr 35 mins | Servings: 4

Beef Mafe (West African Peanut Stew)

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 pounds beef stew meat
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1 yellow onion, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 2 large celery stalks, chopped (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 6 garlic cloves, minced (about 1 1/2 tablespoons)
- 1 (1-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled and minced (about 1 tablespoon)
- 1 (6-ounces) can tomato paste
- 6 cups beef broth, divided
- 1/2 cup unsweetened creamy peanut butter
- 3 carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 eggplant (about 14 ounces), cut into 8 (about 3- x 1 1/2-inch) pieces
- 1 small sweet potato, quartered
- 1 Scotch bonnet chile, seeded and halved (optional)
- Cooked brown rice, for

serving

Directions

1. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high until shimmering. Sprinkle beef evenly with black pepper and 2 teaspoons



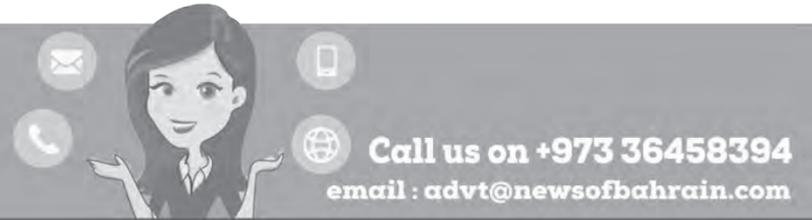
salt. Add beef to hot oil, and sear, turning occasionally, until deeply browned on all sides, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer beef to a plate, reserving drippings in Dutch oven.

2. Stir onion and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt into drippings in Dutch oven; cook over medium, stirring often and scraping browned

bits from bottom of pot, until onion is well browned, 4 to 5 minutes. Add celery, garlic, and ginger; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add tomato paste; cook, stirring often, until paste is slightly darkened in color, 4 to 5 minutes. Add reserved beef and 5 cups beef broth; bring to a boil over high. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until beef is just starting to become tender, about 40 minutes.

3. Whisk together peanut butter and remaining 1 cup beef broth in a medium bowl until smooth. Stir peanut butter mixture into beef mixture in Dutch oven. Bring to a boil over medium-high; add carrots, eggplant, sweet potato, and chile (if using). Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook, stirring occasionally until vegetables and beef are fork-tender, 25 to 30 minutes. Serve with brown rice.

Classifieds



VACANCIES AVAILABLE

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synergic facility services has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(FOOD DISTRIBUTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 66637663 or HESSAHESSA@YAHOO.COM

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Al Rayah For Safety Items WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17822228 or RASHEED@SECURICORE.BH

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AL RUMAISA SPICY CHASKA W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of KITCHEN WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66349798 or rizwanasif0303@gmail.com

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GOLDEN QUALITY CARGO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38881547 or SYED251285@GMAIL.COM

SEVENTIES KARAK has a vacancy for the occupation of SANDWICHES MAKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39664667 or KARAK1977.BAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

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BHERKUND CARGO SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33925515 or NADEEMHARGANO@GMAIL.COM

BDO TAX. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DIRECTOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17530077 or habib@BDO.BH

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Alnosair Contracting & Excavation Co. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION),GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17590078 or roqayaaalnosair@hotmail.com

One Call co W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or IBRAHIM@DREAMGROUP.BH

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ABUJABID CONTRACTING & TRADING GROUP has a vacancy for the occupation of SHEET METAL WORKERS (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700204 or abujabidgroup@gmail.com

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FRANCISCO DREAM BUILDERS CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33027130 or FRANCIS-CODREAMBUILDERS@GMAIL.COM

HAMANDI MANDI W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(FALAFEL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36774492 or PASTRIESONTHEFLY@GMAIL.COM

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SICO BSC (c) has a vacancy for the occupation of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17515012 or hajlan@sicobank.com

UNITED CATERERS & CONTRACTORS COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(ASSISTANT), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17224615 or mao@ucc-bh.com

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DIAMOND DUST INTERIOR DECORATION CO BAHRAIN PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of DECORATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33240774 or BILALGODAL12345@GMAIL.COM

Security Solutions Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77996666 or GOVERNMENT@MRE.CO

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AL HILAL HOSPITAL COMPANY - BSC (CLOSED) has a vacancy for the occupation of CLINIC CLERK, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17344700 or HRD@ALHILAL-HEALTHCARE.COM

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ARAB Union Contracting Co WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17533125 or GOLDENGROUPBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

ALHAJJAN CONTRACTING EST. has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39479980 or ASHFQORAZA29@GMAIL.COM

Ramee Grand Hotel & Spa has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17111999 or hrs.bh@rameehotels.com

ABU SHEHAB 2021 RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(ASSISTANT), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33299543 or TOPTIMEBH0@GMAIL.COM

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Suit Me Tailoring has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36699789 or SUITMEBH@GMAIL.COM

AL BAHA ELECTRICAL WORKSHOP has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33976637 or TARIQBAH52@GMAIL.COM

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applicants can contact 35458563 or Hamad-raja2005@gmail.com

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17400407 or HRD@ALMOAYYEDCG.COM

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Saleh Abdulla Kameshki & Sons B.S.C (c) has a vacancy for the occupation of STEEL FABRICATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250627 or admin01@kameshki.com

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DATAOFMINE4321@GMAIL.COM

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NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of STEEL FABRICATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

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SUN FLOWER MASSAGE has a vacancy for the occupation of MASSEUR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33247474 or alalalarabi.5@gmail.com

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Bezzecchi wins MotoGP opener as wheel woe forces Marquez out

Bezzecchi rebounds from sprint crash to claim commanding win in Thailand opener

- Bezzecchi wins from pole position
- Marquez retires with damaged rear wheel
- Acosta finishes strong in second
- Fernandez completes podium finish

AFP | Buriram

Marco Bezzecchi won the MotoGP season-opening grand prix in Thailand from pole position yesterday as defending world champion Marc Marquez retired late with a buckled wheel.

Aprilia's Bezzecchi led from start to finish to top the podium in Buriram, with KTM's Pedro Acosta second and Trackhouse's Raul Fernandez third.

Ducati's Marquez is chasing a record-equalling eighth world title this season but he exited the race in dramatic fashion while in fourth place with five laps to go.

The Spaniard, who started from second on the grid, took a corner wide and the jolt to his bike dislodged the rear tyre and



Aprilia Racing's Italian rider Marco Bezzecchi competes during the MotoGP Thailand Grand Prix

badly damaged his wheel.

Bezzecchi returned to winning form after crashing out of Saturday's sprint race on the second lap.

The Italian was fastest in all three practice sessions and set a new track record in qualifying.

It was also his third straight

grand prix win stretching back to last season.

"Yesterday was a small mistake with a big consequence so it was important today to try to bounce back," said Bezzecchi.

"My pace was good with the medium, we worked it super-well all weekend, so I knew

that I could be fast if I was in front.

"I tried my all to make a good start and the bike was perfect," he added.

Marquez misery

Marquez said earlier this week that he was still feeling the lin-

BETTER
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Bezzecchi bounced back impressively after crashing out of Saturday's sprint race on the second lap, going on to dominate yesterday's main event with a perfect start-to-finish victory from pole position

gering effects of a shoulder injury that forced him to miss the final four races of last season.

The 33-year-old was picked off by a succession of riders as the race got underway but recovered to put himself back into podium contention.

He was priming himself for an attack on Acosta and Fernandez when he ran wide and did well not to be thrown from his bike, even though it did spell the end of his race.

Acosta beat Fernandez to second place to wrap up a successful weekend for the 21-year-old

Spaniard.

Acosta won the sprint after Marquez was forced to let him pass on the final lap because of a penalty.

"We have to be happy that things are working super-good," said Acosta, who leads the championship standings ahead of Bezzecchi after the first round.

"Thanks to everyone who supported me, because last year the start was not the dreaming one."

Fernandez looked like he had second place locked up until a late problem with his bike allowed Acosta to go past him.

"It was quite difficult, especially the last five, six laps," said Fernandez.

"I tried to make my maximum but I had destroyed the rear tyre."

Jorge Martin, the 2024 world champion, finished fourth after seeing the defence of his title wrecked by injury last season.

Trackhouse's Ai Ogura was fifth, followed by VR46's Fabio Di Giannantonio and KTM's Brad Binder.

Alex Marquez, last season's championship runner-up, did not finish the race after a late crash

Francesco Bagnaia, the 2022 and 2023 world champion, finished ninth after starting from 13th on the grid.

Bahrain's U18 Team Set for Albert Schweitzer Tournament

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Despite the ongoing regional conflict that has temporarily halted domestic sporting activities, Bahrain still has reason for optimism on the international stage next month.

The Bahrain Basketball Association has confirmed that the Kingdom's youth men's national team will compete in the 31st Albert Schweitzer Tournament,



April 4 to 11 in Mannheim and Viernheim, Germany, under the supervision of the Deutscher Basketball Bund and in line with International Basketball Federation regulations. Bahrain's participation comes following an official invitation from the German federation, reflecting the growing recognition of the Kingdom's emerging talent.

Drawn in Group A, Bahrain will face hosts Germany, Sweden, Slovenia, Japan and Turki-

ye in the preliminary round. The top two teams from each group will progress to the semi-finals, with the tournament concluding on April 11.

Beyond the immediate challenge, the competition will also serve as key preparation for the Gulf Basketball Association qualifiers for the Fiba U18 Asia Cup 2026 in Doha, as Bahrain's young prospects look to secure a return to the continental stage.

one of Europe's most prestigious under-18 competitions. The event will take place from

Prestianni career under Mourinho 'over' if guilty of racism: coach



SL Benfica's Argentine forward #25 Gianluca Prestianni controls the ball during a training session (file photo)

AFP | Lisbon

Benfica coach Jose Mourinho said yesterday that if midfielder Gianluca Prestianni is found guilty of racism, his career under the Portuguese will be "over".

Real Madrid star Vinicius Junior accused Prestianni of racially abusing him when the teams met in a Champions League play-off clash on February 17 in Lisbon.

"If, and I repeat that many times, it is proven that my player did not respect these principles, which are mine and Benfica's, his career with me will be over," Mourinho told reporters.

Prestianni, who denies racially abusing Vinicius, is being investigated by European foot-

ball governing body UEFA and was provisionally suspended for the second leg of the play-off tie.

If UEFA find he abused Vinicius then he will be banned for at least 10 matches. Real Madrid progressed 3-1 on aggregate to reach the Champions League last 16.

Mourinho was criticised after seeming to indicate that Vinicius provoked the alleged abuse with a dancing goal celebration after scoring in the first leg.

"The presumption of innocence is a right," added Mourinho.

"If the player is indeed guilty, I will never look at him the way I have looked at him, and that's the end of it for me, but I have to put many 'ifs' in front of it."

Nationwide Suspension of Sporting Competitions

TDT | Manama

Sport in Bahrain has been temporarily put on hold, with the Kingdom's major federations postponing competitions in response to ongoing regional developments.

The Bahrain Football Association confirmed that all matches under its umbrella are delayed until further notice, with re-

vised schedules to be announced once conditions allow. Before the suspension, the King's Cup quarter-finals had progressed, with Al Khaldiya and Muharraq securing their semi-final spots. The remaining ties — Al Ahli vs. Al Ettifaq and Bahrain Club vs. Riffa — were set to determine the other semi-finalists but have now been put on hold.

Similarly, the Bahrain Basketball Association halted all local competitions, including the tenth edition of the Khalifa Bin Salman Cup, which was due to begin on February 28, with defending champions Muharraq aiming to retain their crown.

The Bahrain Handball Federation also called off all fixtures in the Khalid Bin Hamad Bah-

rain Handball League, while the Bahrain Volleyball Association confirmed that its tournaments will remain suspended until further notice.

Officials across all federations stressed that sporting activities will resume only when it is safe to do so, and updated schedules will be released following a re-assessment of the situation.

Man United rise as Spurs struggle

Manchester United extend unbeaten run while Tottenham's relegation worries grow after Fulham loss

● **Sesko scores winner in 2-1 United victory**

● **Tottenham lose 2-1 at Fulham, four points above drop**

AFP | London

Benjamin Sesko stretched his hot streak with the winning goal as Manchester United beat Crystal Palace 2-1 to go third in the Premier League, while Tottenham failed to dispel relegation fears after defeat at Fulham.

Sesko was handed his first start in seven games since Michael Carrick took charge at Old Trafford and rewarded his boss with another vital goal to edge United closer to a return to the Champions League.

Palace had taken an early lead at Old Trafford when Maxence Lacroix outmuscled Leny Yoro to guide in a header from Brennan Johnson's corner.

But United hit back to remain unbeaten under Carrick and take their tally to 19 points from a possible 21.

The game swung on one incident as Lacroix was sent off and conceded a penalty for pulling



Manchester United's Slovenian striker #30 Benjamin Sesko (L) scores his team's second goal

back Matheus Cunha just before the hour mark.

Bruno Fernandes confidently stroked the resulting spot-kick past former team-mate Dean Henderson.

Fernandes was then the creator for the second as his curling

cross was powered in by Sesko. The Slovenian has now scored seven times in his last eight appearances to quieten critics of his £74 million (\$100 million) price tag after a slow start to his career in England.

"It feels like a big result," said

Fernandes. "We were behind and had to show some character."

No Tudor turnaround for Tottenham

Tottenham remain perilously poised just four points above the



Benjamin Sesko has now scored seven times in his last eight appearances for United, silencing critics of his £74 million price tag after a slow start to his career in England



"We were not good, (we) lacked everything attacking and defending. There are problems here, big problems. We need to stay calm, believe in what we are doing in training, and get out (of trouble), staying all together

IGOR TUDOR

ninth and back into contention for European football next season.

Richarlison headed in a late consolation for Tottenham, but they remain the only Premier League side without a win in 2026.

The one crumb of comfort for Spurs was defeat for relegation rivals Nottingham Forest, 2-1 at Brighton.

All three goals arrived in the first 15 minutes as Diego Gomez and Danny Welbeck netted for the Seagulls either side of Morgan Gibbs-White's reply.

Forest sit two points above the drop zone ahead of a daunting trip to Manchester City on Wednesday.

AC Milan consolidate top-four credentials with win at Cremonese

AFP | Milan

AC Milan moved closer to Champions League football next season after two late strikes gave them a 2-0 win at Cremonese yesterday.

Strahinja Pavlovic put Milan ahead in the 90th minute with his shoulder before Rafael Leao's simple finish in stoppage time gave the away side a result which flattered a drab display in Cremona.

Milan, who have been without European football this season, have little realistic hope of winning the Serie A title as the seven-time European champions are 10 points behind league leaders Inter Milan.

Next weekend's Milan derby has little more than local pride riding on it with Inter speeding off into the distance with 11 games remaining in the league campaign.

Milan's stated aim for the season, however, was qualification for the Champions League and Massimiliano Allegri's team are on course for that objective.



AC Milan's Serbian defender #31 Strahinja Pavlovic (2nd L) scores his team first goal

"We have a huge goal to reach with teams behind us who continue collecting points," said

Allegri to DAZN.

"You have Como, Atalanta still have to play, Napoli won in the

end and there are also Roma and Juventus. All we can do is take it one step at a time."

Lewandowski out of Barca's Copa del Rey semi against Atletico

AFP | Barcelona

Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski will miss his team's Copa del Rey semi-final clash against Atletico Madrid with a fractured eye socket, the Catalan giants said yesterday.

"Lewandowski picked up an injury in the recent game against Villarreal. Tests have diagnosed a fracture of the left eye socket," said Barcelona in a statement.

"He will miss the game

against Atletico Madrid."

Copa del Rey holders Barcelona suffered a 4-0 defeat in the first leg against Diego Simeone's side at the start of February.

Lewandowski, 37, has played a bit-part role for Barca this season, often left on the bench in favour of Ferran Torres.

On as a substitute, the former Bayern Munich striker netted La Liga leaders Barca's fourth goal in the 4-1 win over Villarreal on Saturday.



Barcelona's Polish forward #09 Robert Lewandowski celebrates scoring (file photo)

Doncic shines as Lakers cruise past depleted Warriors



Luka Doncic shoots over Gary Payton II in the Los Angeles Lakers' drubbing of the Golden State Warriors

AFP | Los Angeles

Luka Doncic marked his birthday with 26 points as the Los Angeles Lakers boosted their playoff hopes with a 129-101 drubbing of the depleted Golden State Warriors on Saturday.

Doncic rattled in four three-pointers with six rebounds and eight assists in a dominant Lakers win at San Francisco's Chase Center.

LeBron James backed Doncic with a 22-point haul while Austin Reaves finished with 18 points to give the Lakers a morale-boosting victory after three consecutive losses.

The Warriors, missing the injured Stephen Curry and Jimmy Butler, were in damage limitation mode throughout after trailing by 13 points at the end of the first quarter.

"We needed a win like this," Doncic told ABC television following the victory.

"Obviously, they've got

Steph out, Jimmy out, but it's still a dangerous game. So that was a great win," added Doncic, who turned 27 on Saturday.

The Slovenian superstar believes the win can act as a catalyst for the Lakers as they enter the home stretch of the regular season, with Doncic, James and Reaves all fit after various injury absences this season.

"We'll just go game by game, but the chemistry's going to grow -- I think today was one of the best games we played together," Doncic said.

Elsewhere Saturday, Bam Adebayo scored 24 points and pulled down 11 rebounds as the Miami Heat beat Houston 115-105 to end the Rockets' three-game winning streak.

Heat forward Pelle Larsson scored 10 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter to help the Heat hang on in a tense final period in which the Rockets were within one with 7:21 remaining.

Samson's 97 puts India into T20 World Cup semi-final against England

Defending champions chase 196 successfully to keep title defence alive at home

● India beat West Indies by five wickets

● Samson hits 12 fours, four sixes

● West Indies eliminated from tournament

AFP | Kolkata

Sanju Samson's sparkling unbeaten 97 kept alive India's dream of retaining the T20 World Cup at home as they knocked out the West Indies with a five-wicket win in Kolkata yesterday to set up a semi-final against England.

Samson hit 12 fours and four sixes in his superb 50-ball knock in the winner-takes-all final Super Eights match to thrill a capacity 67,000 fans at a pulsating Eden Gardens.

After the West Indies smacked 70 off the last five overs to score 195-4 after being asked to bat, India lost two early wickets but were always up with the required rate.

Samson, opening for the second match in succession, led the way.

When India slipped to 41-2 Samson was joined by captain Suryakumar Yadav (18) and the



India's Sanju Samson (L) and captain Suryakumar Yadav run between the wickets

pair added 58 for the third wicket.

Tilak Varma was next to join Samson and scored 27 off 15 before departing in the 15th over with the score 141-4 and India still needing 55.

Samson stood firm and though Hardik Pandya fell for 17 India

reached the target with four balls to spare to spark celebrations and fireworks.

"It means the whole world to me," Samson said. "Right from the day I started playing, started dreaming to play for the country, I think this is the day I was waiting for."

Samson said he learned the art of finishing matches "from the greats like Virat Kohli, from Rohit Sharma."

Jason Holder and Rovman Powell earlier put on an unbroken stand of 76 for the fifth wicket to help the West Indies set the defending champions a target of



Sanju Samson's 97* is now the highest individual score by an Indian in a T20 World Cup chase, surpassing Virat Kohli's legendary 82* against both Australia (2016) and Pakistan (2022)

196 to stay alive.

The West Indies sprang a surprise at the top of the order, promoting Test captain Roston Chase to open alongside T20 skipper Shai Hope.

That enabled them to bring in an extra spinner, Akeal Hosein, with regular opener Brandon King left out.

In their defeat to South Africa last week the West Indies slumped to 83-7 but the new-look opening partnership was more assured.

Spinner Varun Chakravarthy got the first breakthrough, bowling Hope for a sluggish 32.

Shimron Hetmyer raced to 27 off 12 balls before falling to the faintest of edges off Jasprit Bumrah to make it 102-2.



It means the whole world to me. Right from the day I started playing, started dreaming to play for the country, I think this is the day I was waiting for

SANJU SAMSON

After Chase fell for 40 and Sherfane Rutherford followed, Powell and Holder launched their brutal late assault.

Powell finished on 34 not out from 19 balls with two sixes and three fours while Holder was unbeaten on 37 off 22 balls with three sixes and two fours.

"Maybe a few short, especially on a chasing ground such as this," said a disappointed Hope. "Probably could have gone a bit more at the end. Probably could have got more at the start as well."

It could have been better for India but they dropped three regulation catches in a sloppy fielding display, including Chase when he had made just 15.

South Africa, the only unbeaten side in the tournament, beat Zimbabwe by five wickets earlier yesterday and will face New Zealand in Kolkata in the first semi-final on Wednesday.

The final is in Ahmedabad next Sunday.

Dortmund captain Can out for season with ACL tear



Dortmund's German midfielder #23 Emre Can (C) is consoled by Dortmund's Croatian head coach Niko Kovac as he goes off after sustaining an injury

AFP | Berlin

Borussia Dortmund captain Emre Can will miss the remainder of the season after scans confirmed he tore his ACL in Saturday's 3-2 home loss to Bayern Munich.

Dortmund confirmed the injury in a statement yesterday, saying Can "will be out for an extended period."

Can clutched his left knee after tussling with Bayern's Konrad Laimer just before half-time. The former Liverpool and Juventus midfielder played on for a few minutes

but then signaled to the bench and was withdrawn.

Dortmund feared a serious knee injury after the match and sporting director Sebastian Kehl said yesterday the club's worst fears were confirmed.

"Emre's injury is extremely bitter. Not just for him, but for all of us."

"He is our captain, always puts the team first and is an important part of our club. Emre will receive all our support in the coming months so that he can make a full recovery."

South Africa beat plucky Zimbabwe ahead of New Zealand semi-final

AFP | New Delhi

South Africa survived a brilliant all-round show by Zimbabwe captain Sikandar Raza to record a five-wicket win yesterday that means they remained unbeaten at the T20 World Cup ahead of a semi-final against New Zealand on Wednesday.

After Zimbabwe scored 153-7 in New Delhi, South Africa survived an early wobble.

Dewald Brevis hit 42 off 18 balls as the 2024 runners-up reached 154-5 in 17.5 overs.

"It's exciting. Really exciting. A semi-final in Kolkata against New Zealand," said South Africa captain Aiden Markram.

"The boys will be up for it. It's still 40 overs of good cricket needed and we need to give it that respect."

Raza, who was named player of the match, earlier hit 73 and then took 3-29 with his off-spin for Zimbabwe, who had stunned Australia and co-hosts Sri Lanka in the group stage to reach the Super Eights.

"My immediate reflection is that I shouldn't be here. I've never got a man of the match for



South Africa's Tristan Stubbs (R) plays a shot as Zimbabwe's wicketkeeper Tadiwanashe Marumani watches

losing the game, but I can hold my head high," said Raza.

"The way the boys have played the whole tournament, I know we took a bit of beating in the previous two games, but I think with each beating came a valuable lesson. I think we have

improved with every game that we have played."

Raza struck on the third ball of the South African chase to send back Quinton de Kock caught behind for a duck.

Raza bowled Markram for four in the next over.

Ryan Rickelton was hit on the helmet by a bouncer from Brad Evans and took five minutes to recover.

He then lifted Evans for two straight sixes in the next over before the bowler had him caught for 31.