

Government's electronic services reviewed



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, chaired the 486th meeting of the Coordination Committee. During this session, the committee reviewed the latest advancements in the electronic development of government services, assessing progress and discussing strategies to enhance service effectiveness for citizens. The committee also examined a presentation on transitioning to the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC4). This transition aims to align economic activity classifications with international standards for improved accuracy and relevance. The committee discussed a project focused on enhancing services for pilgrims, emphasising the need to improve quality and effectiveness to ensure a comfortable and safe experience. The meeting addressed developments in priority draft laws, underscoring the importance of expediting their adoption and implementation to align with the country's development objectives.

Bahrain humidity levels to go down

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Humidity levels in the Kingdom of Bahrain are expected to decrease today.

The maximum relative humidity has been forecasted to reach 65% and the minimum at 10%, according to meteorological predictions.

The Kingdom has been experiencing high humidity levels since dawn on Wednesday, which intensified throughout the evening, reaching 90% relative humidity accompanied by elevated temperatures.

The Meteorology Directorate at the Ministry of Transportation confirmed that this high humidity had persisted yesterday.

During this period, the maximum relative humidity remained at 90%, with some cloud cover in the morning, transitioning to hot conditions during the day.

Plane carrying body of Haniyeh arrives in Doha

AFP | Doha

A plane carrying the body of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, killed in a strike in Tehran blamed on Israel, landed in Doha yesterday after a public funeral in Iran, Qatar-based network Al Jazeera reported.

Haniyeh, who had resided in exile in the Gulf state with other members of Hamas's political office, is to be buried in Qatar today.

'Agony is over'

Russia frees US reporter in major prisoner swap with West

AFP | Washington

Jailed US journalist Evan Gershkovich and a Russian intelligence colonel jailed for a Berlin murder were among two dozen prisoners freed yesterday in the biggest East-West prisoner swap since the Cold War.

The prisoners were flown to Turkey's capital Ankara from Russia, the United States, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway and Belarus under the complex deal, the Turkish presidency said.

In total, 10 Russians - including two minors - were exchanged for 16 Westerners and Russians imprisoned in Russia, said a statement released by the Turkish presidency.

Overjoyed family members appeared in the White House alongside President Joe Biden, who said they'd been able to phone their freed loved ones from the Oval Office.

Hailing a "feat of diplomacy," Biden said US allies Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway and Turkey "stood with us."

"Bold and brave decisions" "They made bold and brave decisions" to release Russians

held for espionage and other crimes in return for the Westerners and Russian dissidents and human rights activists, he said.

"Some of these women and men have been unjustly held for years. All have endured unimaginable suffering and uncertainty. Today, their agony is over," Biden said. He described their convictions in Russia as "show trials."

Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris were to greet the freed prisoners at Joint Base Andrews outside Washington later in the day.

Dmitry Medvedev, a former Russian president and close ally of current leader Vladimir Putin, celebrated the return of Russians who he said had "worked for the Fatherland."

'Overwhelmed with relief'

The Wall Street Journal said it was "overwhelmed with relief" at the release of Gershkovich, 32, who was detained in Russia in March 2023 and sentenced in July to 16 years in prison on spying charges that were denounced by the United States.

Paul Whelan, a former US marine detained since 2018, also



US journalist Evan Gershkovich, left, former US Marine Paul Whelan, second from right, and US-Russian journalist Alsu Kurmasheva, right, on a plane after their release from Russia. (AFP)

flew to Ankara. Another American, Alsu Kurmasheva, and Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian with US residency, were likewise freed.

Opposition politician Ilya Yashin and Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian-Briton with US residency, who had both been jailed for criticizing Russia's invasion of

"Some of these women and men have been unjustly held for years. All have endured unimaginable suffering and uncertainty. Today, their agony is over."

- US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Ukraine, were among the Kremlin opponents released.

Yashin will go to Germany with 11 other German nationals and Russians, according to the US administration. They included Rico Krieger, a German who was sentenced to death in Belarus on espionage charges before a reprieve this week.

Among those returned to Moscow was Vadim Krasikov, a Russian intelligence agent imprisoned in Germany for killing a former Chechen rebel commander in a brazen assassination.

Property market booms

Bahrain's real estate hits record BD661mln growth

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Real estate transactions reached a total of BD661,680 million over the first seven months of 2024, according to

the Survey and Land Registration Bureau (SLRB), covering 13,876 deals.

July witnessed the highest increase in transaction volume to date, with a 27% rise compared to the previous month.

In July, transactions amounted to BD85,333 million across 2,317 deals.

March saw the second highest number of transactions with 2,086, followed by February with 2,021 and January with 2,017.

This data reflects a marked increase in real estate activity in the early part of the year.

Transactions declined in April, May, and June, but July reversed this trend with the largest growth rate observed so

far. The SLRB is actively working on developments and updates to adapt to advancements, support the expansion of real estate trading in Bahrain, and encourage a sustainable investment environment.



Bahraini youth 'pillars of Kingdom's development'

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, emphasised that the Bahraini youth are the primary pillars of the Kingdom's comprehensive development.

HRH Prince Salman added that their contributions further the Kingdom's development aspirations, in line with the visions of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

His Royal Highness made the remarks as he received the newly appointed Global Chairman of the Young Presidents Organization, Sofyan Almoayed, at Gudabiya Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister highlighted the Kingdom's commitment to providing promising opportunities for Bahraini youth in line with the Kingdom's far reaching development goals.

He extended his congratulations to Almoayed and wished



HRH Prince Salman receives Sofyan Almoayed

him success in his new role with the international organisation.

In this regard, HRH Prince Salman highlighted that Bahraini youth's leadership roles internationally are due to their competence and excellence.

He noted the role of the Young Presidents Organisation in connecting young CEOs and business leaders around the world to exchange ideas and experiences.

Almoayed expressed his gratitude for His Royal Highness's unwavering commitment to sup-

porting Bahraini youth and the national workforce, providing them with leadership opportunities to further the Kingdom's development.

Almoayed underscored his commitment to represent the Kingdom well during his tenure.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, also attended the meeting.

Bahrain to boost cooperation with global oil and gas bodies

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, highlighted the importance of international organisations, including those in the oil and gas sector, in enhancing the cooperation across all sectors and facilitating development goals to meet desired aspirations.

HRH Prince Salman was speaking as he met yesterday with the newly elected Secretary General of the International Energy Forum, Eng. Jassim Alshirawi, following his appointment, at Gudabiya Palace.

He congratulated Eng. Alshirawi on his election as the Secretary-General of the International Energy Forum.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister noted that Alshirawi's expertise in the en-



HRH Prince Salman with Eng. Jassim Alshirawi

ergy sector facilitated his successful election, and wished him success in advancing contributions in the oil, gas, and energy sectors.

Gratitude

Alshirawi expressed his gratitude for HRH Prince Salman's support of Bahrainis across various sectors and affirmed his commitment to further the

Kingdom's development.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, Dr Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, also attended the meet-

LMRA to cooperate with Jordan in fighting human trafficking



Nibras Mohammed Talib presides over an online discussion

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Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons (NCCPIP), Nibras Mohammed Talib, discussed enhancing cooperation and exchanging expertise with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the field of combating trafficking in persons.

This came during a meeting held by the CEO via video conference with the National Committee to Prevent Human Trafficking in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, headed by the Secretary-General of Judi-

cial Affairs at the Ministry of Justice, Judge Dr. Saad Al-Lawzi, Deputy Chairman of the National Committee to Prevent Human Trafficking, and in the presence of Ambassador Dr. Arwa Hassan Al-Sayed, Head of the Human Rights Affairs Sector at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a number of specialized officials from both countries.

Talib pointed out the importance of enhancing cooperation between the two countries, exchanging expertise in the field of combating trafficking in persons, and developing relevant tools and procedures, stressing the Kingdom of Bahrain's read-

iness to provide all its expertise and experiences to support the system of combating trafficking in persons in Jordan.

During the meeting, the CEO reviewed the system of combating trafficking in persons in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which is based on a number of pillars, most notably protection, prevention, prosecution and partnership.

He touched on a number of initiatives, projects and measures taken by the Kingdom to enhance efforts to combat human trafficking and preserve the rights of employers, including the establishment of the Migrant Workers Protection Center.

Hygiene headache

Cleanliness complaints across Kingdom top list in May's 'Tawasul' reports

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Cleanliness has emerged as the top issue reported through the "Tawasul" citizen feedback system as of May 2024.

The system recorded 471 cleanliness-related complaints, representing 51% of the 938 total complaints and inquiries received.

The Northern Governorate Municipality had the highest number of these complaints, with 406 in total.

Other prevalent issues included rainwater accumulation, abandoned vehicles, construction debris, and sanitation concerns.

Complaints about inspection and supervision ranked second, with 123 reports (14% of the total).

Concerns related to municipal fees and charges followed, making up 10% of the complaints with 93 reports.

In the Capital Municipality, improper waste disposal was the most frequent complaint, with 39 reports.

Concerns about public markets and waste bin placements were relatively rare, receiving only three complaints each.

Inquiries

Overall, the Capital Municipality recorded 189 complaints and 37 inquiries across all categories.

Muharraq Municipality saw municipal fees as the primary concern, with 38 complaints and inquiries.

Sanitation issues and housing certificate inquiries were less common, averaging three per category.

Muharraq had a total of 109 complaints, including 35 inquiries.

The Northern Governorate



Image used for illustrative purposes only

The Southern Governorate Municipality had the fewest complaints, totaling 98, with 17 inquiries.

Cleanliness issues were again the most common, with 31 complaints, while complaints about garbage bag disposal and abandoned vehicles were minimal, with only two each.

Response rate

The Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture confirmed a 100% response rate to all complaints and inquiries across the four municipalities for May 2024.

The "Tawasul" system, launched in 2014, provides a streamlined channel for citizens and residents to address concerns with government entities.

The application serves as a unified platform for direct communication, managed by dedicated teams within each government entity according to established performance metrics and timeframes.



Other common issues included rainwater accumulation, abandoned vehicles, construction debris, and sanitation problems.

Municipality, which led in total complaints, had 406 in total, including 34 inquiries.

Rainwater

Cleanliness issues were most prominent, with 141 complaints, followed by 79 related to rainwater.

Complaints about garbage bag disposal were the least frequent, with only seven.

Lanes set for closure

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The Ministry of Works, in coordination with the General Traffic Department of the Ministry of Interior, has announced maintenance work on Nasser bin Jabr Al Jabr Street at its intersection with King Abdullah bin Al Hussein Street in the Seef District.

This work will necessitate

the closure of some lanes with in the intersection.

The affected area will be operational from tomorrow, at 11pm, until Tuesday, August 6, 2024, at 5am.

Meanwhile, maintenance work on Shaikh Duaij Street, between Al Fateh Street and Al Qasr Street, will require the staged closure of one lane in

each direction, with one lane remaining open for traffic.

This project is set to commence on Monday, August 5, 2024, and will last for one month.

The Ministry urges all road users to adhere to traffic regulations to maintain safety and minimise disruptions during this period.

Workshop to fight human trafficking

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The General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Evidence, in collaboration with the Sunni Endowments Administration, organised a workshop focused on combating human trafficking.

The event aimed to heighten awareness about the critical need to address human trafficking crimes and to bolster Bahrain's ongoing efforts in this field.

During the workshop, His Eminence Dr. Shaikh Habib Al-Namliti, Head of the Research Group at the Sunni Endowments Administration, delivered a keynote speech titled "The Role of the Tolerant Islamic Sharia in Combating the Crime of Human Trafficking."

Dr. Shaikh Al-Namliti highlighted that Bahrain's Constitution and laws, derived from Islamic Sharia, explicitly prohibit human trafficking and exploitation.

He emphasised that human trafficking undermines human dignity and leads to significant moral, economic, social, and psychological harms.

Dr. Shaikh Al-Namliti stressed the necessity of addressing human trafficking by understanding its causes, recognizing its forms, and criminalising its practice.

He underscored the importance of upholding contracts, treating workers with respect, and ensuring that workers are not overburdened.

A wake-up call for road safety

48% of traffic accidents in Bahrain result in severe injuries in June 2024

● 9% lead to death

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A recent report released by the Ministry of Interior has revealed a concerning trend in traffic accidents in Bahrain during June 2024.

The report highlights a significant number of serious injuries and fatalities.

The statistics reveal that 48% of traffic accidents in June resulted in severe injuries, while 43% caused minor injuries. Shockingly, 9% of accidents resulted in fatalities.

The report further delves into the leading causes of these accidents, highlighting a significant number of traffic violations.

Speeding violations accounted for 28% of all violations, followed by red light violations at 24%.

Violations

Improper parking accounted for 11% of violations, while failure to wear seatbelts contributed to 3% of violations.

Additionally, 5% of violations were attributed to expired reg-



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istration certificates, 1% to using mobile phones while driving, and 28% to other violations.

The report also provides insights into the volume of traffic in the country. As of June 2024, there are 760,645 registered vehicles in use on the roads.

Furthermore, the report high-

lights travel statistics through various entry points.

Passengers

The King Fahd Causeway witnessed a total of 2,887,927 passengers, with 1,431,932 arrivals and 1,445,995 departures.

Bahrain International Airport



The report also offers insights into the country's traffic volume, revealing that as of June 2024, there are 760,645 registered vehicles on the roads.

recorded a total of 486,498 passengers, with 213,032 arrivals and 273,466 departures.

Seaports saw a total of 3,582 passengers, with 1,912 arrivals and 1,670 departures.

The report also details the response rate of emergency patrols during June 2024.

The statistics show that 67% of calls received were for emergency response, 29% were for traffic-related incidents, and 4% were for security-related issues.

Retired man awaits verdict for arson, drug possession

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A retired man will be sentenced by the Criminal Court for intentionally setting fire to a car and possessing cannabis.

The court scheduled the sentencing hearing for August 12, 2024.

The defendant was accused of setting fire to a car belonging to another individual, endangering lives and property.

He was also found to have possessed cannabis for personal use.

During the investigation, the car owner testified that he witnessed smoke coming from his car while leaving his home.

Upon approaching the vehicle, he saw flames erupting from the rear and managed to extinguish the fire. He then contacted the police, who arrived at the scene and took necessary action.

Four hours after the incident, the car owner checked his neighbor's security cameras.

The footage revealed that the perpetrator was the driver of a car that had been seen driving around the neighbourhood.

A person wearing a cloth glove, matching the one found at the scene, was seen exiting the vehicle.

The neighbour also testified that he had encountered the defendant earlier that morning while taking out the trash.

Two Asian men on trial for e-signature fraud

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The High Criminal Court commenced the trial of two Asian men accused of electronic signature fraud, forgery of a private document, and unauthorised access to an information technology system.

The first defendant, a 46-year-old manager, is in custody, while the second defendant, a 42-year-old businessman, is currently at large.

The court has scheduled August 4th for the defendants to review the case and respond to the charges.

The case stems from a complaint filed by a financial company alleging fraudulent activities conducted through the electronic payment gateway of a commercial establishment.

The company detected 14 suspicious transactions involving foreign bank cards belonging to individuals outside of Bahrain, without their consent.

The perpetrators used the establishment's website to process the funds into the establishment's bank account.

Investigations revealed that the defendants were involved in



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the scheme.

They had rented the commercial registration from the owner of the commercial company, created a website for the establishment, and entered stolen bank card details to transfer funds into their personal bank account.

A witness from a financial services company testified that the company provides various electronic services, including electronic payment services for commercial establishments.

The service was provided to the establishment in question on June 12, 2022.



Forteen suspicious transactions totaling BD16,000 were identified, using foreign bank cards.

Four women punished for human trafficking

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The High Criminal Court has delivered a strong message against human trafficking, sentencing four women to five years in prison and hefty fines for forcing victims into prostitution.

The Court also ordered the defendants to cover the costs of repatriating the victims and to be deported permanently after serving their sentences.

The Public Prosecutor, Head of the Human Trafficking Prosecution, confirmed the verdict, stating that the case stemmed from a complaint filed by the victims themselves.



They alleged that they had come to Bahrain seeking legitimate employment but were in-

stead coerced into prostitution by the defendants.

Upon receiving the complaint, the Public Prosecution immediately launched a thorough investigation.

The victims were interviewed and provided with shelter and support at a facility run by the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking.

The defendants were interrogated, and police investigations corroborated the victims' accounts.

Based on the collected evidence, the Public Prosecution referred the case to the criminal court, which ultimately issued the harsh sentence.

African man attacks friend over money

● Court sets hearing for August 6th

TDT | Manama

An African man assaulted his friend after the latter demanded the return of money he had given him for renewing his residency.

The victim, who had given the defendant a sum of money to handle the renewal process, was met with refusal and delays in receiving his money back.

On the day of the incident, the victim went to the defendant's residence to confront him

and reclaim his money.

An argument ensued, leading to the defendant, along with unidentified individuals, assaulting the victim.

Injuries

The victim sustained injuries, including pain and swelling in his right hand.

The police were called to the scene, and upon their arrival, they asked the defendant for his identification. He presented a card belonging to another person, claiming it was his. Upon realising the card was not his, the defendant fled the scene.

Further investigation revealed that the ID card present-

ed by the defendant was genuine and belonged to a person who had left Bahrain in 2022.

Harm

The Public Prosecution has charged the defendant with misuse of a valid ID card belonging to another person for personal gain by presenting it to the police, and assault with intent to cause harm.

During his appearance in court, the defendant admitted to presenting the ID card to the police but claimed it was an accident.

He stated that the card was in his pocket and his vision was blurry at the time.

Food services sought for government hospitals



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Five catering companies are vying for a two-year contract to supply food services to all government hospitals in Bahrain, the Tender Board revealed yesterday.

The hospitals require bidders to offer a variety of menus for patients.

They also require bidders to keep up the daily transport of food to and within the hospital premises, operating from 7am to 7pm each day.

The bids run the gamut from BD3,499,870.800 by Food City to BD7,384,440.000 by Jalil Catering.

The selected supplier(s) will service the following sites: Salmaniya Medical Complex, Psychiatric Hospital, Jidhafs Maternity Hospital, Ebrahim Khalil Kanoo Community Medical Center, Muharraq Geriatric Hospital, Multiple Sclerosis Center, and Abdulrahman Kanoo Kidney Dialysis Center.

Road to safety

Private centres start to conduct inspections for vehicles up to 10 years old

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A new regulation requires that vehicles up to 10 years old – those built between 2015 and 2024 – be inspected at licensed private testing centres.

This policy, introduced by the General Directorate of Traffic at the Ministry of Interior, took effect yesterday.

The policy applies to all private vehicles, motorbikes, and passenger transport vehicles weighing up to 3,000kg. Both new and used vehicles can be inspected at these approved centres.

The inspection fee at private centres is set at BD11, BD6 more than the fee at traffic centres.

To facilitate the process for citizens, the General Directorate of Traffic is working with car companies to set up technical service centres.

Currently, there are about eight private inspection centres across the kingdom, with more expected to open soon.

Plan

The General Directorate of Traffic plans to move to the second phase of outsourcing inspections to private centres



Image used for illustrative purposes only



starting in July 2025.

This phase will see licensed private centres handling inspections for all light vehicles and motorbikes.

By 1 July 2025, the third phase will extend this service to include all vehicle types, such as heavy vehicles and public transport.

Lawmakers push for enforcement of 'Bahraini Skipper' Law

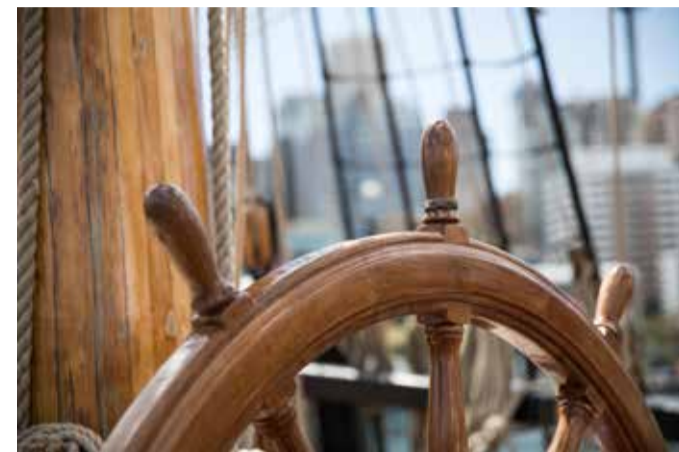


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Five members of the Strategic Thinking Bloc in the parliament have submitted a proposal urging the government to accelerate the implementation of the "Bahraini Skipper" (Al Naukhada) law and launch training programmes to ensure its proper execution.

The proposal, signed by MPs Khalid Buanq, Ahmed Al Saloum, Basma Mubarak, Mariam Al Thaen, and Abdullah Al Rumaihi, aims to create more opportunities for citizens in a field where they face no competition.

The memorandum accompanying the proposal highlights that fishing is a vital source of income for many Bahraini families.

The lawmakers emphasise that the implementation of the "Bahraini Skipper" law will contribute to the preservation and protection of marine resources and reduce harmful environmental practices.

Training programmes

Moreover, the proposal calls for the launch of training programmes alongside the law's implementation to ensure its execution according to best practices.

The proposal stresses the importance of the law, noting that it mandates the presence of a Bahraini skipper on board commercial fishing vessels.

It argues that the law will help protect marine resources, as Bahraini skippers are more likely to prioritise their pres-



The implementation of the "Bahraini Skipper" law will contribute to the preservation and protection of marine resources and reduce harmful environmental practices. It mandates the presence of a Bahraini skipper on board commercial fishing vessels.

ervation.

The proposal further states that the law will create job opportunities for Bahraini citizens in a field where they face no competition, providing a source of income for many families reliant on the sea.

Cooperation

The proposal stresses the importance of cooperation between the legislative and executive branches in matters that benefit the nation and its citizens, particularly in protecting marine resources.

It emphasises the need for practical implementation of laws to ensure their effectiveness.

The proposal comes as the ban on shrimp fishing ended yesterday.

Fire safety awareness campaign launched in Muharraq

TDT | Manama

The Muharraq Municipal Council has launched a comprehensive fire safety awareness campaign in collaboration with the Civil Defence Directorate of the Ministry of Interior, the Muharraq Governorate Police Directorate, the Electricity and Water Authority, and the Muharraq Municipality.

This initiative aims to raise awareness about fire prevention and proper response procedures in case of a fire.

The campaign comes in response to the recent increase in fires in markets and commercial establishments, particularly with the onset of summer and rising temperatures.

During the inspections, officials have been checking electrical connections in shops and



Officials check a fire extinguisher

public markets, providing essential guidance to employees, and emphasising the commitment of all involved parties to collaborate and offer necessary instructions to safeguard lives and property.

The campaign has targeted a diverse range of establishments, including a central public market, car repair workshops, furniture manufacturing workshops, gas sales outlets, restaurants, bakeries, and various retail shops.

The campaign is set to continue throughout all areas of the Muharraq Governorate, ensuring that the public, particularly shop and building owners, are well-informed about fire safety precautions.

This collaborative effort highlights the collective commitment to prioritise public safety.

Infrastructure project on track

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The ongoing infrastructure development in the new Jid Al-Haj area forms part of a broader initiative along the Al Nakheel Highway, directed by the Ministry of Works.

The design and construction of the sewage and rainwater drainage networks, along with street paving, were awarded to Al-Door Excavation & Building Contracting for BD1,050,000.

This includes a 1,278-metre sewage network with 31 main inspection chambers, a 1,750-metre branch line with 183 branch inspection chambers, a rainwater drainage network, street paving, and the

installation of street lighting poles.

A recent assembly reviewed the project's progress.

Dr Shubar Al-Wadaei, Chairman of the North Area Municipal Council, detailed a phased strategy for the project's execution.

Following the municipal elections at the end of 2018, the initial steps involved consultations with local residents to set strategic directions.

This collaborative effort, backed by the Ministry of Works and the executive body, addressed issues such as building violations and public cleanliness.

The Ministry's role was cru-

cial, particularly the Roads Projects and Maintenance Directorate, in assessing roads, setting levels, and replacing unsuitable sandy layers with proper materials to prepare for the infrastructure work.

Dr Al-Wadaei noted that the meeting also dealt with technical challenges concerning the sewage and rainwater drainage networks.

Problems emerged due to some individuals not adhering to approved road levels during house construction, complicating the development of infrastructure, especially the drainage networks, which require precise specifications and affect the project's timeline.

Fil Am Bahrain supports distressed Filipinos

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The Filipino American Association of Bahrain (Fil Am Bahrain) organised a successful gift-giving activity and dental mission for 16 distressed overseas Filipinos and four young children at the Philippine Embassy.

Members and officers of Fil Am Bahrain, under the leadership of its president Orlando O. Fontanilla, gathered at the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) to extend assistance and support to Filipinos seeking refuge at the embassy.

The Fil Am charitable effort for distressed Filipino workers was made possible through the



Fil Am members and teams of dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly to assist and support individuals in need.

generous contributions of its members, as well as the support of local sponsors and partners who shared a commitment to community service.

This collaborative work underscored the strength and unity of the Filipino community in Bahrain, demonstrating the power of collective action in making a positive difference was supported by FILAMCOM Isa Air Base, Triskelion International Kingdom of Bahrain, Lolo's Kitchen and nurses from Royal Bahrain Hospital. Freelance photographers Sajid Rafiq Butt and Rafiq Adnan volunteered their services during the activity.

Stocks flash red

AFP | London, United Kingdom

AS stocks rally fizzled out yesterday as economic data strengthening the case for a September US rate cut sparked worries about the economy slowing too much, while European stocks slumped on disappointing bank earnings.

Wall street's main indices had risen at the start of trading, with shares in Meta jumping 8.8% after it reported a better-than-expected \$13.5 billion profit for the second quarter and issued upbeat revenue guidance.

Investors had recently displayed concern that the tech stocks which have fuelled the market rally this year had become overvalued, but the gains have returned this week.

Shares in Nvidia, which makes computer chips prized for powering artificial intelligence applications, soared

Key figures around 1530 GMT

New York - Dow:	▼ 1.2% at 40,344.84 points
New York - S&P 500:	▼ 0.8% at 5,476.20
Nasdaq Composite:	▼ N 1.2% at 17,388.85
London - FTSE 100:	▼ 1.0% at 8,283.36 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 2.1% at 7,370.45 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 2.3% at 18,083.05 (close)
EURO STOXX 50:	▼ 2.2% at 4,765.72 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 2.5% at 38,126.33 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▼ 0.2% at 17,304.96 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.2% at 2,932.39 (close)
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 150.47 yen from 149.88 yen
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.0793 from \$1.0828
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.2799 from \$1.2858
Euro/pound:	▲ at 84.33 pence from 84.19 pence
West Texas Intermediate:	▼ 0.6% at \$77.48 per barrel
Brent North Sea Crude:	▼ 0.4 percent at \$80.56 per barrel

12.8% Wednesday on reports US chip sanctions on China would not be as severe as expected. US stocks also got a boost on

Wednesday when US Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell signalled the central bank could cut interest rates as soon as September.

"Fed Chair Powell noted yesterday that a discussion of a rate cut would be on the table at the September FOMC meeting if the Fed gets the data it hopes it will get," said Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare.

It got some of that data Thursday with a report showing that first-time requests for unemployment benefits rose last week, as did continuing claims.

Both Frankfurt and Paris stocks finished more than two% lower. Asset manager Adrien Roure at Indosuez noted high volatility in European trading and said investors were being influenced "by company results today, particularly in the banking sector".

Malabar Group to donate INR 3 Crores to Wayanad Landslide Victims

TDT | Manama

In response to the recent disaster in the Wayanad district of Kerala, Malabar Group has pledged INR 3 crores (around BHD134,977.05) in relief assistance to support the victims. Malabar Group Chairman M.P. Ahamed announced the pledge, expressing confidence that all responsible citizens will come forward to assist in the rehabilitation efforts following one of the worst natural disasters the state has experienced.

Malabar Group's relief package includes the urgent provision of food, medicines, and clothing to people in the affected areas. Additionally,



the group will offer financial assistance to rebuild homes for those who have lost their residences. As part of Malabar Group's CSR initiatives, the organization had built homes for 15 families who were the victims of the Puthumala natural disaster which occurred in Wayanad in 2019.

World Bank offers roadmap to avoid 'middle-income trap'

Washington, United States

More than 100 countries, including China, are at risk of entering a "middle-income trap" and failing to become wealthy nations, the World Bank said yesterday as it unveiled a "comprehensive roadmap" to reach high-income status.

In its 2024 World Development Report, the Bank said countries usually hit such a "trap" when they reach around 10 percent of annual US GDP per capita -- roughly \$8,000 today -- which can prove tough to move past.

With more than 100 countries representing more than 75 percent of the world's population currently classified as middle-income, tackling the issue will prove key for economic development in the decades ahead, the Bank added.

"The battle for global economic prosperity will largely be won or lost in middle-income countries," World Bank Group chief economist Indermit Gill said in a statement, calling for a "fresh approach."

"First focus on investment; then add an emphasis on infusion of new technologies from abroad; and, finally, adopt a three-pronged strategy that balances investment, infusion, and innovation," he said.

"With growing demographic, ecological and geopolitical



World Bank Group chief economist Indermit Gill

In its 2024 World Development Report, the Bank said countries usually hit such a "trap" when they reach around 10 percent of annual US GDP per capita -- roughly \$8,000 today -- which can prove tough to move past.

pressures, there is no room for error."

The Bank pointed to South Korea as an example of a former developing country which used this strategy to successfully reach high-income status.

"If they stick with the old playbook, most developing countries will lose the race to create reasonably prosperous societies by the middle of this century," Gill said in the World Development Report.

"The team that has written this report hopes to radically alter this arithmetic," he added.

CBB Government Development Bond Issue No.36 oversubscribed by 280%

TDT | Manama

The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) announces that the issue of the 3-year Government Development Bond has been oversubscribed by 280%.

Subscriptions worth BD 419,294 million were received for the BD 150 million issue, which carries a maturity of 3 years.

The fixed annual coupon rate on the issue, which begins on August 5 and matures on August 5, 2027, is 5.875%.

The Government Development Bonds are issued by the CBB on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain.



This is Government Development Bond issue No.36 (ISIN BH000X4976W9).

Results indicated that 48 equity transactions took place

Bahrain All Share Index closes higher

TDT | Manama

Bahrain All Share Index has closed at 1,970.96 points, marking an increase of 1.07 points above the previous closing.

This increase was due to the rise in the financial sector.

Bahrain Islamic Index has closed at 818.86 points, marking an increase of 0.93 points above the previous closing.

Investors traded mainly in the material sector, representing 64.44% of the total value of securities traded.



with a volume of 1,766,178 worth BD 628,044.

Investors traded mainly in the material sector, representing 64.44% of the total value of securities traded.

Bank of England cuts rate for first time since pandemic

AFP | London, United Kingdom

The Bank of England yesterday cut its main interest rate for the first time since the Covid pandemic broke out in 2020, as British inflation has retreated in recent months.

In a tight 5-4 vote, BoE policymakers agreed to reduce borrowing costs by a quarter-point to 5.0 percent, the central bank



Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey

announced following a regular meeting.

Governor Andrew Bailey joined four other policymakers in bringing the rate down from a 16-year high, which will ease pressure on borrowers while denting interest earned by savers.

Retail banks tend to mirror the direction of BoE policy when setting their own interest rates.

"Inflationary pressures have eased enough that we've been able to cut interest rates," Bailey said in a short statement. "But we need to make sure inflation stays low, and be careful not to cut interest rates too quickly or by too much."

Britain's annual inflation rate has returned to the BoE target of two percent, after soaring to a four-decade high above 11 percent in late 2022.

In world first, EU's sweeping AI law enters into force

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

The European Union's landmark law on artificial intelligence came into force yesterday, which Brussels vows will drive innovation while protecting citizens' rights.

The EU earlier this year adopted the world's first sweeping rules to govern AI, especially powerful systems like OpenAI's ChatGPT after difficult and tense negotiations.

Although the rules were first proposed in 2021, they took on greater urgency when ChatGPT burst onto the scene in 2022, showing generative AI's human-like ability to churn out eloquent text within seconds.

Other examples of generative



AI include Dall-E and Midjourney, which can generate images in nearly any style with a simple input in everyday language. "With our artificial intelligence act, we create new guard-

rails not only to protect people and their interests, but also to give business and innovators clear rules and certainty," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said.

Companies will have to comply by 2026 but rules covering AI models like ChatGPT will apply 12 months after the law enters into force.

Strict bans on using AI for predictive policing based on profiling and systems that use biometric information to infer an individual's race, religion or sexual orientation will apply six months after the law enters into force.

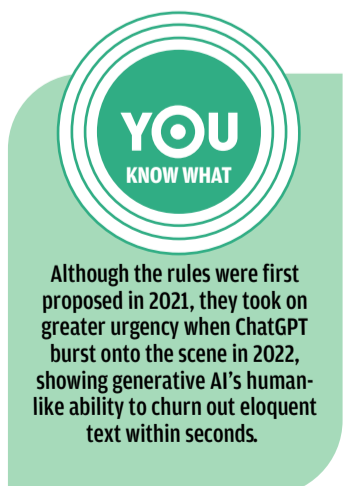
The law known as the "AI Act" takes a risk-based approach: if a system is high-risk, a company

has a stricter set of obligations to fulfil to protect citizens' rights.

The higher the risk to Europeans' health or rights, for example, the greater the companies' requirements to protect individuals from harms.

"The geographic scope of the AI Act is very broad, so organisations with any connections to the EU in their business or customer base will need an AI governance programme in place to identify and comply with their obligations," said Marcus Evans, partner at law firm Norton Rose Fulbright.

Companies in violation of the rules on banned practices or data obligations face fines of up to seven percent of worldwide annual revenue.



Although the rules were first proposed in 2021, they took on greater urgency when ChatGPT burst onto the scene in 2022, showing generative AI's human-like ability to churn out eloquent text within seconds.

The EU in May established an "AI Office" of tech experts, lawyers and economists under the new law to ensure compliance.

News in brief

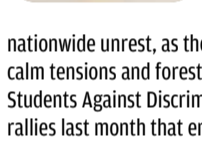
◆ **The health of jailed** Iranian Nobel laureate Narges Mohammadi has deteriorated in prison, supporters said yesterday, demanding her freedom and calling to give her access to medical care "without delay". Rights activist Mohammadi, 52, has been jailed since November 2021, and has spent much of the past decade in and out of prison. A group of supporters of Mohammadi, who in 2023 won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her advocacy work, said they had been informed of the results of medical tests carried out last month "which showed a worrying deterioration of her health". "The Free Narges Coalition is extremely worried about the deterioration of Narges Mohammadi's health in detention," the group said in a statement, noting cardiovascular, gastrointestinal and other risks.



Supporters say Iranian Nobel winner's health deteriorating in prison

◆ **The Kremlin said** yesterday that any F-16s delivered to Ukraine would be shot down and have little impact on the battlefield, in response to reports that the first fighter jets have arrived. "Their number will gradually decrease, they will be shot down... But of course, these deliveries will not have any significant impact on the development of events on the front," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. For more than two years, Ukraine has pleaded with Western allies for the US-made fighter jets -- long considered the crown jewel in the sprawling list of military hardware Kyiv has sought from its Western backers. For decades, the F-16 has been touted for its precision, speed and range.

Kremlin says F-16s delivered to Ukraine 'will be shot down'



◆ **Bangladesh police** freed six student leaders yesterday whose campaign against civil service job quotas sparked deadly nationwide unrest, as the government looked to calm tensions and forestall fresh demonstrations. Students Against Discrimination staged nationwide rallies last month that ended in a police crackdown and the deaths of at least 206 people, according to an AFP count of police and hospital data. The group's leadership were among thousands picked up in the police dragnet that followed some of the worst unrest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 15-year tenure. "All six quota movement coordinators have been returned to their families this afternoon," deputy commissioner Junaed Alam Sarkar said.

Bangladesh police release student leaders after unrest



SPOTLIGHT

Signs of life spark hope for UK's felled Sycamore Gap tree

AFP | London, United Kingdom

New shoots have appeared at the stump of one of the UK's most beloved and photographed trees after it was illegally cut down last year, a conservation charity said Thursday.

The news has sparked hope that the Sycamore Gap tree in northern England could "live on", the National Trust added.

The tree, which grew for more than 200 years in a picturesque dip in the Northumberland landscape alongside Hadrian's Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage site, was found felled in September 2023.

Efforts have been underway to see if the tree in Northumberland National Park could regrow after it was determined that the stump was still alive.

Now, eight new shoots have emerged, which "could develop significant new growth to form as 'new' trees around the original stump", according to the National Trust and the Northumberland National Park Authority.

The sycamore became internationally famous when it was used for a scene in the 1991 blockbuster film "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves", starring Kevin Costner.

The regrowth was spotted during a routine check by park ranger Gary Pickles, who called the discovery "serendipitous".

"I've done this walk several times over the last year, but this time it was different,

there was something new -- the trunk was showing signs of regeneration," Pickles said.

Andrew Pond, general manager for the National Trust at Hadrian's Wall, said officials "always had hope that nature would find a way to recover, and to see signs of life, just ten months on, is astonishing".

The National Trust, which looks after UK heritage and nature conservation, and the park authority said they would leave the shoots to grow for "a few years" to see how they develop.

"We'll also do what we can to protect the root zone, and to avoid any compaction. The next few weeks and months are vitally important for the success of these shoots forming into the reinvigorated tree", Pond said.

To protect the shoots, the authorities have asked visitors to keep away from the stump and not touch the shoots, as well as not leave ashes in the area -- done by people who have special memories associated with the site.

There are also plans to "extend fencing around the site", according to the statement.



Jordan says Israel turned 'rogue'



The New York Times, citing Iranian officials, reported that Khamenei has ordered Iran to strike Israel directly. The international community called for calm and a focus on securing a ceasefire in Gaza -- which Haniyeh had accused Israel of obstructing.

AFP | Amman, Jordan

Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said yesterday that Israel had turned "rogue" state with its "assassination" of the Hamas political leader and needed to be stopped.

He said the killing of Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas's lead negotiator in efforts for a truce and hostage release deal for Gaza, was a clear sign that Israel had decided to undermine the US-backed talks.

"Yesterday, Israel assassinated Ismail Haniyeh. He was the one who was negotiating the exchange deal. So how on earth is a

Plane carrying body of Hamas leader arrives in Qatar

AFP | Doha, Qatar

A plane carrying the body of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, killed in a strike in Tehran blamed on Israel, landed in Doha yesterday after a public funeral in Iran, Qatar-based network Al Jazeera reported.

Haniyeh, who had resided in exile in the Gulf state with other members of Hamas's political office, is to be buried in Qatar on Friday following prayers at the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque, Doha's largest.

Haniyeh and a bodyguard were killed in the pre-dawn strike on their accommodation in Tehran

early Wednesday, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said, in an attack that has been blamed on Israel.

Hamas said in a statement on the same day that the burial ceremonies in Qatar would be held "with popular and factional attendance and the participation of Arab and Islamic leaders".

A public funeral ceremony for Haniyeh was held in Tehran earlier on Thursday with crowds of mourners paying their respects to the Hamas political chief.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh having earlier threatened "harsh punishment" for his killing.

country that wants to conclude a deal killing the main interlocutor in those negotiations?" Safadi told a news conference.

"So when Netanyahu decided and sent his missiles to assassinate Haniyeh in Iran in violation of the sovereignty of another country and bringing escalation to a very high level, is that somebody who wants the deal to work?"

"And all the work that has been done by Egypt, Qatar, and the US

to bring a deal that would have brought a ceasefire, that would have released the hostages, that would have released prisoners, Israel decided to undermine all that".

Israel has not commented on Haniyeh's death, but both Iran and Hamas said it was the result of an Israeli air strike in Tehran before dawn on Wednesday.

Safadi demanded action by the international community to rein

Iran, allies plan joint retaliation against Israel

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Iran and armed groups backed by it are preparing coordinated action meant to deter Israel but avert all-out war, sources and analysts said, after the killings of top Hamas and Hezbollah figures. On Wednesday, Iranian officials met in Tehran with representatives of the so-called "axis of resistance" -- a loose alliance of Tehran-backed groups hostile

Hamas military chief Deif killed

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel's army confirmed yesterday that Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif was killed in an air strike last month in the southern Gaza Strip.

The announcement came a day after Hamas and Iran said the Palestinian movement's chief Is-

rael in.

"The (UN) Security Council must not allow a state that has

Hopes fade for more survivors in Indian landslide rescue

AFP | Wayanad, India

Indian rescue crews scoured mud-caked tea plantations and villages yesterday with little hope of finding more survivors from landslides that killed around 200 people.

Days of torrential monsoon rains have battered the southern coastal state of Kerala, with blocked roads into the Wayanad district disaster area complicating relief efforts since Tuesday.

Army teams were working around the clock to build a temporary bridge over raging waters to help search efforts after earlier relying on jury-rigged ziplines to transport bodies that had been recovered.

The bodies of at least 176 people had been recovered from the disaster site by Thursday. But the final toll is certain to rise, with rescuers reporting the gruesome discovery of dozens of body parts recovered from flood waters or found buried in the muddy earth.

Two killed, 28 missing in north India floods



NDRF personnel conducting a search and rescue operation after cloudburst near Shimla

AFP | New Delhi, India

Heavy monsoon downpours in India's Himalayan foothills triggered flash floods that killed two people, officials said yesterday, with the hunt on for around 28 others still missing.

Fatal floods and landslides are common across India during the annual monsoon but experts say climate change is increasing their frequency, intensity and unpredictability.

Rescue crews worked through the night at two flood

sites in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh.

Mandi district official Madan Kumar told AFP that rescuers had recovered two bodies. "One other person is seriously injured and eight people are missing," said Kumar. "Several houses have been damaged."

In neighbouring Shimla district, a popular tourist destination in India's rugged north, local official Abhishek Verma said rescue crews were searching for around 20 more people believed missing.

17-year-old charged of 3 girls in UK knife



A handout pictures released by Merseyside Police showing a 17-year-old male (L) and three girls (R)

AFP | Southport, United Kingdom

A 17-year-old male was charged yesterday with the murder of three girls and the attempted murder of 10 more people in a knife attack at a Taylor Swift-themed dance class, UK prosecutors said.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said it had authorised Merseyside Police to charge the suspect with three counts of murder over the deaths of Bebe King, six, Elsie Dot Stancombe, seven, and Alice Dasilva Aguiar, nine.

The suspect will appear at court in Liverpool, in northwest

Police clash footage shocks Bangladesh as internet

AFP | Dhaka, Bangladesh

When millions of Bangladeshis came back online this week after a nationwide internet shutdown, many were shocked to watch a ferocious police clampdown they had earlier only heard while bunkered in their homes. At least 206 people were killed last month during some of the worst unrest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's tenure, sparked by student demonstrations against civil



Bangladesh police scuffle with people as they protest to demand justice for the victims killed in the recent countrywide violence

service hiring rules.

Bystanders and several police officers were among the dead but most were protesters killed by police fire, hospitals told AFP, with rights groups and the European Union condemning what they said was an excessive use of force.

Footage of clashes between security forces and crowds was largely absent from news broadcasts and few had a grasp of their extent until the national mobile internet network was switched

Formal signing of the US Declaration of Independence by 56 people (date most accepted by modern historians)



1st US census conducted, the population was 3,939,214 including 697,624 slaves

Government of India transferred from East India Company to the British Crown

Apple becomes the first American public listed company to reach \$1 trillion in value

e state'

oint but limited st Israel

to Israel -- to discuss retaliation for the deaths of Hamas's leader and Hezbollah's top military commander, said a source close to Lebanese group.

"Two scenarios were discussed: a simultaneous response from Iran and its allies or a staggered response from each party," the source who had been briefed on the meeting told AFP, requesting anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

killed in July strike: Israel

mail Haniyeh was killed in Tehran. Israel has not commented on that report. "Mohammed Deif, the Osama bin Laden of Gaza was eliminated" on July 13, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said.

This is a "significant milestone in the process of dismantling Hamas" in Gaza, Gallant added.

turned rogue to impose more wars and more destruction on the region."

ed with murder ife attack



Police of nine-year-old Alice Dasilva, and six-year-old Bebe King

England, on Thursday. The town of Southport, where Monday's tragedy unfolded, was still reeling from the attack, and from violent clashes that broke out on Tuesday.

Bottles were thrown at police officers and several people were arrested at the rally, which police blamed on supporters of the far-right English Defence League (EDL), who it said had travelled from outside the area to the seaside town near Liverpool. A 100-strong group attacked police and properties, throwing bricks at a mosque and setting vehicles and other objects on fire.

net returns

back on after an 11-day shutdown. Though the unrest has since calmed, several graphic amateur videos published to social media that show police firing on protesters have inflamed public anger against Hasina's government.

"How come the police are killing our brothers and sisters like this?" one user wrote, in response to a short clip of a police officer firing at a wounded young man while another tried to drag him safely from the scene.

Brazil to take custody of Argentine embassy in Venezuela: Milei

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Argentine President Javier Milei yesterday thanked Brazil for assuming custody of his country's embassy in Venezuela, after staff were ordered to leave when Buenos Aires questioned the reelection of Nicolas Maduro.

Argentina was among seven Latin American countries whose diplomatic staff were asked to leave Venezuela after their governments signed a joint statement asking for a complete review of Sunday's election results.

Six Venezuelan opposition figures are currently under protection at the Argentine embassy.

"I am extremely grateful for Brazil's willingness to take over the custody of the Argentine Embassy in Venezuela," Milei wrote on the X social network.

"We are also grateful for the temporary representation of the interests of the Argentine Republic and its citizens there. Today the Argentine diplomatic staff had to leave Venezuela as a reprisal by dictator Maduro for our condemnation of the fraud they perpetrated last Sunday."

He did not mention the fate of the asylum seekers.

US says plea deal reached with 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed



The Pentagon said three Guantanamo Bay inmates, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, agreed to enter guilty plea

Washington, United States

US prosecutors reached a deal with 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the Pentagon said yesterday, reportedly involving a guilty plea in exchange for avoiding a death penalty trial

The agreements with Mohammed and two other accomplices moves the long-running cases -- which have been bogged down in pre-trial maneuverings for years while the defendants remained held at the Guantanamo military base in Cuba -- toward resolution.

"The specific terms and conditions of the pretrial agreements are not available to the public at this time," the Pentagon said in a statement.

The New York Times reported that Mohammed, Walid bin Attash and Mustafa al-Hawsawi had agreed to plead guilty in exchange for a life sentence instead of the death penalty.

Erdogan urges Pope to speak against 'perverse' Olympic ceremony

AFP | Istanbul, Turkey

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged Pope Francis yesterday to speak out with him against the "perverse propaganda" he said was spread at the Olympic Games opening ceremony.

A scene during Friday's showpiece event featured dancers and drag queens reminiscent of the Last Supper, the final meal Jesus is said to have shared with his apostles.

Organisers have said they intended to portray a pagan feast and meant no offence, but Erdogan, Catholic groups, US presidential candidate Donald Trump and Russia's foreign ministry spokeswoman were among critics slamming the act as a disrespectful parody.

"President Erdogan said that under the guise of freedom of expression and tolerance, human dignity had been trampled



Organisers have said they intended to portray a pagan feast and meant no offence

underfoot and religious and moral values ridiculed, offending Muslims and the Christian world alike," the Turkish presidency said in a statement.

"He felt it was necessary to raise our voices together," the statement added in the appeal to the pope.

The president, who had an-

nounced on Tuesday his intention to call the Pope to denounce the "immorality" of the opening ceremony, deplored "the undermining of religious values, the perverse propaganda and the moral collapse into which the world is drifting with the Olympic Games", the statement added.

At least 30 dead, 35 missing after torrential rains: China state media

AFP | Beijing, China

At least 30 people are dead and 35 are missing in central China, state media reported yesterday, following days of torrential rain that lashed the country earlier this week.

The downpours were triggered by Typhoon Gaemi, which moved on from the Philippines and Taiwan to make landfall in eastern China a week ago, with hilly, landlocked Hunan province hit particularly hard.

More than 11,000 people had been evacuated from the city of Zixing after some areas endured record rainfall of 645 millimetres (25 inches) in just 24 hours, state news agency Xinhua reported on Tuesday.

Many roads connecting townships in the Zixing area were temporarily cut off by the extreme weather, which also affected the power supply and communications infrastructure.

On Thursday, state broad-



Members of a rescue team walk to a flood-affected area in Zixing, in central China's Hunan province

caster CCTV said that "the roads, electricity and communications in eight towns in Zixing city that were most severely affected by Typhoon Gaemi have basically opened".

"Initial findings show that there have been 30 deaths and 35 are missing," the report said, adding that search and rescue

efforts were still ongoing.

On Tuesday Xinhua said four people had been killed and three people were missing in Zixing.

Three people were killed in Hunan's Yongxing county, Xinhua said Tuesday, while a landslide on Sunday killed 15 people elsewhere in the province.

Trump attacks Harris's racial identity, says she opted to 'turn Black'

AFP | Harrisburg, United States

Donald Trump suggested Wednesday that Vice President Kamala Harris had decided to "turn Black" for political gain, as he attacked his Democratic White House rival during a combative interaction with African American journalists in Chicago. The Republican former president's inflammatory comments marked an escalation of the 78-year-old's vitriol against Harris, whom he falsely accused of having identified as Indian but then, "all of a sudden, she made a turn, and she became a Black person."

Harris, 59, has long identified as Black and graduated from a historically Black university.

"So I don't know, is she Indian or is she Black?" asked Trump



Harris, Trump

during a heated interview at the National Association of Black Journalists conference.

Harris later denounced the attacks as "the same old show" of "the divisiveness and the disrespect" from Trump.

They come as the former president, convicted two months ago of felony fraud related to hush money payments

to a porn star, struggles to formulate a new strategy less than 100 days before the election.

Later Wednesday he held a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, a battleground state where he narrowly survived an assassination attempt earlier this month, and continued the verbal assault on his rival.

"Everything about Kamala Harris's rollout, it's phony," he told the crowd, adding Harris "tried to outbrand a new Southern accent" when she addressed a large rally Tuesday in Atlanta, Georgia. "The contrast could not be more stark," he said. "On the one hand you have a radical left puppet candidate who is fake fake fake, and on the other hand you have a president who will fight fight fight for America."



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Earlier today, held every productive talks with PM Ph m Minh Chinh of Vietnam. India cherishes the strong friendship with Vietnam. Over the years, we have deepened cooperation in trade, energy, technology, security, connectivity and more. Cultural and people-to-people linkages have also become stronger.

@narendramodi

02



The attacks we have seen in the Israeli-occupied Golan, South Beirut & Teheran represent a dangerous escalation at a moment in which all efforts should instead be leading to a ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all Israeli hostages, a massive increase of humanitarian aid for Palestinians in Gaza, and a return to calm in Lebanon & across the Blue Line.

@antonio_guterres

03



Paul Whelan, Evan Gershkovich, and Alsu Kurmasheva are on their way to the United States to reunite with their families. I'm grateful for all of those who worked to secure their freedom and for our allies and partners who made this deal possible.

@SecBlinken

04



The escalating violence in #Sudan, persisting for over 15 months now, has pushed parts of North Darfur, notably the Zam-zam camp near El Fasher town, into #famine conditions, the @theIPCinfo has concluded.

@DrTedros

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

CELEBS

celebs

Katy Perry's daughter is her 'soulmate'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Katy Perry considers her daughter to be her "soulmate".

The 39-year-old pop star has Daisy, three, with actor Orlando Bloom, and Katy has revealed that her daughter is the inspiration behind her new single.

Katy - who is engaged to Orlando - told The Sun newspaper's Bizarre column: "It is funny how sometimes you're looking for your soulmate in a partner. It could be a dog, your mom, your best friend, your cat...but for me it came in the form of Daisy."

"I wrote 'Lifetimes' about her. Every night before we go to sleep I say, 'I love you', and then I ask, 'Will you find me in every lifetime?' and she says, 'Yes.'"

Katy is set to release her long-awaited new album, '143', in September, and she's revealed that it's a mix of dance music and "quintessential pop".

The chart-topping star shared: "I always wanted to make a dance pop record."

"One third is more dance than I have ever done before. One third is quintessential pop and then one third is rhythmic."

Katy quit her role on 'American

"I wrote 'Lifetimes' about her. Every night before we go to sleep I say, 'I love you', and then I ask, 'Will you find me in every lifetime?' and she says, 'Yes'"

KATY PERRY

Idol' in order to focus on her new album.

The pop star previously suggested that a female star should replace her on the show's judging panel - but she also argued that female stars face more scrutiny than their male counterparts.

The 'California Gurls' hitmaker - who previously appeared on the hit TV show alongside Lionel Richie and Luke Bryan - told E!

News: "When you have an opinion, when you're bold, when you're a female, it just happens."

Jelly Roll has been tipped to replace her on the show, but Katy insists that a female voice is necessary.



Katy Perry

50 Cent's rap feuds 'were a waste of time'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

50 Cent "wasted too much time" arguing with his rap rivals.

The 49-year-old star has feuded with the likes of Ja Rule, Fat Joe, and Cam'ron during the course of his career, but 50 now looks back on those situations with some regret.

Speaking to The Hollywood Reporter, the chart-topping rapper explained: "Look, I think we wasted too much time arguing, me and Fat Joe, me and Cam'ron."

"There's other guys like Jada-kiss, we cleared it up easier. But we wasted time because it was just the competitive nature. It wasn't like we crossed paths and had real heat for each other. It went on more with Joe because

he's more like me, he's closer in character to me.

"When we're at odds, we are at odds, and we did that for a long time."

Earlier this year, Kendrick Lamar and Drake exchanged a series of high-profile diss records.

However, 50 believes that hip-hop is a "competitive" genre of music and that rap feuds can actually be healthy for the culture of hip-hop.

The New York-born star - whose real name is Curtis Jackson - said: "This is hip-hop. I think it's competitive to a degree, obviously."

"Even Drake, his position and the attitude and his choices, those are 50 Cent choices. 'F*** it, everybody got to get it then.' When it becomes Drake ver-

sus Kendrick, it's because it's the only thing you can put up against Drake's success."

What's more, 50 is convinced that the feud won't harm Drake's album sales.

He explained: "I don't see a loss for Drake. The people who bought Drake material are going to buy Drake material when his next song comes out."



50 Cent

Pete Davidson 'checks into mental health facility'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Pete Davidson has checked himself into a wellness facility for his mental health.

The 30-year-old comedian is taking some out of his career in order to focus on his mental wellbeing, PEOPLE reports.

Pete has always considered his mental health to be "a priority" for him and he's now decided

to check into a facility, after performing more than 200 stand-up shows across the US.

The 'Saturday Night Live' star has also appeared in a host of big-budget movies in recent years, such as 'The Suicide Squad' and 'The King of Staten Island'.

Pete has been very open about his sobriety journey, too, while he's also received treat-

ment for borderline personality disorder.

The actor - who has previously dated the likes of Kim Kardashian, Ariana Grande and Kaia Gerber - actually underwent treatment for borderline personality disorder last year.

A source told PEOPLE at the time: "Pete will often check himself into rehab to work on these issues. His friends and family have been supportive during this time."

Meanwhile, Pete previously admitted that it feels "weird being happy".



Pete Davidson

Kristin Cavallari recalls being 'afraid of eating carrots'



Kristin Cavallari Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Kristin Cavallari was "afraid" of eating carrots amid her diet struggles.

The 37-year-old beauty feels she's currently in the "best shape" of her entire life - but Kristin used to agonise about her diet.

Speaking to Bustle, Kristin shared: "I'm eating the most carbs I ever have."

"There was a period of my life where I would not go near a carb. I was even afraid of carrots for a while because I was doing keto coupled with intermittent fasting, and I actually think it messed up my metabolism, and it took me a year to stabilize."



Selena Gomez

Selena Gomez 'so depressed' in her 'It Girl era'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Selena Gomez was "so depressed" in her 'It Girl era'.

The singer, 32, is happily settled with her 36-year-old music producer boyfriend Benny Blanco - who she has been dating since June 2023 - and has now reflected on how unhappy she was in her youth, which included her getting photographed by paparazzi while dating her ex Justin Bieber.

She opened up about how she had

the blues at the time in a reaction to throwback footage of herself posted on social media showing her getting snapped by photographers and posing with a fan.

The TikTok clip was set to her ex Justin's song 'Company', with a caption the video saying: "I know and so do you that at the time she would never have gotten engaged to Benny (Blanco) (when) she was in her IT GIRL era'."

Text over the video also said Sele-

na's former self "would never date Benny Blanco".

Selena hit back: "Kinda makes me laugh because I was so depressed back then lol."

The singer dated Justin, 30, on and off for eight years and a few months after she and Justin split in 2018 he married Hailey Bieber, 27, with whom he is expecting his first child - something Selena has not publicly commented on.

Selena has told how she loves how

Benny treats her, saying online in December: "He has treated me better than any human being on this planet."

She added to Time magazine the musician is not "fazed" when her critics say "the most hurtful things".

Benny celebrated her 32nd birthday by buying her a jewel-encrusted necklace in the shape of his first initial.

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

How to play

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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Across

1- Discard; 5- Future fern; 10- Skelton's Kadiddlehopper; 14- Me neither; 15- Son of Abraham; 16- Glow; 17- "Topaz" author; 18- Uses a sieve; 19- Harangue; 20- Outlaws; 22- Austrian composer; 24- Top pitcher; 25- Escort's offering; 26- Mediterranean resort area; 30- Maintains; 34- Beef cut; 35- Ostentatious; 37- Old Italian money; 38- Naval rank, briefly; 39- Chapter in history; 40- Part of RSVP; 41- Web locale; 43- New Zealand aboriginal; 45- Ringing instrument; 46- Healed over, like a scrape; 48- On in years; 50- Scull; 51- Actress Thompson; 52- Kiln; 56- Goggle; 60- Italian wine city; 61- Radii neighbors; 63- It's linked to mighty; 64- Encounter; 65- Brings up; 66- Peace Nobelists Wiesel; 67- Being, to Brutus; 68- Jerks; 69- Cubs slugger Sammy;

Down

1- Rebuff; 2- Israeli round dance; 3- "... Brockovich"; 4- Scorn; 5- Nuns; 6- Pitchfork-shaped letters; 7- Idiot; 8- Phooey!; 9- Rapturous delight; 10- A chewy candy; 11- Hawaiian outdoor feast; 12- Sea eagles; 13- Floor coverings; 21- Rocks; 23- Monopoly quartet; Abbr.; 26- Like non-oyster months; 27- Greek column type; 28- Prospect; 29- In the future; 30- Conscious; 31- Stair part; 32- Run of bird-song; 33- Sudden rushing forth; 36- Granada gold; 42- Inelastic rubber; 43- Liquid metallic element; 44- Ailment; 45- Sandy shores; 47- Noise made by a sheep; 49- Agnus; 52- Renown; 53- Employs; 54- Hwy's; 55- Zeno of; 56- Cutty; 57- Thousand; prefix; 58- Sponsorship; 59- Earthbound bird; 62- Photographer Goldin;

Yesterday's solution

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

Classifieds



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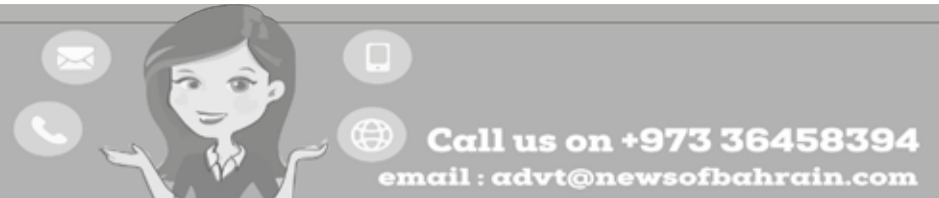
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Classifieds



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ELENA BEAUT

Bahrain bow to China in U18 Volleyball

India, Iran, and Japan secure victories in Asian Under-18 Volleyball Championship

● **Australia overpowers Lebanon**

● **Pakistan defeats Chinese Taipei**

● **Philippines clinches first win over Hong Kong**

TDI | Manama

China's under-18 volleyball team asserted their dominance in the second round of the Asian Championship, overpowering Bahrain in a straight-sets victory.

The scores were 25-8, 25-22, 25-20, showcasing China's technical superiority and cohesion on the court.

The Chinese team quickly adjusted after the first set, demonstrating a noticeable improvement in both offensive and defensive strategies.

Their tall players created a formidable barrier at the net, making it challenging for Bahrain to execute successful attacks.

Bahrain's coach, Fouad Abdel Wahed, attempted to turn the tide with strategic substitutions, but China maintained control with diverse play styles and precise serves.

With this victory, China has accrued five points, bringing them closer to a semi-final berth,



Action during the match between Bahrain and China

while Bahrain remains at one point. Chinese player Yu Jian was a standout performer, scoring 14 points in the match.

India's regained their momentum defeating Saudi Arabia with a commanding straight-sets victory. The scores were 25-13, 25-11, 25-18, reflecting India's return to form after recent setbacks.

Indian player Harnor was instrumental in securing the win, contributing 20 points in the third set alone. The Indian team showcased a solid performance, dominating the court with aggressive plays and strategic serves.

This victory marks an essential step for India as they aim to secure a higher ranking in the championship, currently competing for positions 9 to 16.



China's tall players created a formidable barrier at the net, making it challenging for Bahrain to execute successful attacks

Off the court, the Lebanese Volleyball Federation delegation visited the Bahrain Volleyball Association, exchanging views on Arab and Asian volleyball.

Lebanese Federation Vice President Ali Haider presented

a commemorative gift to Shaikh Ali bin Mohamed bin Rashid Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Volleyball Association and the Higher Organizing Committee, marking Lebanon's first continental presence in this age group.

In other matches, Iran secured a clean sweep against Thailand (25-16, 25-23, 25-20), boosting their chances of reaching the semi-finals. Amir Naderi led the scoring with 21 points, all from attacks.

Pakistan also had a strong showing, defeating Chinese Taipei in four sets (25-20, 24-26, 25-18, 25-23). Mohamed Yahya continued his stellar performance, scoring 29 points despite facing strong defensive walls from Taipei.

Australia defeated Lebanon 3-1 in the 9-18 ranking positions, with Vimatahio scoring 15 points for the winning side.

The Philippines celebrated their first victory in the championship, overcoming Hong Kong in a thrilling four-set match (18-25, 25-20, 28-26, 26-24).

Japan overcame Korea 3-1 in a riveting Asian volleyball championship match, securing a semi-final berth alongside Pakistan. The intense encounter saw Japan triumph 28-30, 25-21, 25-17, 25-18.

The first set was a nail-biter, with Korea clinching it after a crucial error by Japan's Crane Masjedi. However, Japan



Lebanese Federation Vice President Ali Haider presented a commemorative gift to Shaikh Ali bin Mohamed bin Rashid Al Khalifa



India's players block a shot during the match against Saudi Arabia

bounced back, with Masjedi rebounding in the second set to level the score.

In another match, Kazakhstan swept Kuwait 3-0 (25-20, 25-20, 25-23) in the rankings round, with Mstakhin leading the scoring with 15 points.

Nadal says he may not return to Roland Garros after Olympic exit

AFP | Paris

Rafael Nadal admitted he may have played at Roland Garros for the final time after he and Carlos Alcaraz were dumped out of the Olympics men's doubles on Wednesday.

The Spanish dream team lost their quarter-final in Paris 6-2, 6-4 to the US fourth seeds Austin Krajicek and Rajeev Ram.

Nadal and Alcaraz, dubbed "Nadalcaraz", have been one of the main talking points at the Paris Games tennis tournament, wowing the crowds in their first two matches.

But they came unstuck in the last eight against doubles specialists Krajicek and Ram, who

both have Grand Slam-winning pedigree.



Nadal, a 14-time French Open champion, is immortalised with a statue at Roland Garros.

But the 38-year-old has slumped to 161 in the world after a succession of injuries and faces relentless questions over his future.

He said after his painful defeat to Novak Djokovic in the singles competition in Paris that he would make a decision on his future after the Olympics.

The Spaniard -- second on the all-time list in men's tennis with 22 Grand Slams --

Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz embrace after their loss

walked off Court Philippe Chatrier on Wednesday applauding all four sides of the stadium.

He was later asked whether he had played at Roland Garros for the final time.

"Maybe, I don't know," he said. "If that's the last time, for me it's an unforgettable feeling and emotions."

"They give me the love and the support every single second that I have been on court."

"For me, it's super, super special to feel that, particularly in this place. I can't really thank enough all of them for giving me the feelings that I have inside myself and the emotions that they make me feel."

Bahrain's Jiu-Jitsu contenders take on JJAU Regional Championship in Jordan

Hussain Almaskati
TDI | Manama

The JJAU Regional Championship West Asia, taking place from August 1-2 in Amman, Jordan, features a robust lineup of athletes from Bahrain,

competing alongside top jiu-jitsu talents from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other nations.

The Bahrain Jiu-Jitsu Federation has sent a competitive team to represent the kingdom at this prestigious event.

Bahraini athletes have un-

dergone rigorous training to prepare for this championship. Their dedication and skill are expected to showcase the high standards of Bahraini jiu-jitsu on an international stage.

With strong support from the Bahrain Jiu-Jitsu Federation,

the team aims to excel and secure impressive results.

As the championship progresses, all eyes will be on Bahrain's competitors, who are anticipated to contribute to Bahrain's growing reputation in the sport.

Salah scores as Liverpool beat Arsenal 2-1 while Chelsea, Man Utd win

AFP | Washington

Mohamed Salah and Fabio Carvalho scored first-half goals to give Liverpool a 2-1 victory over Arsenal in a pre-season friendly on Wednesday while Chelsea cruised to a 3-0 victory against Club America.

Kai Havertz scored Arsenal's goal in front of a crowd of 69,879 at the home stadium of the NFL's



Mohamed Salah (C) scores a goal

Philadelphia Eagles.

Egyptian Salah opened the

scoring for Liverpool in the 13th minute, outpacing the defenders to latch onto Harvey Elliott's defence-splitting pass.

The striker shrugged off the attentions of Arsenal centre-back Gabriel and fired a low left-footed shot past Arsenal goalkeeper Karl Hein.

Carvalho doubled Liverpool's lead in the 34th minute, with Elliott again the provider.

The 21-year-old Portuguese winger ran onto a perfectly lofted Elliott pass into the box and fired home a crisp right-foot volley through Hein's legs.

Arsenal reduced the deficit in the 40th minute when Havertz scored past Liverpool goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher from point-blank range after Martin Odegaard found him in the six-yard box.

India buoyant but not in Sri Lanka to 'chill': Rohit



India skipper Rohit Sharma during nets

AFP | Colombo

India are still buoyant after their T20 World Cup triumph but skipper Rohit Sharma said yesterday his men were keeping focused ahead of their next engagement with Sri Lanka.

Rohit and star batsman Virat Kohli both sat out this week's 3-0 series sweep by the tourists, both having announced their 20-over retirement after snagging India's first international trophy in more than a decade.

Both are back on tour for the first time since the Barbados final in June, for the first of three ODIs in Colombo on Friday.

"It was a great feeling," Rohit told reporters. "We have to move on. It is time to move on now as well and think of what lies ahead of us."

"We are not here to chill in Colombo. At the end of the day, the standard of Indian cricket is more important."

Rohit said he was agonis-

"
We are not here to chill in Colombo. At the end of the day, the standard of Indian cricket is more important

ROHIT SHARMA

ing over the choice of wicket-keeping mainstay K.L. Rahul or Rishabh Pant, who returned to internationals for the World Cup after a horror car crash and a long injury absence.

"You know the ability of both players. They are match winners in their own way," he said.

"It is nice to have problems picking teams. That means we have quality."
Injuries have bedevilled Sri Lanka, with fast bowlers Dushmantha Chameera and Nuwan Thushara both forced to withdraw ahead of the T20 series.

Biles reclaims gymnastics all-around crown

- Zheng Qinwen ends Swiatek's streak
- Alcaraz advances to semis

AFP | Paris

Simone Biles recaptured the Olympic all-around crown yesterday, seeing off Brazil's Rebeca Andrade for her sixth Olympic gold and second in Paris.

Biles, who famously withdrew from multiple events at the Tokyo Games three years ago with the disorientating "twisties", followed up her team gold with the United States earlier this week. Defending Olympic champion Sunisa Lee took bronze.

The 27-year-old Biles became the first gymnast to reclaim the individual title, which she won in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.

She capped her performance with another electrifying floor routine to Taylor Swift's hit song "Ready for It", her high-flying tumbling bringing the crowd to its feet.

She scored 59.131 points to finish 1.199 ahead of Andrade with 21-year-old Lee sealing bronze with her floor routine having trailed in fourth going into the final rotation.

It was the first time that two women's Olympic all-around champions have gone head-to-head chasing a second crown.



Simone Biles in action

The United States have now won the event six times in a row -- and a record seven times overall.

Biles has now won nine Olympic medals including six golds. She could add three more in Paris as she competes in the apparatus finals on the vault, floor exercise and balance beam.

Swiatek beaten

In tennis, Zheng Qinwen ended Iga Swiatek's 25-match unbeaten streak at Roland Garros to become the first Chinese player to reach an Olympic Games singles final as Carlos Alcaraz marched closer to a showdown with Novak Djokovic. Defending champion Alexan-

der Zverev, however, crashed out, losing his quarter-final to a fired-up Lorenzo Musetti of Italy.

Seventh-ranked Zheng triumphed 6-2, 7-5 over world number one Swiatek and will face either Croatia's Donna Vekic or Anna Karolina Schmiedlova of Slovakia in the gold medal match.

"I feel more than just happy -- happy isn't enough to describe how I feel," said Zheng, who had played back-to-back three-hour matches to make the semi-final.

"If you ask me to play another three hours for my country, I would. It was an amazing match. To beat Iga is not easy." Swiatek, a four-time French

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Zheng's victory marks the first time a Chinese player, male or female, has reached an Olympic singles gold medal match, surpassing Li Na's fourth-place finish in Beijing 2008

Open champion at Roland Garros, went into the match at a sweltering Court Philippe Chatrier having not lost in Paris since 2021.

The 23-year-old had also defeated Zheng in all of their six previous meetings.

However, she was hit off the court by the powerful 21-year-old Australian Open finalist who broke the Pole three times in the opening set.

Swiatek appeared restored by a 10-minute break and quickly stretched out to a 4-0 lead in the second set before Zheng battled back, retrieving both breaks for 4-4.

The Chinese star broke again for a 6-5 lead against the error-plagued Swiatek and claimed victory in the next game.

By making the final, Zheng is the first Chinese man or woman



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns to US' Tommy Paul

to reach an Olympic singles gold medal match, bettering the run of Li Na who finished fourth in the women's event at Beijing in 2008.

China's only Olympics tennis gold came thanks to Li Ting and Sun Tiantian in the women's doubles at Athens in 2004.

'About the fight'

Alcaraz, back at Roland Garros where he won a maiden French Open in June, became the youngest Olympic semi-finalist since Djokovic in 2008.

The second seed saw off 13th-ranked Tommy Paul of the United States 6-3, 7-6 (9/7) after recovering from a break down in the second set and saving a set point in the tie-break.

"It's all about the fight," said Alcaraz, who was playing the day after he and Rafael Nadal suffered a heartbreaking dou-

bles loss in what was probably the veteran's final appearance at Roland Garros.

The 21-year-old will face either Casper Ruud or Felix Auger-Aliassime for a place in the final.

Champion Zverev out

Wimbledon semi-finalist Musetti stunned Zverev 7-5, 7-5 on the back of 20 winners as the 16th-ranked Italian continued his storming Olympics run.

The 22-year-old was playing a tour final in Umag in Croatia on Saturday night and only arrived in Paris on Sunday morning, just hours before his first-round clash.

Musetti has made the semi-finals without dropping a set as he became the first Italian man to reach the singles semi-finals since tennis returned to the Olympics in Seoul in 1988.

'Cool' Turkish marksman unruffled by viral Olympic fame

AFP | Paris

Turkish Olympic shooting silver medallist said yesterday he was unfazed by his new-found fame after his casual style with no headwear and a hand in his pocket made him an overnight Internet sensation.

Yusuf Dikec and partner Seval Ilyda Tarhan won silver on Tuesday for Turkey in the mixed team 10m air pistol, losing to Serbia in the gold medal match.

But it was Dikec's posture that caught attention as much as the result, with the marksman wearing standard glasses, a team T-shirt and with his left hand casually slung in his pocket.

Other than his pistol, he notably had none of the specialised equipment used by athletes in



Yusuf Dikec in action

the hyper-precise event, like headphones, special lenses or a hat.

"Be cool like Yusuf Dikec. Congratulations on winning the silver medal in such a cool way," France's embassy to Turkey

wrote in a post on X in Turkish.

"The name's Dikec. Yusuf Dikec," said posts by other users in reference to cinema icon James Bond. Some memes added a cigarette to his mouth to emphasise the relaxed posture.

Speaking to Turkish channel TGRT Haber, Dikec acknowledged that he had adopted the rare technique of shooting with both eyes open whereas most athletes keep one closed or obscured.

"My shooting technique is one of the rare shooting techniques in the world. I shoot with both eyes open. Even the referees are surprised by this," he said.

He said winning a medal was no surprise as "this year we prepared a lot and worked a lot... this success belongs to all of Turkey."

Algeria boxer in gender row wins in 46 seconds as Italian PM hits out

AFP | Paris

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif, who failed a gender eligibility test last year, pummelled her Italian opponent in 46 seconds at the Paris Olympics yesterday as the controversy threatened to overshadow the sixth day of the Games.

It will also renew the debate about the inclusion of competitors in other sports at the Olympics and beyond who have undergone similar eligibility testing.

A distraught and hurt Angela Carini shrugged off attempts by Khelif to shake her hand afterwards and the Italian collapsed to her knees and sobbed uncontrollably in the middle of the ring.

Khelif advanced to the quarter-finals of the women's 66kg



Algeria's Imane Khelif (in red) and Italy's Angela Carini leave after their women's 66kg preliminaries round of 16 boxing match

category after unloading two strong punches on Carini, who had blood on her shorts and was unable to carry on because of a badly hurt nose.

The one-sided bout sparked an immediate reaction from Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who said the fight was

"not on an equal footing".

"I have a big pain in my nose and I said, 'Stop'. It's better to avoid keeping going. My nose started dripping (with blood) from the first hit," said the distressed Carini, who also broke down in tears when talking to reporters.



Handball: Netherlands' centre back #09 Larissa Nusser (R) attempts to score next to Brazil's centre back #02 Bruna de Paula during the Women's Prelims



Boxing - men's 92kg: Belgium's Victor Schelstraete punches Spain's Emmanuel Reyes Pla in the quarter-final match



Shooting - 50 Rifle 3 Positions: Bronze medal winner India's Swapnil Kusale competes in the finals