

Tehran would take immediate reciprocal action if the US returns to a June agreement, as Iran deepened strategic ties with Russia
| P6-7



'Much Harder' Retaliation



US President Donald Trump said the United States carried out strikes against Iranian targets near the Strait of Hormuz yesterday, describing the attacks as retaliation for an Iranian attempt to place sea mines in the strategic waterway.

He warned that Iran would face a stronger response if it retaliated against the latest US strikes.

Trump also suggested that a larger US military operation against Iran could follow, saying the "biggest attack" was still to come and warning of severe consequences for the Iranian government.

Education Minister Praises HM King's Message



Education Minister Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma expressed pride in the content of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's address marking the start of the 2026-2027 academic year.

Dr. Juma thanked His Majesty for his support and affirmed that the royal backing would motivate students, teachers and education professionals to achieve further progress in the new academic year.

September Fuel Prices



Fuel Pricing and Monitoring Committee approved fuel prices for September, based on the Kingdom's pricing mechanism and global market movements. The prices are effective from today.

Jayyid (91)	: 0.225 BD
Mumtaz (95)	: 0.247 BD
Super (98)	: 0.380 BD
Diesel	: 0.229 BD

220 fils (includes VAT)



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"Forging Bahrain's Next Generation"

Interior Minister praises Gadeha Junior's focus on skills, discipline and national values



TDI | Manama

General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee for the National Plan to Promote the Spirit of Belonging to the Nation and Reinforce the Values of Citizenship, Bahrainouna, visited the Gadeha Junior training camp to review its educational and training programmes and activities.

During the visit, the minister was briefed on the camp's concept, objectives, training and supervision mechanisms, and the progress of its programmes. He

also reviewed the educational and training environment designed to develop the capabilities of young participants.

General Shaikh Rashid attended parts of several training sessions and programmes, which combine physical training with personal skills development while promoting commitment, discipline, self-reliance and national belonging.

The minister thanked His Highness Lieutenant General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Advisor, Royal Guard Commander and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports,



for his directives to organise the camp and launch its specialised programmes and activities.

He also expressed appreciation for the follow-up of His Highness Brigadier Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Commander of Special Operations at the Royal Guard.

General Shaikh Rashid commended the broad participation and strong engagement of the young participants, praising the high standard of the Gadeha Junior camp.

He said the camp is being held at an appropriate time and reflects Bahrain's commitment to strengthening national identity

and promoting the values of loyalty and belonging.

The minister emphasised the important role of specialised programmes and national projects in preparing young people for the future, noting their responsibility in developing a generation capable of assuming responsibility and contributing to the Kingdom.

He added that the camp's programmes help reinforce citizenship, loyalty and belonging, while developing teamwork and practical skills that can positively influence participants' futures and enable them to contribute effectively to serving Bahrain.

Vietnam Independence Day



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa sent a cable of congratulations to President To Lam of the friendly Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the occasion of Vietnam's Independence Day.

His Majesty conveyed his warmest congratulations and wished President To Lam continued health and happiness.

He also expressed his best wishes to the Vietnamese people for further progress and prosperity.

Bahrain, Bhutan Bilateral Cooperation



Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani received, via video-conference, a copy of the credentials of Phub Dorji, Ambassador-Designate of Bhutan to Bahrain, residing in Kuwait.

Dr. Al Zayani welcomed the ambassador-designate and reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment to strengthening friendship and co-operation with Bhutan and expanding bilateral ties in areas of mutual interest.

New Algeria Envoy

Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani received a copy of the credentials of Abdelmajid Amini, the designated Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to Bahrain, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Al Zayani welcomed Ambassador Amini and affirmed Bahrain's commitment to strengthening the strong fraternal relations and bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

GCC Steps Up Customs Cooperation

Gulf officials review steps to strengthen customs integration

TDI | Manama

Bahrain hosted the 18th meeting of the Executive Council of the GCC Customs Union Authority, bringing together heads and directors-general of customs authorities from GCC member states.

Bahrain Customs President Shaikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalifa welcomed the participants

and highlighted the progress made towards completing the requirements for the GCC Customs Union.

The meeting reviewed implementation steps to advance the customs union, as well as progress on a project to develop and operate a customs data exchange platform and related technical projects.

Officials also discussed measures to strengthen GCC customs

cooperation, including decisions of the Committee for Financial and Economic Cooperation and plans for awareness workshops on the GCC Authorised Economic Operator programme.

The council also reviewed issues related to combating harmful practices in international trade and improving the movement of goods through GCC customs points.



Shaikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalifa



Bahrain Condoles Nepal Over Flood Deaths



Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani with Nepal's Ambassador Tirtha Raj Wagle

Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani visited the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic

of Nepal in Bahrain to convey the Kingdom's condolences and sympathies to the government and people of Nepal following floods and landslides in several



parts of the country that resulted in deaths, injuries and missing persons.

During the visit, Dr. Al Zayani expressed sincere condolences to Nepal's Ambassador to Bahrain, Tirtha Raj Wagle, over the

victims of the flash floods that swept through Rasuwa and surrounding areas.

The Foreign Minister affirmed Bahrain's solidarity and sympathy with the Nepalese people during the tragedy, wishing a speedy recovery to the injured and safety for those still missing.

Devastating floods on the China-Nepal border have killed at least 1,050 people in Nepal, the disaster authority said on Tuesday, with nearly 4,000 more missing.
Read more on page 6-7

The 27th edition of StartUp Bahrain Pitch Series crowns “Cogman” & “Luma” as its winners

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the Kingdom of Bahrain and support the growth of startups, StartUp Bahrain, the Kingdom's leading national platform for supporting startups, powered by Tamkeen, hosted the 27th edition of StartUp Bahrain Pitch.

The event was held in the presence of H.E. Noor bint Ali Al Khulaif, Minister of Sustainable Development and Chief Executive of the Bahrain Economic Development Board, H.E. Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce and Chairman of the SME Development Board, H.E. Maha Abdulhameed Mofeez, Chief Executive of the Labour Fund “Tamkeen”, Ms. Dalal Al Ghais, Chief Executive of the Bahrain Development Bank Board, and Mr. Waleed Kanoo, member of Tamkeen's Board of directors.

The Startup Pitch series is held in collaboration with the SMEs Development Board and provides an interactive platform for entrepreneurs to showcase their ventures before a group of experts and



investors, and gain the mentorship and guidance needed to further develop their ideas and enhance their growth and expansion.

The event also showcased a group of innovative startups offering digital and technology-driven solutions across various sectors, including Vibo, a social media platform that enables users to create and share short-form content; Meem AI, an AI-powered platform to streamline operations and enhance communication; Luma, a digital health platform, and Cogman; an AI-powered business management platform.

After the participating

startups presented their projects and were evaluated by the judging panels, the winners were announced with “Cogman” awarded first place and “Luma” awarded second place.

On this occasion, Fahad Al Suwaidi from “Cogman” expressed pride in earning first place, saying:

“This achievement marks a significant milestone in our project's journey and reflects the continuous efforts made by our team to develop an innovative business model that efficiently meets market needs. Our participation in the StartUp Bahrain Pitch competition

also provided us with a valuable platform to showcase our idea to a distinguished group of experts and investors and to benefit from their constructive feedback and guidance, which will support our future growth and expansion plans.”

Second place winner, Badier Mattar from Luma, highlighted that this achievement serves as a strong incentive to continue developing the project and accelerating its growth. He added that participation in the StartUp Bahrain Pitch competition offered a valuable opportunity to showcase the project and demonstrate its potential, while fos-



tering meaningful connections with entrepreneurs, investors and startup ecosystem experts.

The event featured the participation of a group of leading speakers, experts and investors from the entrepreneurship ecosystem, including Nawaf Al Koheji, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Reete.co and keynote speaker at the event; Khalid Saad, founder and Managing Partner of Bunat Ventures; Mahmood Al Saati, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Saturn Consultants; and Laith Al Khalili, Associate Partner at Mumtalakat.

Tamkeen's support for Start-

Up Bahrain aligns with its strategic priorities for 2026, which focus on supporting initiatives with high economic impact, enhancing the competitiveness of the private sector, connecting skills with the needs of the labor market, and adopting innovative approaches to stimulate the growth and expansion of startups, contributing to the Kingdom's sustainable economic development.

For more information about StartUp Bahrain and to participate in future editions of StartUp Bahrain Pitch, follow @startupbahrain on social media.

Shura Council Hails Royal Support for Education

HM King Hamad's Address Highlights Continuity, Digital Learning and Modern Teaching



His Excellency Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh, Chairman of Shura Council



Shura Council's Services Committee



Shura Council Chairman His Excellency Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh and the Council's Services Committee, chaired by Her Excellency Dr. Jamila Mohammed Redha Al Salman, affirmed the importance of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's continued support for Bahrain's education sector as the new 2026/2027 academic year begins.

They said His Majesty's address to students reflects the Kingdom's firm commitment to sustaining education, ensuring continued academic achievement and adopting modern teaching methods.

Al Saleh praised the uninterrupted continuation of education during the previous academic year despite the Iranian attacks on Bahrain, which affected civilian facilities and

vital infrastructure. He said remote learning was activated to safeguard students and staff while ensuring education continued without interruption.

The Services Committee stressed that the education sector's flexibility in responding to exceptional circumstances demonstrated the importance of further developing educational strategies and legislation to keep pace with technological and knowledge-based developments.

Al Saleh highlighted the role of modern systems and the Educational Portal, describing remote learning as an extension of the success achieved through His Majesty's King Hamad Schools of the Future project, launched in 2005. The initiative contributed to digital empowerment and strengthened

communication between students and teachers.

The Council Chairman also praised the government, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for measures that protected citizens and residents and maintained educational services.

He welcomed students' return to classrooms, saying it reflects Bahrain's security, stability and national efforts to sustain education.

The Services Committee reaffirmed its commitment to developing education-related legislation, supporting digital transformation and ensuring the legal framework keeps pace with evolving teaching methods and national development needs.

Zeeba Askar Makes CFA History

First Bahraini appointed to represent Middle East associations

TDI | Manama

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, received Zeeba Askar, CEO of the Bahrain Association of Banks (BAB), following her election as the first Bahraini to serve as Presidents Council Representative (PCR) for the Middle East at the CFA Institute.

The newly established position represents the CFA Institute's associations in the Middle East within its global network. Shaikh Salman affirmed the competitiveness and distinction of Bahraini talent at regional and international levels, stressing



the importance of continued investment in national expertise and enhancing its representation in international professional institutions and organisations.

He said empowering national professionals contributes to strengthening Bahrain's position as a regional financial and investment centre and supports sustainable economic development.

The minister congratulated Askar on her appointment, describing it as a reflection of the competence and expertise of Bahraini professionals, particularly in the financial and investment sectors. He also highlighted Bahrain's continued support for and empowerment of national talent across various fields.

New Health Hub Coming to Salman City

Health centre will feature 14 doctors' clinics, 10 dental clinics and specialised medical departments

Works Minister Ibrahim bin Hassan Al Hawaj inspected the construction project of the Hussein Ali Yateem Health Centre in Salman City, as part of the Ministry of Works' ongoing follow-up on projects supporting primary healthcare services across Bahrain's governorates.

During the inspection tour, Minister Al Hawaj reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to completing the project in accordance with the highest technical standards and the requirements of primary healthcare infrastructure.

He said the project aims to support healthcare services provided to citizens and deliver integrated facilities capable of meeting the current and future needs of residential communities.

The minister was briefed on the progress of construction, along



with the centre's various components and facilities.

The health centre will include 14 doctors' clinics and 10 dental clinics, in addition to laboratory, radiology and physiotherapy departments for men and women. It will also feature maternal and child care clinics, a pharmacy, an emergency and nursing department, and designated parking spaces for patients and staff.

Minister Al Hawaj highlighted the project as an example of the continued partnership with the



private sector and its contribution to supporting government efforts across various sectors.

Parliament Expected to Return for Final Session in October

Final session to tackle deputy speaker vote, corporate tax, state budget and pending laws

TDТ | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

MPs face a final-session race to clear a heavy stack of laws and spending plans when Parliament returns in October, with the state budget, corporate tax and the choice of a new First Deputy Speaker high on the list.

Parliamentary sources told The Daily Tribune that the National Assembly, comprising the Council of Representatives and Shura Council, is expected to return on Sunday, October 11, for the fifth and final convening period of the current legislative term.

The return is formally called by Royal Order, in line with the Constitution, which provides for His Majesty the King to summon the National Assembly into session.

For MPs, one of the first battles will be over who takes the First Deputy Speaker's chair.

The post has been vacant since Abdulnabi Salman lost his parliamentary membership in May. The vote is expected at the first sitting of the Council of Representatives, likely on October 13. Three names have emerged as frontrunners: Dr



Council of Representatives

Hisham Al Ashiri, Financial and Economic Affairs Committee chairman Ahmed Al Salloom and MP Zainab Abdulameer.

Money will also weigh heavily on the session. The corporate tax project is expected to return to Parliament alongside the state budget, while MPs are also due to consider plans for a national fund to support small and medium-sized firms.

The Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee is meanwhile studying amendments to penalties linked to terrorism offences before the measure goes through its remaining parliamentary stages.

Another bill would slash the wait for criminal rehabilitation. For felonies, the period would

fall from two years to three months. For misdemeanours, it would drop from one year to one month.

MPs are also due to vote on a new government-drafted building law carrying fines of up to BD50,000.

Under the bill, the minister would be able to bar building work during specified hours, while the authorities could order unlawful construction to be removed.

Away from law-making, MPs are expected to press for progress on several public projects.

They include the redevelopment of Shaikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah Highway, where work is expected to begin in early 2027, upgrades to Sitra Central



MPs Bader Al Tameemi, Dr Ali Al Nuaimi and Hassan Ebrahim during a parliamentary meeting

Market and plans to improve aid for fishermen. Electricity bills will return to the political agenda too.

MPs have called for changes to the way subsidies are worked out for extended households and properties occupied by two or more Bahraini families who each qualify for support.

They are awaiting ministerial replies after asking for the system to take account of the true make-up of families living under one roof. Sources expect the final session to be crowded with laws and public-service files that have built up over recent months, as MPs try to clear as much unfinished business as possible before the current legislative term ends.

GCC Customs Union Strengthens Emergency Readiness

Interior Minister praises coordinated efforts to keep trade and supply chains moving



Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa received the heads of delegations participating in the 18th meeting of the GCC Customs Union Authority's Executive Council, held in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

At the meeting, the Interior Minister expressed his appreciation for the efforts of GCC member states to complete the requirements of the customs union, which enjoys the support of Their Majesties and Highnesses the leaders of the GCC countries.

He praised the GCC states for their coordinated response to the repercussions of the Strait of Hormuz closure, including launching an exceptional temporary logistical transit mechanism.

The mechanism played a key role in accelerating the movement of goods and ensuring the smooth flow of shipments, particularly food and medical supplies. This was achieved through the rapid exchange of information,

coordination of procedures and the unification of customs efforts, reflecting the high level of readiness among GCC countries to deal with emergency situations and maintain the continuity of trade and supply chains.

The Interior Minister stressed that the next phase requires accelerating progress and further developing joint GCC efforts in light of successive challenges to complete the establishment of the customs union and translate its objectives into reality.

He also highlighted the role of customs systems and procedures in improving the efficiency of border crossings, securing supply chains, and safeguarding the security, safety, and economic interests of GCC countries.

During the meeting, the Interior Minister commended the efforts of the GCC Customs Union Authority and its role in completing the requirements for establishing the customs union and advancing joint Gulf customs cooperation.

A New Chapter in Bahrain's Cancer Care

P3 HIPEC system installed at Bahrain Oncology Centre for the first time



TDТ | Manama

The Royal Medical Services (RMS) has introduced advanced medical technologies and equipment for cancer treatment at the Bahrain Oncology Centre, including the P3 HIPEC system, installed for the first time in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Commander of the Royal Medical Services, Major General Dr. Shaikh Fahad bin Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, said that advancing cancer treatment capabilities and strengthening specialised services remain among the priorities of the Royal Medical Services, in line with global developments in medical care and efforts to enhance the quality of healthcare provided to patients.

He highlighted the introduction of advanced treatment technologies, including Hyperthermic Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy (HIPEC), as re-

flecting the continued development of the Royal Medical Services' specialised medical capabilities and its commitment to providing advanced treatment options in accordance with the highest standards.

He noted that the successful completion of the first surgical procedure using HIPEC at the Bahrain Oncology Centre to treat ovarian cancer represents a significant medical achievement, reflecting the integration of national and international expertise, as well as the centre's medical and technological readiness.

Dr. Shaikh Fahad affirmed that continued investment in modern technologies and the development of specialised medical expertise would further strengthen Bahrain's capabilities in providing advanced cancer treatment services.

The Royal Medical Services said the P3 HIPEC system is being introduced in Bahrain for the first time, making the

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Bahrain performs its first ovarian cancer surgery using HIPEC, marking a major advance in specialised cancer care.

Kingdom the second country in the Middle East to have access to this specialised system and further strengthening the advanced treatment services available at the Bahrain Oncology Centre.

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MPs Urge Focus on AI Skills and National Identity

Lawmakers say students must be ready for an AI-driven future while teachers remain key to raising the next generation

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Schools must prepare young Bahrainis for an AI-driven future without losing sight of national identity, MPs have said as students return for the 2026 - 27 academic year.

MP Maryam Al Sayegh said His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's message for the new school year made clear that education was the best way to build the country's future.

She said the King had placed citizenship, belonging, skills, teachers and the family at the core of learning, making education a shared duty between schools, homes and society.

Ms Al Sayegh said the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for schools, technical education and new methods of teaching was helping prepare students for the years ahead.

She pointed in particular to giving students access to artificial intelligence and innovation tools.

MP Dr Hassan Bukhammas, Chairman of Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence, and National Security Committee said education lay at the root of a country's progress and should help raise Bahrainis who are proud of their identity and armed with knowledge.

He said the King's message also placed teachers in a key role, while calling for school curricula to keep pace with



year had required close work across the Education Ministry to ready schools and provide a suitable environment for students and staff. 'We renew our confidence in the abilities of our teachers,' he said. 'They are partners in building the future.'

The MPs also praised Education Minister Dr Mohammed Juma and ministry staff for prepa-



Education must build pride in national identity and knowledge.

DR HASSAN BUKHAMMAS, CHAIRMAN OF PARLIAMENT'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE, AND NATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE



Teachers are partners in building Bahrain's future.

MP JALAL KADHEM



AI and innovation skills are essential for our students' future.

MP MARYAM AL SAYEGH

modern technology and for closer ties between parents and schools.

Dr Bukhammas said work on school buildings, digital learning and future skills was helping improve what pupils gain from their education.

MP Jalal Kadhem said teachers remained central to building Bahrain's future, praising their role in raising new generations and instilling knowledge, belonging and a sense of responsibility.

He said the start of the school

rations ahead of the school year, including readying schools for students.

They congratulated students, teachers, school staff and parents on the start of the academic year and wished them success in the months ahead.

Powers Ahead in Digital Innovation



TDT | Manama

Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa participated in the opening session of LEAP 2026 in Riyadh, alongside Saudi Minister of Communications and Information Technology Abdullah bin Amer Al Swaha.

The session featured a presentation by HUMAIN, along with keynote speeches addressing artificial intelligence, digital transformation, innovation and the future of emerging technologies.

Dr. Shaikh Abdullah highlighted Bahrain's continued efforts to strengthen its position in the global digital economy and establish the Kingdom as an attractive environment for innovation, investment and advanced technologies.

He said these efforts are

supported by advanced digital infrastructure, national expertise and effective international partnerships.

The minister stressed the importance of continually adopting modern technologies and artificial intelligence to support economic growth, enhance the competitiveness of various sectors and create broader opportunities for high-quality and sustainable investment.

He also underscored the importance of strengthening international cooperation and developing partnerships in technology, telecommunications and artificial intelligence.

Such cooperation, he said, would facilitate the exchange of expertise and experiences with governments, institutions and leading technology companies, enabling Bahrain to keep pace with global technological developments and benefit from innovative solutions and practices.



During his visit, the minister toured the LEAP 2026 exhibition

Bahrain, Japan Discuss Stronger Economic Ties

Talks focused on economic cooperation, investment opportunities and global economic developments

TDT | Manama

Bahrain and Japan reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening economic, trade and investment cooperation during a meeting between senior officials from both countries.

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, received Kenji Yamada, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, in Manama.

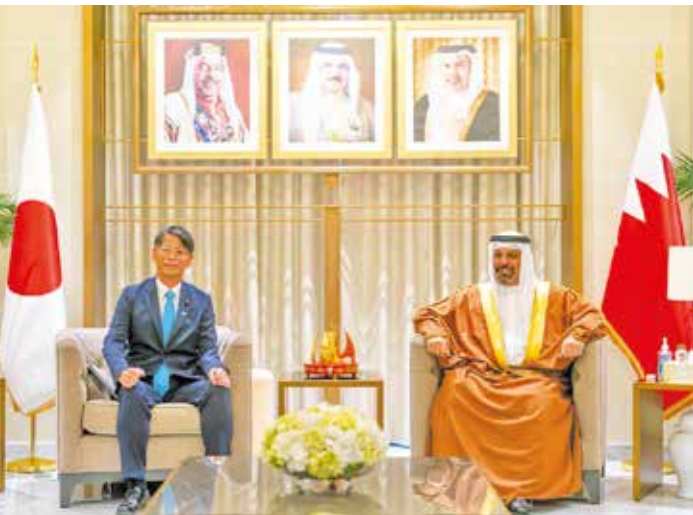
The meeting was also attended by Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce.

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa highlighted the deep-rooted

relations between Bahrain and Japan and the shared interest in further developing bilateral ties across various fields, particularly in the economic, trade and investment sectors.

He stressed the importance of building on the progress made in cooperation and coordination between the two countries, supported by existing agreements and their distinguished partnership, to advance shared objectives and deliver mutual benefits for Bahrain, Japan and their peoples.

The meeting also reviewed areas of economic, trade and investment cooperation, with discussions focusing on promising investment opportuni-



ties, issues of common interest and the latest developments in the global economy.

Shaikh Abdullah bin Khalifa

Al Khalifa, CEO of Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company, and Asako Oka, Ambassador of Japan to Bahrain.

BDF Chief of Staff Receives Kuwaiti Military Attaché



Lieutenant General Theyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, Chief of Staff of the Bahrain Defence Force, received Brigadier General Musaed Haji Raja Al Khayat Al Azmi, Military Attaché at the Embassy of Kuwait to Bahrain. Lieutenant General Al Nuaimi welcomed the Kuwaiti military attaché and expressed appreciation for the strong and longstanding fraternal relations between Bahrain and Kuwait. The meeting highlighted the close ties between the two brotherly countries and their continued cooperation and shared relations.

Traffic Directorate Briefs Student Transport Drivers



The General Directorate of Traffic has organised awareness lectures for student transport drivers in the government and private sectors as part of preparations for the new academic year, focusing on safe transportation practices and compliance with traffic regulations. The directorate stressed the importance of observing speed limits, carrying only the authorised number of passengers and using designated parking and drop-off areas. Drivers were also urged to cooperate with Community Police officers and school guards to help organise traffic and improve safety around schools. The directorate called on parents to avoid hiring unlicensed drivers and to ensure student transport operators hold the required licence from the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications.

Commander-in-Chief Receives Supreme Health Council Chairman



Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), received Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Health yesterday. The BDF Commander-in-Chief welcomed the Supreme Council of Health Chairman and praised the council's efforts in managing medical services and healthcare in Bahrain. He highlighted the continued support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and the follow-up of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Prime Minister. Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa also commended the council's continued efforts to develop healthcare institutions and medical systems and improve their quality to keep pace with advancements in the vital sector and better serve citizens and residents.

Bahrain, Jordan Reaffirm Strong Defence Relations



Lieutenant General Theyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, Chief of Staff of the Bahrain Defence Force, received Brigadier General Jihad Hamoud Omair Al Adwan, Military Attaché at the Embassy of Jordan to Bahrain. The Chief of Staff welcomed the Jordanian military attaché and praised the strong fraternal relations between Bahrain and Jordan. The meeting underscored the close ties linking the two brotherly countries and their continued cooperation.

Alba Invests in Bahrain's Future Workforce Through Record OJT Participation



TDT | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain B.S.C. (Alba) hosted a ceremony for students who completed the Company's On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programmes in 2026, reaffirming its commitment to investing in the next generation of Bahraini professionals with practical industry exposure at the world's largest aluminium smelter on one site.

Alba's Chief Executive Officer,

Ali Al Baqali, along with executives and senior officials, attended the recognition ceremony held on 31 August 2026 at the Company's Oasis Hall to celebrate the trainees' dedication and commitment throughout their OJT placements.

Despite regional challenges earlier in the year, Alba successfully maintained its OJT programme and expanded participation across technical and corporate functions. By the end of August 2026, Alba had enrolled 312 trainees, up

from 300 during the same period in 2025, representing a 4% year-on-year increase. Female trainees accounted for approximately 38% of the total intake, reflecting Alba's continued efforts to foster a broader participation across its workforce development initiatives.

As a responsible corporate citizen, Alba continues to invest in education and youth development as key enablers of Bahrain's long-term economic growth. Alba's OJT programme forms part of the

Company's long-standing partnership with Bahrain's education ecosystem, helping bridge the gap between academic learning and workplace readiness while contributing to the development of a highly skilled national workforce. Notably, 99% of participants were enrolled from Bahrain-based universities and schools, reinforcing Alba's role in supporting local talent development and advancing the Kingdom's human capital agenda.



NBB's Multi-Currency feature on its Debit Card Offers Customers the Chance to Win a Premium Travel Experience

TDT | Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has launched a campaign for its recently introduced Multi-Currency Debit Card feature, offering customers the opportunity to win a travel package to any destination around the world as the grand prize.

Running from 1st September to 30th November 2026, the campaign will give customers the chance to enter the draw by activating the Multi-Currency feature on their Debit Card and using the card for eligible international transactions. Whether travelling abroad or shopping online, customers can turn their routine overseas purchases into a chance to make their next dream getaway a reality.

With every eligible international transaction worth BHD 100 or its equivalent through their Multi-Currency Debit

Card, customers will automatically secure one raffle entry into the draw. Once their total spend exceeds BHD 1,000 or the corresponding value, their raffle entries will double with customers earning two raffle entries for every additional BHD 100 spent.

Commenting on the occasion, Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Chief Executive – Retail Banking at NBB, stated, "We are delighted to launch this campaign which combines the convenience of our Multi-Currency feature with rewards for international transactions. It provides a seamless payment experience when travelling or shopping online, meeting our customers' needs wherever they are."

For further details, customers can visit nbbonline.com, call 17214433, or enquire at any NBB branch. To activate the new Multi-Currency feature, customers can simply apply through the NBB App.



UK Chargé d'Affaires Visits the Bahrain Economic Development Board



TDT | Manama

Her Excellency Noor bint Ali Alkhulaif, Minister of Sustainable Development, Chief Executive of the Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB), alongside senior officials from Bahrain EDB's management team, today received His Excellency Simon Martin CMG, Chargé d'Affaires of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

During the meeting, Her Excellency highlighted the deep-rooted relationship between the

Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Kingdom, underpinned by strong economic and trade ties. She noted the continued momentum in bilateral cooperation, with both countries working to strengthen connections and create new opportunities for investment and partnerships across various sectors, supported by the UK-GCC trade agreement.

She also highlighted Bahrain's resilient business environment, agile regulatory framework, and highly skilled workforce as key strengths that can support future cooperation and create new opportunities for businesses and investors across both markets.

1.129m sqm Expansion Planned Near Khalifa Port

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

A planned 1.129 million-square-metre land reclamation beside Khalifa Bin Salman Port is set to greatly expand the industrial and logistics belt around one of Bahrain's main sea gateways.

The scheme will require about 9.665 million cubic metres of sand to reclaim 1,129,100 square metres along Avenue 13, according to a Ministry of Works tender opened on Monday.

Rock revetments will also be built around the reclaimed land as part of the expansion of Salman Industrial City and the Bahrain Logistics Zone.

Once the work is finished, part of the new platform will be handed to the Ministry of In-

dustry and Commerce and the rest to the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications, based on the survey certificate.

The sheer size of the planned reclamation gives an idea of the scale of the scheme. The new platform alone will be larger than the existing Bahrain Logistics Zone, which covers about one square kilometre.

It will not, however, all become part of the logistics zone. The land will be split between the two ministries, opening up room for both industrial and logistics uses beside the port.

Five firms are competing for the engineering and quantity surveying consultancy contract, with bids ranging from BD778,580 to BD1.083 million.



Dar SSH International Engineering Consultants submitted the lowest bid, at BD778,580. AECOM Middle East Limited offered BD841,182, followed by Ansari Engineering Services at BD883,605 and Millet Engineering Bureau at BD912,890.

AYESA BL Ireland International

Limited submitted the highest bid, at BD1,082,840.

All five offers were accepted at the bid-opening stage. They must still go through technical and financial assessment, and the Tender Board makes clear that the lowest bidder does not automatically win the contract.

The Ministry of Works has given the consultancy contract a 44-month term. It covers engineering advice and quantity surveying before and after the main reclamation contract is awarded, including the land-fill and rock protection works. The project would add a large new tract of land to an area already packed with factories, warehouses and port-linked businesses.

Salman Industrial City includes Hidd Industrial Area and Bahrain International Investment Park. The Bahrain Logistics Zone sits alongside Khalifa Bin Salman Port and caters to firms working in storage, distribution, re-export and logistics.

The logistics zone opened in 2008, giving businesses close

links to sea, road and air freight routes.

The land scheme also fits with the Industrial Sector Strategy 2022-2026, which calls for investment in industrial infrastructure, stronger supply chains, higher locally made exports and greater industrial output.

Salman Industrial City has drawn several large projects in recent years. About 107,000 square metres at Bahrain International Investment Park was allocated to the Bahrain Sugar Refinery, a project worth about BD70 million.

The reclamation scheme, once it reaches the building stage, would give the area beside Khalifa Bin Salman Port far greater room for factories, warehouses, distribution businesses and other port-linked projects.

Philippine couple married in hip-deep floodwaters



Bride Leian Lieza Galang walking down the aisle during her wedding ceremony in a flooded church in Hagonoy town.

AFP | Manila, Philippines

A Philippine couple tied the knot yesterday at a Catholic church swamped in hip-deep waters, as heavy rains have pummelled large parts of the country for a month.

Clutching a bouquet of white blooms and clad in an off-shoulder white gown, Leian Lieza Galang gingerly waded into the murky brown floodwaters inside the Saint John the Baptist church in Hagonoy town, north of Manila, to wed Gilbert Chico.

"We were in complete uniform. We did not mind that our gown and coat got soaked," the groom told AFP.

The parish priest declared the couple, both in their 30s, husband and wife at an abbreviated late-morning ceremony,

said wedding photographer Mikko Rey Alfonso.

"The parish had advised them to postpone the wedding due to the rising floodwaters from upstream. It was their decision to proceed," Alfonso told AFP, adding the church had been partially underwater for nearly a month.

"Since they wanted to see it through, we the servants of the parish did the best we could to make this a special day for them." Heavier-than-usual seasonal monsoon rains pounded the northern third of the mainly Catholic archipelago in August, with resulting landslides and flash floods killing 34 people, according to the latest official tally.

"They love each other. Nothing could stop their union," Alfonso said.

NATO will defend against 'any threat', Rutte says

Brussels, Belgium

NATO chief Mark Rutte yesterday vowed the alliance's "full solidarity" with Berlin, after the German government said Moscow was behind an incident involving an explosive-laden drone at Leipzig airport last month.

"NATO will continue to strengthen our ability to

deter and defend all Allies against any threat -- including malign actions like those seen in Leipzig and elsewhere across the Alliance," Rutte wrote on X after talks with Chancellor Friedrich Merz.

"Russia's attempts to intimidate us, to undermine our unity and our willingness to support Ukraine are futile and will fail," he added.

Israeli settlers try to torch West Bank mosque, Palestinians say

AFP | Bazzaryah, Palestinian Territories

Israeli settlers tried to set fire to a mosque in the north of the occupied West Bank yesterday, Palestinians said, in the latest such attack in the territory.

The Palestinian ministry of religious affairs said that "a group of settlers tried to burn parts of the Nur al-Din Zanki Mosque" in Bazzaryah, near Nablus, describing the incident as a "criminal attack".

AFP photos and video from Bazzaryah showed blackened burn marks around a window of a room belonging to the mosque building and threatening Hebrew messages written on the exterior walls.

"At around 2:45 am, all of a sudden the settlers attacked it. There was a small explosion that caused a fire inside the



A man stands by graffiti in Hebrew left by Israeli settlers following a reported arson attack on a mosque in the Palestinian village of Bazzaryah

mosque building," said Majed Nasr, who lives nearby, adding that the settlers then fled the scene.

"We managed to contain the blaze before things could get worse and reach the main upper part of the building," he told AFP.

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment on the incident.

Xi arrives in Egypt as US sanctions threat looms over Iran links

AFP | Cairo, Egypt

Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Egypt yesterday on a rare trip to the Middle East as both countries face the threat of US sanctions over financial links to Iran.

Xi and his wife were greeted on the tarmac by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and the first lady, as well as a performance by an Egyptian folk dance troupe.

The two-day visit comes as both countries seek to manage



the fallout of the months-long Middle East war, which began when the United States and Is-

rael launched strikes against Iran on February 28, throwing the crucial trade region into

crisis.

Xi's visit "comes at a time when China's economic interests are directly exposed to the US-Iran war", said Gamal Salama, political science professor at Egypt's Suez University.

China, a major buyer of Iranian oil, has presented itself as a neutral party in the Middle East conflict, repeatedly calling for a lasting ceasefire.

Both China and Egypt support an independent Palestinian state as part of a two-state solution.

China-Nepal toll tops 1,000 as tunnel rescue offers last hope



Six-year-old Manisha Magar was pulled alive from beneath mud and rubble in Timure after being trapped for hours.

AFP | Nuwakot, Nepal

The death toll from devastating Himalayan glacial floods crossed the grim 1,000 mark yesterday, as Chinese and Nepali teams searched for survivors including dozens feared trapped in hydropower tunnels.

Nearly 4,500 people are missing after the gigantic wave of freezing water, rocks and debris triggered by a high-altitude glacial collapse roared downstream on Wednesday, wiping out entire settlements and carving a path of destruction across Nepal.

Nepali rescue teams are digging, drilling and blasting through debris in a desperate race against time to free around 100 hydropower workers believed trapped in multiple tunnels.



Nepal Army personnel arrive by helicopters to provide medical treatment for flood affected people in Nepal's Rasuwa district



The 2026 Nepal disaster was initially reported as a magnitude 4.4 earthquake, but the US Geological Survey later determined that the seismic signal was generated by a massive landslide/glacial collapse – not an earthquake. The slope failure released energy equivalent to about a magnitude 5.2 earthquake, and the resulting debris flow travelled roughly 100 kilometres downstream

So far, rescuers have recovered only bodies from tunnels blocked by sludge, and hopes of finding survivors are fading.

Excavators worked into the night on Tuesday, but an army update noted that "a large amount of water started flowing" into a hole they were digging, forcing them to start a new opening.

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah has called the catastrophe "unimaginable and heartbreaking".

With mortuaries overflow-

ing in Nepal, authorities have begun burying hundreds of unidentified bodies after DNA sampling.

At least 17 bodies have also been pulled from rivers downstream in India.

Police, using a drone to search for survivors, said on Tuesday that they had located 24 corpses inside a single house in Nuwakot district.

Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal said he still hoped some of the thousands missing could be alive.

"Miracles do happen," he told

AFP in an interview. "At this point, I do not want to completely give up hope."

Aid needs are enormous. Entire communities have been swept away, leaving families homeless and using makeshift shelters as heavy rain lashes down.

Roads and dozens of bridges have been smashed, and power plants destroyed.

"There are too many challenges," said police officer E. Hawadi in badly affected Nuwakot district.

Netanyahu says Israel captured head of Hamas internal security in Gaza

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that Israeli forces captured the head of Hamas's internal security apparatus in Gaza, without giving his name.

Israel's Shin Bet inter-

nal security agency and the military "in a daring operation today arrested the head of Hamas's internal security apparatus near his home in Gaza... He is one of the most senior Hamas leaders," Netanyahu said, according to a statement released by his office.

Germany says will close Russia's Bonn consulate, Berlin cultural centre

Berlin, Germany

airport.

Foreign Minister Johann Wadepful said that "the Russian general consulate in Bonn will be closed by September 18" and added that "the lease for the Russian House in Berlin will be cancelled".

The German government announced yesterday it would shut Russia's consulate in Bonn and its cultural centre in Berlin after saying Moscow was responsible for a drone incident at a strategic

31 BC

Battle of Actium: Octavian's (later Augustus) naval forces defeat those under Mark Antony and Cleopatra off the western coast of Greece; naval battle leading to the end of the Roman Republic

1192

Sultan Saladin and King Richard the Lionheart of England sign the Treaty of Jaffa ending the Third Crusade in a compromise neither is happy with; treaty leaves Jerusalem under Islamic control with Christian pilgrimage rights and restores the Kingdom of Jerusalem



1666

Great Fire of London begins at 2am at a baker's shop in Pudding Lane, destroying 80% of London

1864

US Civil War: Union General William T. Sherman captures and occupies Atlanta, Georgia, ending the Atlanta Campaign in the US Civil War

X

TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Sad days for the @WHO family, with the sudden passing of Dr Vasee Moorthy. Vasee joined WHO in 2009 and made a major contribution to advancing the Organization's work on clinical trials, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

@DrTedros

02



This morning I spoke with Chancellor Merz to discuss the hybrid attack at Leipzig airport. I assured him that the EU stands in full solidarity with Germany in the face of this attack by Russia. We will keep the EU united despite these escalating and serious acts. The German government has taken strong measures. And the message is clear: hybrid attacks will not go without a clear response.

@vonderleyen

03



It's time to look at the SCO agenda for the next 25 years. India's position is clear...We must transform our shared geography into shared opportunities. We must work on the three pillars of Security, Connectivity and Opportunity.

@narendramodi

04



Today we celebrate the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. This marks the beginning of the Season of Creation – observed by Christians of various denominations – whose theme this year is “Living Water.”

@Pontifex

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

Health risks soaring in Gaza as rainy season nears: WHO

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

The approaching rainy season risks worsening a dire public health crisis in Gaza, where most people live in overcrowded tent camps amid rubble and overflowing sewage, the WHO warned yesterday.

The World Health Organization warned that there had already been a clear deterioration in the quality of water reaching the population in recent months, while the number of diarrhoea cases had surged. “Whilst we fail to provide

people with the minimum quantities of water, water quality and water contamination remains a major issue,” said Reinilde Van de Weerd, the WHO’s representative in the Palestinian territories.

Gaza has been engulfed in a devastating health and humanitarian crisis since Israel launched its war in the territory following Hamas’s unprecedented October 7, 2023 attack inside Israel.

Despite a US-backed ceasefire that took effect in October 2025, violence has not halted in

the Gaza Strip, and Israel continues to impose significant restrictions on the entry of goods, including medical equipment and fuel.

In April, Doctors Without Borders said that Israel was using water access as a “weapon” in Gaza, pointing to data from the United Nations, European Union and World Bank indicating that Israel had destroyed or damaged nearly 90 percent of water and sanitation infrastructure in the territory.

Israel slammed the report at the time.

Qatar urges US, Iran to resume talks after flare-up

● Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran would “immediately” reciprocate if the United States returned to a June deal aimed at ending their war.

AFP | Doha, Qatar



Iranians swim at Suru Beach in Bandar Abbas along the Strait of Hormuz.

Al Ansari told a regular press briefing.

“This is precisely what we have witnessed over the past two days,” he said.

“We urge the parties to exercise wisdom and return to the negotiating path, and we continue to intensify our efforts with our mediation partners to ensure a return to that path.”

Earlier on Tuesday, Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran would “immediately” reciprocate if the United States returned to a June deal aimed at ending their war.

“In Qatar, in the region, in the world today, we cannot afford to accept the status quo,” Al Ansari said.

“Discussions with our mediation partners -- whether in Pakistan or Oman -- are ongoing,” he added.

Last week, Qatar’s Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani travelled to Tehran as part of the mediation efforts, after Iran and Oman, which border the key strait, said they were discussing a temporary shipping corridor and the clearance of mines.

SCO Summit: Iran signals response if US revives June deal



TDT | agencies

At the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Bishkek, Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian warned that Tehran would respond immediately if the United States returns to a June agreement aimed at ending their conflict.

Pezeshkian said Iran would take “reciprocal action” if Washington rejoined the deal, while warning that renewed US pressure and threats could derail diplomacy.

The remarks came as more than a dozen leaders gathered for the SCO summit, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On the sidelines, Pezeshkian held talks with Putin and thanked Moscow for its support, calling the Russia-Iran relationship strategic.

Putin, in turn, praised Iran’s “courage and resilience” and said Russia would continue providing assistance while maintaining momen-

tum in trade and economic ties.

The summit also highlighted the growing influence of the SCO as Russia and China push for what Putin described as a “multipolar world” alongside the United Nations.

With tensions between Washington and Tehran rising again, the SCO summit has become an important diplomatic stage — putting Iran’s ties with Russia and China, and the future of negotiations with the US, firmly in focus.

Norway’s King Haakon VIII swears allegiance to constitution



AFP | Oslo, Norway

Norway’s King Haakon VIII took an oath before parliament yesterday, the first major institutional step of his reign, though his wife, still convalescing after a lung transplant, was unable to attend.

Dressed in a ceremonial uniform, the 53-year-old Haakon, who became king when his father King Harald V died on Friday morning aged 89, swore to abide by the Scandinavian country’s constitution, under which the royals have a primarily symbolic function.

“I promise and swear that I will govern the Kingdom of Norway in accordance with

its Constitution and Laws, so help me God, the almighty and omniscient,” he recited in the parliament’s main chamber.

Haakon’s wife Queen Mette-Marit, 53, was not beside her husband as she is still recovering from her June 17 transplant.

Are Holm, head of the Pulmonary Department at Oslo University Hospital, said in a statement from the palace that complications after a transplant are not “uncommon”.

“The queen has had complications on several occasions since the operation, including today,” Holm said.

“As a result, the queen must be kept under observation throughout the day,” he continued.

Bihar showcases Future-Ready Power sector at Bharat Electricity 2026

TDT | New Delhi

MW by FY 2037.

Bihar showcased its rapidly transforming, technology-driven power sector at Bharat Electricity 2026 in New Delhi, with Energy Minister Shailesh Kumar alias Bulu Mandal delivering the keynote address on “Energy Sovereignty for a Climate-Resilient Viksit Bharat.”

The Minister inaugurated the Bihar Power Pavilion, highlighting the State’s progress in clean energy, storage, smart metering, digital transformation and long-term energy security. Addressing the gathering, he said energy sovereignty goes beyond increasing generation capacity and requires a secure, reliable, affordable, clean and climate-resilient energy ecosystem.

Bihar has emerged as a national leader in smart metering, with more than 94 lakh smart prepaid meters installed. Technology-led reforms have improved billing transparency and energy accounting, while AT&C losses have fallen from around 59–60% to below 11.54%.

The State has also met a record peak electricity demand of 9,475 MW, with demand projected to reach around 19,033

As part of its clean-energy push, Bihar plans to provide free 1.1 kW rooftop solar systems to 2.5 lakh eligible BPL households, helping consumers become more energy self-reliant.

The Bihar Power Pavilion showcased several major projects, including a proposed 1,200 MW/7,308 MWh pumped storage plant in Nawada and solar-plus-storage projects in Lakhisarai. These include 301 MW of solar PV capacity supported by a 523 MWh battery energy storage system at Kajra.

The State is also exploring long-term nuclear energy operations as part of a diversified energy-security strategy.

The Minister stressed the importance of climate-resilient power infrastructure, particularly as Bihar faces floods, droughts, storms and other extreme weather events.

Making a pitch to investors, he said Bihar is undergoing rapid transformation and invited businesses to join the State’s development journey.

“Come to Bihar, not merely as investors, but as our partners,” he said, promising support and an enabling environment for growth.



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region

Saudi Crown Prince, Oman’s Sultan discuss regional security in Jeddah



Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman met Oman’s Sultan Haitham bin Tariq in Jeddah on Tuesday, with the two leaders discussing bilateral relations and regional developments.

During the meeting, the leaders reviewed the close and longstanding ties between Saudi Arabia and Oman, as well as areas of cooperation and opportunities to further strengthen relations across various sectors.

They also exchanged views on developments in the region

and ongoing efforts to safeguard regional security and stability.

The meeting brought together senior officials from both countries, reflecting the breadth of Saudi-Omani cooperation. The Saudi delegation included Energy and Industry and Mineral Resources Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Commerce Minister Dr Majid Al-Qasabi, Tourism Minister Ahmed Al-Khateeb, Transport and Logistics Minister Eng Saleh Al-Jasser and Investment Minister Fahad Al-Saif.

Other senior Saudi officials attending included Deputy Emir of Makkah Region Prince Saud bin Mishal, General Intelligence President Khalid Al-Humaidan and Saudi Ambassador to Oman Ibrahim bin Saad bin Bishan.

The Omani delegation included Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs Sayyid Shihab bin Tariq Al Said, Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Interior Minister Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal Al Busaidi and Minister of the Royal Office Gen Sultan bin Mohammed Al

Numani.

The delegation also included Oman Investment Authority President Abdulsalam Al Murschidi, Transport, Communications and Information Technology Minister Eng Said bin Hamoud Al Maawali, Energy and Minerals Minister Eng Salim bin Nasser Al Aufi and Oman’s Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Najib bin Hilal Al Busaidi.

The meeting comes as Riyadh and Muscat continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation on bilateral and regional issues.

Syria reaffirms commitment to diplomatic solution with Israel

Syria remains committed to pursuing a diplomatic solution with Israel through US-mediated negotiations, Foreign Minister Asaad Al-Shaibani said on Tuesday, despite continuing Israeli military activity inside Syrian territory.

Speaking at a press conference in Damascus alongside Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, Al-Shaibani said Syrian authorities remained focused on diplomacy while calling for Israel to withdraw from territory it occupies in southern Syria and from a UN-monitored buffer zone seized in late 2024.



Asaad Al-Shaibani, Syrian Foreign Minister

He said Syria recorded 65 Israeli incursions in July and 52 during the first 18 days of August in Quneitra province and areas around Damascus. Israeli forces also detained 147 Syrians, 49 of whom remain in custody, he said.

“Despite these challenges, we are still committed to the option of a diplomatic solution,” Al-Shaibani said, adding that negotiations were being mediated by the United States.

The comments came during Rasmussen’s visit to Damascus, where the two ministers discussed strengthening bilateral relations and a proposed partnership covering agriculture, energy, aviation, investment and migration.

Rasmussen’s visit followed Denmark’s reopening of its embassy in Damascus after 14

years, making it the first Scandinavian country to restore diplomatic representation in Syria.

Al-Shaibani welcomed the move as a sign of renewed engagement between Syria and its European partners and thanked Denmark for its support for Syria’s recovery and reconstruction.

The ministers also confirmed that direct flights between Damascus and Copenhagen are scheduled to begin on September 21.

Earlier, Rasmussen met Syria’s interim President Ahmad Al-Sharaa at the People’s Palace, with discussions focusing on investment, trade, science and culture.

Denmark’s diplomatic reopening comes as Syria continues efforts to rebuild following the civil war that began in 2011 and ended with the fall of Bashar Assad’s government in December 2024.

EU members ready to support new Lebanon security mission



EU Foreign Policy Chief Kaja Kallas and Irish Foreign Minister Helen McEntee attend a press conference in Wicklow, Ireland, on September 1, 2026

More than 10 European Union member states have expressed their willingness to provide personnel and resources for a proposed EU mission to advise and train Lebanon’s Internal Security Forces (ISF), EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said.

Speaking in Brussels on Monday, Kallas said the mission would aim to strengthen the ISF and help Lebanese authorities respond more effectively to security challenges.

“The mission is intended to strengthen the Internal Security Forces,” Kallas said, stressing the importance of coordinated international support for Lebanon’s security sector.

The proposed initiative comes as the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is due to expire at the end of 2026. EU officials said the proposed mission would complement existing international efforts to strengthen Lebanon’s security institutions.

The ISF and Lebanese army have faced growing pressure amid political and economic instability and continuing security challenges. The EU initiative is intended to provide long-term advisory and training support and improve the operational capabilities of Lebanon’s security forces.

Regional analyst Fadi Assaf of the Carnegie Middle East Center has suggested that strengthening the ISF could help the Lebanese army focus on efforts to disarm Hezbollah. However, the view has not been officially endorsed by the Lebanese government or military.

The EU has yet to announce a deployment date or provide details on the specific contributions from member states. Discussions remain ongoing among EU institutions and governments as plans for the mission develop.

Qatar urges US, Iran to return to negotiations

Qatar urged the United States and Iran to return to negotiations following renewed attacks between the two sides, warning that continued tensions could trigger further regional escalation.

Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed Al-Ansari said the latest clashes showed the dangers of leaving the dispute unresolved, particularly



Majed Al-Ansari, Qatar’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson

through the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

The comments followed a US strike on an Iranian island in the Strait on Sunday, followed by Iranian attacks on US military targets in the Middle East.

Qatar called on both sides to exercise restraint and return to negotiations, while continuing mediation efforts with partners including Pakistan and Oman.

Iranian President Masoud

Pezeshkian said Tehran would immediately reciprocate if Washington returned to a June agreement aimed at ending the conflict.

Qatar’s Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani recently visited Tehran as part of diplomatic efforts. Iran and Oman are also discussing a temporary shipping corridor and mine clearance in the Strait.

TechZone

Big Tech's Reckoning Bill

Meta, TikTok Hit With Billions in Settlements Over Child Safety

Meta and TikTok have agreed, within days of each other, to pay a combined \$18.4 billion over claims that their platforms harmed children and violated young users' privacy — settlements experts say could reshape how apps for minors are built. Meta, parent of Facebook and Instagram, accounts for most of that sum. It agreed to pay up to \$18 billion to settle claims from nearly every US state that it knowingly built addictive features for kids and teens while downplaying the risks. The deal came mid-trial in California, letting Meta avoid further courtroom disclosures. The company denies wrongdoing. Beyond the payout, Meta must overhaul the teen experience on



Instagram and Facebook: a default two-hour daily limit, nighttime restrictions, quieter school-hours notifications, tighter age checks and stronger parental controls. Teens will also lose visibility of like counts and certain filters tied to compulsive use. Only about 70 percent of the \$18 billion is guaranteed — the rest depends on rivals like TikTok and YouTube adopting similar protections and paying in too. TikTok's settlement, reached

days earlier, is smaller but no less pointed: \$400 million to the Justice Department over claims it let children under 13 onto the platform and collected their data without parental consent. TikTok will boost age verification and parental oversight, without admitting fault. Together, the cases mark a shift from policing content to policing design — algorithms, notifications and engagement features built to keep young users scrolling. Meta's settlement is expected to set a precedent for looming cases against YouTube and Snapchat. Critics, including states that rejected the Meta deal, say money alone won't fix the problem — and that real change will require binding regulation, not settlements.



Vivo X500 Pro Max teased with 6.85-inch 2K display

Vivo has revealed new details about its upcoming X500 Pro Max, with the flagship set to feature a 6.85-inch BOE Q11 2K display. The company claims the new panel can reduce motion blur by 93% compared with the previous-generation display, while improving colour uniformity by 43% and brightness uniformity by 22%. Despite offering higher 2K resolution, Vivo says the screen consumes 21% less power than its previous 1.5K panel and has twice the expected lifespan. The display will also feature an under-display multispectral sensor designed to improve automatic brightness adjustment by detecting different light conditions and colour temperatures. Beyond the display, the X500 Pro Max is expected to feature a 2nm MediaTek Dimensity chipset and a 200-megapixel ZEISS super-telephoto camera. Vivo is expected to reveal more specifications ahead of the phone's official launch, with the X500 series expected to debut in China soon.

Five Android Camera Tricks the iPhone 18 Pro Should Just Copy Already

Apple's September 9 event is almost here, and the iPhone 18 Pro line is expected to headline it — cameras and all. The iPhone 17 Pro already held its own against the Galaxy S26 Ultra and even a professional cinema camera, so Apple isn't starting from behind. But after spending 15 years testing phones from every major brand, I keep coming back to the same thought: some of the best camera ideas right now aren't on the iPhone. Here's what Apple should borrow before it's too late. Start with the sensor. Xiaomi's Leica Leitzphone — my pick for the best camera phone I've ever used — packs a much larger main sensor than anything Apple ships, plus LOFIC technology that captures huge dynamic range in a single shot instead of stitching exposures together

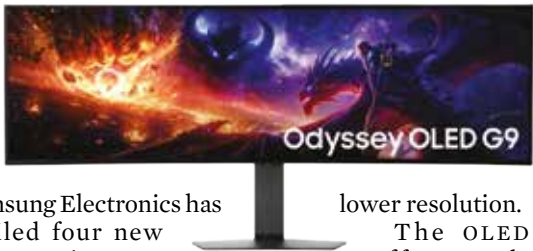
the way Apple's Deep Fusion does. Rumors point to the 18 Pro getting a Sony IMX905 sensor instead, which reportedly skips LOFIC entirely. That would be a missed opportunity. The Leitzphone's proper mechanical zoom lens is worth stealing too — it relies far less on digital cropping than the iPhone does. Then there's color. Samsung's My Filters lets you lift the tones from any photo you like and turn them into a reusable filter. Apple's Photographic Styles can't touch that kind of creative flexibility, and Google's Camera Looks on the Pixel 11 Pro already shows what's possible when a company actually pushes this further. Macro photography is another soft spot. Despite an otherwise underwhelming



camera system, the Nothing Phone 3 shoots gorgeous, natural-looking close-ups. The iPhone's macro mode, which leans on the ultrawide lens, still looks a bit flat and forces you uncomfortably close to your subject. Hardware matters too.

Xiaomi's camera grip and screw-in filter mount for its Ultra phones make shooting feel like using a real camera. Apple has nothing like it — the Leica Lux grip is the closest option, and it's \$400, Mag-Safe-only, and locked to one app. The wildest ask on my list was a variable aperture like the one in Xiaomi's 14 Ultra, which produced genuinely cinematic starbursts at night. I figured Apple would never bother — yet rumors now suggest it's coming to the 18 Pro Max. If true, that alone could be the sleeper feature of the year. Apple doesn't need to reinvent the camera. It just needs to stop pretending Android hasn't already solved half these problems.

Samsung unveils four new Odyssey gaming monitors at Gamescom 2026



Samsung Electronics has unveiled four new gaming monitors under its Odyssey G series at Gamescom 2026, targeting gamers seeking higher refresh rates, sharper displays and improved HDR performance. The lineup includes the 49-inch Odyssey OLED G9, 32-inch OLED G8, 42-inch curved OLED G7 and 27-inch Odyssey G6. The flagship G9 features a Dual QHD OLED display with a 360Hz refresh rate, while it can reach up to 720Hz at a lower resolution. The OLED G8 offers multiple display modes, including UHD at 360Hz, QHD at 520Hz and FHD at 680Hz. The curved OLED G7 features a 165Hz refresh rate and a 0.03ms response time. The Odyssey G6 stands out with a 1,100Hz refresh rate at HD resolution and 600Hz at QHD. Samsung has not yet announced pricing, release dates or market availability for the new monitors.

AI CORNER Anthropic eyes record-breaking AI IPO

AI company Anthropic, the maker of Claude, could be heading for one of the biggest technology IPOs ever. The company is reportedly considering raising more than \$100 billion through a public share offering, potentially surpassing SpaceX's record \$85.7 billion IPO. If the deal reaches that level, Anthropic could be valued at around \$2 trillion. Founded in 2021 by former OpenAI executives, Anthropic has positioned itself as a safety-focused competitor in the rapidly expanding AI market. Its Claude models and Claude Code, an AI coding assistant, have helped drive strong commercial growth. The potential IPO could



also put Anthropic ahead of OpenAI, which is reportedly considering a public listing at a later stage. However, the company faces challenges, including the enormous computing power required to run advanced AI models and a dispute with the US government over military access to its technology. If successful, Anthropic's listing could become a major milestone for the AI industry.

The first computer mouse was made of wood.



In 1964, engineer Douglas Engelbart and his team built one of the earliest computer pointing devices. It was a small wooden box with two wheels underneath that detected movement and allowed us-

ers to control a cursor on a computer screen. It was initially called an "X-Y Position Indicator for a Display System" — a name far less catchy than "mouse." The simple wooden device became the foundation for the computer mice we still use today, although modern versions have replaced wheels with optical sensors and lasers. TechZone fact: The computer mouse was invented decades before wireless mice, touchpads and smartphones — but its basic purpose remains the same: helping us interact with a computer more quickly, easily and intuitively.

Bahrain face Jordan in key qualifier

Group D leaders go head-to-head after opening victories



Bahrain's U20 football team

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain will look to take a major step towards the AFC U20 Asian Cup 2027 when they face Jordan tomorrow in their second Group D qualifier at Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Isa Town.

The kingdom's junior men's team kick off at 8.30pm, with both sides heading into the encounter on three points following victories in their opening

matches.

Ali Aamer's men began their campaign with a dramatic 3-2 win over Tajikistan, while Jordan edged Afghanistan 1-0 to set up an important meeting between the group's two early leaders.

The nationals will once again look to Ali Mahran for inspiration after the youngster fired a hat-trick in their opening victory.

Mahran headed home Rashed Al Jazzaf's delivery to open

the scoring in the sixth minute before Tajikistan responded through Azizbek Murotov eight minutes later.

The Bahrain forward restored his side's advantage just before half-time, knocking home Abdulrahman Bassam's corner to send the hosts into the break 2-1 ahead.

The contest was later halted following a floodlight failure and only resumed after a lengthy interruption.

Mahran completed his treble



Jordan's U20 football team

following the restart, pouncing on a rebound after Tajikistan goalkeeper Abubakr Rahmonqulov had denied Ahmed Nasser Alhumood.

An own goal in stoppage time reduced Bahrain's advantage, but Aamer's side held on to secure all three points.

Jordan, meanwhile, were made to work hard for their opening victory against Afghanistan. Ibrahim Jaber's side survived some early pressure before taking the lead shortly be-

fore half-time, when Mohannad Mahmoud's turn inside the area created the opening for Adeeb Ramadan to finish.

Afghanistan continued to push for an equaliser after the interval, but Jordan protected their slender advantage to begin their campaign with three points and a clean sheet.

With only the group winners guaranteed qualification, the encounter could have a significant bearing on who finishes top of Group D.

Afghanistan and Tajikistan, who are both still searching for their first points, meet earlier tomorrow at 5pm.

The final round of matches takes place on Sunday, when Jordan face Tajikistan at 5pm before Bahrain complete their campaign against Afghanistan at 8.30pm. The eight group winners and seven best runners-up will advance to next year's AFC U20 Asian Cup in China, scheduled to take place from March 24 to April 10.

Premier League action resumes tonight

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Malkiya and Al Najma will both search for their first points of the season when they face off tonight as the second matchweek of the 2026-27 Nasser bin Hamad Premier League gets underway.

The two sides meet at Al Ahli Club Stadium at 7pm, while East Riffa takes on Sitra simultaneously at the National Stadium.

Malkiya heads into their encounter looking to recover from a 3-0 opening-day defeat to Sitra, with Portuguese coach Alvaro Jose Rodrigues hoping for a response from his side.

The final scoreline did not fully reflect how long the contest remained in the balance; all three goals arrived in first or second-half stoppage time.

Skipper Ali Haram broke the deadlock just before the interval after reacting quickest to the rebound when his penalty struck the post.

The one-goal margin remained until the closing stages, when Haram turned provider for Ali AlAsfoor, who controlled the captain's chest-down before finding the net.



AlSayed Hussain Hani in possession during Malkiya's league opener



Al Najma's Ali Aldoseri brings the ball under control in their opening match

Malkiya's Hadi Ghazi was then shown a second yellow card after conceding another penalty, allowing Ali Nasser to convert from the spot with virtually the last kick and complete the 3-0 scoreline.

Al Najma will also look to bounce back under Tunisian coach Fethi Laabidi after suffering a 7-2 defeat to Al Khaldiya.

Having retained their top-flight place through the promotion/relegation play-offs last season, Najma endured a torrid opening half as Khaldiya struck

five times before the interval.

Walid Sabbar opened the scoring from the penalty spot in the 13th minute before Ousman AlHajj struck twice, with Gleison Moreira and captain Mehdi Humaidan adding two more in first-half stoppage time.

Najma pulled one back through a Mohammed Adel own goal six minutes after the restart, only for Nizar El Otmani to restore Khaldiya's five-goal cushion in the 62nd minute.

Rickson Conceicao reduced

the deficit to 6-2 in the 80th before Najma captain Ammar saved Saifeddine Bouhra's stoppage-time penalty, but El Otmami broke clear shortly afterwards to complete his brace and the 7-2 rout.

Tonight's other encounter sees Sitra looking to make it two wins from two when they take on newly promoted East Riffa.

Bahraini coach Hassan Sayed Isa will hope his side can carry their opening-day momentum into the contest, while East Riffa will aim to get off the mark under Hisham Al Mahoozi following a 2-0 loss to Hidd.

Algerian professionals Oussama Bellatreche and Samy Frioui scored either side of half-time to condemn the promoted side to defeat on their top-flight return.

Matchweek two continues on Friday, when Al Khaldiya faces A'ali at the National Stadium, while reigning champions Muharraq take on Al Ettifaq at Al Ahli Club Stadium.

The round concludes on Saturday, with Hidd facing Al Ahli at the National Stadium and Manama taking on Riffa at Al Ahli Club Stadium.

All four Friday and Saturday fixtures kick off at 7pm.

Sadrudinov bags Lausanne bronze



Said Sadrudinov with his bronze medal

● **Bahrain judoka defeats Adamian to reach Grand Slam podium**

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Said Sadrudinov claimed a bronze medal in the men's under-100kg category at the Lausanne Judo Grand Slam 2026 in Switzerland.

Sadrudinov secured his place on the podium with an ippon victory over Arman Adamian on the final day of the three-day competition, capping a strong showing against some of the world's leading judokas.

Georgia's Ilia Sulamanidze took gold after defeating the Netherlands' Simeon Catherina in the final, while Sadrudinov and Sarsenbaev earned the two bronze med-

als.

Dr. Faisal Khalid Kanoo, vice-president of the Bahrain Combat Sports Council and president of the Bahrain Judo Federation, praised Sadrudinov's achievement amid a high-quality international field.

"We congratulate our athlete Said Sadrudinov on this well-deserved success at one of the strongest Grand Slam events on the international calendar," Kanoo said.

"The Lausanne tournament features the world's elite judokas, and winning a bronze medal at such a major sporting event reflects the progress judo has made in the kingdom, as well as the strength and determination shown by our athletes."

Kanoo added that the federation is aiming to build on the result and continue Bahrain's strong presence at major international competitions.

Bahrain Handball Super Cup faces cancellation

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Handball Super Cup could be cancelled this season due to the senior national team's upcoming international commitments.

The Bahrain Handball Federation is reportedly considering scrapping this season's edition of the competition, which traditionally serves as the curtain-raiser to the domestic

campaign and is usually staged in September or October.

The potential cancellation comes with Bahrain facing a busy international schedule over the coming months, beginning with the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The Asian champions will compete in Group B alongside Kuwait, South Korea, Iran and Kazakhstan, with the handball competition scheduled from September 19 to 29.



Bahrain are also set to take part in an international friendly tournament in Kuwait in November as part of their preparations for the 2027 IHF World Men's Handball Championship.

They have been drawn alongside Iceland, North Macedonia and Japan in Group H of the global showpiece.

The Super Cup was introduced seven seasons ago, with Al Najma dominating the competition with six titles.

They are also the defending champions, having beaten Al Shabab in the most recent edition.

Subotic hails Bahrain's defensive progress

Coach pleased with cagers' professionalism after perfect Dubai campaign

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain head coach Slobodan Subotic praised his players for embracing his defensive philosophy after the kingdom's senior men's team completed a perfect first round of pre-qualifying for the FIBA Asia Cup 2029.

The Bahrainis rounded off their Group A campaign with a 95-67 victory over Kuwait yesterday at Sheikh Saeed bin Maktoum Sports Hall in Dubai.

It was their fourth win from four games, following victories over Oman, the UAE and Nepal.

Subotic was appointed by the Bahrain Basketball Association in July, succeeding Georgios Vovoras. The veteran Greek-Slovenian tactician believes his players are already showing signs of adapting to what he has demanded from them.

"You know, I have been here for a month and a half with the team and we have had 23 or 24 practices together," Subotic said after the game.

"I think my team showed something that I have been ask-



Slobodan Subotic talks tactics with Ahmed Alderazi in the previous match

ing from them since day one, defence.

"Today, we played a very good team. Historically, Kuwait is a very good team, and they scored

only 67 points.

"My players took this game very seriously, like all the games they have played since I joined the team, and this makes me

happy because it shows they are professionals who like to meet targets and are on the same page with me.

"I hope we will continue like

this."

Bahrain took control after a competitive start and led 19-11 at the end of the first quarter. They stretched their advantage to 45-30 by half-time and remained firmly in command after the break.

Bahrain carried a 69-48 lead into the final period before sealing the 28-point triumph.

Ahmed Salman led the scoring with 21 points, including five three-pointers, while Mustafa Hussain and JaKarr Sampson added 20 apiece. Sampson also grabbed 16 rebounds, while Hussain contributed six assists.

The result capped an impressive campaign that began with a 106-62 rout of Oman. Bahrain then edged hosts UAE 83-80 before beating Nepal 105-71.

Hussain stressed that the unbeaten run was only the beginning of what the squad hope to achieve.

"Alhamdulillah, with our mindset, we actually don't think too much about what we have achieved so far," he said.

"This is only the first step. Inshallah, we are going to be in the Asia Cup."

Bahrain will next compete in Group E of the second pre-qualifying round alongside the UAE, Kuwait, Palestine, Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka.

The stage will be played during the international window from November 23 to December 1, with the top four teams advancing to the Fiba Asia Cup 2029 qualifiers.

The UAE and Kuwait will be familiar opponents after progressing from the same opening-round group, while Bahrain will face Palestine, Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka for the first time in this campaign.

Group F comprises Hong Kong China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Mongolia and Fiji, with its top four also moving on.

Before resuming their continental qualification campaign, Bahrain will turn their attention to the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, where the basketball events will run from September 10 to 26.

The nationals have been drawn in Group C of the men's 5x5 tournament alongside defending champions the Philippines, China and Kazakhstan.

Barcelona confirm Jesus arrival from Arsenal

AFP | Barcelona

Barcelona signed Brazilian forward Gabriel Jesus from Arsenal yesterday on a deal until 2029, after they were unable to pry Julian Alvarez from Atletico Madrid.

"Barcelona and Arsenal have reached a deal for the Brazilian striker Gabriel Jesus," said the Catalan club in a statement, with Spanish media reporting that they paid the Gunners around 10 million euros (\$11.5m).

Jesus arrives to bolster an attack weakened by the departures of Robert Lewandowski and Ferran Torres earlier this



Brazilian forward Gabriel Jesus poses with his jersey during his official presentation at Barcelona

summer.

Spanish champions Barca pursued Alvarez through the summer but Atletico refused to negotiate with the Catalan giants.

Man City agree blockbuster deal to sign Chelsea star Fernandez: reports

AFP | London

Manchester City have agreed to sign Chelsea midfielder Enzo Fernandez in a blockbuster £125 million deal (\$167 million) that would equal the British transfer record, according to reports yesterday.

City have been chasing Fernandez for several months and the Argentina international is on the verge of moving to the Etihad Stadium on deadline day.

Fernandez's switch would equal the fee paid by Liverpool to Newcastle for Sweden striker Alexander Isak last year.

Enzo Maresca worked with Fernandez at Chelsea before



Enzo Fernandez

taking charge of City in the close-season after his January exit from Stamford Bridge.

Maresca was keen to land Fernandez after the recent sale of influential World Cup winner Rodri to Barcelona, as well as the departures of fellow midfielders Bernardo Silva, Nico Gonzalez and Tijjani Reijnders.

Messi legacy will 'live forever', says Beckham

AFP | London

David Beckham said Lionel Messi's "legacy will live forever" after the Argentina legend announced his retirement from international football.

Messi on Monday revealed he had called time on his remarkable

career with Argentina after 207 caps and 125 goals.

The 39-year-old won the 2022 World Cup in Qatar and his last game for his country was Argentina's World Cup final defeat against Spain in July.

Messi's brilliance for Argen-

tina and Barcelona made him one of the world's greatest ever players. Former England captain Beckham has had a close-up view of Messi's career as an opponent and now as co-owner of the forward's current side Inter Miami.



Lionel Messi (L) and David Beckham

Alcaraz makes winning return at US Open, Sabalenka safely through

AFP | New York

Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz didn't miss a beat as he returned from a four-month injury absence with a straight-sets first-round victory in the US Open on Monday.

Out of action with a wrist injury since April, Alcaraz passed his first test with flying colors, beating Russian Roman Safiullin 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 at Arthur Ashe Stadium, where women's defending champion Aryna Sabalenka also made it safely into the second round.

"It's been a really tough five months for me," Alcaraz said.

"Being able to step on the Arthur Ashe, being able to compete again, I couldn't decide to come back in a better tournament. It's a really special place for me.

"I tried to enjoy as much as I can. I missed the crowd, I missed the energy, I missed competition. I missed everything."

Alcaraz is trying to bookend his season with major titles after his Australian Open triumph in January made him the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam.



Carlos Alcaraz of Spain returns a shot against Roman Safiullin

Monday's performance might not have been peak Alcaraz, but the seven-time Grand Slam champion unleashed his powerful forehand with increasing confidence and displayed his familiar touch at the net.

"I think the level of tennis is going to be better for sure," said Alcaraz, who said he was most proud that he was able to quell his own doubts about his fitness.

"I tried to forget everything. I tried to enjoy," he said.

Alcaraz's smooth progress into the second round came less than 24 hours after an ailing Novak Djokovic suffered his earliest Grand Slam exit in 20 years, falling in five brutal sets to Mariano Navone.

The tournament was already missing top-ranked Jannik Sinner, who has a knee injury, and Djokovic's exit removed another possible obstacle for Alcaraz, who could have met the Serb in the semi-finals.

Aggressive Sabalenka

Sabalenka's bid for a rare US Open three-peat comes during a worrying drop in form, but the Belarusian star rose to the occasion in a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Camila Osorio.

She was slowed by 23 unforced errors but belted 32 winners to more than compensate, her thunderous groundstrokes proving enough to see off a counter-punching opponent who stepped up her game in the second set.

"She brought the fight," Sabalenka said. "She battled really well and I just tried to stay as aggressive as possible.

"I think I played great. She's a tough opponent, makes you work really hard to get every point, so I'm happy that I was able to close the match in straight sets," she added.

Sabalenka hasn't reached a final since capturing the prestigious "Sunshine Double" of Indian Wells and Miami in March.

Japan's Naomi Osaka was forced to dig deep before overcoming Russian first-round opponent Anastasia Zakharova 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/3) in just over two hours in a late night duel.