

Godolphin horses headline Crown Prince's Cup

One of the most significant days in the Bahrain horseracing season takes place today at REHC in Sakhir | P12

AUB quarterly profit rises 30.2% to US\$ 203.9 million



Saudi king appoints Ayman Alsayari as new central bank governor

Saudi Arabia's king appointed Ayman Alsayari as central bank governor replacing Fahad al-Mubarak. Alsayari was vice-governor for investment and research at the central bank and is a member of the board of directors of Saudi Arabia's National Debt Management Centre.

Norway police ban Quran burning protest

Norwegian police yesterday banned a planned protest including the burning of a copy of the Quran this week for security reasons, hours after the Turkish foreign ministry summoned Norway's ambassador to complain. A group of protesters planned to burn a copy of the Quran outside the Turkish embassy in Oslo today, police said, echoing similar demonstrations last month in Sweden and Denmark.

HM King names NCC board

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday named the Board of Directors of the National Communication Centre (NCC), as proposed by the Prime Minister and approved by Cabinet. Accordingly, Information Minister will chair the NCC Board with members Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Brigadier-General Mohammed Mohammed bin Daina, Ebtihal Ahmed Al-Tawash, Dr Arwa Hassan Al-Sayed Ali Ibrahim and Waleed Khaled Al-Shaikh.

Kingdom keen to boost ties with Kazakhstan, says HM King



HM King Hamad with Mukhtar Tileuberdi of Kazakhstan at Al Safriya Palace

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday praised the strong ties bonding Bahrain and Kazakhstan during talks with Mukhtar Tileuberdi, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, at Al Safriya



Palace. Tileuberdi, on an official visit to Bahrain, thanked HM King for the warm welcome and generous hospitality, praising HM's support for strengthening ties. HM King told Tileuberdi that Bahrain is keen to enhance its ties with Kazakhstan for the best interest of the people of the two countries. His Majesty also reviewed with Tileuberdi ways to support and develop friendly ties in all areas.

Bahrain advocate of peace: Vatican

TDT | Manama

Bahrain has been hailed by the Vatican as an "advocate of peace" initiatives yesterday, in a statement commending the recent launch of the "Declaration of the Kingdom of Bahrain" in Europe from Rome, Italy.

The Declaration, the Vatican News said, is an important document that promotes religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

It consolidates "Bahrain's role as an advocate of peace initiatives" and carries the directions, objectives and messages of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, "calling for religious tolerance and harmony."

The Vatican website also recalled the launch of the Bahrain Declaration in 2017 in Los Angeles, in the presence of HM the King's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa with His Holiness Pope Francis during Pope's visit to Bahrain (file)

Affairs, His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 2020.

The statement also shed light on the praise of His Holiness Pope Francis of the Bahrain Declaration during HH's historic visit to the Kingdom last November. Meanwhile, Bahrain's

ad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence Betsy Mathieson, Armin Laschet also stressed the importance of the Abraham Accords signed in 2020 in promoting peace in the region.

Laschet said that the Declaration of Bahrain confirms the Kingdom's commitment towards religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence. "Today, we see how these values are reflected in a society with a growing sense of responsibility towards the other, and how everyone joins hands to create a social fabric that is unparalleled," he noted.

Laschet expressed honour in attending the inauguration of the Declaration of Bahrain, which was held recently in the Italian capital, Rome.

He noted that the noble messages included in the declaration confirm the sound approach of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Three jobs must for crossing causeway, says Saudi Arabia



TDT | Manama

Saudi Arabia yesterday tightened its COVID-19 protocols for those travelling to Bahrain from Saudi through the King Fahd Causeway.

As per the new update, to gain entry to Bahrain via the Causeway all between 12 and 16 years should have taken two COVID-19 jabs and those above 16 years of age three COVID-19 shots.

The announcement was from the General Corporation of King Fahd Causeway.

The authority also confirms that the gap between the second and third doses should be eight months.

Tensions rise

Iran blames Israel for Isfahan drone attack, vows revenge

TDT | agencies

Iran blamed Israel for a drone attack on a military factory near the central city of Isfahan, the semi-official ISNA news agency said yesterday, vowing revenge for what appeared to be the latest episode in a long-running covert war.

In a letter to the UN chief, Iran's UN envoy, Amir Saied Ira-

YOU KNOW WHAT

Several nuclear sites are located in Isfahan province, including Natanz, the centrepiece of Iran's uranium enrichment programme, which Iran accuses Israel of sabotaging in 2021. There have been a number of explosions and fires around Iranian military, nuclear and industrial sites in recent years.

vani, said "primary investigation suggested Israel was responsible" for Saturday night's attack, which Tehran had said caused

no casualties or serious damage.

"Iran reserves its legitimate and inherent right to defend its national security and firmly respond to any threat or wrongdoing of the Zionist regime (Israel) wherever and whenever it deems necessary," Iravani said in the letter.

"This action undertaken by the Zionist regime (Israel) goes against international law."

Iran has accused Israel in the past of planning attacks using agents inside Iranian territory.

"The equipment and explosives used in the Isfahan attack were transferred into Iran with the help of anti-revolutionary groups based in Iraq's Kurdistan region under orders by a foreign security service," Iran's Nournews said on Wednesday.



These doctors say they are on the dole, call for urgent help

TDT | Manama

Despite being in one of the most sought-after job segments in the Kingdom, several medical professionals shockingly revealed during a meeting yesterday that they are staring at educated unemployment.

Poor, or absence of appropriate employment opportunities, medicos complain, have left their career dreams in the lurch.

Interestingly, this strange scenario comes even as the World Health Organisation warns there is a global shortage of more than 7 million health workers, which would rise to nearly 13 million by 2035.

As per an OECD global survey, 79% of nurses and 76% of doctors were performing tasks for which they were over-qualified.

Add to this the rising incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and the growing geriatric population – which will



The meeting with doctors yesterday

generate a demand for 40 million additional health workers globally by 2030, states WHO. “This would require doubling our current global health workforce.”

The *Daily Tribune* has earlier reported the rejection faced by medical graduates of Egyptian universities here. At that time, some of them had said they instead landed administrative

jobs – a far cry from their professional competencies, thanking the efforts of the Ministry of Labour.

Yesterday’s revelations came during a meeting of a group of doctors, who claim they remain jobless, with Abdul Nabi Salman, the First Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MP Salman said the meeting aimed at setting up a general

debate in the Parliament for clarifying policies and directions regarding increasing job opportunities for medical professionals.

The request for general debate, the first deputy speaker said, was tabled by ten parliamentarians in light of the increasing complaints received from graduates of various medical specialities.

“Based on this, a parliamentary initiative is taking shape to resolve the vital issue and find an urgent solution,” said the First Deputy Speaker.

Medicos, outlining the challenges and difficulties they face in finding a relevant position matching their specialisation, said that survival now has become a big question, citing the inability of authorities to provide appropriate jobs.

“The Parliament should strive to find suitable positions that allow us to practice our professions and serve the country.”

Abdul Nabi Salman assured medicos that the Parliament would look into all complaints raised during the general discussion and use all constitutional tools to find radical and effective solutions for finding appropriate positions for national cadres.

MPs Abdulnabi Salman, First Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Ahmed Qarata, Second Deputy Speaker, Mahdi Al-Shuwaikh, Eman Showaiter, Muhammad Al-Alewi, Khaled Buang, Dr Hisham Al-Ashiri, Mamdouh Al-Saleh, Zainab Abdel-Amir, and Maryam Al-Dhaen were present.

Bahrain had earlier launched a national initiative to train unemployed Bahraini doctors in partnership with the Labour and Social Development Ministry, the Labour Fund (Tamkeen) and public and private health institutions. The initiative was part of the implementation of the National Health Plan (2016 – 2025).



According to a report published in January last year, there are 3,599 Bahraini medical professionals working with the Ministry of Health. The report also counts 602 physicians, of which 493 are Bahraini doctors, while 109 are non-Bahrainis. The same report also reveals the Ministry of Health had 2,945 nurses on its roll call in January 2022, of which 1,807 were Bahrainis and 1,138 non-Bahrainis.



Japan’s ‘Ship for World Youth’ benefits Bahrain students most



Minister of Youth Affairs Rawan bint Najeeb Tawfiqi

Ashen Tharaka
TDT | Manama

The ‘Ship for World Youth’, a scholarship programme offered globally by the Japanese government, has termed Bahraini students as one of its largest beneficiaries.

According to Masayuki Miyamoto, the Japanese ambassador to Bahrain, over 30 Bahraini students, since 1994, has studied at Japanese universities through



Scholarship winners at the residence of the Japanese Ambassador to Bahrain

this programme, which currently has five Bahraini students in Japan.

The announcement came as scholarship awardees gathered at the residence of the Japanese Ambassador to Bahrain in the presence of the Minister of Youth Affairs, Rawan bint Najeeb Tawfiqi.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan, represented by the Embassy of Japan in

Bahrain, offers this opportunity every year to Bahraini students who wish to complete their studies at a Japanese university. Since 1997, Bahrainis participated in the programme established in 1954 to increase mutual understanding between Japan and other countries.

Scholarship benefits include air tickets between Japan and Bahrain, tuition fees and a monthly allowance.

Addressing the gathering,

Minister Tawfiqi termed the programme an “opportunity to study and develop a creative global viewpoint.”

“You are a representative of the entire Bahraini youth. Therefore, assume those enormous duties and be the best ambassadors to Bahrain,” the ministry told Bahraini recipients.

Besides covering regular studies, the programme offers a six-month Japanese language study, regardless of arrival time

in Japan.

Scholarship recipients, who wish to opt for one of the research or doctoral programmes, are also allowed to extend the scholarship after passing the exam.

Speaking to *The Daily Tribune*, Ambassador Miyamoto said, “I’m hoping that the Bahraini students chosen for this programme will visit Japan very soon.”

“Today is all about AI and IT.



Masayuki Miyamoto, the Japanese ambassador to Bahrain

We have relatively easy access to everyone in the world. We are also able to travel wherever. But we should also be aware of the advantages of an actual visit.”

He also stressed that the programme demonstrates the close ties between Bahrain and Japan.

Scholarship recipients this year include 90 youths from Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Oman, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, and Australia.

Sufficient quantity of food stocks available in local markets: Industry ministry

TDT | Manama

There is sufficient stock of basic food materials in the local markets here, confirmed the Ministry of Industry and Commerce in response to a parliamentary query yesterday.

Bahrain, the ministry told Hanan Muhammad Fardan during a “question and answer” session in the Parliament that it is keen to secure strategic stock of food materials to meet various circumstances. The Kingdom has integrated oversight mechanisms from all ministries and agencies to ensure market supplies where the Ministry of Industry and Trade intervenes



Representative picture

to ensure “supply and demand” in a way that meets the right of both the consumers and traders.

The ministry also praised the role of traders and suppliers in the private sector for their co-

operation with public entities to ensure sufficient supply.

Bahrain, the ministry said, en-

joys 38th rank worldwide, an increase of 11 positions from 2020, on the Global Food Security Index, thanks to the efforts of the government shared by various ministries and agencies in cooperation with the private sector.

Citing Article 15 of Law No. 35 of 2012 regarding consumer protection, the ministry said it ensures competition and monopoly controls. The ministry said it is keen to intensify efforts to ensure price stability.

Separately, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce said there are 79,821 registrations in the commercial registry system, which the ministry is striving to

take online, in its reply to a question raised by MP Muhammad Jassim Al-Alewi.

The ministry said officials are conducting periodic field visits to markets and shops to ensure customer satisfaction, the validity of promotional campaigns, availability of products, and to prevent commercial fraud.

“If we detect unjustified price hikes or any other fraud, the penalties amount to closing the stores administratively or referring the violators to Public Prosecution, slapping fines, cancelling registration and other lawful procedures,” the ministry said.

Cats can make you sick!

Experts urge pet owners to vaccinate their cats on time

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

Last autumn, when seagulls and gannets began washing up dead on the coasts of north-western Spain, the victims of ongoing H5N1 bird flu, its real gravity was still oblivious to the world.

Then, in a month's time, thousands of minks started to die unusually, which experts later traced to the same "avian virus" found in the gannets.

This led to the Spanish farm owners culling over 50,000 animals and placing farm workers in quarantine. Reports say over 4% of the mink population in Spain succumbed to the virus.

At that time, experts had also linked the incident to the "spill-over event" that could spark the next human pandemic.

They said although the mutated H5N1 virus did not jump to humans, "it's clear such farms could act as incubators and reservoirs for the virus – just as they have done with Covid and other zoonotic diseases."

Veterinarians here in Bahrain yesterday shared with the Daily Tribune similar concerns, but for a different reason: The cats.

Yes! You heard it right. Not minks or gannets. Cats can be deadly too!

Experts warn: "Although the greater majority of feline infectious diseases solely affect cats, some can spill over to humans."

For example, toxoplasmosis, cat roundworm and cat scratch



”
The cat needs three shots from a tricky vaccine, starting at two months old and continuing with a booster shot after three weeks, and a second shot after three weeks

DR. AHMED SHAW

Booster for cats too!

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, Dr Ahmed Shaw, a Veterinary Doctor at Oka Veterinary Clinic, explains that a cat needs three shots of a tricky vaccine.

The process starts when the feline is just two months old.

"Administer a booster three weeks after and a second after another three weeks."

"Rhinitis, Calici, and Panleukopenia viruses are all included in the vaccination.

Dr Ahmed Shaw also warns that there are children who are allergic to cat fur.

"Some children have allergies to cat fur, which they develop when they are in touch with cats, causing them to sneeze and scratch their eyes.

Cats, Dr Shaw said, can get skin diseases frequently, particularly fungus, which is contagious for people, especially children.



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Some kids may experience allergic reactions to the hair, skin, and saliva of cats, which can lead to asthmatic symptoms like wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath

DR. STEVE TIGERE

Hair brushing is crucial!

The doctor explains that daily brushing is crucial as cats tend to lick their fur and ingest it, which can upset their stomachs and cause vomiting or intestinal blockages.

"Grooming is required every two weeks or once a month to remove old hair, prevent hair clumping or knotting, and protect skin from fungus."

Asthma from cat fur!

Dr Steve Tigere from Four Paws Veterinary Clinic further points to the need for three primary vaccinations for kittens.

Dr Tigere also warns about the possibility of asthma-related complications from cat fur.

"Some kids may experience allergic reactions to the hair, skin,

and saliva of cats, which can lead to asthmatic symptoms like wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath."

Allergic asthma develops, the doctor explains when our immune system mistakenly recognises cat protein as an allergen.

"So, long-haired cats must be groomed regularly, for their tangled fur can also make them uncomfortable.

"Once every three months is recommended for deworming, tick, and flea treatments as your pets' health depends on you keeping your home clean."

The doctor also stressed that for the children to remain healthy and avoid falling sick, parents should make sure to keep the pets in good condition.

Representative pictures



In 2004, French archaeologists discovered a 9,500-year-old cat grave in Cyprus. This makes this the oldest known pet cat and it predates Egyptian art about cats by over 4,000 years!

Cats actually spend 70% of their lives sleeping, which works out to around 13-16 hours a day. It's a cat's life!



The richest cat in the world according to Guinness World Records is Blackie. When his millionaire owner passed away he refused to recognise his family in his will and instead gave his 7-million-pound fortune to Blackie!

On October 18th 1963 Felicette, also known as 'Astrocat' was the first and only cat to go to space.



iGA restores eServices after "emergency downtime"

TDT | Manama

The Information and eGovernment authority announced the restoration of all its services through *bahrain.bh* - the national portal, after a downtime extending to several hours.

Without specifying what actually caused the "emergency downtime", igabahrain wrote on its Instagram channel: "Dear customers, we are back! All eServices and eGovernment channels are now available online. You can benefit from our eServices via *bahrain.bh/app* or *bahrain.bh*."

bahrain.bh is aligned with Bahrain Strategic Vision 2030 and maintained by the Information and eGovernment Authority. The website provides informational, interactive, and transactional services and facilitates communication with government entities.

On Thursday, iGA said all eServices and eGovernment



Channels will not be accessible temporarily due to an emergency downtime without giving any specific reason.

"We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and strive to serve you better!" the statement warned.

The General Directorate of Traffic, Electricity and Water Authority, Information and eGovernment Authority, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Waqf, Ministry of Housing and Customs Affairs services are some of the services providers on *bahrain.bh*.



Miss Philippines Bahrain 2023 launched at the Philippine Festival

TDT | Manama

The Miss Philippines Bahrain 2023, organised by the Filipino Club Bahrain, was officially launched on 27th January 2023 at the Philippine Festival held at the Oasis Mall in Juffair.

The seven contestants were presented on stage and introduced themselves before the public for the first time.

Joining the race to become the next Miss Philippines Bahrain are Ayumi N. Aragon (17), Angel Bles S. Ison (17), Carme P. Talave (26), Chloe Keith David (21), Danica Sinchongco (26), Samantha Reyes (21) and Precious Dane M. Delos Santos (17).

These young Filipina women will undergo a Personality Development Seminar,

as well as an Eveningwear, Swimsuit and Talent Competition before Coronation Night.

Ric Advincula (Filipino Club President) thanked Anne Jalando-On Louis, Rosemarie Hernandez, Reigna Gumiran (Project Lead) and the Filipino Club's Executive Committee and screening committee for their support.

MP denies social media claims



TDT | Manama

MP Khaled Saleh Buang yesterday denied social media claims regarding the Council's office granting a BD750 bonus to Secretary-General and BD500 bonus to assistant secretaries-general and directors.

He also clarified that the previous Council didn't deny the grant but requested the Shura and Council of Ministers.

He said the current Council had granted a bonus of BD300 for six managers, which is less than what the Parliament and Shura council decided.

Buang also confirmed receiving no comments on the subject, during the past four years, from the oversight office.

Public health to fore as Bahrain celebrates sports day

TDT | Manama

All of Bahrain came together yesterday to celebrate the 7th edition of Bahrain Sports Day as part of a decision by the GCC Olympic Committees to organise a "sports day" in all GCC member states in February. The three-day event, held for the second consecutive year by Bahrain Sport for all associations, kicked off yesterday at Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir.

As part, HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, had allotted a half day off for all ministries, agencies and government institutions.

On the occasion, the Director-General of the PMO, Hamad bin Yaqoob Al Mahmeed, highlighted the importance of embracing a culture of an active and healthy lifestyle, which contributes to further strengthening public health.

Al Mahmeed noted the Kingdom's wide-ranging sports achievements, emphasising the commitment and support of the Representative of HM the King for Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs, His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Chairman of the General Sports Authority and President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, to the sector.

RHF Secretary General Dr Mustafa Al Sayed highlighted the importance of regular exercise to maintain the overall health of the mind and body. He emphasised the importance of



The Prime Minister's Office marks Bahrain Sports Day



RHF Secretary General Dr Mustafa Al Sayed highlighted the importance of regular exercise



Transportation and Telecommunications Ministry participates in Bahrain Sports Day event



Gulf Air Group, subsidiaries celebrate Bahrain Sports Day



The Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF) celebrates Sports Day



Information Minister Dr Ramzan bin Abdulla Alnoaimi, during celebrations

encouraging employees and associates to participate in athletic activity and boost mental and physical strength.

Minister of Transportation and Telecommunication Mohammed bin Thamer Al Kaabi

also stressed the importance of exercising and promoting a healthy lifestyle to increase productivity at work.

To mark the occasion and promote the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, Gulf Air Group

hosted a range of activities at its headquarters, including football, basketball, tug of war, table tennis, and a fitness session.

The Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance organised activities for its staff and faculty

around Bahrain Bay. The BIBF Director, Dr Ahmed Al Shaikh, stated, "The BIBF is proud to support the initiatives of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, who has been a strong advocate for developing

the sports sector in Bahrain." Information Minister, Dr Ramzan bin Abdulla Alnoaimi, said the Day reflects the Kingdom's keenness in developing sports, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Minister of Interior, General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, yesterday attended the graduation ceremony for the commando trainers' first course and 37th commando Orientation Course for officers, cadets and others from various Interior Ministry directorates and Coast Guard affiliates. The Chief of Public Security, His Highness Southern Governor, the Interior Ministry Undersecretary, and the Commander of the Special Security Force attended. The Minister of Interior congratulated the graduates and distributed prizes among top achievers.



Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa yesterday patronised the graduation ceremony of the first batch of students of Vatel Bahrain - International Hospitality School, which was attended by ministers, senior officials and invitees. The Deputy Prime Minister presented the 29 graduates with their Bachelor's degrees in international hospitality management.

Beyon honours Chairman's award winners during Town Hall

Town Hall attended by over 800 Beyon Family Team Members



Chairman's award winners



Chairman Award nominated staff

TDT | Manama

Beyon, the parent company of Batelco and the Beyon digital companies, held its first Town Hall at the Company's headquarters in Hamala, on 31st January in the presence of Beyon Chairman Shaikh Abdulla

bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Beyon CEO Mikkell Vinter, executive management, and over 800 team members from all the Bahrain-based Beyon companies.

Held under the theme 'Let's Do Magic', the highlight of the Town Hall was the reveal of the annual Chairman's Award winners, with Shaikh Abdulla announcing the top 3 winners. For 2022, 18 candidates were nominated from a pool of high-performing team members.

The winners for 2022 are in 3rd place Anwaar Alsubaie - Talent Acquisitions & Culture

Specialist, in 2nd place Essam Almutawa - IT Development Specialist, and the Chairman's Award 1st place went to Ali Salman - Project Manager.

Beyon Chairman, Shaikh Abdulla, said: "I firmly believe that all candidates are consid-

ered winners and are a great example of the ambitious and promising Bahraini youth, and that a key component in a company's formula for success is its people."

At the end of the ceremony, the attendees enjoyed a show by

Magical Bones, a magician and illusionist from the United Kingdom, who was a finalist on Britain's Got Talent. Attendees got to socialize and enjoy a variety of food trucks and BBQ stations and live entertainment added to the exciting atmosphere.

Alba hits record performance for 2nd Year in a row



We, in Alba, are pleased to report another year of strong operational growth and record financial performance despite market challenges. An all-time Production of 1,600,111 metric tonnes while Value Added Sales exceeds for the first time in history 1,042,000 metric tonnes. For 2nd year in a row, EBITDA at record levels of US\$1.502 billion, Profit hit the three-comma club again by setting another precedent of US\$1.107 billion

SHAIKH DAJI BIN SALMAN BIN DAJI AL KHALIFA, CHAIRMAN



Alba board members

2022 highlights

Demand in Middle East up by 4% YoY fuelled by higher consumption in UAE (+7% YoY), Bahrain (+1% YoY) & KSA (+1% YoY)

Middle East supply: a modest increase of 3% YoY supported by UAE (+6% YoY) & Bahrain (+2% YoY)

LME-Cash averaged US\$2,707/t in 2022 -- up by 9% YoY

LME inventories remain low at 447Kt by end-2022 (-52% YoY) and are at their lowest level in 22 years while Chinese stocks are at 6-year low

All-time Production of 1,600,111 MT, up by 2.5% YoY

Sales' volume rose to 1,568,134 MT despite market challenges (+1.1% YoY)

Value Added Sales averaged 66% of the total shipments vs. 63% in 2021. VAP Sales' volume exceeds 1,042,000 MT (+7% YoY)

Alba exceeded AL HASSALAH savings' target of US\$110 Million by 2022-end (inclusive of US\$10 million one-off savings) and achieved US\$115.34 million

Alba successfully reached the financial close for its Power Station 5 Block 4 Project [US\$225 million China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation ("SINOSURE") supported-facility with a 15-year tenor including a 3-year grace period]

2023 Priorities

Exceed 2022 Net Finished Production of 1,600,111 MT in 2023 and continue with AL HASSALAH Top Up

Continue to screen potential Upstream Opportunities to secure 1/3 Alumina requirements

Progress with PS5 Block 4 and Solar Farm to scale up our efficiency

Accelerate Bechtel's Feasibility Study for Line 7

TDI | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), one of the world's largest aluminium smelters, yesterday reported another year of strong operational growth and record financial performance despite market challenges and proposed a final dividend payout for the year 2022.

The Board of Directors proposed to pay a final dividend of Fils 85.7 per share (excluding the treasury shares) amounting to BD121,306,000 subject to ap-

provals.

The year 2022, Alba said, has been volatile hurt by the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war, ongoing COVID-19 concerns in China,

higher energy costs in Europe, rising interest rates, fears of recession and continuous supply-chain disruptions have taken their toll on the Aluminium

market.

Looking ahead, the board, however, warns that the uncertain macroeconomic conditions, sparked by higher inflation and

interest rates, supply-chain disruptions coupled with governments' ability to continue providing stimulus, will cloud the Aluminium market

Alba said that power shortages and surging energy costs in Europe and US are likely to increase output cuts while Chinese smelters' output will rise at a slow pace.

It also foresees weak market sentiment and a firm US\$ to weigh on LME Price. Prices will range between US\$2,200/t - US\$2,400/t.

Q4 results

The fourth quarter profit was BD39.4 m (US\$104.9m), down by 78% Year-over-Year (YoY) versus a profit of BD181.2 m (US\$481.8m) for the same period in 2021.

Earnings per Share was Fils 28 for Q4 2022 versus Fils 128 in the year-ago quarter.

Total Comprehensive Income stood at BD36.6 m (US\$97.3m) versus BD183 m (US\$486.8m) - down by 80% YoY.

Gross profit was BD80.6 m (US\$214.3m) versus BD215.5 m (US\$573.2m) in Q4 2021 - a drop of 63% YoY.

Revenue was BD462.4 m (US\$1,229.8m) versus BD523.3 m (US\$1,391.7m) in the prior-year quarter - a drop of 12% YoY.

H1 results

Alba reported a Full Year 2022 profit of BD416.2 m (US\$1,106.8m), down by 8% YoY, versus a profit of BD451.9



Our resilience as a team has enabled us to generate an outstanding performance across key performance metrics as well as set new precedents and I am confident that we will continue to do so in 2023. I call upon each employee and contractor's personnel to act on our 2023 Objectives - Safety: our operating license, AL HASSALAH top-up, readiness to take off safely, and don't limit yourself -- to finish strong against the challenging economic backdrop

ALI AL BAQALI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AUB Q4 profit rises 30.2% to US\$ 203.9 m

TDI | Manama

Abu Dhabi United Bank (AUB) reported a record 30.2% jump in its fourth-quarter net profit, driven primarily by higher operating income and lower provision charges. The Board of Directors recommended a distribution comprising a cash dividend of US cents 2.5 per share, subject to AUB Annual General Assembly approval.

The fourth-quarter net profit attributable to its equity shareholders rose to US\$ 203.9 million from net profit of US\$ 156.6 m in the same quarter a year ago. This is also the highest quarterly profit achieved by the bank since its establishment in 2000, thanks to AUB's conservative forward-looking provisioning measures undertaken in the preceding quarter.

Earnings per Share increased to US 1.6 cents in Q4/2022 versus US 1.2 cents in Q4/2021. Comprehensive income attributable to the owners of the bank was US\$ 113.5 m (Q4/2021: US\$ 147.5 m, -23.0%). The core operating performance was



strong with net interest income increasing to US\$ 242.5 m in Q4/2022 (Q4/2021: US\$ 227.6 m, +6.6%) and total operating income surging to US\$ 341.4 m in Q4/2022 (Q4/2021: US\$ 282.7 m, +20.7%). AUB's financial results from Q4/2022 are consolidated into Kuwait Finance House K.S.C.P. (KFH).

Full-year results

Full-year 2022 net profit attributable to its equity shareholders was US\$ 546.1 m, a 10.1% decrease over the 2021

profit of US\$ 607.2 m. This is entirely attributable to the higher exceptional precautionary non-recurring provision charge of US\$160.2 m incurred during Q3/2022.

Earnings per Share was US 4.5 cents, compared to US 5.1 cents in 2021. Total comprehensive income attributable to the owners of the bank was US\$ 261.2 m (2021: US\$ 641.3 m, -59.3%). Net interest income was US\$ 909.1 m (2021: US\$ 871.8 m, +4.3%) primarily achieved through an increase in interest-earning assets. Total operating income was

US\$ 1,236.9 m (2021: US\$ 1,108.9 m, +11.5%).

The AUB Deputy Chairman, Mohammad Fouad Al-Ghanim commented "Excluding the non-recurring additional precautionary provision charge of US\$ 160.2 m taken in Q3/2022 from non-distributable pre-acquisition profits for KFH shareholders, the AUB Group achieved record financial results in 2022 with consolidated NPAT reaching to US\$ 706.3 m, a 16.3% increase over the previous year NPAT and the second highest NPAT achieved in its history".

Fusions by Tala grabs spotlight at MENA's 50 Best Restaurant Awards 2023

TDI | Manama

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain yesterday announced that Fusions By Tala grabbed three accolades at the 2023 Middle East & North Africa's 50 Best Restaurants Awards ceremony.

Climbing an incredible 36 spots since last year's edition of the list, the restaurant also received the Highest Climber Award, for securing the Number 3 spot on MENA's 50 Best Restaurants list, and has additionally won the Best Restaurant in Bahrain title.

Chef Tala Bashmi, Chef Patron at Fusions, is the young, dynamic Bahraini chef who is helping reinvigorate Middle Eastern cuisine - her talent was previously rewarded with the Middle East & North Africa's Best Female Chef Award in 2022. At her dining space



Chef Tala Bashmi

in Manama's iconic five-star Gulf Hotel Bahrain, she fuses childhood memories with traditional dishes and a strikingly contemporary style.

Kazakhstan officials, Bahrain Chamber meeting



The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted yesterday a high-level delegation from Kazakhstan spearheaded by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mukhtar Tleuberdi accompanied by the Riyadh-based Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan to Bahrain Berik Aryn and top officials from the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber Sameer Nass welcomed the delegation and underlined the importance of identifying opportunities and fostering liaison to enhance business cooperation. He also touched upon logistical challenges curbing bilateral trade between both countries. The Deputy Premier and Foreign Affairs Minister Mukhtar Tleuberdi described Bahrain as a reliable partner to his country and expressed pride in the growing relations between both sides. Attending the meeting were also board members of the Bahrain Chamber and Chief Executive Officer Dr Abdulla Al Sada.

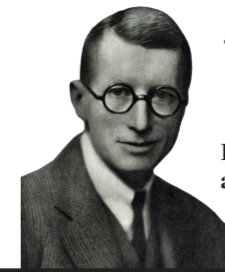
QUOTE OF THE DAY

ADVICE IS LIKE SNOW - THE SOFTER IT FALLS, THE LONGER IT DWELLS UPON, AND THE DEEPER IT SINKS INTO THE MIND SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

TODAY IN HISTORY

1451 Sultan Mehmed II, the Conqueror inherits the throne of the Ottoman Empire

1509 The Battle of Diu, naval battle at port of Diu, India between Portugal and the Ottoman Empire, establishes Portuguese trading control



1928 Paleoanthropologist Davidson Black reports his findings on the ancient human fossils found at Zhoukoudian, China in the journal Nature and declares them to be a new species he names 'Sinanthropus pekinensis' (now known as 'Homo erectus')

1966 1st soft landing on Moon (Soviet Luna 9)

News in brief

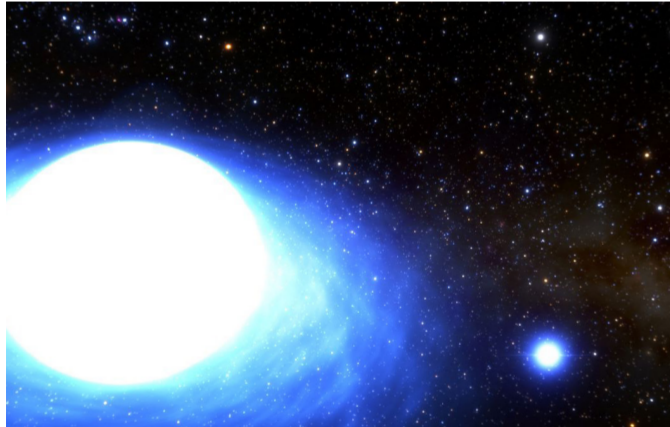
Shun ethnic rivalry and corruption, pope tells African youth Pope Francis yesterday urged young people in Democratic Republic of Congo to forge a new future without the ethnic rivalry, corruption and distrust that have fuelled so many bloody conflicts in Africa.

A leading US maker of advanced military surveillance drones announced Wednesday that it was willing to sell two to Ukraine for just \$1, and called on the US government to approve the deal.

Four men have been given long jail sentences for being accomplices to murder in a deadly terror attack by a lone jihadist gunman in the heart of Austria's capital in November 2020.

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Astronomers document a not-so-super supernova in the Milky Way



An undated illustration shows the binary star system CPD-29 2176, located about 11,000 light years from Earth

Reuters | Washington

Supernovas are not always so super. These explosions that mark the death of a star often are spectacularly energetic. But once in a while they are a complete dud.

Scientists detailed one of the duds - a massive star that had so much of its material siphoned off by the gravitational tug of a companion star in a stellar marriage called a binary system that by the time it came to explode at the end of its life cycle it could barely manage a whimper.

Its eventual explosion was so tame, in fact, that the collapsed star - now an incredibly dense object called a neutron star - remains in a docile circular orbit with its companion. A more powerful explosion at the very least would have resulted in a more oval-shaped orbit and even could have sent the star and its companion hurtling in opposite directions.

Philippines grants US greater access to bases amid China concerns

Reuters | Manila

The Philippines has granted the United States greater access to its military bases, their defence chiefs said yesterday, amid mounting concern over China's increasing assertiveness in the disputed South China Sea and tension over self-ruled Taiwan.

The United States would be given access to four more locations under the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Philippines' Defense Secretary Carilto Galvez said in a joint news conference at the Philippine military headquarters in Manila.

Austin, in the Philippines for talks as the United States seeks to extend its security options as part of efforts to deter any move by China against self-ruled Taiwan, referred to the Philippine decision as a "big deal" as he and his counterpart reaffirmed their commitment to bolstering their alliance.

"Our alliance makes both of our democracies more secure and helps uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific," said Austin, whose visit follows one by US Vice President Kamala Harris in November, which included a stop at Palawan island in the South China Sea.

"We discussed concrete ac-



US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin III shakes hands with Philippines President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr.

Our alliance makes both of our democracies more secure and helps uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific

LOYD AUSTIN

China continues to advance its illegitimate claims in the West Philippine Sea," he added. China said greater US access to Philippine military bases undermined regional stability and raised tensions.

"This is an act that escalates tensions in the region and endangers regional peace and stability," China's foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said in a regular briefing.

"Regional countries should remain vigilant about this and avoid being used by the US" The additional sites under the EDCA bring to nine the number of military bases the United States would have access to. The United States has announced it was allocating more than \$82 million for infrastructure at the existing sites.

North Korea says US drills have pushed situation to 'extreme red-line' -KCNA

Reuters | Seoul

North Korea's Foreign Ministry said yesterday that drills by the United States and its allies have pushed the situation to an "extreme red-line" and threaten to turn the peninsula into a "huge war arsenal and a more critical war zone."

The statement, carried by state news agency KCNA, said Pyongyang was not interested in dialogue as long as Washington pursues hostile policies.

"The military and political situation on the Korean peninsula



US Air Force F-22 fighter jets take part in a joint drill with South Korea's Air Force at Kunsan air base, in Gunsan, South Korea

and in the region has reached an extreme red-line due to the reckless military confrontational manoeuvres and hostile acts of the US

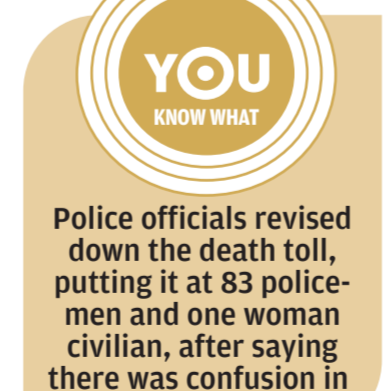
and its vassal forces," an unnamed ministry spokesperson said in the statement.

In Washington, the White House rejected the North Korean statement and reiterated a willingness to meet with North Korean diplomats "at a time and place convenient for them."

"We have made clear we have no hostile intent toward the DPRK and seek serious and sustained diplomacy to address the full range of issues of concern to both countries and the region," said a spokesperson for the White House National Security Council.

Pakistan mosque suicide bomber 'was in police uniform'

AFP | Peshawar



Plain-clothed policemen gather over the rubble of a damaged mosque following January's 30 suicide blast inside the police headquarters in Peshawar

through a security checkpoint and asking officers where the mosque was located.

Authorities are investigating how a major breach could happen in one of the most sensitive areas in the city, which houses the intelligence and counter-terrorism bureaus.

YOU KNOW WHAT

Police officials revised down the death toll, putting it at 83 policemen and one woman civilian, after saying there was confusion in registering bodies

officials as well as other people, which is very sad and which has created a distrust." It is Pakistan's deadliest assault in several years and the worst since violence began to resurge in the northwest bordering Afghanistan after the Taliban seized power in Kabul in 2021.

Putin evokes Stalingrad to predict victory over Nazis

Putin draws parallels with Russia's campaign in Ukraine

80 years have passed since Soviet victory in Stalingrad

Reuters | Volgograd

President Vladimir Putin evoked the spirit of the Soviet army that defeated Nazi German forces at Stalingrad 80 years ago to declare yesterday that Russia would defeat a Ukraine supposedly in the grip of a new incarnation of Nazism.

In a fiery speech in Volgograd, known as Stalingrad until 1961, Putin lambasted Germany for helping to arm Ukraine and said, not for the first time, that he was ready to draw on Russia's entire arsenal, which includes nuclear weapons.

"Unfortunately we see that the ideology of Nazism in its modern form and manifestation again directly threatens the security of our country," Putin told an audience of army officers and members of local patriotic and youth groups. "Again and again we have to re-



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a wreath-laying ceremony during an event marking the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Stalingrad in World War Two

pel the aggression of the collective West. It's incredible but it's a fact: we are again being threatened with German Leopard tanks with crosses on them."

Russian officials have been drawing parallels with the struggle against the Nazis ever since Russian forces entered Ukraine almost a year ago.

Ukraine - which was part of the Soviet Union and itself suffered devastation at the hands of Hitler's

Unfortunately we see that the ideology of Nazism in its modern form and manifestation again directly threatens the security of our country. Again and again we have to repel the aggression of the collective West. It's incredible but it's a fact: we are again being threatened with German Leopard tanks with crosses on them

VLADIMIR PUTIN

forces - rejects those parallels as spurious pretexts for a war of imperial conquest.

Stalingrad was the bloodiest battle of World War Two, when the Soviet Red Army, at a cost of over 1 million casualties, broke the back of German invasion forces in 1942-3.

Putin evoked what he said was the spirit of the defenders of Stalingrad to explain why he thought Russia would prevail in

Biden attorney: no classified documents found in search of Delaware beach house

Reuters | Washington

The US Justice Department did not find documents with classified markings during a three-and-a-half hour search of President Joe Biden's beach house in Rehoboth, Delaware, on Wednesday but did take some materials for further review, Biden's attorney said.

The morning search by FBI agents appeared to represent an expansion of the probe into Biden's handling of classified documents.

Materials were previously found at his home in Wilmington, Delaware, and at a Washington office he used during the time between his service as vice president under Barack Obama and his presidential



Private security guards guard the perimeter of a beach house owned by US President Joe Biden

election. Biden's personal attorney, Bob Bauer, said in a statement that Wednesday's search took place from 8:30 a.m. to noon in "coordination and cooperation with the president's attorneys" and had been planned.

"No documents with classified markings were found," Bauer said. "Consistent with the process in Wilmington, the DOJ took for further review some materials and handwritten notes that appear to relate to his time as Vice President."

Australia to replace monarch on banknote with design honouring Indigenous culture

Reuters | Sydney

Australia will replace the portrait of Queen Elizabeth II on its A\$5 banknote with a new design to reflect and honour the history of its Indigenous culture, the country's central bank said yesterday.

The decision follows consultation with the federal government, which supports the change, the Reserve Bank of Australia said in a statement. The other side of the note will continue to feature

The \$5 bill was Australia's only remaining bank note to still feature an image of the monarch



Australian banknotes are being counted in Canberra

the Australian Parliament, it said.

Queen Elizabeth's death last year has reignited debate in Australia about its future as a constitutional monarchy. Voters narrowly chose to maintain the British monarch as its head of state in a 1999 referendum.

TOP 4 TWEETS 01



As I have seen around the world, we have the know-how to tackle the climate crisis. What our world needs is political will to make the difference that is needed. @antoniogetterres

02 Profile picture of a man.

Kramatorsk. Russian terrorists have hit the city with a ballistic missile leading to civilian casualties. Some people are still under the rubble. No goal other than terror. The only way to stop Russian terrorism is to defeat it. By tanks. Fighter jets. Long-range missiles. @ZelenskyyUa

03 Profile picture of a woman.

Dear @ZelenskyyUa while Ukrainians are fighting to defend our common values, we support your economic security. To date, our EU support amounts to 50 billion Euros. We are with you on this for the long haul. @vonderleyen

04 Profile picture of a man.

Humanity takes up very little of Earth's surface area - you can fit the entire population of Earth in New York City on one floor (@waitbutwhy) @elonmusk

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

Towards creating a common interest for both parties (companies and society)

AHMED SULTAN ALABBASI

To promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), we must root it in a broad understanding of the inter-relationship between the companies/factories and the society, and at the same time embed it in the strategies and activities of these institutions.

One study reported that any business that seeks to achieve its goals at the expense of the society in which it operates will eventually find its success illusory and temporary.

Many of the companies that failed to anticipate the consequences of this cutting-edge body of research are bankrupted by the desired results they hoped for, and companies can no longer stand still with observing the social implications that are evident today.

For example, emissions of gases are generally understood to be a public health hazard and evidence of their dangers mounted gradually for more than 50 years before any company was held liable for the damages they could cause.

Without a rigorous process for identifying future evolving social impacts, companies may even risk their survival. No business entity can resolve all of society's problems or afford to do so, instead, each business entity must identify the problems that cut across its own business, and they rather leave other social agendas of those institutions to other industries.

Addressing social issues through the creation of shared value will lead to self-sustaining solutions that are not dependent on government or private subsidies. When a "well-managed" company uses its vast resources, experience and managerial talent on problems it understands and in which it has a stake, it can have a greater impact on Social Good more than any other charitable foundation or organization.

The best corporate citizenship initiatives involve much more than just writing a check, and managers and staff of these organizations should play an important role by working with the management of social institutions or even schools and universities to assess needs and guide students.

CSR practices should be through expanding and diversifying their employees to include the market segment represented by, for example the disabled "or rather we should call them People of High Spirits and Grit.", PHSG want what others want and there is no doubt that communities feel more favourable to companies that employ People of High Spirits and Grit.

As we head into the new year, I hope companies bring other aspects of CSR into focus in 2023 including a commitment to including People of High Spirits and Grit in their hiring practices and using influence and resources to help build inclusive societies. I am confident that this approach will lead to a very bright 2023, for each of the companies or factories and their communities, through employment and training as well.

On the other hand, the ministries should also facilitate and accelerate the procedures assigned to them through laws and regulations that encourage companies to include People of High Spirits and Grit and diversity in employment, as well as facilitating difficulties for companies so that these companies and factories can achieve the desired goals of their establishment. In the end, all this is in the interest of our kingdom through consecutive successes and good reputation of existing companies and attracting international companies to operate in our beloved kingdom and thus achieve a win-win scenario.

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

CAMPUS

Bahrain Polytechnic celebrates Bahrain Sports Day

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Polytechnic's academic and administrative staff celebrated Bahrain Sports Day on 2nd February 2023 within its campus, in line with the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and in response to the initiative of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, and with the follow-up of the Bahrain Olympic Committee led by HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the

Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee to allocate a day for sports activities.

The CEO of Bahrain Polytechnic, Professor Ciaran O Cathain, stated: "It is a matter of pride that the Kingdom of Bahrain is focusing its attention on the area of sports, thanks to the support from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain, who is always keen on promoting the concept of sports as a culture and lifestyle. This is also thanks to the role of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and the Prime Minister, in addition to the vision of His



Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee."

"The importance of Bahrain Sports Day is to boost awareness about the significance of sports in people's lives. It also pro-



motes physical, psychological and mental health and wellness," Professor O Cathain added.

The Polytechnic CEO concluded his speech by thanking all

academic and administrative staff for organizing, preparing, and participating in the Bahrain Sports Day, which included several physical activities.



New Horizon School commemorates Bahrain National Sports Day



With respect to promoting sports activities in Bahrain as per the interest of the His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and Prime Minister, Kingdom of Bahrain, the New Horizon School also became the part of Bahrain National Sports Day yesterday. Various sports and games events were organised grade wise such as running race, sack race, football tournament, relay race, ball balancing and shot put wherein every student participated

NMS observes Bahrain Sports Day



To commemorate the Bahrain Sports Day, a series of sporting events were held at the New Millennium School yesterday. A number of sports and games were conducted within the school campus. The highlight of the event was a friendly football match which was organised between the students of Grades 9 and 11 and staff members with an aim to glorify and promote the national game (football). Both the teams displayed their exemplary talent resulting in a score of 5:4. The students' team clinched the winning title. Students were encouraged to participate in games like skipping the rope, tug of war, dodge the ball and also quiz related to Bahrain national games. Principal, Arun Kumar Sharma addressed the students and emphasized the importance of sports in a student's life. He applauded the efforts of the students and the teachers for making the event a huge success. He also expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain, for initiating such events which help in inculcating a spirit of sportsmanship among the future generation. The Chairman, Dr. Ravi Pillai and the Managing Director, Geeta Pillai congratulated the staff and students for their participation in this event



Al Noor School marks Bahrain Sports Day



On the occasion of Bahrain Sports Day, Al Noor International School organized a sports festival. The festival began with the Sports Day ceremony by the scouts, girls' guides, and flowers teams of the different sections. Students shared the importance of sport in human lives, and also highlighted the efforts of our esteemed government in supporting sports. A skit, a presentation, and a quiz on 'The Relationship of Sports and Health' were also part of the event. Later, around 5000 students and the members of the school staff, participated in various sports related events, like a walk across the school campus and various field events.

Muharraq edge Manama in thriller

Ali Shukrallah buries go-ahead basket to help lift victors over defending champions in 2022/2023 Zain Bahrain Basketball League

● **Bader Abdulla Malabes scores 26, Tony Mitchell adds 20 in Muharraq win**

● **Ali Oun Rustam scores 29 points to lead Al Hala to 99-68 rout of Isa Town**

TDT | Manama

Ali Shukrallah buried the go-ahead basket to lift Muharraq to an 89-87 upset victory over bitter rivals and defending champions Manama last night in week 19 of the 2022/2023 Zain Bahrain Basketball League.

Ali Shukrallah buried the go-ahead basket to lift Muharraq to an 89-87 upset victory over bitter rivals and defending champions Manama last night in week 19 of the 2022/2023 Zain Bahrain Basketball League.

With the game tied at 87-apiece in the final minute, Shukrallah fired in a baseline jumper to beat the shot block and give his team the single-pos-



Muharraq's Tony Mitchell hangs on the rim after scoring with a two-handed slam dunk off an alley-oop pass

session advantage. Shukrallah then added to his heroics with a steal off a Mohammed Ameer pass on the ensuing possession, forcing Manama to foul with just two seconds left on the clock.

Bader Abdulla Malabes missed both charity shots but it mattered little as Manama were unable to get the ball back into

their own half.

It was a dramatic ending to a see-saw game that saw both teams battle hard over its entire duration.

With the result, Muharraq improved to a 13-4 win-loss record to rise to second on the league standings, just a point behind Manama, who suffered



only their third loss but stayed atop the table.

Malabes finished as the game's leading scorer with 26 points, including five three-pointers. American Tony Mitchell added 20 points and 11 rebounds for Muharraq, while Abdulla Rabee had 19. Shukrallah finished with 10 markers and 14 boards, while also registering five steals.

Mohammed Ameer scored 20 points off the bench to pace Manama in defeat, while Hasan Nowrooz added 16 and Mustafa Hussain and Ahmed Salman

Standings

	P	W	L	Pts
Manama	17	14	3	31
Muharraq	17	13	4	30
Al Ahli	16	13	3	29
Al Ettihad	16	11	5	27
Bahrain Club	18	9	9	27
Al Najma	16	10	6	26
Al Hala	17	9	8	26
Nuwaidrat	15	6	10	22
Sitra	17	4	13	21
Samahajj	17	2	15	19
Isa Town	17	1	16	18

each contributed 14. Elijah Robinson was held to just 12 points.

Back-to-back three-pointers by Malabes turned a 73-75 deficit to a 79-75 lead for Muharraq midway through the final quarter. Mitchell then added another triple in transition, extending Muharraq's lead to 82-75.

But Manama roared back with seven unanswered points to tie the game once more, until Malabes fired in another basket from long range, only to be answered by a Salman triple for an 85-all deadlock with under two minutes left. Baskets from Mitchell and Salman then made it 87-apiece, setting the stage for Shukrallah's game-winner.

In yesterday's other league fixture, Al Hala trounced bottom-of-the-table Isa Town 99-68.

Hala built a 27-18 lead at the end of the first quarter and stretched their advantage to 56-36 at the half. They then outscored Isa Town 27-10 in the third to make it 83-46 with one quarter to go, and they cruised to the finish.

Ali Oun Rustam scored 29 points, including five three-pointers, off the bench to pace Hala, who led by as many as 37 in the game. Nader Ali added 23 points and seven triples, while Alwathaq Ali scored 18 in the win.

For Isa Town, Oumar Barry had 23 points and nine rebounds while Mohammed Nabeel finished with 12 markers.

Hala claimed their ninth win in 17 games and improved to 26 points on the standings, while Isa Town suffered their league-worst 16th loss to go with just one win for 18 points.

League action continues tonight with just one game on schedule. Tipping off at 7.30pm, Nuwaidrat face off with Al Ettihad to wrap up the 19th week of action.

AFC President chairs Executive Committee meeting

TDT | Manama

President of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa, chaired the first meeting of the newly elected AFC Executive Committee.

Members of the Committee approved the appointment of Zaw Zaw from Myanmar as the Senior Vice President of the AFC Executive Committee.

The AFC Executive Committee unanimously approved the establishment of a dedicated AFC Professional Football Task Force to oversee the transformation of Continental club football, set in motion by the AFC



Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa speaks during the meeting

Competitions Committee last year, AFC said on its website.

"The new AFC Executive Committee has today underlined its intention to further accelerate our positive football journey through these two important decisions," said Shaikh Salman.

"We want to ensure that the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 is organised to the highest possible standards and remembered as the best ever, and the activation of the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup is testimony to our sincere efforts and belief. "We have already signalled

our ambitions to elevate Asian club football to new heights and the setting-up of the AFC Professional Football Task Force is a timely step in the right direction following the approval of strategic reforms to the AFC's club competitions late last year."

Several game-changing initiatives - including the introduction of new competition formats, lifting the foreign player quota and increasing the financial distribution model - aimed at ushering a new era of progress were approved by the AFC Competitions Committee and consequently endorsed by the AFC Executive Committee in December 2022.

Bahrain Victorious' Buitrago on stage four podium in Saudi Tour



Santiago Buitrago celebrates on the podium after stage four wearing the white jersey, which signifies his leading place in the race's youth ranking

● **Colombian rider takes third place on stage four to rise to third overall on general ranking, while also take lead in the youth ranking**

● **Teammate Jonathan Milan drops to fifth on general classification after placing 17th in stage, continues to lead race's points ranking**

TDT | Manama

Team Bahrain Victorious rider Santiago Buitrago finished on the podium yesterday after placing third in the 163.4-kilometre fourth and penultimate stage of the Saudi Tour, part of this year's Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Asia circuit.

Buitrago battled hard to stay close behind winner Ruben

Almedia Guerreiro of Movistar Team and runner-up Davide Formolo of UAE Team Emirates.

His finish helped him rise to third place on the general ranking heading into today's final leg. Buitrago also took over as the leader in the race's youth category.

Teammate Jonathan Milan, who was the overall leader heading into yesterday's events, dropped to fifth on the general classification after placing 17th in stage four. Despite this, Milan stayed in first place on the general points classification, but went to second in the youth category behind teammate Buitrago.

Today's fifth and final stage will cover a distance of 143km. It will begin at AlUla Old Town and end at Maraya.

Bahrain Victorious are competing with seven riders in the Saudi Tour, which is set to conclude today. Bahraini Ahmed Madan is a part of the squad, as are Filip Maciejuk, Rainer Kepplinger, Andrea Pasqualon and Dusan Rajovic.

BIC set for National Race Day thrills tomorrow

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom's leading circuit racing talents will be hitting the track on Saturday (Editor's note: 4 February) for the third round of National Race Day at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

"The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East" is set to host plenty of exciting racing action with both the 2022/2023 BIC 2,000cc Challenge and the Bahrain Motorcycle Championship taking centre stage.

The day-long programme is scheduled to begin from 10am and will continue until after 3pm. The racing will be held along BIC's 2.55-kilometre Inner Track.

All are welcome to attend. Tickets can be purchased at the gate.

The BIC 2,000cc Challenge will get the day's events underway with a 30-minute Practice session at 10am. Qualifying will then be held at 11.15am, which



Cars in action at BIC

will set the grid for Race One starting at 1.18pm. Race Two, which will feature a reverse grid, will flag off from 2.48pm, with both sprints featuring 12 laps.

The BIC 2,000cc Challenge is the longest-running circuit racing championship in the region. It is a home-grown, two-litre series, with competitors of various ages and nationalities going bumper-to-bumper.

Andrew Rey (Honda Integra) won both races in the previous

round held last month, and he now heads into this weekend's meeting in first place on the championship standings with 77 points.

Majed Himmo (Honda Civic) is currently second with 62 points, while Moaz Elzahrawi (Honda Civic), who won a race with Rey in the season's opening round in November, is ranked third on 54 points.

Isa Ebrahim (Honda Civic) is fourth with 49 points, while Wiebke Buelow (Honda Civic)

completes the top five with 34 points.

Meanwhile, the Bahrain Motorcycle Championship will kick off their round on Saturday with a 30-minute Practice at 10.40am. Qualifying is then set for 11.55am, determining the order on the grid for the single 12-lap Race, starting at 2.03pm.

Riders will be competing in two categories, including the Superstock 600cc and Superstock 1,000cc.

The meeting's podium ceremony is scheduled to begin at 3.25pm following the completion of all the action.

National Race Day is being organised by BIC in cooperation with the Bahrain Motor Federation, Circuit Racing Commission, Bahrain Motorcycle Commission and Motorsport Marshals Club.

For more information on National Race Day or other events and activities at BIC, visit bahraingp.com or call the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

Godolphin horses headline Crown Prince's Cup

One of the most significant days in the Bahrain horseracing season takes place today at REHC in Sakhir

● The Crown Prince's Cup, an internationally listed race, boasts an extremely high-class field with 15 horses declared

● Penultimate races in the Bahrain Turf Series also set to take place with The Anchorman Cup and The Hawar Cup

TD | Manama



HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa

A top-class card featuring His Royal Highness The Crown Prince's Cup, sponsored by Howden, and the penultimate races in the Bahrain Turf Series, The Anchorman Cup and The Hawar Cup, will take place today at Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC) in Sakhir, marking one of the most significant days in the Bahrain horseracing season.

The Crown Prince's Cup, sponsored by Howden, runs over 1m 2f (2000m), is an internationally listed race, and is one of the principal races in the Kingdom, along with the Bahrain International Trophy in November and His Majesty The King's Cup in March.

The partnership between The Bahrain Turf Club and Howden strengthens in its second year, reflecting Bahrain's emergence

as a major force in the world of horseracing and Howden's status in this field as a specialist provider of equine insurance.

His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of The Bahrain Turf Club said: "I would like to thank Howden for their continued support of His Royal Highness The Crown Prince's Cup. The continued advancement of the Kingdom of Bahrain's horseracing sector is highlighted by the support from a renowned international sponsor."

"I would also like to thank His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum for Godolphin's ongoing support. The feature of top-quality horses, trained by Britain's Champion trainer Charlie Appleby, in the Bahrain Turf Series and The Crown Prince's Cup, raises the quality of Bahrain's horseracing

“The feature of top-quality horses in the Bahrain Turf Series and The Crown Prince's Cup raises the quality of Bahrain's horseracing competitions and highlights the importance of further growing the sector at an international level”

HH SHAIKH ISA BIN SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA

competitions and highlights the importance of further growing the sector at an international level."

This year, The Crown Prince's Cup boasts an extremely high-class field with 15 horses declared to run made up of both locally and internationally trained horses.

Godolphin have two runners on the day with Warren Point lining up in the Listed contest. The four-year-old gelding was last seen to success at Kempton in October and his trainer Charlie Appleby spoke of his chances. He said: "Warren Point is in great shape, his form is over 1m 2f and 1m 4f and here he is dropping back to 1m 2f. He is drawn sensibly enough (five) and they will go a good gallop which should suit him and if not he is quite happy to make his own gallop. With what he has achieved to date he should be



One of today's competitors training at the club this week

very competitive. As always it is exciting to have runners in Bahrain and hopefully we can walk away with a winner, or two!"

Lucander trained by George Baker, a winner over 1m 2f in the opening Bahrain Turf Series race and the Roger Fell-trained Marie's Diamond make up the field of the internationally trained horses.

One of Bahrain's leading trainers Allan Smith, is no stranger to getting horses ready for the big days in the Bahrain horseracing season. He has three go to post in The Crown Prince's Cup: Byline, Recovery Run and Glen Savage. Smith updated on his runners and said: "I've got Byline who we're stepping up in trip. He's been running over 1m for the last couple of seasons, but he's always looked to me as though he is crying out for a bit further.

"He ran over 1800m last time in the Turf Series race, and

he just got a bit far out of his ground. He had to come from too far back and he finished fourth. He was still finishing and running on, so if we can get a handier position with him early on we fancy him a lot."

On Recovery Run and Glen Savage, he added: "Since the last time he raced he has been castrated so we're hoping that has turned him around a little bit. He has come through it very good and he seems a lot happier. Then we've got Glen Savage who is a good horse who won last time over 2800m, but he's still acclimatising and he's been doing some nice work. We're very happy with him and he's a nice horse, we just need a bit of luck in-running."

Bahrain Turf Series

Meanwhile, competition is building in the Bahrain Turf Series. Locally trained horses

and the European challengers have had a chance to get on the board and this Friday features two more £60,000 handicaps, The Anchorman Cup over 9 furlongs (1800m) and The Hawar Cup, over a straight 6 furlongs (1200m).

Godolphin are represented in The Anchorman Cup by King Of Conquest who makes up a field of 16. A winner last time out, the Charlie Appleby-trained four-year-old will be stepping up in distance which his trainer is hoping will bring about more improvement.

Appleby said: "He is stepping up in trip which I think will suit him and 9 furlongs should be the ideal trip. He is drawn 10 and with what he has achieved to date you'd hope he will be very competitive with conditions that will suit him."

A field of 18 go to post in The Hawar Cup and the George Baker-trained Watchya will be hoping to go one better having finished second last time out on his first start in Bahrain over the same distance. Andrea Atzeni takes the ride and has high hopes for the race, he said: "Watchya ran a very good race on his first start in Bahrain when he was second. He hasn't run since then but the vibes are good and apparently he's been working well. If he turns up he could be very hard to beat."

The three feature races will be available to watch live on Racing TV and via live stream on The Bahrain Turf Club website.

Manama through to HM the King's Cup semis

● Younes Musa converts decisive spot kick in thrilling 5-4 penalty shootout victory

● Mahdi Abduljabbar, Al Mustafa Abdulsamad on target for their sides in regular time

TD | Manama



Manama's Mohammed Hallaq battles to keep possession from Sitra's Seydina Laye Dabo during their match last night

Manama barged into the semi-finals of this year's His Majesty the King's Cup following a thrilling 5-4 penalty shootout victory over Sitra last night.

The match was deadlocked at 1-1 at the end of extra time, with Mahdi Abduljabbar and substitute Al Mustafa Abdulsamad both scoring in the second half for their respective sides.

The game then went to the penalty kicks, and both teams were perfect after the first eight attempts. But then Sitra's Hamza Al Hamami misfired on his shot, sending the ball over the crossbar and failing to break the 4-4 deadlock. Manama's Younes Musa

took advantage, firing in a powerful left-footed effort into the top-left corner of goal to give Manama the win.

Yesterday's contest was the first of four quarter-final matches in this year's HM the King's Cup. Hidd and Al Hala face off in another, while tonight Al Najma take on Al Ahli at 4.30pm followed by a titanic clash

between Riffa and Muharraq at 8pm.

The HM the King's Cup football tournament is a knockout competition that offers the richest prizes in Bahrain.

In last night's clash, both teams could not break the tie over the opening half, but then it took Manama only

nine minutes after the break to go ahead. Abduljabbar found the net with a floating header from close range. He connected on a long cross from the right wing supplied by teammate Ahmed Mirza.

Manama appeared to be headed for a victory in regulation but Sitra pulled off a late comeback, with Abdulsamad hitting a brilliant equaliser in the fifth minute of second-half stoppage time.

Abdulsamad sent the ball home with a fine bicycle kick after receiving a short pass from Ali Abdulrasool Al Asfoor. That paved the way for the extra 30 minutes of action, which led to the decisive shootout.

There, Sitra took the lead with Dabo converting their first kick against Manama goalkeeper Ammar Mohammed Abbas. Abduljabbar then replied for Manama against substitute Sitra stopper Godwill Chia Ndang.

The two teams then made their next three attempts, with Mutasim Billah Iskandar, Abdulsamad and Vincent Emmanuel Ani all scoring for Sitra, and Ahmed Ammar, Khalifa Issa Al Lafi and Mohammed Al Marmour finding the net for Manama.

That set the stage for the decisive attempts of Al Hamami and Musa.

France defender Varane retires from international football



Raphael Varane

Reuters | Paris

France defender Raphael Varane is retiring from international football, ending a 10-year career with Les Bleus in which he won the World Cup in 2018 and was a runners-up four years later.

The 29-year-old, who has 93 caps after making his debut in 2013, and also helped Didier Deschamps's side win the UEFA Nations League in the 2020-21 season.

"Representing our beautiful country for a decade has been one of the greatest honours of my life," Varane said in a statement.