

**Bahrain thanked by Kuwait Amir**

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, received cables of thanks from His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, in response to their cables of congratulations on the second anniversary of HH Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad assuming office.

**Germany warns of 'power politics'**



German Ambassador,  
H.E. Mr. Henning Simon  
TDT | Manama

As 2026 approaches as a turning point for the global order, Germany warns that fragmentation and power-driven politics are eroding international stability. (Read the German ambassador's perspective on Page 2)

**Fikra's seventh edition e-voting for 'Public Vote' category launched**

TDT | Manama

Electronic voting for the seventh edition of the Government Innovation Competition (Fikra) has been launched through the Prime Minister's Office website at [www.pmo.gov.bh](http://www.pmo.gov.bh) to determine the winner of the "Public Vote" category.

Voting will remain open until Sunday, 11 January.

This follows the qualification of 12 concepts, which were selected after a rigorous evaluation of the initial 40 concepts by four specialised committees.

The outcome of the vote will be announced alongside the results from the Ministers' evaluation committee, which will determine the winning concepts in the other competition categories.

220 fils (includes VAT)



# Revenue boost

**Labour Minister: 2,200 businesses used parallel Bahrainisation system up to October 2025**

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

**M**ore than 2,200 businesses used Bahrain's parallel Bahrainisation system up to October 2025, Labour Minister, His Excellency Yousef Khalaf, has told Parliament, with revenues from the scheme reaching about BD26.5 million since January 2023.

In a written reply to MP Mohammed Salman Al Ahmed, H.E. Khalaf said 2,200 establishments used the system over the past year up to October.

The total was 2,394 in 2023 and 2,308 in 2024.

**Permits**

He said work permits issued for expat staff without meeting the Bahrainisation ratio set for the business.

He said around BD850,000 was returned to employers over the same period.

H.E. Khalaf said the fee is an extra charge paid by an employ-



MP Mohammed Salman Al Ahmed



**All employers pay the extra fee when they seek permits for expat workers without meeting their Bahrainisation ratio, leaving no special rules or plans linked to exemptions**

**H.E. YOUSEF KHALAF, LABOUR MINISTER**

er who asks for a work permit for expat staff without meeting the Bahrainisation ratio set for the business.

He said around BD850,000 was returned to employers over the same period.

Refunds stood at BD188,013 in

2023, rose to BD358,612 in 2024, then reached BD301,833 up to October 2025.

**Fee**

The Minister said the fee, like other charges tied to bringing in expat workers, is returned

only in two cases: if the worker moves to another employer, or if the work permit is cancelled before the worker arrives in Bahrain.

He cited Article 1 of Decision No. 28 of 2002 on the refund of work-permit fees.

H.E. Khalaf said there are no exemptions from the parallel system under Cabinet Decision No. 27 of 2016 on certain fees collected by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), as amended by Cabinet Decision No. 2 of 2019.

He said this means all employers pay the extra fee when they seek permits for expat workers without meeting their Bahrainisation ratio, leaving no special rules or plans linked to exemptions.

**Tool**

The Minister added that Parliament's interest in the figures was welcomed, describing the system as one tool used to back efforts to raise the share of Bahrainis in the labour market, alongside other plans and joint work between the executive and legislative authorities.

## Education for all



His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma, Minister of Education, met with a number of parents of students with disabilities to discuss their views and proposals aimed at developing and improving the educational services provided by the ministry. He emphasised the importance of holding regular meetings with parents of this group of students to ensure their active involvement in their children's educational process. He also referred to the possibility of forming an advisory committee for students with determination to enable ongoing consultation on developing a more inclusive educational system.

## Maduro to appear in court

AFP | New York

Venezuela's deposed president Nicolas Maduro is scheduled to appear before a federal judge in New York

at noon today, to be formally notified about the charges against him, the court said.

Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, were seized by US forces

during a pre-dawn raid on Saturday in Caracas and brought to New York to face charges of "narcoterrorism" tied to alleged trafficking of tons of cocaine into the US.

## All systems go

## Metro route works begin for airport-to-Seef line

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

Airport-to-Seef trains and a Juffair-to-Isa Town line will form the spine of Phase One of Bahrain's planned metro, the Transportation and Telecommunications Minister has said, as work begins to prepare the route.

The Minister, His Excellency Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, said the ministry is working under the project's approved plan and coordinating with relevant bodies to complete the route works for the first stage.

In a written reply to a parliamentary question from MP Lulwa Ali Al Rumaihi, H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla said the metro is expected to improve traffic flow by adding a mass-transit option alongside buses.

He said it should shorten journey times, make day-to-day travel easier for citizens and residents, and cut reliance on private cars as Bahrain moves towards a more sustainable public transport system.

H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla said the Bahrain Metro and the GCC Railway are being managed separately in planning and delivery, but with ongoing coordination so the two schemes can link up in the future in line with shared national and Gulf



**H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa**

goals.

He added that progress on one project would not directly affect the other.

His Excellency said the two projects are expected to reduce congestion on key routes, raise the share of travel by public transport and provide a dependable, long-term network for travel across the country.

The minister said the total cost cannot yet be set because the final design has not been completed and market conditions continue to change.

He said the final figure, and any needed changes, will be settled once detailed studies and designs are completed and approved.

Phase One is planned to include 20 stations, with two main interchange stops for transfers between the lines, one in the Bahrain Financial Harbour area and the other at Central Market in Manama, to serve key residential and commercial districts.

As 2026 marks the moment when a decade of global shocks begins to harden into a new structural order, Germany cautions that growing fragmentation and power-based politics are placing unprecedented strain on the rules and institutions built to safeguard international stability. In conversation with Mahir Haneef, His Excellency Henning Simon, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, outlines why renewed commitment to multilateralism, dialogue, and international law is essential to preserving trust and predictability in global affairs.

**H.E. Mr. Henning Simon, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany**

## When power is exercised **without regard for commonly agreed principles**, trust erodes and the predictability necessary for stability diminishes

*Our common task for this year must be to protect multilateralism.*

*Global expectations are shifting toward greater accountability, inclusiveness, and effectiveness from international institutions.*

*Preserving a rules-based international order requires renewed commitment, restraint, and good faith from all states, regardless of size or power.*

**A**s the international community moved into 2026, profound structural shifts are testing the foundations of the rule-based global order. One of the most significant trends influencing international relations is the growing tension between cooperation and fragmentation. While global challenges increasingly transcend borders, the willingness of some actors to uphold shared rules and norms has come under strain, testing the resilience of the international system built over decades. The international environment is increasingly characterized by strategic rivalry, selective engagement with international norms, and a growing tendency to subordinate shared rules to narrow national interests.

In this respect, dialogue and negotiation remain indispensable, yet they are too often overshadowed by coercive approaches that prioritize leverage over legitimacy. When power is exercised without regard for commonly agreed principles, trust erodes and the predictability necessary for stability diminishes. Traditional state-to-state diplomacy remains essential, yet it is complemented by more complex forms

of dialogue involving cities, private actors, and civil society. At the same time, diplomacy is becoming more transactional and, in some cases, more confrontational, reflecting a perception among certain powers that influence can be maximized through pressure rather than consensus.

Economic cooperation is also undergoing transformation. Global supply chains are being reassessed in the name of resilience, but this trend carries the risk of deepening divisions if it leads to exclusion rather than diversification. Sustainable growth will depend on maintaining open markets, fair competition, and respect for agreed frameworks that ensure mutual benefit rather than unilateral advantage.

Our common task for this year must be to protect multilateralism. Global expectations are shifting toward greater accountability, inclusiveness, and effectiveness from international institutions. Preserving a rules-based international order requires renewed commitment, restraint, and good faith from all states, regardless of size or power.

Against this background, the Federal Republic of Germany will continue to cooperate closely with the Kingdom of

Bahrain to uphold the international rule-based order, peace and tolerance around the globe and commends Bahrain's vital role in the United Nations Security Council.

For Germany, foreign policy remains firmly guided by the interlinked principles of peace, security, and prosperity—principles that can only be sustained through respect for international law, responsible state behavior, and genuine multilateral cooperation.

As 2026 begins, the central question is whether states will recommit to collective responsibility—or continue down a path where power increasingly substitutes for principle.



(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)

# Transport vote

Parliament set to debate Decree-Law on unified GCC land transport system

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

**A** Decree-Law approving the unified GCC system for international land transport will go to a vote in Parliament tomorrow, after the government said Bahrain needs to bring its rules into line with a framework agreed by Gulf leaders.

Decree-Law No 35 of 2025 approves the Unified System (Law) for International Land Transport between GCC states, adopted by the GCC Supreme Council at its 43rd session, and would place cross-border road transport under a single set of rules across member states.

The Public Utilities and Environment Committee, which reviewed the government referral, said the decree-law is sound on constitutional grounds and recommended that Parliament approve it.

The decree-law adopts the unified system in full and states that the 'competent authority' will be the government body to be designated by decree.

It also provides that, for the purposes of applying the system, one Bahraini dinar is treat-



ed as equal to ten Saudi riyals. It explains how decisions issued under the system and its executive rules can be challenged.

Anyone affected has 30 days from notification to submit a grievance to the competent authority, which must decide within 30 days.

If the grievance is rejected, or no reply is given within that period, an appeal may be filed with the competent court within a further 30 days.

### Decisions

Until the executive rules are issued, decisions already in force at the time the decree-law is issued would remain in effect.

The unified system itself runs to 25 articles.

It covers definitions, the aim and scope, the operating card, rules for return trips and entry without a load, movement by vehicles that are not registered, and domestic transport of passengers and goods.

### Standards

It also sets technical standards for vehicles, rules on carrying goods and exceptional loads, and duties on carriers and drivers.

Other provisions deal with how long a vehicle may remain in a member state, as well as weight and size limits.

The system also lists breaches and administrative penalties, covers repeat offences and outlines how fines are paid, before the final articles.

In its explanatory note to Parliament, the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission said the decree-law was issued on an urgent basis because the date set for the GCC system to take effect has already passed, and because delay risks leaving a gap in the law that could disrupt the flow of land transport with other member states.

### Procedures

The Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications said Saudi Arabia has already begun applying the system and that Bahrain needs to adjust its own laws and procedures to avoid clashes that could affect cross-border movement and the interests of national carriers.

The ministry also linked the system to road safety through unified technical standards and stricter controls on transport operations.

The Ministry of Interior's General Directorate of Traffic said it agreed with the decree-law as issued.

## New rule scraps paper books for digital firms



H.E. Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

ing, and that entries must be made on a regular basis within the legal time limits.

### Decision

The decision cites the Commercial Code issued by Decree-Law No. 7 of 1987, particularly Article 20, as well as the Commercial Companies Law issued by Decree-Law No. 21 of 2001, and the Electronic Communications and Transactions Law issued by Decree-Law No. 54 of 2018, as amended by Law No. 29 of 2021.

Signed by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, it was issued after Cabinet approval and following a submission

from the undersecretary. It will take effect from the day after publication, with the undersecretary tasked with implementing it.

The decision says the electronic system must have security measures that protect stored data and prevent any alteration, deletion or tamper-

## Budget bill targets surpluses from public bodies and state-owned firms

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

Half the state's net profits from Mumtalakat and Bapco Energies would be routed into the general budget under a merged bill. Parliament will debate in its next sitting.

The Financial and Economic Affairs Committee has also rewritten the wider plan so the budget would take the year-end surpluses of all public authorities and public institutions, while keeping the 50 per cent floor for the two state-owned groups, after the statutory reserve is set aside.

The government has objected, saying the current legal set-up already covers profit transfers and oversight, and warning that fixed rules could limit cash used for reinvestment and debt duties.

### Plan

The plan began as two separate draft laws, one to amend Article 10 of Decree-Law No. 39 of 2002 on the state budget and another to set a minimum transfer from the two state groups.

The committee merged them into one report under Parliament's rule for measures that deal with the same subject, treating the earlier text as the main bill and the later one as an amendment.

In the merged redraft, the committee moved away from pulling in all revenues and instead focused on surpluses left at year end for public bodies.

It kept, in the same article, the rule that no less than 50 per cent of the state's net profits from Mumtalakat and Bapco Energies should be included in the general budget, after the statutory reserve.

The bill also keeps a reporting duty for the two companies' accounts.

Under the committee text, the government would submit the prior year's financial statements, audited by the National Audit Office, to Parliament within five months of the annual accounts being closed, with approval then issued by both chambers and published in the Official Gazette.

## Housing application reinstatement window may extend to four years

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A proposal to give families longer to revive a cancelled housing application will be debated in Parliament tomorrow, with MP Hanan Fardan urging the government to extend the reinstatement window from two years to four after an applicant loses one of the eligibility conditions.

The recommendation targets Article 69 of Ministerial Decision No. 909 of 2015, which governs the housing system.

Under the rule, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning

# Legal milestone

Shura Council passes law enabling Permanent Court of Arbitration to operate in Bahrain

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

The Shura Council yesterday passed a draft law ratifying a Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Permanent Court of Arbitration, under Decree No. 39 of 2025, clearing the way for the court to hold arbitration, mediation and conciliation proceedings in Bahrain.

The council agreed to take the final view on the bill on an urgent basis and send it to the Speaker of the Council of Representatives to refer it to His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, ahead of submission to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Rapporteur Ali Al Aradi said the agreement showed a shared wish "to establish a headquarters for the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Kingdom", through which disputes would be handled "by arbitration or mediation or conciliation or commissions of inquiry".

### Text

He said the text also covers the privileges and immunities for those involved in the court's work, including arbitrators and



**The court has a big return for legal professionals and lawyers in Bahrain through training and closer work on investment files**

H. E. NAWAF AL MAWDA, JUSTICE MINISTER

other participants in proceedings.

Justice Minister, His Excellency Nawaf Al Mawda, told members: "Bahrain is keen to diversify the arbitration centres it brings into the kingdom."

He said the court deals with disputes between states and with state investment disputes, adding that it has "a big return for legal professionals and lawyers in Bahrain" through training and closer work on investment files.

The Minister said there



**The agreement showed a shared wish to establish a headquarters for the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Kingdom**

ALI AL ARADI, COMMITTEE RAPPORTEUR

would be coordination with the Bahrain Chamber for Dispute Resolution on how the work would begin, including training and payment arrangements, once the legal steps in Bahrain are completed.

Shura member Dr Hani Al Saati said ratification would make Bahrain "the first among the Gulf states to host the Permanent Court of Arbitration", adding that this would strengthen trust in Bahrain's legal setting while "not detracting from the sovereignty of the national

judiciary".

Under the agreement attached to the bill, Bahrain would recognise the court's legal capacity, provide premises and secretariat support for hearings and meetings, and name contact points to handle coordination between the two sides.

The text also covers security arrangements for proceedings and steps to ease entry and stay for non-Bahrainis taking part, alongside rules for waiving immunities when they block the course of justice.



**This would strengthen trust in Bahrain's legal setting while "not detracting from the sovereignty of the national judiciary**

DR HANI AL SAATI, SHURA COUNCIL MEMBER

**Court upholds BD50 fine in Mercedes rental non-payment case**



Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A woman has lost her last bid to overturn a conviction after the Court of Cassation upheld a BD50 fine over a Mercedes-Benz rental left unpaid, with dues put at BD1,210.

Prosecutors said she hired the car from a rental office for 24 days, from 6 to 29 January 2024, then did not pay what was owed.

The Lower Criminal Court first jailed her for one month, while setting bail at BD100 to suspend the sentence.

She appealed, and the High Criminal Court of Appeal changed the ruling, dropping the jail term and keeping only a BD50 fine.

Her lawyer then took the case to the Court of Cassation, arguing she had nothing to do with the rental and denying the charge.

The defence claimed her sister rented the vehicle using her identity card number, and asked the court to order a review of the company's CCTV to show who collected the car. It also sought checks with Immigration and Passports to confirm if the sister entered Bahrain on the day in question.

## MPs seek VAT relief for suppliers waiting on government invoices

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A group of five MPs has put forward a draft change to Bahrain's VAT law that would tie the tax due date on government work to the day suppliers are paid.

The proposal amends Article 13 of the Value Added Tax Law issued under Decree-Law No. 48 of 2018 by adding a new clause.

It says that when goods or services are supplied to a government entity, the "date of supply" is the date the supplier receives the amount due.

Those behind the proposal are MP Hassan Ebrahim, MP Dr Ali Al Nuaimi, First Deputy Speaker Abdulnabi Salman, MP Hamad Al Doy and Mamdouh Al Saleh.



### Change

They argue the change is aimed at a cashflow problem suppliers and service providers face when dealing with govern-

ment entities.

In their explanatory memorandum, they say invoices are often settled after long and uneven waits, ranging from three months to six months and, in some cases, more than a year.

Under the current rules, a



**The proposal states that when goods or services are supplied to a government entity, the "date of supply" is the date the supplier receives the amount due.**

supplier may have to account for VAT before receiving payment, which the proposers say places an added burden on working cash and can make it harder to meet tax payments on time.

### Provisions

The proposal cites constitutional provisions on social justice in taxation and the right of members of either chamber to propose laws.

It also points to the role of the legislature in reviewing laws and amending them when practice shows a need for change.

If the amendment is enacted, it would take effect the day after publication in the Official Gazette, with implementation assigned to the Prime Minister and ministers within their areas of responsibility.



MP Hanan Fardan



**The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning said job loss and financial crises do not lead to a housing application being cancelled.**

issues a decision cancelling a housing-service application if the applicant loses any condition required to receive the service.

### Conditions

Article 69 also grants applicants, except in cases linked to Bahraini nationality, the right to ask the ministry to return the cancelled file to the register of applications that meet the conditions, provided the request is made within two years from the date of cancellation.

Fardan is seeking to amend that time limit, saying some families face short-term setbacks that make it hard to restore eli-

gibility within two years.

"Since Article 69 provides for an application to be cancelled as soon as an eligibility condition is lost, while giving the family two years to reinstate it, we propose extending that period to four years," she said.

She said the change would reduce the need for families to submit new applications and repeat the process from the beginning.

"Families may face temporary difficulties that prevent them from meeting the requirements within two years, such as job loss or unstable economic conditions," she said.

# Second thumbs down

Shura Council votes down draft law setting master's degree requirement for expat hires in public sector

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

**S**hura Council said no again yesterday, voting down for a second time a draft law that would make a master's degree the minimum bar for expat hires in public-sector posts, and sending the disputed proposal to the National Assembly after the two chambers failed to agree.

The proposal seeks to amend Article (11) of the Civil Service Law issued by Decree-Law No. 48 of 2010.

It would add new limits on when non-Bahrainis can be hired, and on what terms, when no suitable Bahraini candidate is available.

#### Experience

Under the draft, an expat recruit would need at least a master's degree, or its equivalent, in the same field, and no fewer than



an eligible Bahraini candidate.

#### Aims

The committee urged members to stick with the Shura Council's earlier refusal, arguing the aims sought by the draft are already met through the Civil Service Law and its implementing rules, in line with Article 16 of the Constitution, which gives Bahrainis priority in public

**Any qualification threshold should follow the job itself, rather than the passport of the person hired**

H.E. GHANIM AL BUAINAIN, MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

employment and allows hiring non-Bahrainis only in cases set by law.

During the debate, Shura member Dr Ali Al Haddad backed the committee's stance, saying its view "is not a rejection of the public interest or of reform", but a bid to avoid piecemeal change to civil-service rules.

Shura member Dr Ahmed Al



Dr Ali Al Haddad



Dr Ahmed Al Oraiyedh



Dr Abdulaziz Al Ajman

Oraiyedh questioned the fit of a blanket master's-degree rule across many jobs, saying: "Academic certificates like a master's and a doctorate are always given to those working in academia," while many professions follow different tracks.

#### Legislation

Minister of Parliamentary Af-

fairs, His Excellency Ghanim Al Buainain, also supported the committee's reading, saying: "The legislation is already in place and there is no need to repeat it in the texts."

He argued that any qualification threshold should follow the job itself, rather than the passport of the person hired.

The committee also pointed to

what it said were results under the current rules, citing a Civil Service Bureau (CSB) drive to localise jobs that cut expat employment contracts by 23 per cent between 2019 and 2024.

With the Shura Council repealing its rejection, the draft law has been referred to the National Assembly for a final decision.

## Most expat private-sector workers earn under BD200 a month salary

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama



**M**ost expat workers in Bahrain's private sector are on low pay, with about 336,746 earning under BD200 a month and an average wage of around BD267, new figures from the Social Insurance Organisation show.

The data put the total number of expat employees and workers in the private sector at about 473,323.

Men made up 423,413 of them, or 89.3 per cent, while 49,910 were women, or 11.7 per cent.

#### Data

Alongside those under BD200, the figures show about 64,036 expat workers on monthly wages between BD200 and BD399, equal to 14 per cent of the expat workforce counted in the data.

The same release also tracked Bahraini pay and headcount across the public and private sectors. It put the average monthly wage for Bahraini employees at about BD919, with an average age of 36.

Bahraini employment across both sectors stood at about

157,213, with the larger share in the private sector at 105,503, or 67 per cent.

The public sector accounted for 51,710, or 33 per cent.

Average Bahraini pay differed by sector, at about BD973 a month in the public sector and around BD892 in the private sector.

#### Figures

The figures also show the number of Bahraini employees across both sectors rising over the past five years, from about 145,849 in 2021 to 145,894 by the end of 2024, before reaching around 157,000 in the third quarter of 2025.

A year-on-year change of 2 per cent was recorded between

the third quarter of 2024 and the same period in 2025.

By gender, the data put Bahraini men at 90,444 employees across the two sectors, or 57.5 per cent, compared with 66,769 women, or 42.5 per cent.

#### Women

In the public sector, women accounted for about 55 per cent in the third quarter of 2025, up from 54.8 per cent at the end of 2024. That equated to 28,431 women and 23,279 men among the 51,710 employees in ministries and government bodies.

In the private sector, Bahraini men remained the larger group, with 67,165 employees, or 64 per cent, compared with 38,338 women, or 36 per cent.

## Duty-free solar equipment plan on track

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

**A** revised proposal for a renewable energy law was sent to the government yesterday after the Shura Council agreed to refer it for drafting as a bill, with an amendment that would exempt renewable-energy systems and energy-saving equipment from customs duty.

Members debated a supplementary report from the Public Utilities and Environment Committee on the amended text, submitted by Talal Al

Authority.

Among the committee's changes is a rewrite of the definition of the 'Authority' in Article 1, making it the body whose name is set by decree.

The amended version also adds a new article stating that the Civil Code applies in matters not covered by a specific provision in the proposed law.

Another amendment adds a second paragraph to Article 13 stating that systems, devices and equipment linked to renewable energy sources and energy-use control.

## Pravasi Legal Cell successfully repatriates stranded Indian family

Pradeep Puravankara  
TDT | Manama

**T**he Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter has successfully facilitated the repatriation of Mr. Sandeep Thundiyl, a native of Mahe, India, marking the end of a prolonged humanitarian and legal ordeal for his family in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Mr. Sandeep, who had been residing in Bahrain since 2011, faced a severe crisis after his small business collapsed due to financial hardships.

This led to the expiration of his residency, the accumulation of multiple legal cases related to business liabilities, and a lack of documentation that left the family in a state of complete helplessness.

#### Complications

The family's situation was further complicated by the birth of their daughter, Ivani Sandeep, in 2022.

Due to unpaid hospital charges at the Salmaniya Medical Complex, the child's birth could not be registered, leaving her undocumented for nearly three years without access to healthcare or education.

Furthermore, the loss of Mr. Sandeep's passport and the unlawful withholding of his wife's passport by a former landlord prevented them from initiating any legal or repatriation procedures on their own.

**M**r. Sudheer Thirunilath, Pravasi Legal Cell Bahrain Chapter President, and other officials with Mr. Sandeep Thundiyl before his departure

**This case highlights the harsh realities faced by undocumented migrant families and the vital importance of timely legal intervention**

SUDHEER THIRUNILATH, GLOBAL PRO AND BAHRAIN CHAPTER PRESIDENT OF THE PRAVASI LEGAL CELL

Surviving on the mercy of friends after losing their home and belongings, the family's plight became a priority for the Pravasi Legal Cell starting in July 2025.

Under the comprehensive support of the PLC, several critical milestones were achieved, including legal coordination to resolve pending cases and the issuance of a birth certificate for the child.

The organization also cov-

ered the outstanding hospital charges and arranged Emergency Certificates through the Embassy of India.

While Mr. Sandeep's wife and daughter were repatriated earlier in August 2025 with tickets provided by the Embassy, Mr. Sandeep's return was finalized today, January 4, 2026.

His return is particularly urgent as his father is currently battling a serious illness in India.

Sudheer Thirunilath, Global PRO and Bahrain Chapter President of the Pravasi Legal Cell, stated that this case highlights the harsh realities faced by undocumented migrant families and the vital importance of timely legal intervention.

He expressed deep gratitude to Adv. Tariq Alown for his dedicated legal efforts, as well as the Embassy of India, Bahrain Immigration Authorities, and the Sikh Gurudwara Sahib in Salmabad for providing food and accommodation.

## Former East Riffa Health Centre to oncology unit

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

**P**arliament will debate tomorrow a motion to convert the former East Riffa Health Centre into an oncology centre for the Southern Governorate, as MPs argue cancer care should be closer to residents and pressure eased on Salmaniya Med-

ical Complex and King Hamad University Hospital.

The proposal, submitted by MPs Dr Ali Al Nuaimi, Mohamed Mousa, Bader Al Tamimi, Mohammed Yousef Al Maarafi and Najeeb Al Kowari, calls on the government to turn the former facility in East Riffa into a specialised centre for treating

cancer patients, serving residents of the governorate and others.

Supporters say the move would improve health services, strengthen the system's ability to provide co-ordinated care, and respond to what they described as an alarming rise in cancer cases.

# Safety 'priority'

MPs set to debate tomorrow ban on delivery motorbikes using main roads

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A call to bar delivery motorbikes from main roads will be debated in Parliament tomorrow, even as a committee has urged MPs to reject it, warning it would shift congestion into neighbourhood streets and could push riders into cars.

The request, filed by MPs Badier Al Tameemi, Abdulkhalid Qarata, Ali Al Doseri, Hamad Al Doy and Abdulla Al Rumaihi, asks the government to stop delivery riders using main roads and to curb traffic breaches linked to the trade.

Al Tameemi said the aim was direct.

"The proposal by wish centres on banning delivery motorbikes from riding on main roads," he told colleagues, arguing that repeated road breaches by riders working for restaurants had become hard to ignore.

## Riders

He pointed to what he said had been seen in recent weeks, with some riders using the left



side of main roads.

"Recently, many traffic violations have been observed by motorbike riders using the left side of main roads, putting themselves and others at risk," he said, warning that crashes can lead to severe injuries and death.

He also said the move would mirror rules used in Kuwait and would curb bikes moving between governorates.

But the Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee told MPs to vote the proposal down.

## Report

In its report, it said many areas cannot be reached through side streets alone, meaning riders would still need main roads to get to internal and secondary routes. A ban, it said, would pile more vehicles onto smaller roads and worsen traffic queues.

The committee also warned of a knock-on effect: blocking bikes from main roads could lead riders and firms to switch to cars for deliveries, adding to traffic and slowing the flow.

The Ministry of Interior,

**Repeated road breaches by riders working for restaurants had become hard to ignore**

MP BADER AL TAMEEMI

through the General Directorate of Traffic, backed those concerns.

## System

It said Bahrain's road network is built as a linked system, with main roads feeding into side routes, junctions, cities and other districts, and that a ban would be hard to carry out on the ground.

The directorate said it was already stepping up checks on delivery riders who break the rules, with action taken under the traffic law, including impounding delivery bikes.

It said 1,005 delivery motorbikes were impounded from 2022 until February 2025.

## Project

It also told MPs it was close to finishing a project to supply 500 smart cameras to record traffic offences, strengthen road monitoring and help track risky driving behaviour.

The ministry said its note was not the final government reply, and that a final position would be sent later in an official memorandum.

# 5,000 students take part in field visits



Students travel, learn, and discover Bahrain's rich history alongside its modern institutions

Hasan Barakat  
TDT | Manama

Nearly 5,000 government school students stepped beyond their classrooms this semester, taking part in a nationwide programme of educational field visits organised by the Ministry of Education.

The initiative turned Bahrain itself into a living textbook, placing history, culture and public institutions directly in front of young learners.

The programme began with the start of the academic year and ran daily throughout the first semester, carefully aligned with examination schedules and official holidays.

It is set to resume with the beginning of the second semester, continuing its structured approach to experiential learning.

## Participation

Students from all government schools for boys and girls participated, representing primary, intermediate and secondary levels.

The visits were organised in groups to ensure balanced representation and smooth coordination in line with the approved academic calendar.

The destinations reflected the breadth of Bahrain's national story and public life. Students visited the National Charter Monument, the Council of Representatives, the Shura Council, the military museum, the Royal Humanitarian Foundation, several departments under the Ministry of Interior, and cultural landmarks including the Qal'at al Bahrain Site Museum, Beit Al Quran, the Bahrain National

Museum, the Bahraini Farmers Market and the Post Museum.

The visits were designed to strengthen students' understanding of Bahrain's deep rooted history and its modern institutions.

Exposure to real world settings helped students connect classroom lessons with lived experience, supporting their preparation of curriculum based reports and assignments.

## Concert

A cultural highlight of the programme brought students to the Bahrain National Theatre, where they attended a special concert by the Bahrain Philharmonic Orchestra.

The event was held in cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA).

Education Minister H.E. Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma attended the concert, which featured an interactive educational segment led by maestro Mubarak Najem.

Students were introduced to orchestral instruments through simple theoretical and practical explanations, followed by performances of Bahraini works, international pieces and excerpts from classic cartoon film music.

## Impact

By bringing students face to face with institutions, heritage and the arts, the programme reaffirmed that learning does not stop at the classroom door.

In Bahrain, education is increasingly being shaped by experience, curiosity and direct engagement with the nation itself.

# Isa Town events hall proposal

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

MPs have asked the government to build a public events hall for Isa Town residents, with the proposal due to be discussed at the Council of Representatives' next sitting.

The request was submitted by MPs Abdulla Al Rumaihi, Ali Al Doseri, Lulwa Al Rumaihi, Mohammed Al Maarihi and Najeeb Al Kawari.

It calls for a hall to host weddings and other social occasions, serving Isa Town and nearby areas.

The Services Committee has backed the proposal and recommended that the Council approve it, citing the public-interest reasons put forward by its sponsors.

In their memorandum, the MPs argue that Isa Town's growth has increased demand for a suitable venue, and that the area lacks a dedicated hall.

They also say a public facility would ease costs for families, pointing to higher rental fees for private halls, and would help bring residents together.

Consulted bodies offered mixed views.

The Ministry of Social Development said events halls do not fall under its supervision and that the matter is outside its remit.

The Ministry also noted that halls across the Kingdom are generally built by the private sector or community groups, or funded by charitable donors.

# Hawa Al Manama Festival antique auction big hit

Ghadeer Alkumaish  
TDT | Manama

The antique auction at the Hawa Al Manama Festival, organized in collaboration with Bahrain Auction, sparked excitement and intense bidding at Qasr Al Sharq Hotel, reflecting

strong interest from visitors and collectors.

Citizens, GCC visitors, and official figures attended one of the festival's most engaging events.

Participants were required to pay a BD25 deposit, ensuring serious bidding and smooth proceedings.

Among the highlights, the old map of Manama featured in the "Marbopol" game drew attention.

Sarah Bouhaji, CEO of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), purchased the limited-edition historical map for BD55, noting its

documentation of hotels and institutions from old Manama.

MP Mohammed Janahi also participated, acquiring a vintage Casio watch for BD20. The auction reached its peak excitement during the bidding for an old Zamzam water container from the Holy Mosque in Mecca.

# The US and Venezuela's vast oil reserves: key questions

AFP | London, United Kingdom

After a US military operation that seized Nicolas Maduro, President Donald Trump said he wants to allow American oil companies to head back into Venezuela to tap its massive crude reserves.

Here are some of the key questions around US interest in Venezuelan oil:

## What are Venezuela's reserves?

The country has the largest proven reserves in the world, with 303.221 billion barrels, according to OPEC, which Venezuela is a member of. That puts it ahead of Saudi Arabia (267.200 billion) and Iran.

But output is very low. The country pumps around 1 million barrels per day (mb/d), compared with around 3.5 mb/d when Maduro's predecessor Hugo Chavez came to power in 1999, according to Peter McNally of global research firm Third Bridge.

"Neglect, poor infrastructure, under investment, and corruption have diminished the country's productive capacity," he noted.

Sanctions imposed in 2019 by Trump during his first term contributed to production plunging to a historic low of 350,000 b/d the following year.

## How does it circumvent sanctions?

Due to the curbs, there are few importers of Venezuelan oil. China buys 80 percent of it, according to estimates, via Malaysia.

Some 5 percent goes to Cuba under agreements between the two countries.

To get around the embargo, Caracas relies on "ghost tankers" that use numerous ploys, like false flags and fake routes.

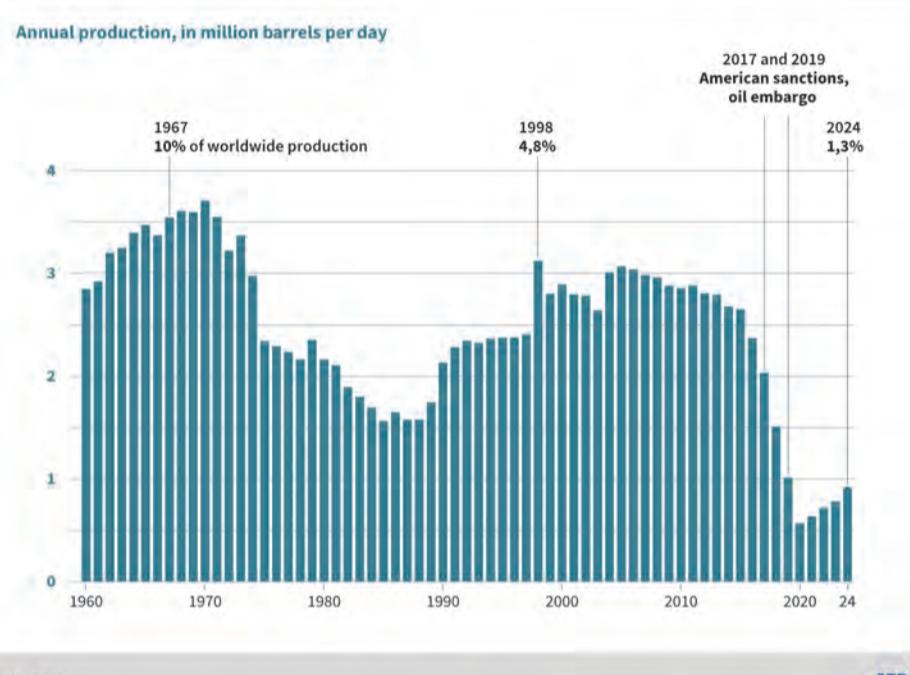
The M/T Skipper, intercepted by the US Navy as part of an oil blockade on Venezuela announced last month, was one such "ghost" vessel, transporting over a million barrels of Venezuelan oil, reportedly destined for Cuba.

To avoid US sanctions, clients pay in cryptocurrency, including asset-pegged stablecoins, mainly USDT.

## What is the American footprint

### Crude oil production in Venezuela

Venezuela currently holds 19% of the world's proven crude oil reserves, but produces relatively little by comparison



### Operation Absolute Resolve in Venezuela: how the American attack unfolded

The United States has captured Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro in Caracas in the early hours of January 3



## there?

A small portion of Venezuelan oil is produced by US group Chevron.

The company operates under a special license issued by Washington that allows it to maintain its partnership with Venezuela's national oil company and to export part of its production, notably to the American market.

However, it is no longer allowed to transfer money to the state and therefore pays taxes and other dues in crude.

Other US groups present in the early 2000s -- ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips -- left the country in 2007, refusing Chavez's terms.

They required the state to become the majority shareholder of all companies operating in the country.

## Why is Trump interested in Venezuelan oil?

"We have to be surrounded by safe, secure countries, and we also have to have energy, very important," Trump said Saturday.

He added "a lot of money is coming out of the ground", claiming the US would be "repaid for everything" it spent in the country.

The US leader considers that "the oil exported under embargo by Caracas is oil stolen from the international community," John Plassard of Cite Gestion Private Bank told AFP.

In Trump's view, these volumes were extracted thanks to American equipment and investments prior to Chavez's nationalisations, he said.

The US goal is

to "violently kill peaceful protesters, which is their custom", the United States of America will come to their rescue", Trump posted on his Truth Social platform Friday.

"We are locked and loaded and ready to go," he added, ahead of a weekend that saw deadly clashes between protesters and security forces there.



# Moscow airports shut over Ukrainian drone threat

## The attacks led to multiple flight delays

AFP | Moscow, Russia

Three out of four of Moscow's airports shut to air traffic yesterday after Ukraine launched dozens of drones at the Russian capital, authorities said.

The attacks led to multiple flight delays, including at Mos-



cow's second-busiest airport of Vnukovo, Russian media reported.

Ukraine, which has itself endured waves of Russian drone strikes throughout the nearly four-year war, did not immediately comment.

A spokesman for Russian aviation regulator Rosaviatsia announced the closures between 1300 GMT to 1400 GMT.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky

"The restrictions are necessary to ensure flight safety," Artem Korenyako said on Telegram.

Each of the airports -- Vnukovo, Domodedovo and Zhukovsky -- partially re-opened less than an hour later, he said in later posts.

Russian air defences downed at least 27 drones headed towards the capital on Sunday, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin announced in a series of Tele-

gram posts.

Russia, which launched a full-scale military assault on its neighbour in 2022, has repeatedly closed its airspace in response to the Ukrainian drone strikes.

The governor of the Russian region of Belgorod, on the border with Ukraine, said a Ukrainian drone strike earlier Sunday

on a car carrying a family killed one person and wounded two others, including a four-year-old.

# Zain Bahrain launches One CX

A New AI-Powered Customer Experience Service

Manama

Zain Bahrain, the leading telecom and technology innovator, announced the launch of One CX, a new AI-powered customer experience service that enables organizations to design, manage, and enhance customer interactions across digital and assisted channels. The launch reflects Zain Bahrain's continued leadership in customer experience and technology, extending its expertise into a dedicated service offering for organizations across multiple sectors.

One CX is built on advanced technology that brings together omni-channel customer engagement platforms with real-time analytics and performance monitoring. These



capabilities enable organizations to manage customer interactions more efficiently, gain deeper insight into customer behavior, and continuously im-

- One CX is a new AI-powered customer experience service offering digital and omni-channel solutions to organizations across multiple sectors.

- The service combines advanced technology, including AI chatbots, automation, real-time analytics, and performance monitoring, to deliver smarter customer journeys.

- Through One CX, Zain Bahrain extends its customer experience leadership into a dedicated service offering beyond the telecom sector.

prove service quality across all touchpoints. The service also leverages AI-powered solutions, including intelligent chatbots, automa-

tion, and AI-supported service operations, allowing organizations to deliver faster, more personalized customer interactions at scale. One CX is supported by leading global technology partners, ensuring secure, enterprise-grade platforms and continuous innovation aligned with international customer ex-

perience standards.

Ammar Al Ketbi, Zain Bahrain Acting CEO, commented: "Zain Bahrain has consistently advanced its customer experience capabilities through years of operational excellence and innovation. With the launch of One CX, we are proud to lead the way by offering our AI-powered customer experience expertise as a dedicated service that supports organizations in delivering smarter and more connected customer journeys."

With the launch of One CX, Zain Bahrain reinforces its position as a leading technology and customer experience provider, building on years of operational expertise to offer trusted, market-ready solutions that extend beyond the telecom sector.

**North Korea fires ballistic missiles in first test of 2026**  
Seoul, South Korea

North Korea fired multiple ballistic missiles off its east coast on Sunday, Seoul's military said, a day after a major US military operation against Pyongyang's socialist ally Venezuela.

The first launch of the year came just hours before South Korea's leader headed to China for a summit that is expected to feature ties with the North.

Seoul's defence ministry said it had detected "several projectiles, presumed to be ballistic missiles" fired from near the North Korean capital Pyongyang around 7:50 am (2250 GMT Saturday).

The missiles flew approximately 900 kilometres (559 miles), the military said, adding that South Korea and ally the United States were "closely analysing the specifications" while "maintaining a full readiness posture".

## South Korea's Lee visits China, hoping to sidestep Taiwan tensions

AFP | Beijing, China

South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung arrived in China yesterday for a four-day visit, eager to boost economic ties with Seoul's largest trading partner while keeping a lid on potentially explosive issues such as Taiwan.

Lee is the first South Korean leader to visit Beijing in six years, and his trip comes less than a week after China carried out massive military drills around Taiwan, the self-ruled island it claims as part of its territory.

The exercise, featuring missiles, fighter jets, navy ships and coastguard vessels, drew a chorus of international condemnation that Seoul has notably declined to join.

Lee, accompanied by a delegation of business and tech leaders, hopes to expand economic cooperation in meetings with President Xi Jinping and other



South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung (R) and his wife Kim Hea Kyung (L) board their plane to depart for China at Seoul Air Base in Seongnam

top officials.

And he hopes to possibly harness China's clout over North Korea to support his bid to improve ties with Pyongyang.

"China is a very important

cooperative partner in moving toward peace and unification on the Korean Peninsula," Lee said during a meeting with Korean residents in Beijing, according to Yonhap news agency.

Lee added his visit "would serve as a new starting point to fill in the gaps in Korea-China relations, restore them to normal and upgrade them to a new level".

Hours before Lee departed for Beijing, Seoul's military said the North had fired a ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan -- its first test of the year.

Seoul has for decades trodden a fine line between China, its top trading partner, and the United States, its chief defence guarantor.

But Kang Jun-young, a professor at Seoul's Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, said Beijing was now seeking to draw South Korea away from Washington's sphere of influence.

"China views South Korea as the weakest link at a time when trilateral cooperation among South Korea, the United States and Japan is strengthening," he told AFP.

**New clashes in Iran as protests enter second week: rights groups**

AFP | Paris, France

New deadly clashes between protesters and security forces erupted in Iran over the weekend, rights groups and local media said Sunday, as demonstrations first sparked by anger over the rising cost of living entered a second week. At least 12 people including members of the security forces have been killed since the protests kicked off with a shopkeeper's strike in Tehran on December 28, according to a toll based on official reports.

Overnight, protests featuring slogans criticising the Islamic republic's clerical authorities were reported in Tehran, Shiraz in the south, and in areas of western Iran where the movement has been concentrated, according to the US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) monitor.

## Vessel coming from Russia dragged anchor before subsea cable damaged: Finnish police

AFP | Helsinki, Finland

The anchor of a vessel that damaged an undersea cable linking Helsinki and the Estonian capital Tallinn dragged along the seabed "at least several tens of kilometres" before it hit the line, Finnish police said yesterday.

On December 31, police detained the Fitburg, a 132-metre-long (433-foot-long) cargo ship en route from St Petersburg, Russia, to Haifa, Israel, following suspicion that the ship's anchor had damaged the subsea cable in the Gulf of Finland.

Finnish authorities have launched an investigation into "aggravated criminal damage, attempted aggravated criminal damage, and aggravated inter-



A Finnish border guard vessel and helicopter located the ship and ordered it to stop, raise its anchor, and move into Finnish territorial waters

ference with telecommunication". Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many experts and political

leaders have viewed the suspected cable sabotage as part of a "hybrid war" carried out by Russia against Western countries.

"There is reason to suspect that the anchor and anchor chain of the Fitburg vessel have dragged along the seabed for at

least several tens of kilometres before reaching the point of damage," police said in a statement.

Of the vessel's 14 crew members -- from Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan -- a Helsinki court ordered the detention of one Azerbaijani national for one week, lead investigator Kimmo Huhta-aho told journalists after the hearing.

A Russian crew member was also placed under a travel ban after two others were subjected to the same measure.

Finnish telecoms group Elisa owns the cable, which is located in Estonia's exclusive economic zone. Energy and communications infrastructure, including underwater cables and pipelines, have been damaged in the

Baltic Sea in recent years, raising suspicions of Russian involvement.



Helsinki and Tallinn are linked by undersea cables that are critical to the Baltic region's digital backbone, carrying electricity and high-speed data traffic between Finland and Estonia. These connections help make the two capitals among the most digitally integrated cities in Europe, despite being separated by the Gulf of Finland.

## The main US interventions in Latin America since Cold War

### 1954: Guatemala

On June 27, 1954, Colonel Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, president of Guatemala, was driven from power by mercenaries trained and financed by Washington, after a land reform that threatened the interests of the powerful US company United Fruit Corporation (later Chiquita Brands).

In 2003, the United States officially acknowledged the CIA's role in this coup, in the name of fighting communism.

### 1961: Cuba

From April 15 to 19, 1961, 1,400 anti-Castro militants trained and financed by the CIA attempted to land at the Bay of Pigs, 250 kilometres (155 miles) from Havana, but failed to overthrow Fidel Castro's communist regime.

The fighting killed more than a hundred on each side.

### 1965: Dominican Republic

In 1965, citing a "communist threat", the United States sent Marines and paratroopers to Santo Domingo to crush an uprising in support of Juan Bosch, a leftist president ousted by generals in 1963.

### 1970s: support for dictatorships

Washington backed several military dictatorships, seen as a bulwark against left-wing armed movements in a world divided by Cold War rivalries.

It actively assisted Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet during the September 11, 1973 coup against leftist president Salvador Allende.

US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger supported the Argentine junta in 1976, encouraging it to quickly end its "dirty war", according to US documents declassified in 2003.

At least 10,000 Argentine dissidents disappeared.

In the 1970s and 1980s, six dictatorships (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Brazil) joined forces to eliminate left-wing opponents under "Operation Condor", with tacit US support.

### 1980s: wars in Central America

In 1979, the Sandinista rebellion overthrew dictator Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua. US president Ronald Reagan, concerned about Managua's alignment with Cuba and the USSR, secretly authorised the CIA to provide \$20 million in aid to the Contras (the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries), partly funded by the illegal sale of arms to Iran.

The Nicaraguan civil war, which ended in April 1990, claimed 50,000 lives.

Reagan also sent military advisers to El Salvador to crush the rebellion of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN, far left) in a civil war (1980-1992) that resulted in 72,000 deaths.

### 1983: Grenada

On October 25, 1983, US Marines and Rangers intervened on the island of Grenada after prime minister Maurice Bishop was assassinated by a far-left junta and as Cubans were expanding the airport, presumably to accommodate military aircraft.

At the request of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Reagan launched Operation "Urgent Fury" with the stated goal of protecting a thousand US citizens.

The operation, widely deplored by the UN General Assembly, ended on November 3, with more than a hundred dead.

### 1989: Panama

In 1989, after a contested election, president George H. W. Bush ordered a military intervention in Panama, resulting in the surrender of general Manuel Noriega, a former collaborator of US intelligence, who was wanted by US justice.

Some 27,000 GIs took part in Operation "Just Cause", which officially left 500 dead.

NGOs put the toll significantly higher, in the thousands.

Noriega would spend more than two decades in prison in the United States for drug trafficking before serving additional sentences in France and then Panama.



The USS Iwo Jima, a Wasp-class amphibious assault ship of the United States Navy. US President Donald Trump said, that Venezuela's leader Nicolas Maduro was initially extracted by helicopter and was being held on the Iwo Jima, an amphibious assault ship that is part of a large US naval presence in the Caribbean. From there, he will be sent to New York.

# Maduro now in New York jail

Trump says US to 'run' Venezuela



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro (C) escorted by DEA agents inside the headquarters of the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in lower Manhattan, New York

**"Good night, happy new year," the 63-year-old leftist was heard saying in English.**



A man looks at the front page of a newspaper reading "He fell" and depicting Venezuela's ousted president Nicolas Maduro in Cucuta, Colombia, on the border with Venezuela

a 58-year-old resident told AFP. But the streets in the Venezuelan capital remained quiet and many residents were apprehensive about what is to come.

Trump said he was "designat-

ing people" from his cabinet to take control, but gave no further details.

The Republican leader appeared to reject the possibility of the country's opposition taking power, instead saying he could work with Maduro's Vice President Delcy Rodriguez.

Rodriguez poured cold water on that prospect, demanding Maduro's release and vowing to "defend" the country.

Late Saturday, Venezuela's Supreme Court ordered Rodriguez to assume presidential powers "in an acting capacity".

But Trump indicated US involvement is likely for the long haul, adding to the confusion over how the country would be run.

"We're going to stay until such time as the proper transition can take place," he said.

#### Massive crude reserves

Trump's interest in tapping into Venezuela's massive crude reserves also became clearer.

"We're going to have our very large United States oil companies... go in, spend billions of dollars, fix the badly broken infrastructure," he said.

"We'll be selling large amounts of oil." Venezuela produces just under a million barrels of crude a day, according to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and sells most of it on the black market at steep discounts.

Trump claims Caracas is using oil money to finance "drug terrorism, human trafficking, murder and kidnapping".

Venezuelan territory contains about 17 percent of the world's oil reserves, the International Energy Agency (IEA) reported in 2023, but is far from being a leading global producer after years of mismanagement and corruption.

#### 150 aircraft took part

The top US military officer, General Dan Caine, said 150 aircraft took part in the operation, supporting troops who choppered in to seize Maduro with the help of months of intelligence into his daily habits -- down to "what he ate" and what pets he kept.

Maduro and his wife "gave up" without a struggle and there was "no loss of US life," he said.

Venezuelan authorities have yet to release casualty figures. But Trump told the New York Post that "many" Cubans in Maduro's security detail were killed.

At a celebration in Santiago, Venezuelan Yasmery Gallardo, 61, said she planned to return home soon from Chile where she had lived for the past eight years, telling AFP that Maduro's capture was "tremendous for us".

1781

British naval expedition led by Benedict Arnold burns Richmond, Virginia

1919

German Workers' Party forms, precursor to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazi)



1930

Mao Zedong writes the essay "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire" to criticize cadres not creating rural revolutionary base areas

1949

US President Harry Truman labels his administration the "Fair Deal"

X

TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Following very closely the situation in Venezuela. We stand by the people of Venezuela and support a peaceful and democratic transition. Any solution must respect international law and the UN Charter.

@vonderleyen

02



It is with deep concern that I am following the developments in Venezuela. The good of the beloved Venezuelan people must prevail over every other consideration. This must lead to the overcoming of violence, and to the pursuit of paths of justice and peace.

@Pontifex

03



The Venezuelan people are today rid of Nicolás Maduro's dictatorship and can only rejoice. By seizing power and trampling on fundamental freedoms, Nicolás Maduro gravely undermined the dignity of his own people.

@EmmanuelMacron

04



Nicolás Maduro has led his country into ruin. The most recent election was rigged. Like many other countries, we have therefore not recognized his presidency. Maduro has played a problematic role in the region.

@bundeskanzler

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



A convoy of armoured vehicles makes its way along a street in the port city Mukalla, southern Yemen

## At least 80 STC members killed since Friday



audi-backed forces that took control of the Second Military Region Command on the outskirts of Mukalla, the capital of Hadramawt

AFP | Aden, Yemen

At least 80 troops from Yemen's secessionist Southern Transitional Council (STC) have been killed in fighting and strikes since Friday, a military official from the group told AFP on Sunday.

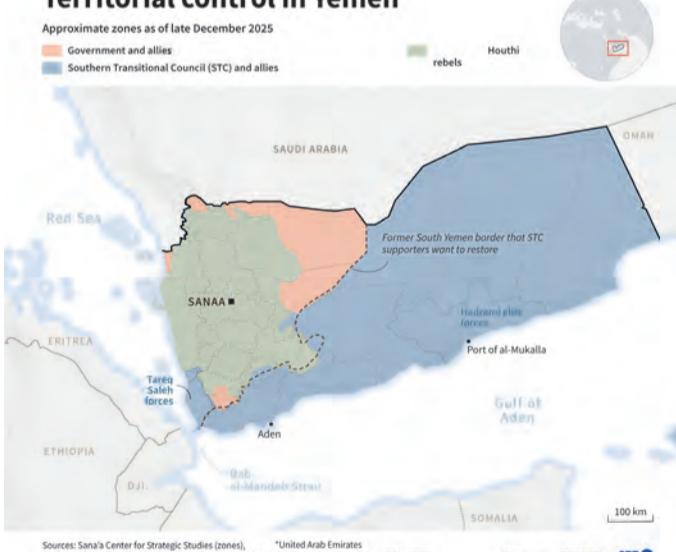
At least 152 members of the STC forces were wounded and 130 were taken captive, the official said, giving a preliminary toll of casualties since the start of the operation.

Forces began on Friday operations to retake swathes of territory seized by STC.



Yemen is home to Shibam, often called the "Manhattan of the Desert." Built over 500 years ago, the city features mud-brick skyscrapers rising up to 11 storeys, making it one of the world's earliest examples of vertical urban planning—long before modern high-rise cities existed.

### Territorial control in Yemen



Most of the casualties had occurred in strikes by the coalition that targeted military camps, the official said, including Al-Khasha and Barshid military camps in Hadramawt province.

An official told AFP later yesterday that at least 14 of their fighters had been killed in fighting and over 30 wounded during the offensive.

Yemen's presidency on Saturday announced the retaking of resource-rich Hadramawt, following an apparent retreat of

the STC.

Military officials on Saturday also said authorities in neighbouring Mahra province had switched back their allegiance without any resistance.

On Sunday, forces were consolidating positions in Mukalla, the capital of Hadramawt province, two government military officials told AFP.

On Friday, a strike on the Al-Khasha military camp in Hadramawt left 20 dead, according to an earlier toll from the separatist group.

## Tariffs are gone. Now, let's build on India-Australia pact



Prime minister Narendra Modi with Australian prime minister Anthony Albanese.

The Indian Express

As of January 1, 2026, no Indian goods face any tariff entering Australia. None. Zilch, nada, zippo across the board. No asterisk. No hash. No fine print.

Three years after the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) came into force, Australia has eliminated every last tariff on Indian exports. That's completely free access to Australia's nearly \$2-trillion economy. And in return, many Australian goods now enter India under reduced or zero duties.

That's good for both countries. Driven by ECTA, trade between Australia and India has crossed 50 billion Australian dollars, or Rs 3 lakh crore, for the first time. Over the past five years, our two-way goods trade has doubled. And Australian commodity exports to India have grown strongly, fuelling "Make in India".

Meanwhile, India's exports to Australia have expanded much faster than to the rest of the world. Consider this: Over the last five years, India's global goods exports have grown 40 per cent. Not bad, right? Yes, but over the same period, India's goods exports to Australia were up 200 per cent. So, India is benefiting from trade with Australia five times faster than it is from the rest of the world. Ripper.

And these aren't just numbers. They mean economic activity — and jobs for Indians and Australians. One in four jobs in Australia is linked to trade, and with billions in Australian exports now going to India each year, I estimate around 200,000 jobs in my country are tied to trade with India.

In this country, Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal has said ECTA will create 1 million jobs. And with the growth we've seen, I'd be surprised if we hadn't hit that number already.

This isn't unexpected. Our economies are a natural fit. They click. Australia has what India needs: The critical minerals, rare earths and skilling expertise that will supersize Indian manufacturing. And India has what Australia needs: Quality manufactures and bonza agriculture products that suit the tastes of modern Australia.

You can see that complementarity when walking the streets of Australian cities. You will see Mahindra selling cars in showrooms. You will

see supermarkets stocking produce from Indian farms. And you will see Indian-made garments for sale at major retailers. These products aren't just consumed by our Indian diaspora, now more than 1 million strong. They are enjoyed by Australians at large.

This success matters even more today. As global trade becomes unpredictable, Australia remains a reliable and committed partner for India. Three days ago, Minister Goyal said that India's relationship with Australia anchors India's economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. As he put it, "In-

Three years after the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) came into force, Australia has eliminated every last tariff on Indian exports.

dia and Australia are building a future of shared prosperity and trusted trade." I couldn't agree more.

That's why Australia and India want to go farther. We're working to upgrade ECTA into a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, or CECA.

This can strengthen trade and investment ties across goods and services, and support new critical minerals supply chains. In November, Goyal and Australia's Minister Farrell reaffirmed their commitment to conclude CECA as soon as possible.

And that's not all: Last year, my Prime Minister released A New Roadmap for Australia's Economic Engagement with India, which details how Australia can contribute to and benefit from India's economic rise.

Looking back, it's clear ECTA has given Australia and India an excellent start — and that we have a lot more to do together. I can be frank with you: Over the years, trade with Australia has helped power some of the Indo-Pacific's biggest economies to prosperity. Australia can help India do the same, to the benefit of both our great nations.

That's fair dinkum!

# Four members of Indian family die in road crash near Madinah

● The victims were Abdul Jaleel (52), a native of Vellila in Manjeri; his mother Maimunath Kakkengal (73); his wife Thasna Thodengal (40); and their 14-year-old son, Aadhil Jaleel.

● All four died on the spot

● Their vehicle reportedly collided with a truck on a highway near Madinah

TDT | agencies

Four members of a family from Manjeri in the south



The accident took place as the family was travelling by car from Mecca to Jeddah after completing Umrah, the Islamic pilgrimage.

Indian state of Kerala's Malappuram district were killed in a tragic road accident near Madinah in Saudi Arabia, plunging their relatives and the local community into deep grief.

The victims were Abdul Jaleel (52), a native of Vellila in Manjeri; his mother Maimunath

Kakkengal (73); his wife Thasna Thodengal (40); and their 14-year-old son, Aadhil Jaleel. Preliminary reports from Saudi Arabia said all four died on the spot on Saturday evening, January 3, due to the impact of the collision.

The accident occurred while

the family was travelling by car from Mecca to Jeddah after completing Umrah, the Islamic pilgrimage. Their vehicle reportedly collided with a truck on a highway near Madinah, resulting in extensive damage. Saudi authorities have yet to officially confirm the exact cause of the

crash.

Three other family members — Abdul Jaleel's daughters Aysa, Hadiya and Noorah — sustained serious injuries and are undergoing treatment at different hospitals in Saudi Arabia. Hospital sources said the girls remain in critical condition and

are under close medical observation.

Abdul Jaleel had been working in Jeddah for several years. His family had recently travelled to Saudi Arabia on a tourist visa specifically to perform Umrah, which they completed shortly before the fatal accident.

The news has sent shockwaves through Manjeri and neighbouring areas, where the family is well known. Relatives, neighbours and community members gathered at the family home in Vellila as condolence messages poured in from across Malappuram district and from the Indian diaspora in the Gulf.

Efforts are under way to coordinate with Saudi authorities to complete legal formalities and arrange the repatriation of the bodies. Expatriate organisations and community groups in Saudi Arabia have also stepped in to assist the bereaved family.

## US to work with current Venezuela leaders if they make 'right decision': Rubio

AFP | Washington, United States

The United States is ready to work with Venezuela's remaining leaders if they make "the right decision," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Sunday after an audacious US operation removed the oil-rich country's president, Nicolas Maduro.

"We're going to judge everything by what they do, and we're going to see what they do," Rubio told CBS News' "Face the Nation."

"I do know this: that if they don't make the right decision, that the United States will retain multiple levers of leverage."

US commandos snatched Maduro from a compound in Caracas on Saturday in a risky operation involving jets, helicopters, warships and ground troops.

He is now in a New York detention cell awaiting a court appearance expected Monday on federal narcotics trafficking and weapons charges.

Rubio appeared to significantly soften President Donald Trump's extraordinary statements on Saturday that the United States will "run" Venezuela and that he would not be afraid to put military "boots on the ground."

Instead, he made clear that Washington is ready to try working with Maduro's vice president and now acting president, Delcy Rodriguez, and the rest of the ousted leader's cabinet.

"We are going to see what happens moving forward," he said.

"We're going to make an assessment on the basis of what they do, not what they say publicly in the interim, not what you know, what they've done in the past in many cases, but what they do moving forward."

### Paris, France

America's military assault of Caracas to grab Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro unsettled many US allies, but also impressed some who are supportive of Donald Trump.

Here are the main reactions:

#### China

China called for Maduro to be "immediately released" in a condemnation of the US operation, which the foreign ministry said was a "clear violation of international law, basic norms in international relations, and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter".

#### Russia

Russia demanded the US leadership "reconsider its position and release the legally elected president of the sovereign country and his wife".

#### North Korea

North Korea's foreign ministry denounced the United States' capture of Maduro as a "serious encroachment of sovereignty".

#### Iran

Iran, which Trump bombed last year, said it "strongly condemns the US military attack

on Venezuela and a flagrant violation of the country's national sovereignty and territorial integrity".

#### Mexico

Mexico, which Trump has also threatened with military force over drug trafficking, strongly condemned the US military action in Venezuela, saying it "seriously jeopardises regional stability".

#### Colombia

Colombian President Gustavo Petro -- whose country neighbours Venezuela -- called the US action an "assault on the sovereignty" of Latin America which would lead to a humanitarian crisis.

#### Cuba

Cuba, a strong ally of Venezuela, denounced "state terrorism against the brave Venezuelan people".

#### France

France's Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said the US operation undermined international law, and no solution to Venezuela's crisis can be imposed externally.

But President Emmanuel Macron later said Venezuelans "can only rejoice" at Maduro's

said he had "admiration" for her, but avoided any demands that she -- or her party's candidate in the 2024 election, Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia -- become interim leaders.

He said the United States wanted to avoid getting mired in nation building.

"The whole foreign policy ap-

overthrow.

#### Spain

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said the intervention "violates international law and pushes the region toward a horizon of uncertainty and militarism".

#### EU

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas called for "restraint" and respect for international law in Venezuela while emphasising Maduro "lacks legitimacy".

#### Britain

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the UK will discuss the "evolving situation" in Venezuela with the US while stating Britain will "shed no tears" about the demise of Maduro's "regime".

#### Italy

In a rare expression of support for the US operation by a major European country, far-right Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni -- a Trump ally -- argued the US military action in Venezuela was "legitimate" and "defensive".

#### Israel

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel support-

ed the United States' "strong action" in Venezuela to "restore freedom and justice to that region of the world".

#### Ukraine

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga focused on Maduro's lack of legitimacy and the Venezuelan government's repression, while backing "democracy, human rights, and the interests of Venezuelans".

#### South Africa

South Africa, which Trump accuses of alleged discrimination -- and even "genocide" -- of minority white Afrikaners, said: "Unlawful, unilateral force of this nature undermines the stability of the international order and the principle of equality among nations."

#### UN

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was "deeply alarmed" by the US strikes, with his spokesman quoting him as saying it could "constitute a dangerous precedent".

#### Pope

Pope Leo XIV said the "welfare of the beloved Venezuelan people must prevail over all other considerations".

paratus thinks everything is Libya, everything is Iraq, everything is Afghanistan," he said, referring to previous US interventions. "This is not the Middle East. And our mission here is very different." Rubio's remarks contrasted with Trump's statements that "we're going to stay until such time as the proper transition can take place" and that his own cabinet officials would be in charge of the country. Rubio said US pressure would remain on Venezuela in the form of the large naval presence in the Caribbean and an oil export embargo "that allows us to exert tremendous leverage over what happens next."

**114 killed in week of attacks in Sudan's Darfur: medical sources**

Port Sudan, Sudan

Attacks by Sudan's army and its paramilitary foes on two towns in the western Darfur region over the past week have killed 114 people, medical sources told AFP Sunday.

Since April 2023, Sudan has been gripped by a war between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which in October seized the army's last holdout position in Darfur.

The RSF has since pushed west to the Chadian border and east through the vast Kordofan region, where a drone strike on the North Kordofan capital of El-Obeid on Sunday caused a blackout in the key army-controlled city.

A medical source reported Sunday that 51 people were killed the day before in drone strikes attributed to the army on the North Darfur town of Al-Zuruq, 180 kilometres (112 miles) north of the RSF-overrun state capital El-Fashir.

The strike hit a market and civilian areas, the source said.

Al-Zuruq, under RSF control, is home to family members of RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, the former deputy of his now rival, army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

"Two of the Daglo family were killed, Moussa Saleh Daglo and Awad Mousa Saleh Daglo," an eyewitness to the burial told AFP.

## Interior Minister Emphasizes Role of Bahraini Families in Strengthening National Unity



His Excellency Lieutenant General Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, received members of the Bin Daina and Al-Arifi families today, led by Mr. Rashid Mohammed Bin Daina. The meeting, held to express the families' gratitude for the Minister's recent condolences, underscored the traditional Bahraini values of community communication. During the reception, the Minister praised the role of Bahraini families in maintaining a unified social fabric. He emphasized that such harmony is vital for consolidating national values, ensuring security, and supporting the Kingdom's continued progress and development. Mr. Rashid Mohammed Bin Daina, speaking for both families, thanked the Minister for his support and outreach. He also commended the Ministry of Interior's dedication to preserving stability across the nation.

## Al Furqan Centre Organizes Blood Donation Drive to Mark the New Year



The Social Welfare Department of the Al Furqan Centre, in collaboration with the Salmaniya Blood Bank, successfully organized a blood donation camp on January 1. The drive, which ran from 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM, saw active participation from Al Furqan members, parents of Madrasa students, and representatives from various community organizations. The Al Furqan Centre has established a tradition of hosting regular blood donation drives, specifically held on January 1 and on the occasion of Muharram 1 (the Hijri New Year) each year. This initiative reflects the organization's ongoing commitment to community service and public health. The event was attended by senior officials from the Al Furqan Centre, alongside representatives from the Friends Social Association, Al Mannai Centre, and the Indian Islahi Centre. Under the guidance of Convener Abdul Salam, a dedicated team of volunteers managed the logistics and operations of the camp, ensuring a smooth experience for all donors.

## Celebrating the New Year 2026



As part of the "Reach the Unreached" initiative, Lights of Kindness distributed lunch packets, sweets, fruits, and water bottles to 100 workers in the Tubli area.

## Kerala Christian Ecumenical Council Hosts Reception for H.G. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theophilos



The Kerala Christian Ecumenical Council (KCEC) organized a warm reception in Bahrain for H.G. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theophilos, Metropolitan of the Ahmedabad Diocese and Assistant Metropolitan of the Mumbai Diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Church. The event was held under the presidency of KCEC President Rev. Aneesh Samuel John. General Secretary Jomon Malayil George delivered the welcome address, greeting the visiting Metropolitan and the gathered dignitaries. Several prominent clergy members attended the ceremony and offered their felicitations, including Vice Presidents Rev. Fr. Jacob Thomas Karaikkal, Rev. Mathews David, and Rev. Fr. Thomaskutty P.N. Their remarks highlighted the Metropolitan's leadership and his contributions to the spiritual community. The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Abin Mathew Oommen.

## Bahrain St. Mary's Cathedral Appoints 2026 Governing Body



The new managing committee of the Bahrain St. Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral has officially assumed office for the 2026 service year. The installation ceremony was led by H.G. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theophilos, Metropolitan of the Ahmedabad Diocese and Assistant Metropolitan of the Mumbai Diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Church. The new officials took charge in the presence of the Parish Vicar, Rev. Fr. Jacob Thomas Karaikkal, and Associate Vicar, Rev. Fr. P.N. Thomas Kutty. The nineteen-member governing body includes John K.P. (Trustee), Kuruvilla Pappy - Aby (Secretary), and committee members representing the parish's 13 area prayer groups.

## 'Ponfest 2026' Marks Grand Anniversary and Festive Celebration for PCWF Bahrain



The Ponnani Cultural World Foundation (PCWF) Bahrain Chapter celebrated its fifth anniversary alongside Christmas and New Year festivities with a grand event titled "Ponfest 2026" at the K City Hall in Salmaniya. The event was inaugurated by Dr. Sridevi Rajan, a prominent Orthopedic and Sports Rehabilitation Specialist and social activist. A highlight of the evening was the screening of the short film 'Adichu Mole Kodi', written and directed by Hassan VM Mohammed and featuring a cast of PCWF members. The celebration also showcased the diverse talents of the PCWF Kalavedi and their families, featuring traditional Nadan Patta (folk songs) and Ponbeats Muttipattu, which added a vibrant cultural flair to the festivities.

# Classifieds

## VACANCIES AVAILABLE

dellaa rohak for hairdressing has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33469971 or AMOOLAH89@GMAIL.COM

SEA OF GULF NOOR FOOD STUFF W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33116292 or PALACE.GULF@GMAIL.COM

Chemco Plastic Bahrain W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17464159 or vijaysharma@chemcogulf.com

TERRA LINK MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39609881 or MOONLANDBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

BURGER LAVA W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34100500 or NURALAMIND-ESIGNS@GMAIL.COM

B7 FITNESS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36900617 or FITNESSB-2BH@GMAIL.COM

RIFFA GATE BAKERY has a vacancy for the occupation of BREAD BAKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39055870 or all-branach2013@gmail.com

REGAL MAINTENANCE & SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCE).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17448936 or regal@rmswl.com

MEGAS KITCHEN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36888624 or SOMANSOMU@GMAIL.COM

KITTO BARBER SHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35002840 or PURE-MIND.BH@GMAIL.COM

Road carrier food delivery services W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(FOOD DISTRIBUTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39466606 or feryalfareed85@gmail.com

Dhafayer Ladies Beauty Salon has a vacancy for the occupation of BEAUTICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33290001 or DAFAIRSALON@GMAIL.COM

Elza Persis Fabrication Co W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38013435 or PRAJODM@GMAIL.COM

GHULAM TAHIN ARK DECORATION COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CAR-PENTER(DECOR), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39852147 or TGHULA32@GMAIL.COM

KINGS ROAD CARGO HANDLING has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33323379 or HASSAN1983735@GMAIL.COM

MILLENIUM CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35588880 or milleniumbh183@gmail.com

ALESSAWEYAH MENS BARBER has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39881108 or HUHUN888@YAHOO.COM

MOGA MANAGEMENT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DECORATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33161222 or SARB-JEET2003@YAHOO.COM

FIT SOLUTIONS CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COMPUTER PROGRAMMER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34453311 or luk4navab@gmail.com

STAR ONE PAINTING has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33851089 or Usmanham-ed1732@gmail.com

Stiller Agency for the Supply Workers w. l. i has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17717730 or rsuresh@alazzamgroup.com

PRUDENT SOLUTIONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of PROJECTS COORDINATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17456180 or PRAKASHR@PRUDENTSOLUTIONS.NET

LIRA FRUITS AND VEGETABLES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17699537 or RANJITHAR83@GMAIL.COM

REHMAT for Sweets and Baklawa has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35641047 or rehmetssweet@yahoo.com

TOP CATERING SERVICES has a vacancy for

the occupation of BREAD BAKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39939974 or SAMIALMULLA15@GMAIL.COM

Magic Needle Fabrics has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38455475 or MAGICNEEDLEBH@GMAIL.COM

ACROW BAHRAIN CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MARKETING SPECIALIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35176860 or

ISA ALAWADHI CONTRACTING AND PROPERTIES has a vacancy for the occupation of WORK SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39464260 or isa\_alawadhi\_cont@hotmail.com

DESIGNS JOY AMOUR EVENTS FILIPINO VIBEHOUSE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECRETARY, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37276699 or SHERYLFULGAR2020@GMAIL.COM

SOUTH KOREA YOSKIN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIRDRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35394762 or YUPINGZHOU@LIVE.COM

AL NASEEM GENTS TAILORING has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 32189809 or INFO@FKHALIFA.COM

AEEBHA FACILITIES SUPPORT CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33682667 or HAMIDMAQSOD309@GMAIL.COM

GOLDEN GROUP CONTRACTORS has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17533125 or GOLDENGROUPEBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

SAIKON CONSTRUCTION COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38727838 or MUDASARIQBAL34@GMAIL.COM

BASE TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33233078 or Rgsham-il06@gmail.com

QUICK ZEBRA SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or hrd@dreamgroup.bh

UNIVERSAL READYMIX CONCRETE has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER/OPERATOR(SHOVEL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17620672 or SHUBBAR60@HOTMAIL.COM

COMSIP AL A LI W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17773006 or arnaud.alix@VINCIE-NERGIES.COM

M & Q CARGO SERVICES CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34227519 or QASOORAHMAD@GMAIL.COM

QUICK ZEBRA SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or hrd@dreamgroup.bh

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STAR CARE WORKSHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION

WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33300544 or BTC.BH111@GMAIL.COM

BLUEFALLS EDUCATION CENTER has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66948335 or THEROSEWLL@GMAIL.COM

COMSIP AL A LI W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17773006 or arnaud.alix@VINCIE-NERGIES.COM

Spectrum Cleaning Co W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77122441 or hr@mmkoohjei.com

GAYATRI CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECRETARY, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38881547 or ERPANKAJAKASHYAP@GMAIL.COM

CIRCLE INTEGRATED SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17822228 or INFO@CIRCLE.BH

AL AREEN PALACE AND SPA W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17845000 or ADNAN.ASLAM@LPODWATERPARK.COM

CIRCLE INTEGRATED SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17822228 or INFO@CIRCLE.BH

BIKEA FOOD DELIVERY has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34234903 or NOORADEEM2404@GMAIL.COM

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

ALDAAYSIS DISTRIBUTION CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 13118898 or GOLDDUST.BH@GMAIL.COM

KOOHEJI CONTRACTORS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON ASST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17786500 or careers@kobahrain.com

ASAD SCRAP has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33268625 or MUHAMMADJAHAN-GIR206@GMAIL.COM

CHAIYANI GENERAL TRADING has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39248620 or EVERGREENDOCUMENT@GMAIL.COM

NAWAZ CAFETERIA W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33118489 or ILAHORI@YAHOO.COM

LEENA FURNITURE & UPHOLSTERY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34463452 or mohammed.amoudi.sa@gmail.com

SHAHID YASIN INTERIOR DECORATION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35317672 or NADEEMSHAHDJOYA@GMAIL.COM

AL FURAT AL ABAYAT & JALABIYA has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33339112 or M-AL-AALI@HOTMAIL.COM

KDDI ASIA PACIFIC PTE LTD BRANCH OF A FOREIGN COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(SHOVEL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17295603 or sales@dynamicssolutionsgroup.com

FAST & FURIOUS BIKES RENTAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39191352 or ZAHIDRASHID\_333@HOTMAIL.COM

UNION WORLD BUILDING has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36636622 or hr@eraprojects.net

KUWAIT FINANCE HOUSE B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17585778 or girish.menon@ahlited.com

Westcom Technology Co W.I has a vacancy for the occupation of COMMUNICATION TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17295603 or sales@dynamicssolutionsgroup.com

FAST & FURIOUS INDUSTRIAL CONTRACTING AND TRADING B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of ASSISTANT MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17705313 or ALIHAASSAN@ALMOAYYEDINTL.COM.BH

Arabian Building Support and Rehabilitation Co. LTD - Foreign Br has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17100882 or SABIR@ABSAR.COM

TALIA RESIDENCE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ACCOUNTANTS, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39661889 or FADHEL@FUTUREAC.BH

ALMOAYYED INDUSTRIAL CONTRACTING AND TRADING B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of ASSISTANT MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17705313 or ALIHAASSAN@ALMOAYYEDINTL.COM.BH

FOODFOCUS MARKET W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33631580 or ZUHAIRKAKKUNI66@GMAIL.COM

Bahrain Specialist Hospital has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER (MANAGERIAL SERVICES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 66711895 or bshhr@bsh.com.bh

KARAK AL ARAB has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(JUICE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33878334 or YAHAAL-HARAM@GMAIL.COM

Swiss Belhotel Seef W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17555527 or hrmsbse@swiss-belhotel.com

NORTHEN AREA TAILORING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17506730 or kasandrafashion@gmail.com

STAR CARE WORKSHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or hrd@dreamgroup.bh

BURJ TECH CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION

qualified applicants can contact 39643189 or INFO@AWTADI.COM

EVERCARE FOUNDATION FOR ELDERLY & DISABLED SUPPORT has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36886644 or INFO@MAGICSHINEBH.COM

BU WAFA PASTRIES has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33323345 or MAJED5770G@GMAIL.COM

JANNAT BABU SPARE PARTS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of AUTOMOBILE SERVICEMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33174790 or ADMIN.BAHRAIN@MI-SOLUTIONS.IN

AL ASHAD PACKAGING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35314227 or NADEEM.6038@GMAIL.COM

PROJECTS ACCESS SCAFFOLDING & FORMWORK CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SCAFFOLDING, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17337891 or jose@projectsaccess.net

GEORGIA FASHIONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36954443 or JKHAM-DAN@HOTMAIL.COM

MISK AL ABRAR PERFUMES has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33852854 or TAYY-ABQAMAR52@GMAIL.COM

LIFE POINT CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of CAR WASH/CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36555867 or HAYWARD.TRADING1@GMAIL.COM

BARAKA CLEANING SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34310405 or JUSTICELLA@GMAIL.COM

NAMALA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33369922 or MUNALITAREST@GMAIL.COM

MUNALITA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39008063 or HASSANMAH-DIALI

# Classifieds

## VACANCIES AVAILABLE CONTINUED

PIERRE HAYAT SALON & SPA W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BEAUTICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39249000 or pierre.beautysalon01@gmail.com

ROSSUM MARKETING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33015010 or INFO-28TRAVEL@GMAIL.COM

SAR ALNAJAH GRILLS has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39001108 or isaalbuti7@gmail.com

CLEAN TOUCH LAUNDRY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(LAUNDRY), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33345899 or SAKEENAM78@GMAIL.COM

KHALIFA HAMAD SULTAN MOHAMED AL- GHAMEM (19298) has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33656333 or MNOUR8374@GMAIL.COM

COOL DRIVE GARAGE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CAR MECHANICAL WORKSHOP), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33057494 or BUSINESSPOINT.BM@GMAIL.COM

BLACK RUSTURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35548980 or INFO.LIFE-LINE25@GMAIL.COM

AL SHARIF HOT AND FRESH W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(ASSISTANT), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35495060 or SAJIDAMJAD786@GMAIL.COM

ALHAWRA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39111159 or JALAL488@HOTMAIL.COM

THE BROW ROOM SKIN CARE CENTER W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BEAUTICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 1731060 or REEAMA-SUSHMA@YAHOO.COM

DEBESS LOUNGE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER/BARTENDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33656333 or SUJITHSDURSANAN@HOTMAIL.COM

BASSEL TELECOMS COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MAINTENANCE CLERK, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38044888 or basseltelecoms@gmail.com

Almoayed Air Conditioning W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or profice@almoayedcg.com

GREEN INNOVA TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17600334 or info@green-innova.com

ALDEGWY EAGLE ONE CAR INSPECTION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CAR MECHANICAL WORKSHOP), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37706515 or HANI.ELSAYED11@GMAIL.COM

Almoayed Air Conditioning W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or profice@almoayedcg.com

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Almoayed Air Conditioning W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or profice@almoayedcg.com

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# Cunha rescues Man Utd in draw with Leeds

AFP | London

**M**atheus Cunha saved Manchester United from a rare defeat against fierce rivals Leeds as the Brazilian's equaliser salvaged a 1-1 draw at Elland Road yesterday.

Rubem Amorim's side trailed to Brenden Aaronson's second half strike before Cunha dragged them level moments later.

In a bitter rivalry keenly felt among two feuding fan-bases, Leeds have now gone eight matches without a win over United since an FA Cup triumph at Old Trafford in 2010.

United's failure to take all three points cost them a chance to move into the Premier League's top four.

Amorim's men sit in fifth place after winning just one of their last five league games.

After a disappointing 1-1 draw against lowly Wolves on Tuesday, this was another frustrating result for United.

Daniel Farke's team moved eight points clear of the relegation zone after extended their impressive unbeaten run to seven matches.



Manchester United's Brazilian striker #10 Matheus Cunha (L) tries to hold off Leeds United's Dutch defender #05 Pascal Struijk (C)

Still without injured captain Bruno Fernandes, Amorim sent United out in his preferred 3-4-2-1 shape after finally tinkering with his much-derided tactics for the recent win over Newcastle.

Amorim's chopping and changing is especially intriguing against the backdrop of his comment that he is starting to

realise United's sporting directors might give him the right players for his system.

On a bitterly cold afternoon in Yorkshire, Leeds thundered into a series of bone crunching tack-

les a bid to seize the momentum in the opening minutes.

## Sound and fury

Leeds hadn't beaten United at Elland Road since 2002 and the urgency to end that drought meant there was little sign that they had 48 hours less than their opponents to recover from their previous match.

Despite their attempts to rattle United, it was the visitors who took control amid the sound and fury in the stands.

Benjamin Sesko should have put United ahead from Casemiro's pin-point pass, but the striker hesitated too long, allowing Pascal Struijk to make a vital block.

Diogo Dalot scuffed high over the bar from a good opportunity inside the Leeds area.

Leeds striker Dominic Calvert-Lewin was inches away from breaking the deadlock with a glancing header that cannoned off the far post from Anton Stach's cross.

Leny Yoro was denied by Lucas Perri's superb save after the United defender nodded goalwards from Casemiro's header into the six-yard box.

United keeper Senne Lammens had to be alert to keep out Gabriel Gudmundsson's low drive at the near post after the interval.

But teenage defender Ayden Heaven's lack of experience was exposed when Leeds went in front after 62 minutes.

Heaven was far too casual when Leeds played a long ball over the centre-back and Aaronson took full advantage, accelerating into the United area before sweeping a clinical finish Lammens.

Amorim responded by sending on Joshua Zirkzee, a move that proved inspired as he played a crucial role in United's 65th minute equaliser.

Zirkzee slipped a perfectly weighted pass towards Cunha and the Brazilian stretched to poke past Perri from 12 yards.

It was Cunha's third goal in his last five games as he finally emerges from a poor start to life with United after his summer move from Wolves.

Noah Okafor's overhead kick was palmed away by Lammens before the out-of-form Sesko wasted a good chance at the other end.

## Bournemouth win a sign of Arsenal 'growth', says Arteta



Arsenal's English midfielder #41 Declan Rice (C) celebrates scoring

AFP | London

**M**ikel Arteta said Arsenal's resilience to fight back from conceding early to beat Bournemouth 3-2 is a sign of his side's growth as they aim to end a 22-year wait to win the Premier League.

The Gunners moved six points clear of Aston Villa at the top of the table and seven ahead of Manchester City, who host Chelsea in their game-in-hand yesterday.

A rare error from Gabriel Magalhaes gifted Bournemouth an early lead, but the Brazilian centre-back quickly made amends at the other end to equalise.

A second half double from Declan Rice then secured the three points despite a stunning strike from Eli Kroupi to give Bournemouth hope late on.

"They are so good, (we) made it even harder for ourselves conceding the first goal but I love the character of the team," said Arteta.

"I love the character of Gabriel. The way he overcame that situation, it's just unbelievable."

"It says a lot about how much we've grown. The team found a way to beat them and it's a massive win."

Rice had been a major injury doubt after missing Tuesday's 4-1 thrashing of Villa due to swelling on his knee.

## Project Dream Players Secure JPL Premiership GCC Title

Manama

**A**l Salam Bank announced that players enrolled in its Project Dream initiative, in partnership with Tumooch Sport Management and Ole Academy, have achieved a significant milestone by winning the JPL Premiership - Top Tier (GCC) for the 2014 age group. The tournament brought together more than 22 leading youth academies from across the GCC, underscoring the competitive intensity and regional stature of the achievement.

Representing Ole Academy, the Project Dream players delivered a disciplined and consistent performance throughout the competition. The team progressed through the group stages unbeaten before advancing to the final, where they secured victory against Manchester City Academy - UAE (City School) to claim the championship title. In recognition of individual excellence, Abbas Ali Khairallah, a Project Dream player, was named Best Player in the 2014 age category, following a series of standout performances that contributed to the team's success throughout the tournament.

The achievement highlights the tangible outcomes of Project Dream, Al Salam Bank's long-term youth development initiative designed to support the structured and sustainable development of young talent. The initiative is built on a comprehensive framework that emphasizes physical preparation, technical analysis, individualized monitoring, and long-term progression planning, providing young players with a professional environment that supports both performance and personal development.

Commenting on the achievement, Mahmood Qannati, Chief Marketing Officer at Al Salam Bank, said: "This mile-

stone achieved by the Project Dream players underscores the importance of sustained investment in youth development and the value of strong partnerships. Project Dream was established to support young talent through a structured and professional environment, and this result demonstrates the effectiveness of a long-term development approach that prioritizes both performance and character. We are proud to support initiatives that contribute to building future generations, and through our support for Project Dream, we aim to

Khaliifa to support and empower talented players to serve as a future pillar for the national teams. This GCC achievement for the Under-12 category reflects the success of the partnership with Al Salam Bank and Ole Academy in providing a professional environment that highlights the quality and efficiency of Bahraini talents. We are confident that this success will continue through sustainable development programs that enhance the competitive excellence of the rising generation".

Reflecting on the tournament outcome, Khaled Al Awadi, Co-Founder of Ole Bahrain Academy, said: "This success

reflects the commitment, discipline, and dedication shown by the players throughout the season. The Project Dream framework has enabled us to provide a structured development environment that emphasizes long-term growth rather than short-term results. Our partnership with Al Salam Bank has been instrumental in advancing the academy's vision of developing

players capable of competing at a regional level."

Through Project Dream, Al Salam Bank works in strategic partnership with Tumooch and Ole Academy to contribute to the development of a sustainable player development ecosystem that nurtures talent from an early age and supports continuous progression across multiple age groups. The achievement represents a continuation of a long-term development approach that demonstrates how sustained investment in youth can build future generations of players capable of competing at both regional and international levels.

The initiative aligns with the Bank's broader commitment to community development, long-term value creation, and responsible corporate engagement. Al Salam Bank continues to support initiatives that promote youth development, excellence, and sustainability, reinforcing its role as a responsible corporate partner within the community.

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**Litton Das to lead Bangladesh T20 World Cup squad**



Litton Das  
AFP | Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday named their squad for the T20 World Cup beginning in February, leaving out middle-order batters Jaker Ali Anik and Mahidul Islam, and selecting five fast bowlers.

Wicketkeeper and batter Litton Das will also lead Bangladesh in the tournament in India and Sri Lanka, the Bangladesh Cricket Board said.

But the announcement also came as Dhaka requested that its four group matches in India be moved to Sri Lanka, after anger because India forced a Bangladeshi player to quit the Indian Premier League.

Bangladesh are due to play the West Indies in Kolkata on February 7, the opening day of the World Cup.

They are then due to face Italy on February 9, and England on February 14, both also in Kolkata, followed by Nepal on February 17 in Mumbai.

Top-order options Tanzid Hasan Tamim and Parvez Hossain Emon made the squad, while Towhid Hridoy is the only specialist middle-order batter.

# Muharraq dominate Al Najma to stay top

**Title Holders Maintain Winning Momentum in ZBL**

**Hussain Almaskati**  
TDT | Manama

Muharraq reinforced their Zain Basketball League lead yesterday, beating Al Najma 86-67 at Um Al Hassam Arena in Gameweek 8. The victory keeps the defending champions unbeaten this season, extending their record to seven wins from seven games and cementing their status as the team to beat.

From the opening tip, Muharraq set the tone. Wayne Chism won the jump ball and delivered alley-oop dunks and layups, while Mahmood Abbas Isa and Bader Abdulla added quick points. Nader Ali's sharp perimeter shooting helped the champions take a 25-8 lead by the end of the first quarter.

Al Najma struggled to respond. Ahmed Aldurazi and Donovan Smith contributed with free throws, layups, and a three-pointer, but they could not match Muharraq's pace. By halftime, the lead had grown to 50-25, with Kerwin Roach and Chism orchestrating fast breaks and Ali continuing his three-



Wayne Chism fires a close-range shot for Muharraq

point barrage.

The third quarter saw Al Najma fight back with inside plays, but Muharraq's balanced attack and efficient ball movement kept the deficit double digits, peaking at 28 points. Roach, Chism, and Ali combined for threes, drives, and assists, while Al Najma relied on Smith's rebounds and Aldurazi's scoring to stay in touch.

In the fourth, Al Najma trimmed the lead to 19 with late threes, but Muharraq closed out the game strongly. Nader Ali led all scorers with 21 points. Chism added 19 points and eight rebounds, and Roach contributed 18 points with seven assists. For Al Najma, Aldurazi scored 18, Smith added 16 points with 13 rebounds, and Ahmed Najaf contributed 14 points.

Muharraq's defensive intensity produced 13 steals and 27 assists, reflecting their depth and cohesion. Al Najma struggled with turnovers and could not match the champions' efficiency, leaving Muharraq atop the standings with a perfect 7-0 record, while Al Najma remain fourth on 9 points.

**'Nothing concrete' in Rosenior Chelsea reports**



Liam Rosenior  
AFP | London

Strasbourg coach Liam Rosenior said on Saturday that there was "nothing concrete" about the reports linking him with the Chelsea job, after his team's 1-1 draw at Nice in Ligue 1.

Enzo Maresca left his role in charge of the Blues on Thursday with Englishman Rosenior, who guided the Alsatian club to a seventh-placed finish last season, tipped to take over at Stamford Bridge.

The draw leaves Strasbourg, who are owned by Chelsea's parent company BlueCo, seventh in the table without a league win since November 9.

"I want to focus on Strasbourg and not other things at the moment," Rosenior told reporters.

"That's all the information I can give you today."

"We don't know what will be done tomorrow, but at the moment, there's nothing concrete," the 41-year-old former England under-21 defender added.

## Root, Brook tame Australia in rain-hit 5th Ashes Test

AFP | Sydney

Joe Root and Harry Brook tamed Australia's all-pace attack with an unbroken 154-run stand yesterday to rescue England and give them the upper hand after a rain-hit day one of the fifth and final Ashes Test.

Batting after skipper Ben Stokes won the toss at a sold-out Sydney Cricket Ground, they steered the tourists to 211-3 when bad light forced the players from the field just before tea.

Subsequent rain and the risk of lightning made no further play possible, with stumps called an hour early.

Root was not out 72 and Brook on 78 after coming together with England tottering at 57-3 following the wickets of Ben Duckett (27), Zak Crawley (16) and Jacob Bethell (10) before lunch.

The world's top two-ranked batsmen set about counter-attacking on a decent batting pitch providing little movement for the bowlers.

Both brought up hard-fought half-centuries and, with dark storm clouds looming, kept the scoreboard ticking over at a fast clip.

"We're in very good position, obviously three down at the end of play," said Brook.

"Hopefully we can make the most of that going into tomorrow."

"It was good pitch," he added.

"When I first went in it felt like the bounce was fairly steep. But then it started to get a little bit lower and slower and just generally feels like a good wicket."



**It was good pitch. When I first went in it felt like the bounce was fairly steep. But then it started to get a little bit lower and slower and just generally feels like a good wicket**

HARRY BROOK

little bit lower and slower and just generally feels like a good wicket."

England came into the game

buoyed by a four-wicket win inside two days in the previous Test in Melbourne, desperate to keep the momentum going.

That victory snapped a 15-year winless streak in Australia but came too late to save the series, with the hosts retaining the urn by winning in Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide.

Australia sprang a surprise by including all-rounder Beau Webster in place of quick Jhye Richardson, with off-spinner Todd Murphy overlooked.

**'Hate doing it'**

It is the first time in almost

140 years that the hosts have not played a front-line spinner during a Sydney Test.

"Hate doing it," said Australia skipper Steve Smith.

"But if we keep producing wickets that we don't think are going to spin and seam is going to play a big part and cracks are going to play a big part, you kind of get pushed into a corner."

England brought in seamer Matthew Potts for the injured Gus Atkinson in their only change, with their front-line slow bowler Shoaib Bashir missing out for a fifth straight Test.

## Former Australian Open champion Kenin opens 2026 with Brisbane win



Sofia Kenin in action

AFP | Brisbane

"She is a really tough player and I had to stay with it, definitely wasn't easy."

Australian wildcard Ajla Tomljanovic eased into the second round with a 6-1, 6-3 win over Romanian qualifier Elena-Gabriele Ruse in the Brisbane International yesterday.

"I had such a great preparation but you never know when that first match comes, anything can happen on the day," Tomljanovic said.

"I was hoping to do at least 80 percent of what I've been practising and I think I did even more. This feels amazing."

In the men's draw, American Francis Tiafoe was too strong for Australian wildcard Aleksandar Vukic 6-2, 6-2.

# Kingdom awaits darts world's best

World Champion Littler Sets Sights on Bahrain Darts Masters

**Hussain Almaskati**  
TDT | Manama

The darts world turns its eyes to Bahrain as the Kingdom kicks off 2026 in style, hosting the Bahrain Darts Masters on January 15 and 16 at Exhibition World Bahrain. Luke Littler's back-to-back World Championship triumph adds extra excitement to the event, which opens the PDC World Series of Darts calendar. The tournament is organised by the Bahrain International Circuit in partnership with the Professional Darts Corporation and supported by the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority.

Fresh from his second successive title at Alexandra Palace, Littler will arrive in Bahrain as the undisputed force in the sport. The 18-year-old Englishman produced a sensational display last weekend, overwhelming Dutch challenger Gian van Veen 7-1 in the final to retain the Sid Waddell Trophy and become the first player since Gary Anderson in 2016 to win consecutive world titles. Widely known



Luke Littler celebrates back-to-back world titles at "Ally Pally"

as Luke the Nuke, he arrives in Bahrain carrying the momentum of a dominant victory.

The Bahrain Darts Masters

will feature eight elite PDC players facing Asia's top talents, including two Bahraini qualifiers, in a knockout format that promises high-stakes drama. Littler's presence further intensifies anticipation for the tournament.

He headlines a star-studded



Stephen Bunting lifts the 2025 Bahrain Darts Masters trophy

lineup that includes defending Bahrain Darts Masters champion Stephen Bunting, alongside former world champions Luke Humphries, Michael van Gerwen, and Gerwyn Price. Together, these five bring experience, silverware, and global appeal to the Kingdom.

Since its 2023 debut, the Bahrain Darts Masters has quickly become a key stop on the World Series circuit. Michael Smith won the inaugural title, followed

by Littler's breakthrough victory in 2024 and Bunting's composed triumph last year. Each edition has delivered drama and quality, reinforcing Bahrain's growing place on the global darts map.

With Littler arriving on the back of another emphatic world title and the sport entering a new year full of momentum, the stage is set for the Bahrain Darts Masters to deliver another compelling chapter in its young but rapidly expanding legacy.

## 'An enormous triumph,' amputee Baumel wins Dakar Rally first stage



Belgian driver Guillaume de Mevius and French co-driver Mathieu Baumel compete in the prologue for the first stage

AFP | Yanbu, Saudi Arabia

Frenchman Mathieu Baumel hailed an "enormous triumph" as just a year after having his leg amputated he won the opening stage of the Dakar Rally alongside Belgian driver Guillaume De Mevius yesterday.

Navigator Baumel was back at the race just 11 months after his right lower leg was amputated after being run over while helping someone who had broken down on the road in France.

Last January it had looked as if life behind the wheel was in the past for the successful co-driver and navigator.

"Just being here is an enormous triumph," said the 49-year-old, who got into his car yesterday carrying his prosthetic limb.

Driving a mini the pair won the perilous 305km first stage at Yanbu, Saudi Arabia.

Baumel had previously won

the Dakar Rally four times as co-pilot to Nasser Al-Attiyah, most recently back-to-back titles in 2022 and 2023.

Yesterday, Qatari Al-Attiyah in a Dacia was 40 second down in second with Czech Martin Prokop of Ford third at 1min 30sec.

De Mevius, sitting top of the heap at the finish line, admitted he was surprised.

"It wasn't particularly the objective to win today, but we said to ourselves with Mathieu (Baumel) that we wanted to at least win one on the Dakar stages," he said after a stoney and dusty ride.

Al-Attiyah had mixed feelings saying he "could have lost it all" on the challenging route and lamented that he had been ahead of the day's winner for most of the stage.

French driver Sébastien Loeb came 10th in his Dacia losing three minutes with a puncture after also leading the field.

## Abdulla Saeed and Basem Mahmood to represent Kingdom in Bahrain Darts Masters



Abdulla Saeed

Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East', announced that Bahraini darts stars Abdulla Saeed and Basem Mahmood will be part of the high-profile competitors in the 2026 edition of the Bahrain Darts Masters.

The Kingdom's darts spectacle is scheduled for 15 and 16 January, 2026, taking place at its new venue, Terminal 4 by Beyon, Exhibition World Bahrain, and it will see eight of the world's biggest icons in the game take on eight regional representatives, which will include Saeed and Mahmood.

The Bahraini pair secured their berths in the event for the second straight year after finishing as the top two players in a national qualifying competition. It will be their third appearances in the history of the Bahrain Darts Masters, with Saeed having also competed in

the 2024 event and Mahmood in 2023, to go along with their participations last year.

### Legends confirmed

Saeed and Mahmood join a current list of five Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) legends who are already confirmed for the two-day extravaganza.

They include the new World Champion and global star Luke "The Nuke" Littler, English darts legend and Bahrain Darts Masters defending champion "The Bullet" Stephen Bunting, three-time former World Champion "Mighty" Michael van Gerwen from the Netherlands, 2021 World Champion "The Iceman" Gerwyn Price from Wales, and 2024 World Champion "Cool Hand" Luke Humphries from England.

The Bahrain Darts Masters is organised by BIC, the PDC, and sports promoter CBX, and is supported by Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority.

Tickets for the event are still available to the all-new Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand, but fans must act fast and purchase theirs at the soonest to avoid missing out on one of the most highly sought-after occasions in the new year.



Basem Mahmood

All tables, including Premium and VIP areas for the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters, have already completely sold out, but darts enthusiasts can still experience the magic of the game at the Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand, which offers an incredible view of the stage, as well as close access to food and beverage areas at the venue.

Tickets to the Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand are BD25 apiece for the two days. All available ticket options can be found online at [bahraingp.com](http://bahraingp.com) or by calling the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

The Bahrain Darts Masters will be the first event after the 2025/2026 World Darts Championship, and it will also kick off this year's PDC World Series of

Darts, making for an occasion that will be watched by millions from around the world.

The game of darts has become an international phenomenon in recent years, and in the Kingdom, the Bahrain Darts Masters has grown tremendously over the past three seasons it has been held. The event has been moved to Terminal 4 by Beyon to be able to accommodate the massive crowd expected, and the venue will be transformed into Bahrain's answer to the iconic Alexandra Palace.

Fans can expect an incredible atmosphere, with fancy dress, themed activations, and a wide range of food and beverage options as 'Sport's Biggest Party' brings its unique flavour to Bahrain.

For more information on the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters or other events and activities at BIC, visit [bahraingp.com](http://bahraingp.com), call the BIC Hotline, or follow the circuit's official social media channels.