

HM King HRH CP, PM condole with Jordan King

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, sent cables of condolences to His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, following the passing of Ahmad Obeidat, former Jordanian Prime Minister.

Trump deletes racist video post of Obamas as monkeys
 Washington, United States

President Donald Trump shared a post with a racist video depicting Barack and Michelle Obama as monkeys, sparking outrage across the US political spectrum Friday before deleting it in a rare backtrack.

The White House initially rejected "fake outrage" over the video shared on Trump's Truth Social account late Thursday night, only to then blame the post on an error by a staff member.

Bahrain condemns Islamabad mosque attack, mourns victims

TDT | Manama

Bahrain has condemned the terrorist attack on a mosque in Islamabad during Friday prayers, which killed 31 people and injured over 130 worshippers.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed the Kingdom's rejection of extremism and terrorism, and strongly denounced attacks targeting places of worship and civilians.

Bahrain expressed its condolences to the government and people of Pakistan, as well as to the families of the victims, and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.



220 fils (includes VAT)



Tensions ease as Iran-US talks open

Iran agrees with US to 'proceed with negotiations'



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (C) arrives for a meeting in Muscat.

response to anti-government protests.

"In a very positive atmosphere, our arguments were exchanged and the views of the other side were shared with us," Araghchi told Iranian state TV, adding that "it was a good start."

He noted the two sides had "agreed to proceed with the ne-

gotiations" and that the "way forward" would be decided after negotiators held consultations within their respective capitals.

The timing and the format of the next round will be decided "at a later date", Araghchi said, expressing hope that Washington would refrain from "threats and pressure" so that "the talks

can continue".

The top diplomat insisted that the discussions were "focused exclusively on the nuclear issue", in an interview with the official IRNA news agency.

"We are not addressing any other subject with the Americans," he added.



Yesterday's talks were the first since nuclear negotiations between Iran and the US collapsed last year following Israel's unprecedented bombing campaign against Iran, which triggered a 12-day war.

Slovenian Prime Minister receives Arab foreign ministers in Ljubljana

TDT | Ljubljana

Dr. Robert Golob, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, received a number of Arab foreign ministers during their official visit to Slovenia.

Present was Tanja Fajon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia.

The meeting was attended by His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah Al Saud, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Ayman Safadi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; Dr. Badr Abdelatty, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt; Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain; and Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar.



Buying local in Budaiya



P2



Under the shade of Budaiya Botanical Garden's greenery, the Bahraini Farmers Market has evolved into a lively weekend destination, drawing families, food lovers and visitors from Bahrain and abroad.

Power trouble

MPs push for separate power meters for families sharing homes

Mohammed Darwish

TDT | Manama

Families sharing a single home should be allowed to install separate electricity meters for each household, according to a proposal submitted to Parliament.



The proposal, put forward by MPs Abdulhakeem Al Sheno, Bader Al Tamimi, Hamad Al Doy, Abdulwahid Qarata and

Hassan Ibrahim, focuses on extended families and households benefiting from housing finance and housing programmes that are currently billed through a single shared meter.

The MPs said combining electricity use often pushes households into higher tariff bands, resulting in bills that do not reflect the actual consumption of each family.

They noted that the impact is felt most by retirees and low- to middle-income families, with homeowners frequently bearing the cost of electricity used by multiple households.

The accompanying memorandum described the proposal as an administrative measure that would not impose additional direct costs on the state.

A royal welcome



France's President Macron welcomes HM King and HRH Shaikh Nasser at the Elysee Presidential Palace in Paris



Macron (L) welcomes HM King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa at the Elysee Presidential Palace in Paris



HH Shaikh Nasser, HM King Hamad, France's President Emmanuel Macron and France's junior Defence Minister Alice Rufo (R) pose after signing a bilateral agreement at the Elysee Palace in Paris



HM King Hamad arrives at the Elysee Presidential Palace to meet with French President in Paris

A garden, a market and a message

Budaiya Farmers Market grows into a weekend community favourite

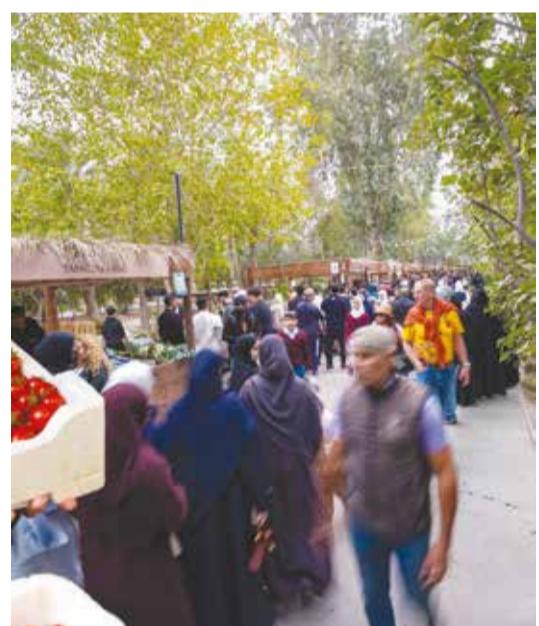
● Every Saturday until February 14, colourful stalls come alive with the sights and sounds of local agriculture

● Beyond the produce, the market has become a family-friendly space

TDT | Manama

Under the shade of Budaiya Botanical Garden's greenery, the Bahraini Farmers Market has evolved into a lively weekend destination, drawing families, food lovers and visitors from Bahrain and abroad.

Every Saturday until February 14, colourful stalls come alive with the sights and sounds of local agriculture. Fresh fruits, vegetables and traditional Bahraini products are displayed in abundance, all offered directly



by the farmers who grow them. The setting creates a relaxed atmosphere where shopping blends naturally with community interaction.

This season, 33 Bahraini farmers are taking part, presenting

more than 100 varieties of locally grown produce. From crisp leafy greens to sun-ripe tomatoes and fragrant herbs, the market reflects the diversity and quality of Bahrain's agricultural output.



Beyond the produce, the market has become a family-friendly space. Children gather around interactive workshops that turn lessons on sustainable farming into hands-on experiences, while parents browse stalls with

baskets gradually filling with fresh, local food. These scenes highlight the market's growing role as both a social hub and an educational platform.

Organised by the Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture, in partnership with the National Initiative for Agricultural Sector Development and private-sector partners, the initiative strengthens the link between farmers and consumers. It also plays a wider role in supporting local producers and reinforcing national food security by encouraging the purchase of Bahraini-grown products.

The market also supports Bahraini entrepreneurship, providing space for agricultural initiatives, craft projects and value-added food products. Alongside this, educational and awareness activities continue throughout the season, focusing on environmental preservation, sustainable agriculture and the importance of local produce.



Budaiya Botanical Garden is a popular public green space in Bahrain known for its diverse plant life, including areas dedicated to palm trees, aromatic plants, wild plants and flowers, and it hosts seasonal community events such as the Bahraini Farmers Market which attracts thousands of visitors and supports local agriculture every winter.

Pension payment delays to face Parliamentary scrutiny

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Delays in pension disbursements will come under parliamentary scrutiny when the Council of Representatives convenes on Tuesday, as MPs question the efficiency of administrative procedures affecting retirees' financial stability.

The issue will be raised following a parliamentary ques-

tion submitted by MP Mahmood Mirza Fardan.

Oversight

The discussion will involve the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, the government body responsible for public finances and pension-related financial administration. MPs are expected to examine whether existing procedures ensure timely payment, and whether current systems sufficiently re-

spond to pensioners' needs.

Pension administration has increasingly featured on the parliamentary agenda amid growing public concern over retire-

ment security. The issue will be discussed alongside other pension and social insurance matters during the same sitting, highlighting the importance of effective implementation in addition to legislative reform.



Education Minister receives Head of Saudi Educational Mission in Bahrain



Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma'a, Minister of Education, received Dr. Sami bin Ghazi Al Otaibi, Head of the Saudi Educational Mission in Bahrain. The meeting focused on strengthening the longstanding educational partnership between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

Over 23,000 retirees receive pensions above BD 1,000

Pension data reveals trends among top earners

● The largest group, 19,346 pensioners, fall in the BD 1,000–1,999 band

● 1,128 beneficiaries receive pensions above BD 1,000 on behalf of relatives, with payments totalling about BD 1.6m a month

● Younger beneficiaries aged 20 to 40 include 49 men and 162 women, mostly in the lower pension bands

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

More than 23,000 retirees receive monthly pensions of over BD 1,000, the Social Insurance Organisation

(SIO) has told Parliament.

SIO chief executive Sahar Rashid Al Mannaie, responding to a parliamentary question from MP Ali Saeer Al Doseri, said the figures were based on the organisation's third-quarter statistical report.

In total, 23,499 pensioners receive more than BD 1,000 a month. The largest group, 19,346 retirees, receive between BD 1,000 and BD 1,999.

A further 2,851 receive between BD 2,000 and BD

2,999, while 1,002 receive BD 3,000 to BD 3,999. Another 192 pensioners receive between BD 4,000 and BD 4,999, and 108 receive BD 5,000 or more.

Separately, the SIO said 1,128 beneficiaries receive pensions of more than BD 1,000 a month on behalf of relatives. "The total monthly pensions are about 1.6 million dinars, and the total annual pensions are about 19.2 million dinars," Al Mannaie said.

Most beneficiaries fall within the BD 1,000 to BD 1,999 band, numbering 1,008. Another 87 receive between BD 2,000 and BD 2,999, 28 receive BD 3,000 to BD 3,999, four receive BD 4,000 to BD 4,999, and one receives BD 5,000 or more.

Among male beneficiaries aged 20 to 40 receiving pensions above BD 1,000 on behalf of relatives, the SIO reported 49 cases, with total payments of about BD 66,300 per

Sahar Al Mannaie, Chief Executive of SIO

month and approximately BD 795,600 per year. Of these, 46 receive between BD 1,000 and BD 1,999, two receive BD 2,000 to BD 2,999, and one receives BD 3,000 to BD 3,999.

For female beneficiaries in the same age group, the SIO reported 162 cases, with total payments of around BD 226,400 per month and about BD 2.7 million annually. Of these, 146 receive between BD 1,000 and BD 1,999, 13 receive BD 2,000 to BD 2,999, and three receive BD 3,000 to BD 3,999, with none in the higher bands.



29.5 km coastal road to transform northern Bahrain

● Northern Bahrain Road set for advisory tender next week

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

The Northern Bahrain Road project is set to move into its next phase, with the Ministry of Works preparing to appoint a qualified transaction adviser under a public-private partnership (PPP) framework.

The ministry is expected to issue a tender next week to appoint an advisory firm to



provide integrated financial, technical and legal services for the project, as part of efforts to accelerate investment and strengthen infrastructure along the Kingdom's northern coastline.

The proposed road will run

from the Northern Manama Bridge interchange at Bahrain Bay in the east, pass through Suhail Island in the west, and extend towards the King Fahd Causeway. The route is expected to enhance connectivity between major development

zones, improve traffic flow and support commercial activity across key areas.

The Northern Bahrain Road forms a core element of a wider package of residential and development projects planned for the northern coast, including Noorana, Marassi Al Seef, North Star and Diyar Al Nakheel.

The project is expected to span approximately 29.5 kilometres. Its first phase will include two lanes in each direction, with a second and final phase expanding the road to four lanes each way to meet future urban growth and transport demand.

Sheikh Jaber highway financing deal up for parliamentary review

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

The Council of Representatives is set to review a proposed financing agreement for the second phase of the Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah Highway during its session on Tuesday.

The agenda includes a report by the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee on a draft law



approving a framework agree-

ment between the Government

of Bahrain and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, which would contribute to financing the project through a series of loans.

The committee said the agreement allows for multiple loans to be extended over several years, supporting the project while spreading financial commitments over time. It concluded that the agreement meets constitutional requirements re-

lated to public borrowing and treaty approval.

The highway project is considered a strategic infrastructure initiative aimed at improving traffic flow and connectivity across key areas of the Kingdom.

MPS are expected to assess the financing structure during the session and decide whether the agreement should move forward through the remaining legislative stages.

Royal Hospital could become public maternity facility



Bader Al Tameemi, MP
Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Parliament is set to vote on Tuesday on a proposal to convert the Royal Hospital for Women and Children (Al Malaki) into a public maternity hospital serving the Southern Governorate.

The Services Committee has recommended approval, saying the public-interest grounds presented for the proposal justify its support.

The proposal was submitted by MPs Bader Al Tameemi, Dr Ali Al Nuaimi, Ali Saeer Al Doseri, Mohammed Mousa and Mohammed Al Rifai. It calls for the hospital to be brought under the Ministry of Health to provide maternity and related healthcare services to residents of Riffa and surrounding areas.

Al Tameemi said the aim was

to establish the facility as a public maternity hospital serving the area, noting that Riffa and nearby districts are among the most densely populated in Bahrain.

He said converting the hospital into a public facility would help narrow gaps in access to healthcare for women and children and promote a fairer distribution of health services across the Kingdom.

Al Tameemi added that the hospital is already specialised, with trained staff and equipment in obstetrics and paediatrics, and said integrating it into the public system would reduce travel for patients currently seeking care elsewhere. He also said it could ease the financial burden on families who rely on private hospitals, where maternity and newborn care costs can be high.

MPs to vote on raising housing income cap to BD 2,500

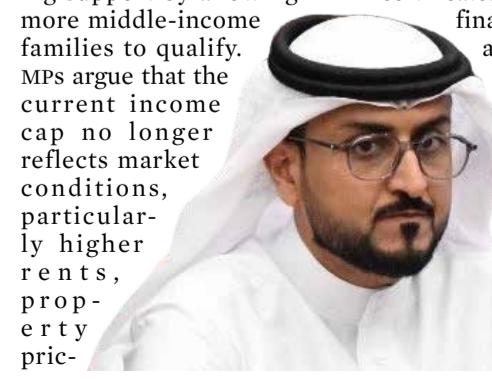
Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Parliament will debate and vote on Tuesday on a proposal to raise the maximum salary ceiling for eligibility for state housing services to BD2,500, a move supporters say reflects rising living costs and changing income realities.

The recommendation, submitted by MPs Abdulwahid Qarata, Bader Al Tamimi, Hamad Al Doy, Ali Al Doseri and Mohammed Salman Al Ahmed, aims to widen access to housing support by allowing more middle-income families to qualify. MPs argue that the current income cap no longer reflects market conditions, particularly higher rents, property prices and household expenses.

The Services Committee has endorsed the proposal, with all attending members voting in favour, citing strong public-interest grounds and the need to ease pressure on families who are currently excluded despite facing housing affordability challenges.

In its written response, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning said existing regulations limit eligibility for housing services to applicants earning no more than BD1,200. It outlined that nomination certificates and most housing finance programmes are tied to strict income thresholds, both at the time of application and at allocation or payout.



Abdulwahid Qarata, MP

Marriage to move-in: MPs want housing allowance paid immediately

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Newly married couples should receive a housing allowance from the date of marriage, rather than after a five-year wait, according to a proposal backed by MPs but opposed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning.

Despite the ministry's objections, Parliament's Public Utili-

ties and Environment Committee has recommended approval of the proposal, with all attending members voting in favour.

The proposal, submitted by MP Dr Ali Al Nuaimi, seeks to amend current rules governing housing allowance payments. Supporters argue that newly-weds face rising living costs, alongside higher property prices and rents, particularly during the early years of marriage.

MPS backing the move said paying the allowance from the date of marriage would help couples meet daily expenses, support family stability and ease financial pressure at the start of married life. They also linked the proposal to the government's 2023-2026 programme, which includes targets related to improving living standards and preserving social gains.

The Ministry of Housing and

Urban Planning has warned that implementing the change would affect the sustainability of its housing plans and its ability to deliver services at the required pace.

The ministry cited Decision No. 909 of 2015, which governs the housing system and stipulates that the allowance is paid after five years from the date an application is submitted. It noted that certain categories —

including divorced women and widows — are exempt from this rule and receive the allowance from the date of application, in recognition of their financial circumstances.

The ministry
Dr Ali Al Nuaimi,
MP



added that its current efforts are focused on expanding housing options, including immediate financing solutions tailored to different needs, without reliance on long waiting periods.

Marching to the rhythm of Bahrain's pride



The Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) military band held a celebration at Marassi Galleria in Muharraq Governorate, marking the 58th anniversary of the establishment of the BDF. The event featured musical performances by the BDF military band, accompanied by a women's military band, combining live music with a military march. The programme included a selection of national musical pieces inspired by Bahrain's heritage and traditional folklore, which were well received by attendees.

Indian Ladies Association celebrates Annual day 2026 with a "Bollywood Vintage Night" at Crowne Plaza

Manama

The Indian Ladies Association (ILA), one of Bahrain's most respected and longest-serving women's organizations, celebrated its Annual Day on 5th February 2026 at Crowne Plaza, marking the commencement of its 70th year with elegance, nostalgia, and vibrant community spirit. The evening's theme, "Bollywood Vintage Night," paid tribute to the timeless charm of classic Indian cinema.

The programme was gracefully anchored by Ms. Rekha Utam, whose poised and engaging emceeing ensured a seamless and lively flow throughout the evening.

The event was honoured by the presence of Ms. Betsy Mathaiso, Guest of Honour, who addressed the gathering and appreciated ILA's seven decades of dedicated service to the community.

A significant highlight of the evening was the Presidential Address by Ms. Smita Jensen, who underscored the essence of sisterhood as the very foundation of ILA—a bond that has remained unbroken since 1956 and continues to grow strong-



er across generations. As ILA steps into its Platinum Jubilee year, she spoke passionately about celebrating joy, unity, and togetherness, while reaffirming ILA's commitment to inclusivity, meaningful initiatives, and vibrant events that enrich members' lives. She emphasized that the journey ahead would be possible only through the continued support,

participation, and enthusiasm of its members, who are the true custodians of ILA's enduring legacy.

One of the most unique and widely appreciated moments was the Bollywood-style introduction of the newly elected Executive Committee. Members made a retro-themed entry to classic Bollywood melodies, creatively aligning with the

theme and drawing enthusiastic applause.

This was followed by the formal induction and oath-taking ceremony, which was administered by Ms. Meera Ravi. The solemn yet powerful oath was deeply appreciated by the audience for its dignity and sense of purpose. In a distinctive and symbolic gesture, respected entrepreneurs and community

leaders from Bahrain, actively serving the community, were invited on stage to pin each Executive Committee member, reinforcing unity, trust, and collective leadership.

During the ceremony, mementos were presented to Subcommittee Coordinators in recognition of their dedicated service throughout the year. Special appreciation was also extended

to those who contributed significantly to the successful organisation of the Dandiya celebrations, acknowledging their hard work and commitment. In addition, Sneha and Sneha Coordinators were formally recognised for their compassionate efforts and continued service to community welfare initiatives.

Adding an emotional and celebratory touch to the evening, all ILA members came together on stage to cut the cake, commemorating 70 years of ILA's enduring sisterhood, unity, and service to the community.

The evening also featured a Best Attire Competition, with winners announced as:

- Best Attire – Female: Zamini
- Best Attire – Gentleman: Aruldas

- Best Attire – Couple: Kalesh Kamal & Ushas

The evening concluded with cultural performances, live music, and dinner. The programme formally closed with a Vote of Thanks delivered by Sarmistha Dey, Honorary General Secretary, expressing heartfelt gratitude to the guests, members, sponsors, volunteers, and all those who contributed to the success of the event.

Elections Committee publishes voters' list for review and data verification

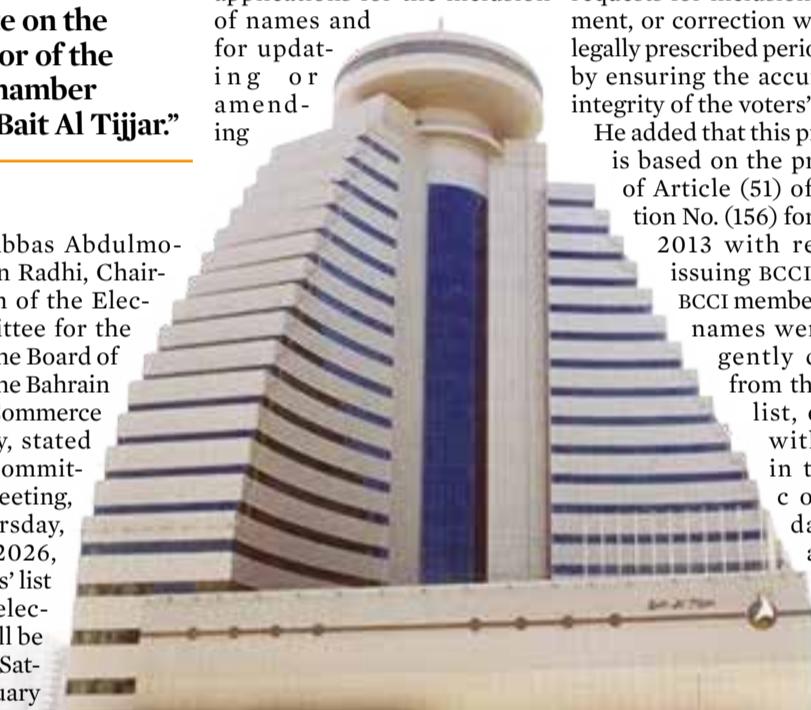
In Preparation for the Elections of the 31st session of BCCI's Board of Directors

From Tuesday, 10 February 2026, until Tuesday, 10 March 2026, applications for the inclusion of names and for updating or amending data in the voters' list will be received

Visit headquarters of the Client Care Directorate on the ground floor of the Bahrain Chamber building, "Bait Al Tijjar".

Manama

Mr. Abbas Abdulmohsen Radhi, Chairman of the Elections Committee for the 31st term of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stated during the Committee's third meeting, held on Thursday, 5 February 2026, that the voters' list for the 31st electoral term will be published on Saturday, 7 February



2026.

This is to enable Chamber members to review the list and verify the accuracy of their data, in preparation for submitting requests to include names or to update and correct information, in accordance with the provisions of the Chamber's Law and its Executive Regulations.

Bait Al Tijjar

Mr. Radhi clarified that, from Tuesday, 10 February 2026, until Tuesday, 10 March 2026, applications for the inclusion of names and for updating or amending

data in the voters' list will be received during official working hours, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the headquarters of the Client Care Directorate on the ground floor of the Bahrain Chamber building, "Bait Al Tijjar".

He noted that publishing the voters' list on the 7th of February, reflects the Elections Committee's keenness to provide Chamber members with the opportunity to review their data in advance and to submit requests for inclusion, amendment, or correction within the legally prescribed period, thereby ensuring the accuracy and integrity of the voters' list.

He added that this procedure is based on the provisions of Article (51) of Resolution No. (156) for the year 2013 with regard to issuing BCCI's bylaw. BCCI members whose names were negligently dropped from the voters' list, or those with errors in their recorded data, may appeal to the Elections Committee to have their names included and/or corrected to match their data in the Commercial Registration at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism. The amendment application should be submitted two days prior to the date of applying for BCCI Board of Directors' candidacy. The Elections Committee reviews all the applications within a maximum of one day from the date of application submission, includes the names of the members in the voters' list as per its assessment, and hereafter informs the member of its decision by phone, Fax or E-mail. The owner of a sole proprietorship or the legal representative of the member company should represent the member in the voting process according to its issued capital registered in BCCI records as per the schedule attached to the Chamber's Law.

tee to have their names included and/or corrected to match their data in the Commercial Registration at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism.

The Chairman of the Committee called on Chamber members to review the voters' list and verify the inclusion of their names and the accuracy of their data, in preparation for submitting correction or update requests when necessary, in accordance with the legally specified procedures and deadlines.

In a day

Mr. Radhi added that the Elections Committee will review the submitted applications and issue decisions thereon within a period not exceeding

one working day from the date of submission. The applicant will be notified of the Committee's decision by phone, fax, or email, and will be provided with an official notification signed by the Chairman of the Elections Committee.

He confirmed that the Committee will add the names of members who are proven to have the right to vote to the voters' list after completing the required procedures, urging all Chamber members to take the initiative to update their data within the specified period to ensure the smooth and easy exercise of their voting rights.

He also noted that representation of a member in the

voting process will be through the sole proprietor or the legal representative of the member company, in accordance with the capital registered in the Chamber's records and in line with the schedule annexed to the Chamber's Law.

The Chairman of the Elections Committee concluded his statement by affirming the Committee's commitment to applying the provisions of the law and the regulations governing the electoral process with full transparency and integrity, in a manner that enhances members' confidence and serves the public interest of the commercial and industrial sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain.



Announcement

Submitting Applications for Insertion in Voters' List and of Data Amendment for the Elections of the 31st session of BCCI's Board of Directors

The Election Committee for the 31st session of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) declares receiving applications for insertion in the voters' list and data amendment from Tuesday 10th February 2026 until Tuesday 10th March 2026 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the headquarters of the Client Care Directorate on the ground floor of Bahrain Chamber's Building "Bait Al Tijjar".

According to Article (51) of Resolution No. (156) for the year 2013 with regard to issuing BCCI's bylaw, BCCI members whose names were negligently dropped from the voters' list or those with errors in their recorded data, may appeal to the Elections Committee to have their names included and/or corrected to match their data in the Commercial Registration at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism. The amendment application should be submitted two days prior to the date of applying for BCCI Board of Directors' candidacy. The Elections Committee reviews all the applications within a maximum of one day from the date of application submission, includes the names of the members in the voters' list as per its assessment, and hereafter informs the member of its decision by phone, Fax or E-mail. The owner of a sole proprietorship or the legal representative of the member company should represent the member in the voting process according to its issued capital registered in BCCI records as per the schedule attached to the Chamber's Law.

To view the voters' list, And to get the application form for insertion in the voters' list and modification of data, please Scane the QR :



VAT haul grows past BD 600m on trade activity

Trade and services drive steady growth in tax receipts

Wholesale and retail trade, along with financial services, hospitality and communications, generated the largest share of revenue

Healthcare, education, basic food items and real estate remain zero-rated or exempt from VAT

The data was disclosed in a parliamentary reply to MP Abdulwahid Qarata

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Annual VAT collections rose by around 10.2%



Abdulwahid Qarata, MP

to BD 603m in 2024, from BD 547m in 2022, according to figures released by the National Bureau for Revenue (NBR).

The data was disclosed in a parliamentary reply to MP Abdulwahid Qarata.

The bureau said VAT in Bahrain is administered through a fully digital system, covering registration, return filing and payments.

The largest share of VAT revenue came from the wholesale and retail trade sector, followed by financial and insurance activities, accommodation and food services, information and

communications, professional, scientific and technical activities, and administrative and support services.

The NBR noted that several sectors are zero-rated, including healthcare services, medicines and medical equipment, education, domestic and international transport, and services related to the construction of new properties. Many basic food items also fall under the zero-rated category.

It added that the sale and lease of residential and commercial real estate are exempt from VAT, while sovereign government services provided by state entities fall outside the scope of the tax.

Examples of zero-rated or exempt items include 94 basic food products, healthcare and education services, medicines and medical equipment, construction services for new properties, the sale and lease of homes and commercial units, precious stones, investment-grade gold, silver and platinum, core financial services, oil and natural gas, and local and international transport.

Bahrain's National Environment Day, An Annual Milestone



SRIKOTA

Bahrain observed its National Environment Day on 4th February, 2026 with the theme of "We Restore it...to Revive it". The occasion highlighted Bahrain's commitment to environmental protection, sustainable development, and raising public awareness about preserving natural resources for future generations. The day was marked by special initiatives such as the placement of recycling bins in over 300 locations to boost waste management. The day also put the spotlight on key initiatives such as the Afforestation Plan that aims to plant 3.6 million trees by 2035 to expand green spaces. Due to the commendable efforts of Bahrain, already 67% of the target or 2.4 million trees have already been planted in 2025.

Efforts such as above have helped Bahrain put words to action and helped translate policies to environmental conservation achievements. On the eve of the National Environment Day it is important to note that the Bahrain Mangrove Initiative is yet another step that envisions an increased role of mangroves in ecological conservation. The initiative aims at increasing the mangrove cover four-fold by 2035. These steps have solidly put Bahrain on the path of carbon neutrality by 2060 besides enhancing the quality of life of the citizens. The special day helped Bahrain highlight these achievement and future ambitious plans for the environment which in turn inspire societal commitment for environmental protection. This year's National Environment Day served as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between people and their natural surroundings.

Additionally Bahrain's decision to ban import of plastic in all forms is yet another global benchmark in environmental conservation. Moreover the prohibition of manufacture, trade and import of plastic bottles and cups less than 200 milliliters is also an encouraging step towards an eventual plastic free future. These steps have helped the nation celebrate the National Environment day as they aid in tackling everyday environmental challenges such as climate change, water stress, rising temperatures, and increasing waste generation. Moreover the society is also encouraged to come together to pause and consider how everyday

Today Bahrain has emerged as one of the foremost nations that has evolved and established best environment conservation practices for the world to emulate. The implementation of "My Clean Plate Bahrain" for instance targets food wastage and aims to combat plastic pollution

world to emulate. The implementation of "My Clean Plate Bahrain" for instance targets food wastage and aims to combat plastic pollution. Similarly, investment in solar and other renewable energies aiming for 5% usage by 2025 and 10% by 2030 is yet another outstanding step by Bahrain.

Inspite of being in a geographical area that has harsh weather conditions all year long, Bahrain has been able to log impressive progress in almost all spheres of environment protection. The National Environment Day is an apt event to showcase this progress so that it serves as inspiration to achieve even greater heights.

This year's National Environment Day underlines Bahrain's unwavering commitment to protecting and conserving the environment.

(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)

US seeks new nuclear talks

Washington calls for Russia, China talks after last major nuclear arms treaty expires

● New START treaty expires Thursday

● US calls for three-way talks

● China refuses to join "at this stage"

● Russia demands UK and France join

AFP | Washington

The United States yesterday urged three-way talks with Russia and China to set new limits on nuclear weapons, after the last treaty between top nuclear powers Washington and Moscow expired.

China has already rejected joining disarmament negotiations "at this stage", while Russia suggested other nuclear-armed states like Britain and France should be included.

"Arms control can no longer be a bilateral issue between the United States and Russia," US Secretary of State Marco Rubio wrote in an online essay.

"Other countries have a responsibility to help ensure strategic stability, none more so than China," he said.

Thomas DiNanno, US under secretary of state for arms control, presented a new plan to the UN Conference on Disarmament, charging that the New START treaty that lapsed on Thursday had "fundamental flaws".

"Serial Russian violations, growth of more worldwide stockpiles and flaws in New START's design and implementation gives the United States a clear imperative to call for a new architecture that addresses the threats of today, not those of a bygone era," he told a United Nations meeting in Geneva.

Modernised treaty

The expiration of New START, which restricted the United States and Russia to 1,550 de-



a naval flag-raising ceremony aboard the latest Project 955A (Borey-A) strategic nuclear-powered submarine Knyaz Pozharsky in Severodvinsk

ployed nuclear warheads each, marks the first time in decades that there is no treaty to curtail the positioning of the planet's most destructive weapons, sparking fears of a fresh arms race.

US President Donald Trump did not accept a proposal from Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to keep New START's restrictions in place for another year. He called Thursday for a "new, improved and modernised treaty".

Rubio said that the United States will "negotiate from a position of strength".

"Russia and China should not expect the United States to stand still while they shirk their obligations and expand their nuclear forces," Rubio wrote.

"We will maintain a robust, credible and modernised nuclear deterrent.

"But we will do (so) while pursuing all avenues to fulfil the president's genuine desire for a world with fewer of these awful weapons."

Trump has said he wants to restart nuclear testing for the first



The expired New START treaty capped US and Russian deployed nuclear warheads at 1,550 each – and its lapse leaves no active limits between the world's largest nuclear arsenals

time in decades, although there has been no follow-through.

No limits'

DiNanno accused China of taking advantage of the "legally-binding US-Russian restraint to begin expanding its arsenal at a historic pace", maintaining that it was "on track to have over 1,000 nuclear warheads by

2030".

"As we sit here today, China's entire nuclear arsenal has no limits, no transparency, no declarations, had no controls," he charged.

Russia and the United States together control more than 80 percent of the world's nuclear warheads.

But China's nuclear arsenal is growing faster than for any other country, by about 100 new warheads a year since 2023, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

China's ambassador Shen Jian reiterated Beijing's official position yesterday, insisting to the disarmament body that "China's nuclear capabilities are nowhere near the level of those of the US or Russia".

"China would not participate in nuclear disarmament negotiations at this stage."

He insisted that "states possessing the largest nuclear arsenals should continue to fulfil their special and primary responsibilities for nuclear disarmament".

Russia accuses Kyiv of gun attack on army general in Moscow

AFP | London

A top Russian military intelligence general was shot and wounded in a Moscow apartment building yesterday, in what Russia called an assassination attempt orchestrated by Ukraine.

There was no comment from Kyiv, which has claimed responsibility for several of the high-ranking military officials that have been killed on Russian soil since Moscow launched its full-scale offensive in February 2022.

Vladimir Alekseyev is the deputy head of Moscow's GRU military intelligence. He is under Western sanctions for his alleged role in cyberattacks and charges that he organised a nerve agent attack on a Russian defector in Britain.

Russian investigators said he was shot by an "unidentified in-



Investigators leave a high-rise residential building, the scene of an assassination attempt on Russian Lieutenant General Vladimir Alekseyev, in Moscow

the negotiation process" aimed at ending the four-year war.

Alekseyev is the top deputy of Moscow's main negotiator at trilateral talks with Ukraine and the United States, the latest round of which concluded Thursday in Abu Dhabi.

The Kremlin acknowledged its military leaders were under threat at home while its troops were fighting in Ukraine.

"It is clear that such military leaders and high-level specialists are at risk during wartime," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"But it is not up to the Kremlin to decide how to ensure their safety. That is a matter for the special services."

He added that Russian President Vladimir Putin was being kept aware of the incident and the Kremlin hoped the general would recover.

dividual" who fled the scene, and was subsequently admitted to hospital.

In televised comments, Rus-

sian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused Ukraine of being behind the "terrorist act", saying Kyiv wanted to "disrupt

1301

Edward of Caernarfon
(later Edward II)
becomes the first
English Prince of Wales

1842

Battle of Debre Tabor: Ras Ali
Alula, Regent of the Emperor
of Ethiopia, defeats warlord
Wube Haile Maryam of Semien

1856

Colonial Tasmanian Parliament passes the
first piece of legislation, the Electoral Act
of 1856, anywhere in the world providing
for elections by way of a secret ballot

1992

The Maastricht Treaty is
signed by 12 countries from the
European Community (EC) to
create the European Union (EU)

Deadly blast hits Islamabad

Suicide blast at Islamabad mosque kills at least 31, wounds over 130



Security personnel stand guard outside a mosque following an explosion

group or other militants.

The attack was the deadliest in the Pakistani capital since September 2008, when 60 people were killed in a suicide truck bomb blast that destroyed part of the five-star Marriott hotel.

Bodies, bloodied clothing, debris

AFP journalists at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences hospital saw several people including children being carried in on stretchers or by their arms and legs.

Medics and bystanders helped unload victims with blood-soaked clothes from the back of ambulances and vehicles. At

least one casualty arrived in the boot of a car.

Friends and relatives of the wounded wept and screamed as victims -- dead or alive -- arrived at the hospital's heavily guarded emergency ward.

Another team of AFP journalists saw armed security forces outside the mosque, where pools of blood were visible on the ground.

Yellow crime scene tape surrounded an investigation area, with shoes, clothing and broken glass scattered around the site.

Videos shared on social media, which AFP was not able to verify immediately, showed several bodies lying near the mosque's

front gate, with people and debris also strewn across the red-carpeted prayer hall.

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar branded the attack "a heinous crime against humanity and a blatant violation of Islamic principles".

"Pakistan stands united against terrorism in all its forms," he said in a post on X.

Growing insurgencies

The attack comes as Pakistan's security forces battle intensifying insurgencies in southern and northern provinces that border Afghanistan.

Islamabad has said separatist armed groups in southern Balochistan, and the Pakistani Taliban and other Islamist militants in northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, near Islamabad, have used Afghan territory as a safe haven from which to launch attacks.

Afghanistan's Taliban government has repeatedly denied Pakistan's accusations.

Bilateral relations have plummeted, with forces from both sides regularly clashing along the border.

The last major attack in Islamabad took place in November when a suicide blast outside a court killed 12 people and wounded dozens, the first such incident to hit the capital in nearly three years.

In Balochistan, attacks claimed by separatist insurgents last week killed 36 civilians and 22 security personnel, prompting a wave of counter-operations in which authorities said security forces killed almost 200 militants.

● Blast occurred during Friday prayers**● Suicide bomber detonates at mosque gate****● Deadliest Islamabad attack since 2008
Marriott blast**

AFP | Islamabad

A suicide bombing at a mosque in Pakistan's capital Islamabad killed at least 31 people yesterday, according to authorities, with a police source saying more than 130 were wounded.

City officials said 31 people died in the blast at the Imam Bargah Qasr-e-Khadijatul Kubra mosque in the Tarlai area on the city's outskirts.

"The attacker was stopped at the gate and detonated himself," a security source told AFP.

A senior police official said the explosion occurred after Friday prayers, when mosques around the country are packed with worshippers.

The casualty toll was "expected to rise further", he told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

No group immediately claimed responsibility, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said those behind the blast would be found and brought to justice.

South Asia analyst Michael Kugelman said on X that the target suggests it was either the local affiliate of the Islamic State

or the Taliban.

Trump posts election conspiracy video with Obamas depicted as monkeys

AFP | Washington

US President Donald Trump on Thursday posted an election conspiracy video that depicted former president Barack Obama and his wife Michelle as monkeys, drawing condemnation from prominent Democrats.

Near the end of a one-minute-long video posted on Trump's Truth Social platform, the Obamas are shown with their faces on the bodies of monkeys for about one second.

The song "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" plays in the background when the Obamas appear.

The video repeats false allegations that ballot-counting company Dominion Voting Systems helped steal the 2020 election from Trump.

As of early yesterday morning, the video had been liked several thousand times on the president's social media platform.

The office of California Governor Gavin Newsom, a potential 2028 Democratic presidential candidate and a prominent Trump critic, slammed the post.



Donald Trump speaks with Barack Obama as Melania Trump looks on (file photo)

"Disgusting behavior by the President. Every single Republican must denounce this. Now," Newsom's press office account posted on X.

Ben Rhodes, a former top national security advisor and close confidant to Barack Obama, also condemned the imagery.

"Let it haunt Trump and his racist followers that future Americans will embrace the Obamas as beloved figures while studying him as a stain on our history," he wrote on X.

Obama is the only Black president in American history and backed Trump's opponent Kamala Harris on the campaign trail in the 2024 presidential election.

In the first year of his second term in the White House, Trump ramped up his use of hyper-realistic but fabricated visuals on Truth Social and other platforms, often glorifying himself while lampooning his critics.

He has used the provocative posts to rally his conservative base.

X

TOP
4
TWEETS

01

YOU
KNOW WHAT

The bombing is Islamabad's deadliest attack since 2008, when a truck blast destroyed part of the Marriott Hotel and killed around 60 people

02



Vice President Vance and Italian Prime Minister @GiorgiaMeloni met this morning prior to the Olympic Opening Ceremony this evening in Milan

@VP

03



Russia will only come to the table with genuine intent if it is pressured to do so. So we are tabling our 20th package of sanctions against Russia covering energy, financial services and trade

@vonderleyen

04



Progress on Syria humanitarian access and efficiency last year meant we reached 3.5 million people with vital support every month, despite deep funding cuts. We need to sustain this life-saving aid while we help communities move from relief to recovery. #87MillionLives

@UNReliefChief

Trump tried to name airport, rail station after himself: US media

AFP | Washington



Travelers sit on the floor inside Penn Station waiting for their trains

US President Donald Trump offered to unfreeze federal infrastructure funding if the top Senate Democrat would help rename a major airport and train station after him, US media reported Thursday.

Trump, a real estate mogul who plastered his name on buildings around the world, has sought to leave his mark on the country in an unprecedented image and building campaign.

In December, Trump's hand-picked board of the Kennedy Center, an arts complex and memorial to late president John F. Kennedy, voted to rename itself the "Trump-Kennedy Center."

Meanwhile he has pushed for the construction of an "Independence Arch" similar to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and launched the construction of a new White House ballroom, tearing down the storied building's East Wing to make way.

But New York's Penn Station and Washington's Dulles International Airport are also in Trump's sights, CNN and NBC

Citing unnamed sources, the outlets reported Trump offered a quid-pro-quo for the held-up funding, meant for a New York infrastructure project, if New York Senator Chuck Schumer agreed to help get the train station and airport named after him.

Schumer rebuffed the offer, the broadcasters reported. CNN reported the offer was made last month.

New York and New Jersey are currently suing for the \$16 billion in blocked federal funds, meant to be used for a tunnel connecting them.

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



CELEBS

Emma Stone 'too afraid' of her 'own mental health' to launch own Instagram account

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Emma Stone is "too afraid" of her "own mental health" to launch an Instagram account.

The 37-year-old actress much prefers being a "lurker" and looking

at other people's content rather than creating a profile on the photo-sharing site in her name.

Asked if she would ever start a lifestyle website, she told Rolling Stone magazine: "One hundred percent no."

"That's why I don't even have Instagram. I'm too afraid of my own mental health to be engaged

in that way, and that's why I'm such a lurker and love following other people's stuff."

The Bugonia star is to feature in a brand-new commercial for Squarespace, in which the company helps her to acquire her own website domain name.

A 30-second version of Emma's

Squarespace ad will air between the first and second quarters of Super Bowl LX on Sunday.

Filming the commercial led to Emma wondering why she hadn't bought her own website name beforehand, and the star admitted it was a "lack of foresight" on her part.

She said: "I don't know what I never actually did that.

Squarespace kind of had to deal with my lack of foresight.

"So I'm very grateful they did or else the commercial really would not have worked.

"It would have been weird if you went to EmmaStone.com and it was ... I don't even know what might have been going on over there."

Emma Stone

Elton John accuses UK tabloids publisher of 'abhorrent' privacy breaches



Elton John
AFP | London

Pop icon Elton John yesterday accused the publisher of two UK tabloids of "abhorrent" privacy invasions "outside even the most basic standards of human decency" as he testified at London's High Court.

Giving evidence in the joint legal action against Associated Newspapers Ltd (ANL) -- the publisher of the Daily Mail and The Mail on Sunday -- John claimed the papers had unlawfully accessed his and his family's medical records.

Other complainants in the case include Prince Harry, King Charles III's younger son, and actor Liz Hurley.

"I have found The Mail's deliberate invasion into my medical health and medical details surrounding the birth of our son Zachary abhorrent and outside even the most basic standards of human decency," John wrote in a witness statement released as he began testifying by video link.

Wearing a green blazer and purple tie, the 78-year-old

musician who has a rocky relationship with British tabloids appeared furious while giving evidence.

He and his husband David Furnish -- who testified on Thursday -- accuse the UK publisher of using unlawful means to gather information used in 10 articles between 2000 and 2015.

ANL has strongly denied claims made against its journalism calling them "lurid" and "preposterous".

Hurley, a friend of the couple, and Prince Harry each took the stand in the first two weeks of the trial.

The seven claimants suing ANL also include actor Sadie Frost, and two other public figures.

The case "contains the most horrendous things in the world that you can ever suffer from a privacy point of view," John told the trial, which is in its third week and expected to last until March.

The "Rocket Man" singer alleged that all three of the family's landlines "were hacked, including the junction box at the end of the road".



Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Jennifer Garner once bit a portion of a stunt performer's ear off.

The 53-year-old actress has revealed that she accidentally injured a stunt performer while filming The Kingdom, the 2007 action thriller film that also featured Jamie Foxx and Chris Cooper.

The Hollywood star told reporters: "Pete Berg, who was the director, told him to try to kill me. We did not have a lot of choreography, and he told me to do anything I could to survive. He did, and I did, and I ended up scrambling onto his

Jennifer Garner

back. I bit his ear, and we have a picture of him missing a chunk of ear, because we were not kidding."

Jennifer likened her ear bite to boxer Mike Tyson biting a chunk out of Evander Holyfield's ear back in 1997.

The actress jokingly added: "Don't make me mad. I seem nice. I've warned you before."

Meanwhile, Jennifer previously revealed that she got stuck in an elevator for more than an hour at San Diego Comic-Con in 2024.

The actress confessed via social media that she spent more than an hour waiting to be rescued during the event.

Jennifer explained on Instagram: "Hey, guys, we're stuck on this elevator [and] I could

use a Wolverine; I could use a Deadpool. I could use someone [and] we're looking for stairs. OK, thanks for having us here. My first Comic Con!"

Jennifer attended the event for the first time after she starred in the superhero movie Deadpool and Wolverine.

And in one of her Instagram updates, Jennifer joked about her own misfortune as she waited to be rescued.

The actress - who was previously married to fellow film star Ben Affleck - said: "I'm schvitzing [and] I need to blot. 'Don't cut the blue wire' is what we're hearing.

"I think I heard on an episode of 'The Office' or 'Brooklyn Nine-Nine' or something that you're supposed to sit, so we're sitting."



Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Justin Bieber didn't tell Grammys bosses he planned to perform in his underpants

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Justin Bieber didn't tell Grammys bosses he planned to perform in his underpants.

The 31-year-old pop star was among the performers at the glitzy prizegiving in Los Angeles on Sunday night (01.02.26) and he stunned the audience at the Crypto.com Arena by walking out on stage wearing nothing but a pair of satin boxer shorts made by his fashion brand SKYLRK and a pair of socks.

Bieber's fashion choice also

surprised organisers because the singer didn't tell anyone about his plan. During an appearance on the Rolling Stone Music Now podcast, Grammys executive producer Ben Winston said:

"I don't think he decided what the outfit would be until he walked on stage."

"He's not even really going: 'This is what I'm going to do.' When we had got reached out to him about his creative, he was just like, I'm just going to get on stage and sing."

Winston went on to reveal the Baby star didn't need

much rehearsal time for the performance - only taking 15 minutes out of his allotted 90 minutes.

He explained: "It was brilliant. We are seven minutes into his hour-and-a-half rehearsal.

And he goes: 'How'd it look to you? You happy with it?'



Kristen Stewart is 'HAUNTED' by Princess Diana and any thought of late royal leaves actress in tears

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Kristen Stewart feels "haunted" by Princess Diana, and the mere thought of the late royal leaves her in tears "at any moment".

The 35-year-old actress and director portrayed the late Princess of Wales - who died in a car accident in Paris in 1997,

aged 36 - in 2021 psychological drama film Spencer, and now whenever Kristen thinks about Diana she becomes emotional.

Kristen also told how she cannot drive around London or Paris without thoughts of Diana invading her mind.

Speaking about being "haunted" by Diana, she told the Daily

"I can't drive round this city, and Paris for that matter, without thinking about her. All the love that poured out of this woman... I can cry about her at any moment."

The 5ft 5in American star thought Spencer director Pablo Larrañaga was "insane" for casting her as the British royal, and

he pleaded with the filmmaker to cast someone else - but he refused.

She added: "I told Pablo he was insane and he should probably hire someone else, but he refused to accept that."

"There were some massive distinctions between her and me.

"It was the statuesque thing

It was the eye colour - I have green eyes; she has very famously blue eyes that match her ring.

"So I was like, 'Should we make the engagement ring green, then?'

"[They] were pulling me under and Pablo was like, 'You really must detach from those things - this is about spirit.'

Classifieds

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HOME T&K REAL ESTATE W.L.L has a vacancy

India captain admits 'there will be nerves' at home T20 World Cup

Suryakumar admits pressure but promises entertainment

India face USA in World Cup opener today in Mumbai

AFP | New Delhi

India captain Suryakumar Yadav admitted yesterday "there will be nerves" when India open their T20 World Cup campaign in front of more than 30,000 fanatical home supporters in Mumbai, but vowed to give them "entertainment".

The co-hosts start their Group A campaign against the United States at a packed Wankhede stadium on Saturday night.

Suryakumar is only too aware that India, the top-ranked T20 team in the world, are overwhelming favourites to retain their title.

But he said his team will try to feed off the positive vibes from a billion-plus home supporters and not be crushed by the huge weight of expectation.

"When you're playing at home there is always an added pressure. I'm not running away from the fact," Suryakumar told reporters ahead of India's final training session yesterday.

"To be honest, there will be nerves, there will be pressure, but if you see the positive side of it, there'll be a lot of cheer around.

"There's so many people coming to watch in the stadiums,



India's captain Suryakumar Yadav (C) interacts with his teammates during training session

I've told my boys the same thing, 30,000-35,000 people coming and so many watching at home.

"Let's give them a good time. Let's give them entertainment."

India know that their opening opponents, the United States, caused the biggest upset of the 2024 tournament when they beat Pakistan in a super over, and Suryakumar said no team would be taken lightly.

"I don't see any weak teams in the competition. All 20 teams are very much capable of playing some good cricket," he said.

When you're playing at home there is always an added pressure. I'm not running away from the fact. To be honest, there will be nerves, there will be pressure, but if you see the positive side of it, there'll be a lot of cheer around

SURYAKUMAR YADAV

"In this format, one or two batters can make a difference. Or it takes one or two bowlers to have a good 24 balls on any given day.

"So we will have to play the same way as we've been playing against all the teams."

The captain said there were fitness doubts over fast bowler Harshit Rana, who was injured in a warm-up game on Wednesday.

Rana bowled just one over before leaving the field clutching his knee.

Teen Suryavanshi smashes 175 as India win Under-19 World Cup final

AFP | Harare

Fourteen-year-old prodigy Vaibhav Suryavanshi hammered a stunning 175 from just 80 balls as India thumped England by 100 runs in the Under-19 ODI World Cup final in Harare yesterday.

Suryavanshi, who has already made history by becoming the youngest player to post a century in the Indian Premier League, lashed 15 fours and 15 sixes in his innings which saw him score his last 151 runs from just 56 balls.

The left-handed opener was finally caught behind by England captain Thomas Rew off Manny Lumsden to leave India on 251-3 in the 26th over. They closed their 50 overs on 411-9.

England launched a spirited attempt at making the runs with opener Ben Dawkins making 66 and middle-order batter Caleb



Falconer striking a sublime 115 from 67 balls.

Falconer was last man out, superbly caught by Khilan Patel, with England all out for 311 in

40.2 overs and India winning the title for the sixth time.

"I had faith in my skills that I can contribute in big games and today it happened," said Surya-

Guardiola lauds Haaland as 'world's best striker' but won't confirm Liverpool start

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola insisted Erling Haaland is the "best striker in the world" despite refusing to confirm if the misfiring Manchester City star

will start Sunday's crucial clash with Liverpool.

Haaland has scored just twice in his last 12 appearances, and Guardiola elected to drop him to the bench for City's 3-1 win over Newcastle in the League Cup semi-final second leg on Wednesday.

He has suffered a significant loss of form after scoring 19

goals in 14 games in all competitions in a blistering start to the season that included becoming the fastest player to reach 100 Premier League goals.

City have subsequently struggled during Haaland's dip, falling six points behind Premier League leaders Arsen-

The Norwegian scored when City beat Liverpool 3-0 earlier this season, but Guardiola would not reveal if he will feature against Arne Slot's side this weekend.

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King's Cup last eight confirmed

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

HTM The King's Cup round-of-16 continued on Thursday as Al Ahli and Al Ahli stormed into the quarter-finals, completing the line-up for Bahrain's premier domestic knockout tournament.

At Shaikh Ali Bin Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa Stadium, Al Ahli put on a clinical display to see off Al Najma 2-0. Yazid Abdul-lah broke the deadlock in the 31st minute, slotting home from close range after a blocked corner rebound. Minutes into the second half, Diego Cardoso doubled the lead with a crisp finish from a perfectly weighted pass by Englishman Lyton Ndukwu. Despite further chances at both ends, Al Ahli's defence held firm, though their upcoming clash with holders Al Khaldiya promises a stern test.



A'ali squad celebrate their qualification

Meanwhile, at Khalifa Sports City Stadium, Al Ahli survived a tense penalty shootout against

Budaiya after a goalless 90 minutes. Rodrigo Varanda calmly converted the opening spot-kick, and Hamed Junior Toure scored

the decisive penalty, while goalkeeper Sayed Shubbar Alawi



Al Ahli applaud supporters after a tense win

saved Budaiya's final attempt to seal the win. Al Ahli now face First Division side Al Ettifaq, a fixture that will put their credentials to the test.

The quarter-final bracket is now complete, as Muharraq face

Al Shabab and Riffa take on Bahrain Club. With the illustrious competition nearing its climax, the mix of top-flight sides and one remaining First Division team ensures the final eight remain unpredictable.

Russian Players Dominate Junior ITF Last-16 in Bahrain



TDT | Manama

vincingly with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Switzerland's Ben Neiveller, while Sergei Bankov beat Lebanon's seventh seed Rami Saouli 6-2, 7-5 in another closely contested match.

In the girls' singles, Turkey's Asya Ay cruised past Kristianna Danko 6-0, 6-3 to reach the quarter-finals. Russia's Maria Kovaleva and Stefania Kadzova also progressed with solid wins, while Sofia Bizyanova completed a strong Russian showing by defeating compatriot Elena Titova 6-3, 6-3.

Top seed Javier Montes Jimenez of Spain continued his strong run, defeating Russia's Demyan Medvedev 6-3, 6-2 to reinforce his status among the title favourites. Russia's Andrey Li also advanced con-

Ahli book quarter-final place with second straight win

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Al Ahli secured their place in the quarter-finals of the 4th WAVA Men's Clubs Volleyball Championship yesterday with a straight-sets victory over Lebanon's CJS Batroun in Kuwait City. The Group B contest, held at the Kuwaiti Volleyball Federation Hall, ended 3-0 in Al Ahli's favour, with set scores of 25-19, 25-21, 25-21. This result lifts the Bahraini side to six points from two matches, while Batroun remain without a point after suffering back-to-back defeats.

The opening set was finely balanced at 18-18 before Al Ahli asserted control with solid blocking, with Sayed Mohammad Al Abbar finishing it with a composed spike. The second set followed a similar script, as Al Ahli's defence forced errors from Batroun, allowing Al Abbar to close it out again. In the third set, Al Ahli raced to a 14-6 lead, and despite a late fightback to 22-20, two double-touch calls sealed the match.

The win guarantees Al Ahli



Al Ahli players rallying together mid-match

a spot in the last eight, with hosts Kuwait SC scheduled for their final group match against

will decide the top position in Group B. Coached by Renato Castro of Brazil, Al Ahli are competing in the tournament for the third consecutive edition, having claimed bronze in last year's championship hosted in Bahrain.

Meanwhile, Bahrain's other representative, Dar Kulaib, made a winning start in Group C on Thursday, coming back from a set down to beat Oman's Al Seeb 3-1 (31-33, 25-15, 25-20, 25-16).

The team, coached by Ivan Joksimovic and featuring standout performers Enoch Mogeni, Mahmoud Abdulwahed, Ali Marhoon, and Ali Habib, dominated the last three sets after a closely contested opener. They return to action today at 4 PM against Kuwait's Burgan SC.

The championship features 11 clubs from across the region, with the top two from each group, plus the two best third-placed sides, advancing to the quarter-finals.

The tournament also serves as a qualifier for the 2026 Asian Volleyball Confederation Men's Champions League in Indonesia.

Hazlewood out of T20 World Cup in fresh blow to Australia

AFP | Sydney

Fast bowler Josh Hazlewood was yesterday ruled out of the T20 World Cup after failing to recover from hamstring and Achilles injuries in another setback for Australia.

The 35-year-old missed the entire Ashes series against England and has not played any cricket since November.

Earlier this week, Cricket Australia said he would miss the initial stages of the tournament with Sean Abbott called up as cover.

But yesterday they conceded Hazlewood had "run out of



Josh Hazlewood

time" to be fit for the event which begins in India and Sri Lanka on Saturday.

"We were hopeful Josh would be back to match fitness by the Super Eight stage," said selector Tony Dodemaide.

Top seeds set for finals at Asian U14 tennis event in Bahrain

TDT | Manama

The first week of the Asian Tennis Federation Development Championship for under-14 players concludes on Saturday with highly anticipated singles and doubles finals, hosted by the Bahrain Tennis Federation at the Bahrain Tennis Club.

In the boys' singles final, top seed Hamza Al Mansouri of Saudi Arabia will face second seed Hassan Gharyari of Iraq after both advanced with straight-sets victories in the semi-finals. Al Mansouri dominated Jordan's fourth seed Rayan Kawar, while Gharyari overcame Omar



Istinbuli of Jordan, sealing the opener in a tiebreak before pulling clear.

The girls' singles final will



also feature the top two seeds, with Turkmenistan's Nazli Hodaykulieva meeting Jordan's Aya Sofia Ghoukashaw.

Hodaykulieva eased past Lebanon's Maria El Hachach, while Ghoukashaw secured a composed win over Maryam Kamaraldine to book her place in the title match.

In doubles action, the boys' final will pit the Saudi pair of Al Mansouri and Elias Al Ghafli against Jordan's Istinbuli and Kawar, while the girls' doubles final will see Lebanon's El Hachach and Kamaraldine take on Turkmenistan's Hodaykulieva and Eshankulieva. The championship, featuring players from across West and Central Asia, wraps up its opening week with finals expected to showcase the region's leading young talent.