

Al Najma through to semis

Bahrain champions punch tickets to final four in 25th Asian Men's Club League Championship in Isfahan | **P16**

WORLD 10 Destruction of frontline dam forces Ukraine evacuations

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Benzema signs for Al-Ittihad: source 15 SPORTS

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Eats and Treats



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Warning as fake websites sell concerts tickets
TDT | Manama

The Anti-Cyber Crimes Directorate of the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security has warned of fake websites on social media selling tickets for concerts to get bank details and money from their victims.

Citizens and residents were urged not to respond to these websites and use official channels for e-purchases.

Iran's embassy reopens in Riyadh
Riyadh

Iran's embassy in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh has reopened.

Both countries agreed to end a diplomatic rift under a China-mediated deal in March.

"We consider today an important day in the relations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alireza Bigdeli told a flag-raising ceremony.

US sanctions
Washington

The US Treasury Department yesterday sanctioned a network of individuals and companies in Iran, China and Hong Kong for their support to Iran's ballistic missile program.

Seven individuals and six entities were designated for their illicit work, and the Treasury Department also sanctioned Iran's defense attaché in Beijing for coordinating military-related procurements from China for Iranian end-users.

Bahrain vows to boost Saudi ties

HRH Prince Salman: Let's strengthen ongoing investments cooperation in tourism projects

● HM King and King Salman keen to bolster bilateral relations

● Part of efforts to develop priority economic sectors of both Kingdoms

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, highlighted the importance of continuing to strengthen cooperation between the Kingdom of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

HRH Prince Salman said it is aimed at achieving the joint aspirations of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

His Royal Highness was speaking as he met yesterday with the Minister of Tourism



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister meets with the Saudi Tourism Minister

of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Fund for Development, HE Ahmed bin Aqeel Al Khateeb, at Gudaibiya Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister emphasised that a shared value of unity underpins the longstanding relation-

ship and collective aspirations of both countries.

He commended HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, for his continued efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the two Kingdoms, which are

bolstered by the Saudi-Bahraini Coordination Council framework.

HRH Prince Salman noted that cooperation efforts support the development of priority economic sectors and that the two Kingdoms' ongoing investments in tourism projects are designed to achieve common goals.


"A shared value of unity underpins the longstanding relationship and collective aspirations of both countries."
 - HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA, THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRIME MINISTER

Al Khateeb expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness for his commitment to fostering bilateral relations and wished Bahrain further progress and prosperity.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, HE Hamad bin Faisal Al Malki, and the Minister of Tourism, HE Fatima bint Jaffer Al Sairafi, also attended the meeting.

Fiscal reform on track

State budget to sustain robust economic growth target

TDT | Manama

The government has concluded its state budget for the period 2023-2024, putting fiscal responsibility and economic growth at the heart of its medium-term plans.

Set against the backdrop of strong economic growth of 4.9

per cent in 2022, and a reduction in the overall fiscal deficit of 47 per cent, the budget sets out a range of new growth and non-oil revenue raising measures to drive sustainable development in the Kingdom, ensure public finances remain on a stable footing, and enhance the quality of life for Bahraini citizens to

ensure prosperity is accessible to all. New budget measures include over 50 new fully funded infrastructure projects worth over BD1.5 billion over the next two years, increases to living allowance for public sector workers and pensioners, as well as spending efficiency initiatives

as part of the government's multi-year Fiscal Balance Program.

The government's fiscal reform targets as part of the Fiscal Balance Program remain on track, with budget forecasts assuming a conservative estimate of \$60 per barrel.

Together with past efforts to consolidate government spend-

ing, the reforms announced in this budget will lead to a budget deficit of less than 1 per cent of GDP in 2024.

The 2023-2024 state budget demonstrates a firm commitment to building a sustainable and inclusive future for Bahrain that unlocks the nation's full potential.

Focus on promoting peaceful co-existence

Washington

Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa attended a ceremony hosted by US-based Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E), marking the 40th anniversary of its establishment.

Gen. Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla was honoured and awarded by the officials of the organisation.

The minister delivered a speech, highlighting the strong partnership between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the US, and commending joint efforts to stave off threats and overcome challenges.

He hailed the successful launch of the curriculum for peaceful coexistence and combating extremism, describing the blueprint as key step in concerted collective efforts to confront extremism, which is a global challenge.

Bahrain Ambassador in Washington and first member of the board of directors of the organisation from outside the US, Shaikh Abdulla bin Rashid Al Khalifa, was also present.

A curriculum for peaceful coexistence and combating extremism was launched within the framework of the modernisation process of the program to combat violence and addiction "Together" which is being implemented by the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The training curriculum has been translated into Arabic, in line with Arab customs and traditions, in partnership with the American organisation D.A.R.E.

Gen. Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla stressed the ministry's efforts to promote basic values to combat intolerance and extremism, highlighting the national plan to promote national belonging and consolidate the values of citizenship (Bahrainouna).

Education is the 'core pillar of development'

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, emphasised the Kingdom of Bahrain's commitment to education as a core pillar of development, which shapes future generations of leaders.

HRH Prince Salman noted that investing in Bahraini nationals remains at the core of the Kingdom's development strategy to meet current and future requirements of the labour market.

He highlighted the importance of modern teaching methods to further strengthen the Kingdom's comprehensive development, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

His Royal Highness was speaking as he met yesterday with the Chief Executive Officer of the Bahrain Polytechnic, Dr Ciaran O Cathain, at Gudaibiya Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister was briefed on Bahrain Polytechnic's strategy, which aims to supply the labour market with skilled graduates



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister meets with the Bahrain Polytechnic CEO

Investing in Bahraini nationals remains at the core of the Kingdom's development strategy to meet current and future requirements of the labour market."

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA, THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRIME MINISTER

according to the highest educational standards and practices.

He highlighted Bahrain Polytechnic's efforts in offering

comprehensive educational programmes that balance practical training and academic knowledge to meet Bahrain's labour market requirements.

His Royal Highness commended the efforts of the President and members of the Board of Trustees of Bahrain Polytechnic, and its administrative and academic bodies in achieving its goals.

The Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture and the Chairman of Bahrain Polytechnic's Board of Trustees, HE Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, and Dr O Cathain thanked His Royal Highness for his continuous support of educational institutions and for strengthening their role in the Kingdom's

development.

They further highlighted the commitment to implement Bahrain Polytechnic's strategy to benefit the students and keep up to date with modern education methods.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture and the Chairman of Bahrain Polytechnic's Board of Trustees, HE Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, and the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, His Excellency Hamad bin Faisal Al Malki, also attended the meeting.

5G download speeds up in Bahrain



● Peaks to 3.2 Gbps for faster connection

TDT | Manama

The 5G download speeds in Bahrain reached a peak of 3.2 Gbps, enabling consumers to connect faster, according to a research conducted by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA).

Furthermore, 4G network average download speeds have more than doubled since 2020, going up from 85 Mbps in 2020 to 266 Mbps in 2022.

The TRA released its 2022 report on the Quality of Service (QoS) of mobile networks in the Kingdom.

This comprehensive audit aimed to provide an accurate assessment of Bahrain's mobile network performance and user experience based on three main areas: mobile coverage, quality of service, and billing.

Kingdom keen to develop tourism for economic growth

TDT | Manama

Finance and National Economy Minister Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa has emphasised the keenness Bahrain attaches to the development of tourism, and various promising sectors, in the interest of promoting sustainable economic growth.

Shaikh Salman made the statement as he received yesterday the Saudi Minister of Tourism and Chairman of board of directors for the Saudi Fund for Development, Ahmed Al Khateeb.

Tourism Minister Fatima bint Jaafar Al Sairafi and Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa,



Shaikh Salman with the Saudi Tourism Minister

CEO of Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company (Mumtalakat), were present.

The Finance Minister affirmed the depth of historical relations between the two king-

doms, and the solid foundations on which they are based for integration and joint work in various

fields.

He noted that these relations are supported by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

He stressed the keenness of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to enhance cooperation and boost joint work that bring prosperity and development for the benefit of the two countries and peoples.

Bahrain-Philippines ties



Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, Nawaf bin Mohammed Al Ma'awda, received in his office Ambassador of the Philippines to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Anne Jalando-on Louis. He commended friendly relations between both countries and their steady development in all domains. They discussed issues of mutual concern and reviewed joint cooperation in the judicial field.

Bahrain to boost Turkey ties and cooperation

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is keen to continue strengthening its cooperation with Turkey.

This was affirmed by the His Highness the Deputy Prime Minister, Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, in an interview with the Anadolu News Agency during his visit to Ankara.

With Turkey entering a new historical phase, Bahrain is looking forward to boosting trade and tourism exchange between the two countries, and encouraging the private sector to explore available investment opportunities, and strengthen partnership in the infrastructure sector.

HH Shaikh Khalid was delegated by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to attend the inauguration ceremony of re-elected Turk-



Deputy Prime Minister

ish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday in Ankara.

Diplomatic relations between Bahrain and Turkey go back to some 50 years, since 1973.

This solid and strong relationship is based on the values of mutual respect and understanding.

Over 17 official visits have



Bahrain is looking forward to boosting trade and tourism exchange with Turkey.

been made, and several agreements and memoranda of understanding have been signed between the two countries in various fields. To date, 38 agreements and memorandum of understandings have been signed in different fields, including youth, education, military, and industry.

The two countries enjoy a

prospering economic relationship with the volume of bilateral trade amounting to almost \$883 million in 2022, up by 66% from the same period the year before.

"The Kingdom is confident that the two countries will continue to foster these bilateral relations and advance them towards broader horizons of cooperation and partnership," HH the Deputy Prime Minister said.

"As the chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Development Projects and Infrastructure, I also look forward to focusing on cooperation in the infrastructure sector, as well as the exchange of knowledge and experience in this area. Moreover, I would like to express my admiration for the urban expansion and advanced infrastructure that Turkey is currently experiencing."

Landmark deal signed

Bahrain and Saudi Arabia forge unprecedented tourism alliance to present mesmerising joint destination

● Tourism MoU sealed

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have officially inked a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) that seeks to position both nations as a singular regional and global tourism destination.

This landmark agreement not only signifies a pivotal milestone in their bilateral relations but also sets the stage for an exponential surge in their respective tourism sectors.

It is in line with the wise visions of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain, and His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, with the implementation of the sound directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia and Prime Minister.

The MoU was signed by Tourism Minister, H.E. Fatima bint Jaafar Al Sairafi and H.E. Minister of Tourism Ahmed Al Khateeb of Saudi Arabia.

The signing took place in the presence of Dr. Nasser Qaedi, CEO of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority and H.E. Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities and representatives from both ministries of the two kingdoms. The official ceremony was held in Manama.

This ambitious collaboration aims to strengthen the relations between the two kingdoms. It



Tourism Minister Fatima bint Jaafar Al Sairafi and Saudi counterpart Ahmed Al Khateeb sign the Memorandum of Understanding



reflects their sincere and determined efforts to enhance cooperation in the field of tourism.

The memorandum includes multiple provisions that expand the scope of tourism cooperation between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, fostering greater collaboration in various areas of mutual interest.

The Memorandum of Understanding establishes a framework for combining efforts to market and promote tourism activities and programs in both kingdoms.

It involves coordinating joint events to attract more tourists, fostering growth in specialised tourism sectors, and collaborating with tourism agencies and regional/international tour operators to create shared tourist destinations.

Furthermore, the MoU aims to enhance collaboration in various areas of the tourism industry,

striving to achieve sustainable tourism development in both nations.

This involves exchanging information and experiences related to tourism legislation, data and statistics, licensing, operation and management of tourism facilities, and developing human resources in the tourism sector.

The MoU encompassed various aspects to enhance tourism collaboration between the two kingdoms.

These included promoting visits by experts and representatives from the tourism media in both nations, enhancing tourist destinations, providing support for SMEs tourism projects, and participating in tourism exhibitions and conferences held in both kingdoms.

These efforts aim to foster tourism development and establish a shared tourism vision that respects the traditions and

social values of both Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the two parties agreed, through this MoU, to harmonise their stances on tourism matters in regional and international platforms, ensuring that these positions align with their traditions and social values, thereby strengthening the bond between the two brotherly kingdoms.

During the signing held at the Bahrain National Museum by the Ministry of Tourism,

Al Sairafi warmly welcomed her Saudi counterpart to Bahrain.

She commended his genuine efforts in promoting collaboration in the tourism sector between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

Her Excellency said: "Today's achievements are a source of great pride, marking the culmination of extensive work, numerous discussions, and

meetings with His Excellency Minister Al Khateeb. These interactions took place during our active participation in various regional and international tourism conferences and exhibitions. We have diligently ensured that the cooperative frameworks, as outlined in the memorandum of understanding, are effectively implemented to achieve our shared goals."

Minister Al Sairafi emphasised that significant progress has been made towards expanding horizons through collaborative work teams consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, BTEA, and the Saudi Ministry of Tourism.

A comprehensive timetable will be established for implementation, goal setting, performance measurement, and evaluation based on the practical execution of the tasks.

She revealed that the execu-

tion of the MoU sets an exemplary precedent for consolidating efforts among the two nations in order to promote holistic development.

The cooperative endeavours in the tourism industry are envisioned to serve as a milestone in unifying energies and accelerating growth, leading to mutual benefits for all parties involved.

Minister Al Sairafi further highlighted the anticipated immense advantages that the tourism sectors in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia will derive from the activation of the memorandum of understanding.

She called upon the authorities responsible for private tourism sector establishments and investors in tourism and hospitality to actively participate in this collaborative tourism initiative, extend support, and reap the rewards it offers.

Court acquits cold store worker of molesting child

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court confirmed that the statements of a child victim are viewed by the law with great caution, as they are based on inference, and according to the Code of Criminal Procedure, constitute mere allegation unless supported by evidence.

This came in the context of acquitting a cold store worker of molesting a child, who stated in his account that the act did not exceed one second.

The court indicated that the social worker's report on the incident was contradictory and did not explain its conclusion in support of the charge.

The defendant's lawyer said that his client denied the incident; furthermore, the victim's own statement claims that the act took place within a second,

with no evidence that the defendant had committed the crime attributed to him.

He also argued that indecent assault is inapplicable to this case, since it took place within such a short span of time, which indicates that the nature of contact had been accidental.

The defendant's lawyer pointed out that all witnesses denied the de-

fendant's guilt, which is proof that the defendant is innocent of this charge, which had been maliciously fabricated by the reporting individual.

For its part, the court indicated that the accusation was void of evidence.

It also asserted that the social worker's report contradicted the victim's statement and failed to provide a sound explanation for its conclusion. Thereby, the court cleared the defendant of the charge.



Six unlicensed manpower agencies face legal action

TDT | Manama

Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) has announced that six manpower agencies were referred for legal action after failing to acquire the necessary licenses.

This came following LMRA's joint inspection campaign conducted in the Capital Governorate in coordination with the Ministry of Interior (MOI), represented by the General Directorate for Criminal Detection and Forensic Evidence and the Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs.

LMRA stressed that there is no tolerance for unapproved activity of manpower agencies that are not in compliance with the provisions of the Labour Market Laws, calling all enterprises and individuals to comply with the legal procedures set and to acquire a "Labour Supply Agency" license from the LMRA to avoid legal accountability.

Civil Court obligates company to pay BD17,000 to lawyer

TDT | Manama

The High Civil Court obligated a contracting company to pay BD17,000 in dues to a lawyer for nearly two years of representation in various cases.

The company pleaded that the lawyer's right was forfeited due to the statute of limitation.

However, the court confirmed that while the lawyer's right to request an estimate of fees is null within the passage of a year since the completion of work, in this case, the lawyer's request pertained to a contractual obligation. Therefore, the statute of limitation does not apply.

The plaintiff had filed a lawsuit demanding that the contracting company be obligated to pay BD17,000, along with legal interest, attorney's fees and expenses. She indicated that according to a signed agreement in her capacity as the owner of a law firm, the defendant entrusted her to follow up on cases in exchange for BD9,000 annually.

The amount was raised to



BD10,500. However, the defendant refused to pay her dues for a period of nearly two years, claiming the forfeit of the plaintiff's right due to the statute of limitation.

According to the provisions of Article (37) of the Law of Legal Practice, the right of the lawyer to request an estimated fee is forfeited in accordance with the provisions of Article (33) of this law after the lapse of one year from the date of termination of the representational work.

This article furthermore relates to the estimation of fees; however, the plaintiff's request is for the defendant to fulfil a contractual obligation. There-

fore, there is no statute of limitation on her right, and the court rejected the defendant's claim.

Furthermore, the Law of Evidence in Civil and Commercial Matters stipulates that the creditor must prove the validity of obligation while the debtor must prove his exemption thereof.

The defendant did not deny the legitimacy of the signature, seal, or fingerprint authenticating the contract agreement.

In accordance with the Court of Cassation, a document derives its binding power from its signature, and if the signature is valid, the enclosed content is legally binding.

Social media influencers in Bahrain make 'less money'

Ashen Tharaka
TDT | Manama

The social media influencers' income issue was revealed at the economic council, organised by the Bahrain Businesswomen's council, on June 4 at its site in the Mahooz area.

It was held under the title "The size of the market for influencers on social media and its impact on the economy".

The council was attended by a group of influencers on social media, a representative from the Labour Fund, Tamkeen, and a number of businesswomen and businessmen.

The President of the Businesswomen's Society, Ahlam Janahi, said: "The economic council is one of the most important events that we have been organising in the Businesswomen's society for years, and we strive to make it continuous to always keep up with the economic developments in the Kingdom."

Janahi explained that the society was keen to invite these influencers and Tamkeen and representatives of the private sector to display all means of cooperation between them,



Bahrain Businesswomen's economic council

present examples of their work, and how their activity can be utilised. Additionally, Tamkeen provides training courses for influencers and displays other means of support.

The First Deputy of the Businesswomen's society, Shaikha Aisha bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, welcomed everyone, emphasising the importance of holding this economic council every month and presenting a topic that concerns the economic sector in the presence of officials and stakeholders in this important sector.

During her speech, she listed the names of the influencers who participated in the council, including Ahmed Al Maghribi, Amina Boussif, Reem Ali, Zeinab Akbar, Sawsan Tahir, Malak



The economic council is one of the most important events that we have been organising in the Businesswomen's society for years, and we strive to make it continuous to always keep up with the economic developments in the Kingdom.

AHLAM JANAH, BUSINESSWOMEN'S SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Noor Maghmool, Farah Abdul Kareem, and Iman Al-Ghawas.

The President of the Media Club for Social Media, Ali Sabkar, stated that influencers and bloggers are classified according to their specialties, whether as advertisers, opinion leaders, influencers, content creators, media personnel, or presenters,

including both male and female. Sabkar pointed out that the monthly income of these influencers in Bahrain is low compared to Gulf countries because of the fewer number of followers.

For example, the monthly income for an influencer in Bahrain ranges from BD500 to BD10,000, with no upper limit.

In Kuwait, the income is much higher due to the difference in society and the increase in the number of social media users, reaching millions in some countries.

The Head of the Evaluation Department at Tamkeen, Noha Suleiman, said, "We are honoured today to be present at this event and present the support provided by the Labour Fund to this category of influencers on social media, realising the impact of this sector on the national economy."

She emphasised the importance of having Tamkeen as an assistant factor in developing the work of those working in this field and providing programs to develop their skills.

Sustainable housing success highlighted at UN Summit Nairobi

Housing and Urban Planning Minister Amna bint Ahmed Al Romaihi stressed Bahrain's strides in achieving sustainability in the housing sector.

She highlighted the role of the ministry in spearheading programs in partnership with the private sector, citing the housing finance program, the government land rights development program, which aim to guarantee citizens immediate access to housing service without waiting periods.

Addressing the 2nd session of the UN-Habitat, being held on June 5-9 in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, Al Romaihi noted that the Government gives full priority to providing decent housing for citizens through innovative and optimal programmes and initiatives.

"These initiatives are based on extensive studies that take into account the challenges facing the housing sector", she said, citing mainly demographic growth, rising number of applications and the need to optimize the budget allocated to the social housing sector.

Feeding animals in public places raises 'serious concerns'

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

In a residential area like Hooraa or Gudaibiya, feeding birds and other animals is a serious concern that has been brought up by a local.

Nithin claims that people purchase food from cold stores and discard it next to trash or on the streets for stray animals to consume, but this results in unpleasant odours.

"Throwing food items that are damp and smelly draws a lot of rodents and pests that carry a lot of diseases," Nithin said.

"Not only is it unsanitary to live with stray animals, but they also disrupt our sleep by making noises late at night."

He further said, "We feel that complaining about this situation would hurt the feelings of animal lovers, so we are unable to do so. However, we would like to ask that the streets be kept clean and hy-

gienic."

Fathiya Al Bastaki, a well-known animal lover in Bahrain and the founder of Bahrain Strays, told The Daily Tribune: "Individuals can feed stray animals and birds, but they shouldn't be dumped in busy streets or in neighbourhoods. They can feed the animals away from populated areas, perhaps close to an industrial region."

Muharraq Municipality launched a campaign to punish people who feed animals in the streets and public spaces with fines of BD300.

This action was taken after receiving complaints from locals that feeding birds and animals attracts pests and vermin.

Officials have pointed out that leftover food and waste of birds and animals on the sidewalks of roads, streets and vacant lands can pollute the environment, emit unpleasant odours and distort the general view.

'Early intervention' for autism

Julia Cassano
TDT | Manama

Although talked about heavily, autism may be one of the most misconceived stereotypes that are talked about.

The current estimation worldwide is that 1 per cent of any population, both adults and children, has a diagnosis of autism.

To get a better understanding of autism, The Daily Tribune went down to the Alia Center for Early Intervention in A'ali, which promotes lifelong access and opportunity for all individuals with behavioral and communication difficulties.

When touring the center, it was revealed that children and adults have access to gardening classes, basic-skill classes, printing workshops, laundry classes, cooking classes, gyms, and much more.

Educators at the center relayed that teaching individuals with autism basic life skills helps them build an independ-



Art room



Cooking



Workshop

ent future.

Giving children the opportunity to take matters into their own hands, the printing workshop allows individuals at the center to work with big corporations like McDonald's by designing postcards for the company. Showing that people with autism can be a part of the community and contribute to society.

Also exceeding expectations, the center provides the ASDAN certificate, a UK qualification, which allows young people with autism to achieve meaningful learning outcomes, which elevates them to go on to further

education and venture out into the job market.

In an interview with Dr. Rania Ali Alkhalifa, President of the Bahrain Society for Children with Behavioral and Communication Difficulties, she highlighted that early intervention and parent training are the key factors to help those with autism develop ably.

Haidy Wadie Halim, deputy director at the Alia Center, also highlighted the importance of parents' awareness of their child's behaviour. "Parents should be educated on the early warning signs of autism, as early

intervention can most definitely shape the child's future."

The main signs to look out for are communication delay, no eye contact, social withdrawal, and behavioral problems that can appear as early as 12 months.

Both Dr. Rania and Haidy said that if parents do not take necessary action when symptoms arise, this can delay the child's development tremendously.

But, if the child is taken to a specialist at an early age, Dr. Rania, said that there have been cases where individuals with autism are able to live fully independent lives.

Highway lane set for closure

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Works has announced that the resurfacing works on Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway between Wali Al Ahd Flyover and Roundabout 6 Un-

derpass necessitate closure of the slow lane for southbound traffic to Zallaq and two lanes will be provided for traffic movement.

The closure will be effective from tomorrow at 11pm for five days.

Health facilities inspection



The Protection and Safety Directorate of the General Directorate of Civil Defence has inspected several sites of radiation materials at health facilities. The visits inspect radiation safety requirements and procedures, alarm systems and firefighting systems

Cleanup campaign



The General Directorate of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing has held a cleanup campaign at Al Malikya Beach for beneficiaries of the open prisons programme. The campaign was held in coordination with the Supreme Council for Environment to mark World Environment Day. It aimed to reintegrate the beneficiaries into society and promote nationalism values.

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (Expressed in thousands of Bahraini Dinars unless otherwise stated)

	At 31 March 2023 (Reviewed)	At 31 December 2022 (Audited)
ASSETS		
Cash and balances with banks and central banks	114,737	122,377
Commodity and other placements with banks, financial and other institutions	16,358	18,440
Murabaha and other financings	602,054	578,510
Musharaka financing	441,237	573,470
Investment securities	692,111	815,341
Investment in associates	226	3,204
Assets acquired for leasing	304	304
Other assets	92,351	67,527
Investment in real estate	4,224	4,792
Development properties	57,280	57,280
Fixed assets	52,220	59,745
Intangible assets	6,983	8,568
Total assets	2,080,085	2,309,558
LIABILITIES, EQUITY OF UNRESTRICTED INVESTMENT ACCOUNTHOLDERS AND TOTAL EQUITY		
LIABILITIES		
Customers' current accounts	567,506	658,614
Due to banks, financial and other institutions	500,819	419,454
Due to investors	4,543	13,954
Other liabilities	151,176	144,781
Total liabilities	1,224,044	1,236,803
Equity of unrestricted investment accountholders	785,089	993,418
Total liabilities and equity of unrestricted investment accountholders	2,009,133	2,230,221
OWNERS' EQUITY		
Share capital	100,000	100,000
Reserves	(53,699)	(53,699)
Accumulated losses	(11,984)	(10,182)
Total owners' equity	34,317	36,119
Non-controlling interest	36,635	43,218
Total equity	70,952	79,337
Total liabilities, equity of unrestricted investment accountholders and total equity	2,080,085	2,309,558

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN OWNERS' EQUITY FOR THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 (Expressed in thousands of Bahraini Dinars unless otherwise stated)

	Share capital	Reserves	Accumulated losses	Total owners' equity	Non-controlling interest	Total equity
At 1 January 2023	100,000	(53,699)	(10,182)	36,119	43,218	79,337
(Loss)/Profit for the period	-	-	(1,802)	(1,802)	1,573	(229)
Movement from dividend distribution by subsidiaries	-	-	-	-	(743)	(743)
Movement in fair value of sukuk and investment securities	-	-	-	-	(467)	(467)
Movement in fair value of land and building	-	-	-	-	(113)	(113)
Movement in fair value of investment in real estate	-	-	-	-	(73)	(73)
Foreign currency translation adjustments	-	-	-	-	(6,760)	(6,760)
At 31 March 2023 (Reviewed)	100,000	(53,699)	(11,984)	34,317	36,635	70,952

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN OWNERS' EQUITY FOR THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2022 (Expressed in thousands of Bahraini Dinars unless otherwise stated)

	Share capital	Reserves	Accumulated losses	Total owners' equity	Non-controlling interest	Total equity
At 1 January 2022	100,000	(40,120)	(16,150)	43,730	53,202	96,932
Profit for the period	-	-	196	196	1,306	1,502
Movement from dividend distribution by subsidiaries	-	-	-	-	(1,072)	(1,072)
Movement in fair value of sukuk and investment securities	-	120	-	120	61	181
Movement in hedging reserve	-	770	-	770	-	770
Movement in fair value of investment in real estate	-	185	-	185	93	278
Foreign currency translation adjustments	-	(3,208)	-	(3,208)	(1,512)	(4,720)
At 31 March 2022 (Reviewed)	100,000	(42,253)	(15,954)	41,793	52,078	93,871

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED INCOME STATEMENT (Expressed in thousands of Bahraini Dinars unless otherwise stated)

	Three months ended	
	31 March 2023 (Reviewed)	31 March 2022 (Reviewed)
INCOME		
Income from financing contracts	28,027	22,596
Income from investments	26,510	17,825
Other income	452	5,554
Total income	54,989	45,975
Less: profit to banks, financial and other institutions - net	(1,506)	(13,781)
Return on equity of investment accountholders before Group's share as a mudarib	(53,888)	(27,225)
Group's share as a mudarib	21,245	16,842
Share of profit of unrestricted investment accountholders	(32,643)	(10,383)
Net income	20,840	21,811
EXPENSES		
General and administrative expenses	(12,482)	(13,620)
Depreciation and amortization	(1,581)	(2,204)
Total expenses	(14,063)	(15,824)
Profit before provision for impairment and overseas taxation	6,777	5,987
Provision for impairment - net	(3,195)	(480)
Profit before overseas taxation	3,582	5,507
Tax expense	(3,811)	(3,471)
(LOSS)/PROFIT FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS	(229)	2,036
Net results from discontinued operations	-	(534)
(LOSS)/PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD	(229)	1,502
Attributable to:		
Equity holders of the Bank	(1,802)	196
Non-controlling interests	1,573	1,306
	(229)	1,502

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS (Expressed in thousands of Bahraini Dinars unless otherwise stated)

	Three months ended	
	31 March 2023 (Reviewed)	31 March 2022 (Reviewed)
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Profit before taxes from:		
Continuing operations	3,582	5,507
Discontinued operations	-	(534)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation and amortization	1,581	2,204
Provision for impairment - net	3,195	480
Income from sukuk and investment securities	(26,510)	(17,825)
Finance cost on net ijarah liability	522	736
Loss on sale of fixed assets	(12)	(53)
Operating loss before changes in operating assets and liabilities	(17,642)	(9,485)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Balances with banks maturing after 90 days including central banks balances relating to minimum reserve requirement	(5,578)	(51,736)
Murabaha and other financings	(66,389)	35,758
Musharaka financing	17,047	(35,714)
Other assets	(30,176)	(10,239)
Customers' current accounts	11,130	82,157
Due to banks, financial and other institutions	115,718	104,537
Due to investors	(7,206)	(64,285)
Other liabilities	30,191	10,082
(Decrease)/Increase in equity of unrestricted investment accountholders	(26,313)	56,550
Taxes paid	(7,036)	(3,321)
Net cash generated from operating activities	13,746	114,304
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Net changes in:		
Assets acquired for leasing	-	1,533
Sukuk and investment securities	(13,347)	(56,726)
Fixed assets	(5,337)	(368)
Net cash used in investing activities	(18,684)	(55,561)
FINANCING ACTIVITY		
Repayment of net ijarah liability	(782)	(1,328)
Net cash used in financing activity	(782)	(1,328)
Foreign currency translation adjustments	(7,277)	(5,904)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(12,997)	51,511
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	125,656	225,530
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	112,659	277,041

The above Condensed Consolidated Statement of Financial Position, Condensed Consolidated Income Statement, Condensed Consolidated Statement of Changes in Owners' Equity and Condensed Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows have been extracted from the Condensed Consolidated Interim Financial Information of Ithmaar Bank B.S.C.(c) for the three-month period ended 31 March 2023, which were approved for issue by the Board of Directors and reviewed by KPMG Fakhro, Kingdom of Bahrain, who expressed an unqualified review conclusion on 6 June 2023.

HRH Prince Amr Mohamed Al Faisal
Chairman

Elham Hasan
Director

Abdulla Taleb
CEO

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Licensed as an Islamic retail bank by the Central Bank of Bahrain

بنك الإثمار
Ithmaar Bank

Ithmaar Holding posts Q1 results; shareholders agree to boost capital

TDT | Manama

Ithmaar Holding, a Bahrain-based holding company, yesterday announced its first quarter 2023 results, reporting a net loss attributable to equity holders of US\$3.01 million compared to the net profit of US\$1.14 m in the year-earlier quarter.

Earnings Per Share (EPS) were negative US Cents 0.10, compared to US Cents 0.04 for the same period in 2022. Operating income was US\$53.66 m, a 10% decrease compared to the US\$59.59 m reported for the same period in 2022.

The announcement, by Ithmaar Holding Chairman Prince Amr Al Faisal, follows the review and approval of the Board of Directors of the Company's consolidated interim financial results.

Total net profit was US\$2.05 m, a decrease of 68% from net profit of US\$6.47 m in the pri-

Ithmaar Bank reports Q1 2023 results

TDT | Manama

Ithmaar Bank a Bahrain-based Islamic retail bank, yesterday reported a first quarter net loss attributable to equity holders of BD1.80 million compared to net profit of BD0.196 m in the year-ago quarter.

Total net loss was BD0.23 m compared to the BD1.502 m net profit reported for the same period in 2022. This is mainly due to foreign exchange impact relating to strategic investments

The announcement, by Ithmaar Bank Chairman Prince Amr Al Faisal, follows the review and approval of the Board

of Directors of the Bank's consolidated financial results. The bank attributed the decrease mainly to foreign exchange impact relating to the Group's strategic investments



Prince Amr Al Faisal

of Directors of the Bank's consolidated financial results.

At an Extraordinary General Meeting on Sunday, Ithmaar Holding shareholders approved plans to improve the capital of the Company. The initiative,

proposed by the Board of Directors, includes injection of Tier 1 Capital of up-to \$200 million which will be subject to legal and regulator's approval.

"On behalf of the Ithmaar Bank Board of Directors, I would like to announce that despite the challenging global economic situation, the Bank continues its efforts to grow its core Islamic banking business, which focuses on Corporate Banking and on further enhancing the value of its strategic investments," said Prince Amr.

Total assets stood at BD2.08 billion as at 31 March 2023, 10% lower than BD2.31 bn as at 31 December 2022. This is mainly due to foreign exchange impact during the period resulting from the Bank's strategic investment.

BisB opens summer campaign for VISA credit cardholders

Travel packages to London and cash prizes worth over BD 80,000

● The Bank will reward 25 customers every month

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB) yesterday announced the launch of its summer campaign for VISA Credit Cards holders. The campaign, which began in June will run until the end of August, offers prizes including a family travel trip for four to London and cash prizes worth more than BD 80,000.

Both existing and new customers who use their VISA Credit Cards to make purchases in either local or foreign currency will qualify for the monthly prize draws. Each customer will have one chance to qualify for the draws with every BD 50 they spend in local currency, while customers will receive five chances to qualify for the draws when paying the same amount in a foreign currency. This applies to all types of BisB's VISA Credit Cards, including VISA Infinite, Signature, Platinum, and Gold Cards.

Over the summer, the Bank



Fatema AlAlawi

will reward 25 customers every month, while one lucky winner will win an all-expenses-paid trip for four family members to London, inclusive of the travel tickets, accommodation for five nights, a Disney-themed experience, and a sum of BD 1,000. Another winner will also win a similar family trip in addition to a sum of BD 750. Furthermore, three winners will receive BD 750 each, five winners will receive BD 500 each, and fifteen customers will win BD 300 each.

Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Retail Banking Officer at BisB, said; "Moving forward, we will be introducing similar initiatives and adopting further rewards schemes in order to enrich our customers' banking journey."

World Bank lifts Russia growth forecast on resilient energy exports

Washington

The World Bank has significantly improved its outlook for the Russian economy this year due to stronger-than-expected revenues from energy

exports to countries including India and China.

The Russian economy is now forecast to contract only slightly in 2023, the bank said in a semi-annual report on the global economy published Tuesday,

marking a sharp change from its previous prediction of a more pronounced economic contraction.

But overall, Russian oil export volumes "have not changed materially," with Russia successful-

ly offsetting this lost revenue by ramping up exports to other countries including India and China, the World Bank said.

Russia's economy is now expected to contract by just 0.2 percentage points this year.

The all-new 2023 Grand Wagoneer raises the bar in offroad capability, technology and luxury

● The All-New 2023 Grand Wagoneer by Jeep is the most luxurious and technologically advanced SUV in the brand's history

● Debut of the Hurricane I6 Twin Turbo with output of 493 hp / 670 NM of torque performance

● The Grand Wagoneer will be available at Behbehani Brothers showrooms starting 6th June 2023

TDT | Manama

Yesterday marked the official arrival of the All-New 2023 Grand Wagoneer in Bahrain, the most luxurious and technologically advanced SUV in the Jeep brand's legendary 80-year history. Customers now have the opportunity to experience the car's renowned capability courtesy of three available 4x4 systems, exceptional driving dynamics, powerful performance, advanced technology, safety and a new level of comfort for up to eight passengers – all wrapped in a sophisticated and authentic new design.

Jeep® Middle East, in partnership with its trusted partner Behbehani Brothers in Bahrain will



Officials with the All-New 2023 Grand Wagoneer during the launch

mark the arrival of an icon with a dedicated reveal of the car at Jeep Showroom, Sitra. This will be followed by a pop-up "House of Grand Wagoneer" experience from 6th June, featuring an experiential zone where guests can customize and configure their Grand Wagoneer using the latest hot spot technology and capacity sensors, as well test drive the car.

Rakesh Nair, Managing Director, American Brands at Stellantis ME, said: "Grand Wagoneer is an American icon re-born and has been designed and built with the Middle East firmly in mind. Today, the SUV makes its debut in Bahrain and brings with it legendary capability, new levels of comfort, advanced technology and sophisticated design. This is the first time we will enter the large SUV segment in Bahrain with Jeep, and we have an incredible opportunity to redefine the category and expand our potential customer base."

"We are committed to provid-

ing the best possible experience for our customers in the region guided by Jeep's 10 promises to the Middle East. This includes setting premium standards for both our showrooms and service centers with fully trained Jeep ambassadors for sales and service, providing courtesy vehicles, convenient scheduling, complimentary maintenance and much more. Our goal is to exceed expectations and ensure complete customer satisfaction." added Nair.

Sam Yacoub, General Manager Stellantis Brands Bahrain welcomed the crowd followed by a detailed product presentation by Mr. Mohamed Aladdin Brand Marketing- Head of Wagoneer Stellantis Dubai.

Featuring three 4x4 systems and an all-new architecture that delivers exemplary on-road driving performance, the 2023 Grand Wagoneer epitomizes luxury and adventure. The bold and distinctive exterior is com-

plimented with artisan levels of craftsmanship in the interior with opulent Palermo leather trimmed seating and a fully digital cockpit with leading-edge technologies that are exquisitely presented for ease of use.

The most technologically advanced Grand Wagoneer ever, also features next-generation innovations, including the new



The All-New 2023 Grand Wagoneer

advanced Uconnect 5 system and 75 inches of total digital display screen area. This consists of 45 inches of screen across the front dashboard, Fire TV integration, digital rearview mirror and exclusive Rear Seat Monitoring Camera. Over 120 leading-edge safety and security features are also a part of the 2023 Grand Wagoneer inventory including innovative applications of technologies that connect the drive, vehicle and road. These include segment-leading features that enhance a driver's field of vision, help make instrumentation easier to see and enable driver-assist capabilities that support collision avoidance. Autonomous vehicle capabilities, hand-free active driving assist, night vision with pedestrian and animal detection, intersection collision assist, drowsy driver detection, digital rearview mirror and 360-degree surround view camera are just some of the many attributes of the cutting-edge,

large segment SUV.

The 2023 Grand Wagoneer has also collaborated with distinguished audio brand, McIntosh, to bring an exclusive, high-fidelity audio system to a vehicle for the very first time. For more than 70 years, McIntosh has created high-quality, handcrafted, American-made audio products and systems for homes, concert venues and iconic moments in music history across the globe. Now its signature audio performance has been perfectly tailored to the Grand Wagoneer with patented technology that gives a sense of space and recreates a realistic ambience of a musical venue – concert or recording studio. In conjunction with the outstanding audio quality, the McIntosh logos appearing on the door speaker grills are backlit in the brand's signature blue color, adding to the ambience created by the interior's custom ambient lighting.

In another industry leading innovation, the 2023 Grand Wagoneer features the new 3.0-liter Hurricane twin-turbo, inline, six-cylinder engine, that that delivers better fuel economy and fewer emissions than larger engines while at the same time generates more horsepower and torque than many competitors' naturally aspirated V-8 engines.

Starting price of pre-VAT BHD. 49,999/- Visit Behbehani Jeep Showroom Sitra / Call 17459955 to Know more OR to book a test drive.

Bank ABC announces senior appointments

TDI | Manama

Bank ABC appointed Ian McCallum as Group Chief Sustainability Officer yesterday to drive the Group's Sustainability Strategy in line with the fast-emerging trends in ESG.

McCallum has over 17 years of experience in asset management and banking and holds a BA (Hons.) in Accountancy & Finance from Heriot-Watt University; Edinburgh, Sustainable Finance Certificate from Cambridge University; and Investment Management Certificate from the UK Society of Investment Professionals.

In addition, the Bank has appointed a new Group Head of Human Resources (HR), Ehab AlMaskati, taking over from the incumbent Elaine Wood, who has headed the Group's HR function for the past seven



Ehab AlMaskati



Ian McCallum



Sael Al Waary

years. AlMaskati has worked for Bank ABC for 18 years, during which time he has held several key HR positions, including most recently, Group Head of HR Operations & Reward. In his new role, he will work closely with

the senior management and lead HR teams across the Group to drive the Bank's human resources strategy. He holds a Master's Degree in Information Systems from Manchester University, UK. Sael Al Waary, Bank ABC's

Group CEO, said, "These new senior appointments underline our commitment to ensure that we stay ahead of the curve and deliver exceptional value for our customers and meet our strategic goals."

EU mulls economic weapon in face of China trade spat

AFP | Brussels

The European Union yesterday agreed to create a trade tool aimed at punishing countries that seek to put pressure on one of its member countries, after China targeted Lithuania.

The new weapon would allow the 27-nation bloc to impose tariffs, restrict investment and limit access to public contracts for nations seen as engaging in economic blackmail. "This sends a strong signal that the EU rejects all forms of economic coercion," said EU economy commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis.

"We'll be more assertive in defending our legitimate rights and interests."

The push to bulk up the EU's economic muscle was

given impetus by a row with China over trade restrictions imposed on EU member Lithuania after it strengthened ties with Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its territory.

The EU has started action against leading trade partner China at the World Trade Organization over the restrictions. Beijing has denied taking coercive measures.

The new instrument was agreed between EU member states and lawmakers after a year of negotiation.

It is now expected to enter into force later this year after it is formally approved by the parliament and 27 EU countries. "It is one more tool at the service of our strategy for a less naive European trade," said France's trade minister Olivier Becht.

Over 5,000 visit alBarakat promotional Stand in City Centre



Al Baraka Islamic Bank officials during a photo call.

TDI | Manama

Al Baraka Islamic Bank said announced the success of its recent interactive alBarakat promotional stand at the City Centre Bahrain, held from 1 to 5 June 2023. The bank's most recent activation was well-received by current and potential customers, with over 5,000 visitors and nearly 1,000 winners.

The promotional alBarakat stand included an activation whereby customers who opened alBarakat Savings Account and topped-up their account at the platform or through the Bank's digital application were awarded a chance to par-



The promotional alBarakat stand

ticipate and win cash prizes of up to BD1,000, in addition to qualifying them in the Grand Prizes draws of BD100,000 for one winner every month and weekly cash prizes for 12 weekly winners. Ali Al Derzi - Act-

ing Chief Retail Officer stated: "The positive response we have received from visitors to the platform inspires us to do more to deepen our relationship with our customers".

Customers can view the



Ali Al Derzi

names of the weekly, monthly and grand winners of the alBarakat awards by visiting the bank's website or through its social media channels, through which the new winners are announced weekly.

Apple unveils Vision Pro, its \$3,500 headset

AFP | Cupertino

Apple on Monday unveiled its first mixed reality headset, challenging Facebook-owner Meta in a market that has yet to tempt users beyond videogamers and tech geeks.

The release was the most significant product launch by the iPhone maker since it unveiled the Apple Watch in 2015.

The Vision Pro, which was generally well received on Monday, will cost a hefty \$3,499 and be available early next year in the United States only, the company said.

"There are certain products that shift the way we look at technology and the role it plays in our lives," said Apple CEO Tim Cook as he unveiled the sleek VR device that resembled ski goggles.

"We believe Apple Vision Pro is a revolutionary product with the performance, immersion and capability that only Apple can deliver," he added.

The headgear, which Apple referred to as a spatial comput-



Apple's new Vision Pro virtual reality headset

er, was introduced at the close of an Apple event in Cupertino, California in which the company announced a long list of product updates.

The product has been in development at Apple for years, and will focus on gaming, streaming video and conferencing.

Company executives insisted that the Vision Pro offers an unchallenged experience, making the hard sell on tech that has yet to win the hearts of the greater public.

Unlike its rivals, the Vision Pro delivers mixed reality technology that "clearly situates the user in their environment," said Insider Intelligence principal analyst Yory Wurmser.

GFH launches afforestation initiative in Seef 58 Avenue



TDI | Manama

GFH Financial Group yesterday inaugurated its 58 Avenue afforestation initiative in Seef District, marking World Environment Day observed on June 5, 2023.

The campaign kicked off in the presence of Shaikha Maram Bint Isa Al-Khalifa, the National Initiative for Agricultural Development (NIAD), Salah Sharif, Chief Operating Officer of GFH, Saleh Tarada, Chairman of the Capital Municipality Council, Hassan



In pictures, the afforestation initiative held at 58 Avenue

Abdullah Al Madani, Deputy of Capital Governor, representa-

tives from Supreme Council for Environment (SCE), Ali Al-Qase-

er, Co-Founder and Chairman of CleanUp Bahrain, and a number

of dignitaries, bankers, and senior business leaders. Under the

initiative, GFH planted trees on a 2 km area in collaboration with the Capital Municipal Council and CleanUp Bahrain.

Salah Sharif, Chief Operating Officer of GFH, said, "We are pleased to support the planting of trees in the Seef area in line with the Group's ESG practices and sustainability efforts."

World Environment Day is celebrated annually on June 5 and encourages awareness and action for the protection of the environment.



Tania Rebello

Eats & Treats

BAHRAIN

to your heart's content



Shying away from Burgers? Here's why you shouldn't.

The dilemma of whether or not hamburgers are good for us has been a topic of debate for decades. Some people call it junk food, while others disagree. To those opposing, it may seem like a balanced meal consisting of bread, cheese, meat and vegetables. Quite often, the process of cooking the burger and the ingredients used determines this. For example, a copious amount of cheese, mayonnaise, or deep-frying burgers will cause concerns. However, there is no reason as to why you cannot enjoy a delicious burger when prepared correctly with the right quantity and quality of ingredients.

If you have opted to stay away from store bought frozen factory-made burgers or the burgers you get at fast food joints, you have done the right thing as factory-made burgers contain unsafe amounts of sodium. Excess sodium is added to serve as a preservative and a taste enhancer. However, does that jeopardise health? Yes, it does. High sodium consumption can raise blood pressure, and high blood pressure is a significant risk factor for heart disease and stroke. An occasional trip to your favourite fast food chain will not pose serious threats to your health. Regular consumption of burgers and other fast food will ultimately cause trouble.

I enjoy good hamburgers. What defines a good hamburger? For me, it is the perfect ratio of meat to bun, a fresh and soft bun, the use of condiments, freshness of the meat, the right amount of seasoning and juiciness of the burger patty. Would you agree with me? These tips and tricks will give you a good reason to consume this much-enjoyed favourite.

Here are some tips for creating the perfect hamburger:

1. Combining 80% meat and 20% fat is ideal.
2. Do not overwork the meat. Gently form patties and do not press them too much. This will ensure that the burgers stay juicy.
3. Season the meat patty with salt and pepper once formed.
4. Make an indent in the centre of the patty. This should prevent the burgers from becoming dome-shaped while cooking.
5. Cook on high heat until cooked through. The burgers will retain their moisture.



Condiments add goodness and wholesomeness:

Toppings and condiments are a great way to customise the flavour of your hamburger.

I love adding pickled jalapenos and dill relish to my burgers. It adds a bit of tang that cuts through the heaviness of beef. Besides, pickled vegetables are great for good gut health.

Tomatoes, onions, and crunchy green leafy vegetables add a variety of vitamins and minerals. They also add a fresh element to burgers and make them colourful and appetising. I do not like romaine lettuce as it hampers the sandwich's flavours. If I need to add lettuce, iceberg lettuce would be my primary choice due to its neutral flavors. Spinach or cabbage leaves are excellent too.

Caramelised onions are a game changer. These slow cooked fried onions are addictive when added in burgers along with a slice of cheddar cheese.

Avocado is perfect as a creamy element. If you must use mayonnaise, replace half the mayonnaise with mashed avocado. This way, you are adding healthy fat in addition to creaminess.

Try my tasty Mock Mayo. I developed this recipe to enjoy guilt-free homemade burgers. Its texture and colour is similar to mayonnaise. The addition of herbs and toasted garlic makes this sauce unique.

TANIA'S TASTY MOCK MAYO SAUCE FOR BURGERS



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup of Greek yoghurt
- 2 cloves of garlic (sliced)
- 1 tbsp of olive oil
- ¼ tsp oregano
- ½ tsp chopped parsley
- 2 pinches of Chili flakes (optional)
- 2 pinches of salt
- Freshly crushed black pepper to taste

METHOD:

1. Whip the yoghurt with a fork until smooth.
2. In a pan, add olive oil. On low flame, toast the sliced garlic until it turns light golden colour. Remove from pan.
3. Add the garlic and olive oil along with oregano, parsley, chili flakes, salt and pepper to the yoghurt.
4. Mix well. Taste for seasoning.

WEEKEND EATS



OMAKASE EXPERIENCE RE ASIAN, FOUR SEASONS HOTEL

Omakase meaning 'I'll leave it up to you' is a Japanese dining concept that leaves your dinner selection up to Chef Kiyoshi Udagawa. Each course is a pleasant surprise to the palate and an authentic way of celebrating culinary artistry. Revel in this re-imagined Japanese dining tradition over dazzling night views of the Manama skyline.

Timings: Wednesday to Sunday | 7:00 pm – 11:30pm
Price: BHD 60 per person for 10 Course Set Menu,
BHD 69 per person with beverage pairing.
Contact: 1711 5046



GO BISTRO BY LA TABLE KRUG RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL

Are you craving a twist on a classic bistro experience? Look no further than this modern take on traditions at Go Bistro by La Table Krug. The menu features innovative adaptations of beloved bistro fare, from Mussels a La Provençale to Le Poulet a La Boss. Indulge in a variety of classic and contemporary dishes along with an extensive beverage list, including selections from France and beyond. Enjoy an unforgettable dining experience in the stylish, inviting, French ambiance without ever leaving the island.

Timings: Tuesday to Saturday | 5:00 pm – 11:00 pm
Price: A la carte
Location: Nikmati (next to Royal Marina)
Contact: 1758 6499



SURF & TURF NIGHT BAHARAT RESTAURANT, LE MERIDIEN HOTEL

Treat your taste buds to a selection of prime beef cuts and fresh seafood flame-grilled to order. Enhance the grill experience with fresh salads, starters, and locally grown grilled vegetables from the buffet. Conclude your dinner with one of the largest award-winning selection of desserts.

Timings: Every Thursday | 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm
Price: BHD 28 net per person including soft beverages,
BHD 38 net including selected beverages.
Available on the Entertainer App- Buy 1 get 1 free
Contact: 1717441



Ladies, It's Your Night!

Salero at the Westin Hotel, Bahrain City Centre, is an authentic and unique Spanish restaurant. The authenticity of this restaurant is truly evident at hola and everything that follows. If you fancy Spanish culture and a social atmosphere, you need to visit Salero. Lola's Night is an exciting getaway for women in Bahrain.

After a welcome by Paloma that was as warm and cosy as the ambience, I sat at an ideal spot that ensured the perfect view of the Flamenco performers. The bright and bold murals of a Flamenco dancer, guitarist and other Spanish elements were a precursor to the fun-filled evening that was yet to come. Large rectangular rattan ceiling lamps emitting golden hues, and the meticulous woodwork gives this upscale set-up a traditional, homey touch.

As I became comfortable, the server brought me a welcome platter of toasted bread with roasted garlic, tomato dip and

flakey sea salt. The delicate crispiness of the toasted bread slathered with sweet and creamy roasted garlic, dollops of freshly grated tomato and little white crystals of sea salt made a great first bite.

The riveting performance of Salvi and Yaiza was a pleasure to watch. Salvi, with his powerful voice and captivating Flamenco

guitar skills combined with the intense yet graceful Flamenco moves by Yaiza, ensured our gaze was secure on them. All of us were awestruck by the stunning combination of music and

environment, and before we knew it, we learnt how to make sangria and made new friends too!

Apart from this free masterclass, women can enjoy a discount of 50% on selected handcrafted cocktails.

Appetisers and main course are available a la carte. I selected a few tapas, some main course items, and desserts. Sautéed shrimp with garlic and chili was bursting with flavours. The combination of tender, plump prawns with garlic and smoked sweet paprika won my heart. Spinach and cheese croquettes were large crunchy spheres with a soft filling. The spinach and cheese filling was delectable with the contrasting crispiness of the breadcrumb-coated exterior. A favourite of mine at the restaurant is patatas bravas meaning 'spicy potatoes'. This flavoursome potato dish reminds me of potato wedges. Skin-on cubed potatoes are fried, topped with garlic aioli and sriracha, and served with a tasty tomato relish. Beef tenderloin with Manchego cheese crust was tender and succulent. I liked the tender beef with the partly melted creamy cheese. The pairing of beef, mushrooms and perfectly roasted potatoes is incomparable.

Their speciality- Paella is cooked to order in front of guests, and it was fun to watch Chef Ruben Botella work patiently on my chicken paella as I talked to him about some of the other dishes I had relished that evening. Gazing at the ingredients being layered during the cooking process was quite amusing. Paella is one of those dishes that needs your attention. Ladling the chicken stock and waiting for it to be absorbed before the next ladle-full is added is key to ensuring the rice is cooked perfectly. The piping hot chicken paella had tender, juicy chicken thighs. The herby notes from thyme and rosemary and a spritz of fresh lemon juice made it scrumptious. To wind up this delicious meal, I had a handful of freshly-made churros that I relished with chocolate sauce and a dainty portion of Basque cheesecake with berry sauce and fresh berries.

Ladies, gather your female friends and head to Salero for a special night of delightful Spanish food, specially crafted beverages, a Sangria Masterclass and top-notch Flamenco entertainment. Make it a night to remember.



Lola's Night
Every Wednesday
7pm- 11pm
Book a table by calling 17171300 or through WhatsApp 33502110



News in brief

◆ **Europe's top rights court** said yesterday condemned Russia for failing to properly investigate the 2020 poisoning of opposition figure Alexei Navalny which the West says was an assassination bid. The Strasbourg-based European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) said Russia had notably failed "to explore the allegations of a possible political motive for the attempted murder, as well as possible involvement of state agents", unanimously finding Russia had violated the European Convention on Human Rights. It said Russia had refused to open criminal proceedings into the poisoning, which led to Navalny falling into a coma and being put on life support. Navalny was later evacuated to Germany where he recovered. He has been b. The court said the inquiry by Russia was not open to scrutiny and Navalny had not been allowed to participate. ehind bars since he returned to Moscow in early 2021.



European court condemns Russia over Navalny 2020 poisoning

◆ **China, Russia conduct air patrol over Sea of Japan, East China Sea** yesterday, as South Korea said it had deployed fighter jets in response to warplanes near its airspace. Beijing and Moscow "staged the sixth joint aerial patrol in accordance with an annual military cooperation plan between China and Russia", the Chinese defence ministry said in a statement. The statement gave no further details of the manoeuvres, which took place over waters bordering Japan, the Korean peninsula and Taiwan. South Korea said four Russian and four Chinese military aircraft had entered its air defence identification zone (ADIZ) around lunchtime on Tuesday, prompting it to scramble fighter planes.



◆ **More than 30 people** accused of a coup plot have been arrested in Kyrgyzstan, the national security service said yesterday. The impoverished Central Asian country with ties to Russia and China has seen three presidents resign over political crises fuelled by corruption, nepotism and disputed votes since gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The GKNB state security agency said it dismantled the preparations of a group of people planning to organise riots "in order to seize power by force", adding that more than 30 people were arrested on Monday. The arrests come just days after a visit to Kyrgyzstan by European Council President Charles Michel, during which President Sadyr Japarov pledged his "readiness to work hand in hand with the European Union".

30 arrested for 'attempted coup' in Kyrgyzstan: official

◆ **A leading international NGO's** Afghan women staff have resumed their work in some provinces, months after the Taliban government banned them from working. Several aid groups suspended operations in protest at the order that was announced at the end of December, and later extended to include Afghan women working for the United Nations. I am glad to confirm that we have been able to resume most of our humanitarian operations in Kandahar as well as a number of other regions in Afghanistan," Jan Egeland, Secretary-General of the independent Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said Monday. "All our work is for women & men, girls & boys alike, & with equal participation of our female & male humanitarian colleagues," he said in a tweet. It comes after Egeland travelled to Kandahar -- the Taliban government's traditional stronghold -- last month where he announced that officials had said they would consider a "temporary agreement" to allow women to return to work.

Major aid group's women staff partially resume work in Afghanistan

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Pooch claims world record for longest tongue



Zoey, a three-year-old Labrador/German Shepherd mix from Metairie, Louisiana

The Daily Mail

Many dog owners enjoy the occasional kiss from their pet.

But one pooch's smooches are so sloppy that they could leave you needing a towel, or even a quick shower.

Zoey, a three-year-old Labrador/German Shepherd mix from Metairie, Louisiana, has

claimed the Guinness World Record for dog with the longest tongue.

Her tongue measures a whopping five inches (12.7cm) long, making it longer than a can of Coke.

The new record comes just three months after an English Setter called Bisbee broke the record with a tongue measuring 3.74 inches (9.49cm).

Destruction of frontline dam forces Ukraine evacuations

● Moscow and Kyiv traded blame for the attack

● 16,000 people living in the flooding zone

● Zelensky said the "world must react"

● Peskov accused dam attack deliberate sabotage by Ukrainia

AFP | Kherson

An attack on a major Russian-held dam in southern Ukraine yesterday unleashed a torrent of water that flooded a small city, two dozen villages and sent hundreds fleeing.

Moscow and Kyiv traded blame for ripping a gaping hole in the Kakhovka dam in what Kyiv said was an attempt by Russia to hamper Ukraine's long-awaited offensive.

People in the city of Kherson, the largest population centre in the area, headed for higher ground as water, which had been held back by the dam and a hydroelectric plant, rose in the Dnipro River.

"There is shooting, now there is flooding," said Lyudmyla, who had loaded a washing machine onto a cart that was attached to an old Soviet car.

Ukraine's interior ministry said 650 people had been evacuated as of 1000 GMT and 420 more had left the area, with a total of 24 villages flooded.

Ukrainian officials said there were a total of 16,000 people living in the "critical zone" for



The Kakhovka hydroelectric dam which was damaged in Nova Kakhovka, near Kherson



Built in the 1950s, the Kakhovka dam has strategic value as it pumps water into the North Crimean Canal, which starts in southern Ukraine and crosses the entire Crimean peninsula. This means that any problem with the dam could cause water supply problems for Crimea, which has been under Russian control since 2014.

potential flooding.

On the Russian-controlled riverbank, Vladimir Leontyev, the Moscow-installed mayor of Nova Kakhovka where the dam is located, said the city was underwater and 900 people had been evacuated.

He said 53 evacuation buses were being sent by the authorities to take people from Nova Kakhovka and two other settlements nearby to safety.

"We are organising temporary accommodation centres with hot meals," he said.

The Kakhovka dam and its power plant were seized by Russia in the first hours of the war.

'War crime'

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky accused Russia of blowing up the dam and said that the "world must react."

He said Russia had carried out "an internal explosion of the structures" of the plant at 2:50 am local time (2350 GMT).

Ukraine also called for a meeting of the UN Security Council and warned of a potential "ecocide" after 150 tonnes of engine oil spilled into the river as a result of the attack.

Western powers also blamed Russia for the damage to the Kakhovka dam, with EU chief

Charles Michel calling it a "war crime." NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said the dam breach was "outrageous" and "puts thousands of civilians at risk and causes severe environmental damage." Russia however said the dam was partially destroyed by "multiple strikes" coming from Ukrainian forces.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the destruction was the result of "deliberate sabotage by the Ukrainian side."

The Soviet-era dam sits on the Dnipro River, which provides cooling water for the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the largest in Europe. The flooding fuelled already existing fears for the safety of the Zaporizhzhia plant, under Russian control.

The plant is some 150 kilometres (about 90 miles) away from the damaged dam. Moscow and Kyiv offered conflicting versions on the safety of the facility.

Senegal arrests teacher accused of raping 27 girls

AFP | Dakar

A Senegalese Quran teacher suspected of raping 27 of his female students was arrested on Monday after several weeks on the run, a police source said.

The man is accused of assaulting the students at his school in the holy city of Touba in central Senegal, a local police official said. The suspect went missing after the accusations emerged earlier this year following a



Representative picture

complaint from alleged victims who produced medical certificates, the source added. He

was arrested on Monday "after handing himself over to the police. After questioning, he was handed over to the gendarmerie," the official said.

The source said the teacher is accused of "raping 27 students" but did not provide precise details on the dates of the alleged crimes or the age of the complainants.

Local media reported that the alleged victims were "minors", implying they were under 15,

and that the Koranic school has been closed.

The newspaper "Le Jour" wrote last week that the affair came to light when one of the girls refused to return to the school, because the teacher "had sexual relations with her and all the other girls".

Touba is considered a holy city by the Mourides, a major Islamic brotherhood in the Muslim-majority West African country.

Colombian president drawn into nanny wiretapping scandal

Bogota

Colombia's President Gustavo Petro has been drawn into a scandal involving the unlawful wiretapping of his former chief of staff's nanny, with claims of illegal financing levelled at his campaign.

Petro's chief of staff Laura Sarabia and ambassador to Venezuela Armando Benedetti are under scrutiny after Sarabia's



Colombian President Gustavo Petro

nanny allegedly fell victim to illegal surveillance following the disappearance of thousands of dollars from her employer's house. To gain access to her calls, a false police report was allegedly used to link the nanny to organized crime -- none less than the notorious Gulf Clan drug cartel, Attorney General Francisco Barbosa told a press conference last week.

The nanny, Marellys Meza, has also claimed she was subjected to illegal interrogation and a lie detector test in January at a building annexed to the presidential palace in Bogota.

Sarabia and Benedetti stepped down last week and levelled accusations against one another after prosecutors said the pair would be called to testify in a probe into Meza's allegations.

CAMPUS

NMS Bahrain celebrates environment day



To sensitise its students about the environmental issues of the current time and to motivate them to wake up to their responsibilities towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, NMS- Bahrain heralded the World Environment Day celebration on Monday. The students participated in a series of activities that included creating the Best out of Wastes, Poster designing, Slogan and Jingle writing, PPT & movie making, Group discussions and speech delivery on issues of environmental sensitivity. School Chairman Dr Ravi Pillai, Managing Director, Geetha Pillai and Principal, Arun Kumar Sharma appreciated the efforts put in by the students, teachers and parents

ISB students explore the spirit of entrepreneurship



Students came up with innovative business ideas in the one day workshop organized by INJAZ Bahrain in association with the Indian School Bahrain (ISB). The Innovation Camp was an exciting workshop that challenged students to find innovative solutions to a real business challenge using creativity, thinking outside the box, and teamwork. The workshop was delivered by trained corporate volunteers from the private sector. ISB Chairman Prince S Natarajan, Secretary Saji Antony and Principal VR Palaniswamy thanked INJAZ Bahrain for giving the students an opportunity to foster understanding of the world of work and the spirit of entrepreneurship through the principle of learning by doing

ISB to host Floodlit Cricket Tournament on Friday

TDT | Manama

As part of the ISB Community Sports Fest 2023 under the patronage of the Indian Embassy in Bahrain, stage is set for a Floodlit Cricket Tournament

starting Friday.

Indian Ambassador Piyush Srivastava will inaugurate the Cricket Tournament at 6.30pm in the ISB Isa Town campus ground. The Cricket Tournament is

organized in association with Bahrain Cricket Federation for Indian nationals in the Kingdom.

The opening ceremony will be followed by a show match.

Students discuss global issues at ISBMUN conference



Fostering leadership qualities and public speaking skills, The Indian School Bahrain hosted the largest ever MUN, The Indian School Bahrain Model United Nations 2023 (ISBMUN 23) on 19th and 20th May. The two-day conference was inaugurated by school chairman Prince S Natarajan in the presence of EC Members Binu Mannil Varughese, Rajesh Nambiar, Principal VR Palaniswamy, Riffa Campus Principal Pamela Xavier and Vice-Principals. Around 370 delegates from 11 schools from grades 6 to 12 attended the 8th ISBMUN conference. The conference was completely student-run in which students as delegates of nations debated pertinent world issues. The organization of the conference was spearheaded by an organizing team consisting entirely of students headed by Student Director of the Organizing Committee, Aryan Arora. The entire ISBMUN conference was organized by students under the guidance of ISBMUN Directors Chhaya Joshi, Sreesadan OP, Prajisha Anand, Dilna Shajeeb, Danny Thomas, Elizabeth Saldanha and Asha Latha. The administration team was led by Secretary-General Joanna Jess Binu, Student Director of the Organising Committee, Aryan Arora and Student Director of Research & Training, Hariram Chembra

BIS hosts Model United Nations conference



Bhavans-Bahrain Indian School organised BISMUN'23, a Model United Nations conference, on May 26 and 27. The conference was attended by over 150 delegates from grades VI-XII. The theme of the conference was "Galaxy of Possibilities," and delegates were tasked with working together to find solutions to some of the world's most pressing problems. There were eight councils in BISMUN this year namely WHO, ECOSOC, UNHRC, UNODC, UNEP, UNCSCW, UNICEF, and UNOOSA. At the closure ceremony, 48 students were awarded certificates in various categories like best speaker, best delegate, best position paper, best diplomat etc. Directors Himanshu Verma and Ritu Verma, and principal, Saji Jacob, applauded the efforts of the Social Science department and future leaders

RCSI Bahrain announces winner of 2023 Intern Award



The Alumni Office of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland - Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain) announced and celebrated, Dr Danya Alaseeri (Class of 2022) as the winner of the annual 'Intern Award' for 2023, for demonstrating distinction in professionalism, communication skills, collaboration and patient management during her one-year internship year at the King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH). Above: (L-R) Fadi Ghosn, Loreen Bahour, Stephen Harrison-Mirfield, Professor Alfred Nicholson, Dr Danya Alaseeri, Professor Kathryn Strachan, Fatema Frutan, Professor Najj Alamuddin

Indian School inducts new student leaders



The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) Prefectorial Council for the academic year 2023-2024 was formally inducted during an investiture ceremony held in the Jashanmal auditorium May 30, 2023. ISB Chairman Prince S. Natarajan, Secretary Saji Antony, EC Members Rajesh MN, Mohammed Nayaz Ullah, Principal VR Palaniswamy, Staff Representative Johnson K Devassy, Senior Section Vice-Principal Anand Nair, Vice-Principal (Academics) Sathesh G, Middle Section Vice-Principal Vinod S A and Head Teachers attended the ceremony. Daneys Subramanian was inducted as the Head Boy and Sahasra Kotagiri as the Head Girl of the Prefectorial Council for Level - A which consists of classes XI and XII. For classes X and IX (Level B) Sidharth Sajeevan was selected as the Head Boy and Rudra Rupesh Aiyer as the Head Girl. For classes VI to VIII (Level C) Kalvi Fabian Rozario is the Head Boy and Sreelakshmi Ettammal is the Head Girl. Alin Babu Pathickal is the Head Boy and Lakshya Ramakrishnan is the Head Girl of Level D from class IV and V. The Prefectorial Council consists of students from classes IV to XII who were selected based on interviews considering their organizational and leadership abilities. Senior Section Vice-Principal Anand Nair and Middle Section Vice-Principal Vinod S A declared the names of the prefects. Chairman Prince S. Natarajan handed over the school flag to the Head Boy

1494

Treaty of Tordesillas: Spain and Portugal divide the new world along a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands, off the west coast of Africa

1654

Louis XIV crowned King of France



1753

British Museum founded by an Act of Parliament with royal assent from King George II (opens in 1759)

1753

Vatican City becomes a sovereign state

Egypt, Israel pledge cooperation



Israeli soldiers are pictured outside the Mount Harif military base near the city of Mitzpe Ramon in Israel's southern Negev desert, adjacent to the border with Egypt

AFP | Cairo

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to boost cooperation yesterday after an Egyptian policeman shot dead three Israeli soldiers before being killed, officials said.

Sisi received a telephone call from Netanyahu about Saturday's deadly violence on the normally calm border, the spokesman for the Egyptian president said.

During the conversation, the two leaders stressed "the importance of coordination between the two countries to clarify the circumstances", he said.

Egypt has said the police-

man crossed into Israel while chasing drug smugglers, leading to exchanges of fire with Israeli soldiers.

On Saturday, Netanyahu called the Egyptian shooter a "terrorist" although he has since mostly spoken of the shootings as an "incident".

Sisi offered Netanyahu his "deep condolences", the Israeli prime minister's office said.

"The two leaders expressed their commitment to further strengthening peace and security cooperation, which is an essential value for both countries," it added.

Israel's border with Egypt has been largely quiet since Egypt became the first Arab country to make peace with Israel following the Camp David accords of 1978.

Iran unveils hypersonic missile



The unveiling ceremony of the new 'Fattah' hypersonic missile in Tehran

● Missile capable of speeds between 13 and 15 times the speed of sound with a "range of 1,400 kilometres"

● Hypersonic missiles can be equipped with nuclear warheads

AFP | Tehran

Iran's Revolutionary Guards unveiled an intermediate range ballistic missile yesterday capable of travelling at hypersonic speeds of up to 15 times the speed of sound, state television reported.

President Ebrahim Raisi hailed the new missile's hypersonic capability, saying it would boost Iran's "power of deterrence" and "bring peace and stability to the countries of the region".

The official IRNA news agency published photographs of

the ceremony in a closed area it did not identify. Several top military commanders were present, including Guards chief General Hossein Salami.

"The range of the Fattah missile is 1,400 kilometres (870 miles) and its speed before hitting its target" is between 13 and 15 times the speed of sound, IRNA said.

Like slower ballistic missiles, hypersonic missiles can be equipped with nuclear warheads.

Unlike conventional ballistic missiles, hypersonic ones fly on a trajectory low in the atmosphere, enabling them to reach their targets more quickly and with less chance of being intercepted by modern air defences.

When the programme was announced last year, Guards aerospace chief General Amirali Hajizadeh said the system was developed to "counter air defence shields", adding that he believed it would take decades before a system capable of intercepting it is developed.

UK reputation at 'rock bottom' because of media, govt: Prince Harry



Harry

AFP | London

Prince Harry yesterday hit out at close ties between the UK media and government as he sued a tabloid newspaper group for illegal reporting methods, accusing both of damaging the country.

British royals have largely followed the same practice as the monarch, who as head of state of a constitutional monarchy is supposed to be above politics.

As such, they have steered clear of publicly commenting about the government of the day. But Harry -- now self-exiled in the United States -- waded into a longstanding debate about government links to news organisations, as part of his case against Mirror Group Newspapers (MGN) Ltd.

The Duke of Sussex, as he is formally known, maintained in his witness statement to London's High Court that he was not bringing the case out of a vendetta against the tabloids.

Instead, he said, he wanted to "properly hold the people who have hijacked" the "privileges and powers of the press and have used illegal or unlawful means for their own gain and agendas".

Harry, 38, said those responsible had "showed no willingness to change" and needed to be exposed, to prevent others suffering the same fate as he had.

"On a national level, at the moment, our country is judged globally by the state of our press and our government, both of which I believe are at rock bottom," he said.

UK orders China to shut unofficial police stations on British soil

AFP | London

The UK government has ordered China to shut unofficial police stations operating on British soil, Security Minister Tom Tugendhat told parliament yesterday.

The Foreign Office "told the Chinese Embassy that any functions related to such 'police service stations' in the UK are unacceptable and that they must not operate in any form," a written statement said.

The embassy "responded that all such stations have closed permanently", it added.

British police began investigations after the human rights group Safeguard Defenders reported their existence in the UK, Tugendhat said.

According to the group, they were officially set up to provide administrative services but were also used "to monitor and harass diaspora communities and, in some cases, to coerce



Fuzhou Police Station for Overseas Chinese in Manhattan's Chinatown. UK Foreign Office has informed the Chinese Embassy that such 'police service stations' are unacceptable. (Courtesy of The Citizen)

people to return to China outside of legitimate channels", he added.

Tugendhat said police visited each location identified by Safeguard Defenders and "have not, to date, identified any evidence of illegal activity on behalf of the Chinese state across these sites".

"We assess that police and

public scrutiny have had a suppressive impact on any administrative functions these sites may have had," he added.

"However, these 'police service stations' were established without our permission and their presence... will have worried and intimidated those who

have left China and sought safety and freedom here in the UK," Tugendhat said.

In April, *The Times* newspaper reported that Chinese businessman Lin Ruiyou, with links to the ruling Conservative party, operated a food delivery business in the London suburb of Croydon that doubled as an undeclared Chinese police station.

Beijing's embassy in London denied the *Times* report at the time and warned against "false accusations" spread by the media.

Similar operations have been investigated in the United States, Canada and several European countries.

US authorities in April arrested two men for allegedly setting up one such outpost in New York and charged dozens of Chinese security officials over a campaign to monitor and harass US-based dissidents.

US fines Microsoft \$20 million over child data violations

Washington

Microsoft will pay \$20 million to settle government charges that it collected personal information from children without their parents' consent, officials said Monday.

The Federal Trade Commission alleged that from 2015 to 2020 Microsoft collected personal data from children under age 13 who signed up to its Xbox gaming system without their parents' permission and retained this information.



Visitors take a photo of the Xbox logo at the Gamescom video game fair in Cologne

To open an account, users had to provide their first and last names, an email address, and date of birth.

The FTC said Microsoft violated a law called the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, or COPPA.

"Our proposed order makes it easier for parents to protect their children's privacy on Xbox, and limits what information Microsoft can collect and retain about kids," said Samuel Levine, head of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection.

"This action should also make it abundantly clear that kids' avatars, biometric data, and health information are not exempt from COPPA," Levine

added. The decision still needs the approval of a federal court before it can be implemented.

The FTC said Microsoft will be required to take several steps to bolster privacy protections for child users of its Xbox system.

Under the COPPA law, online services and websites aimed at kids under 13 must notify parents about the personal information they collect and obtain verifiable parental consent before collecting and using any personal information collected from children.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Primarily relying on GDP as a metric of progress does not accurately reflect the world as it is - nor the world that we want for future generations. By moving beyond GDP, we can measure what we truly value.

@antonio gutierrez

02



Congratulations to Rashtrapati Ji on being conferred the highest civilian award of Suriname - Grand Order of the Chain of the Yellow Star. This special gesture from the Government and people of Suriname symbolizes the enduring friendship between our countries. @rashtrapatibhvn

@narendramodi

03



Over 7,000 pounds of new solar arrays, and other cargo has arrived at the station after the @SpaceX Dragon cargo craft docked to the Harmony module at 5:54am ET today.

@elonmusk

04



American food—and the people behind it—are vital to how we connect with the world, so we have teamed up with the James @Beard-Foundation to relaunch the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership. Congrats to this year's awardees, who are bringing their history and heritage to their plates.

@SecBlinken

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

Classifieds



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Pulisic keen to put 'tough' Chelsea season behind him



Christian Pulisic receives medical attention during a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Chelsea forward Christian Pulisic is hoping to put one of the most challenging seasons of his career behind him when he returns to international duty for the United States against Mexico in next week's CONCACAF Nations League finals in Las Vegas.

Pulisic made just eight Premier League eight starts for Chelsea last season as he struggled for form and fitness in a chaotic campaign at Stamford Bridge that saw the club burn through four different managers before finishing 12th in the table.

It has left Pulisic facing an uncertain future in west London, and the 24-year-old is reportedly keen to re-launch his career elsewhere, with Italian giants Juventus reportedly leading the chase for the former Borussia Dortmund player.

Speaking in Los Angeles on Monday, where the US are preparing for next week's Nations League semi-final showdown with Mexico in Las Vegas, Pulisic said he was excited by the prospect of getting minutes under his belt at international level.

"It's been a really tough season for me personally and for our team of course at a club level," Pulisic told reporters on a video call.

"So for me it's just about

It's been a really tough season for me personally and for our team of course at a club level. So for me it's just about coming in here and having a fresh start and being able to be a part of a team that hopefully can come out and win some games

CHRISTIAN PULISIC

coming in here and having a fresh start and being able to be a part of a team that hopefully can come out and win some games.

"I'm really excited to be here and just to get some minutes on the field and just get back to being that confident player that I know I can be, and just find my footing again and just enjoy the game because it feels like it's been tough to do that lately."

Pulisic also dropped a strong hint that he was ready to leave Chelsea after four years.

"It's obviously been an interesting journey at club level for me," he said.

"I thought I had a great couple years and the last couple years just haven't gone at all how I've planned them to be.

"Right now my focus is obviously here with the national team.

India captain Rohit coy over Ashwin role in WTC final

AFP | London

India captain Rohit Sharma was tight-lipped on whether star spinner Ravichandran Ashwin would feature in the World Test Championship final starting on Wednesday.

Rohit's men will bid to be crowned Test world champions for the first time when they face Australia at the Oval.

The last time India played a Test at the London ground, in 2021, they left out Ashwin despite the star off-spinner's excellent record -- 474 wickets at 23.93 in 92 matches.

Instead they opted to play spin-bowling all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja alongside four seamers in a match in which India beat England by 157 runs.

Both bowlers are in India's 15-man squad for the WTC final.

"In terms of the combination, better we wait until tomorrow (Wednesday) -- that's a common answer, I think," Rohit said with a smile during a pre-match press conference at the Oval



India's Rohit Sharma (L) and Ravichandran Ashwin celebrate a wicket during a match (file photo)

yesterday.

Early season surfaces in England generally do not give spinners much help and Rohit said the Oval pitch and the overhead conditions looked as though they would assist seam bowlers.

"When we played the last Test match here at the Oval, it looked very similar to this and then as the game went on, it got better and better and slower and

slower, then the reverse-swing came into play on the fifth day," he said.

"We are going to consider all those factors."

Wednesday's match is only the second WTC final -- India lost the inaugural showpiece match by eight wickets to New Zealand in Southampton in 2021.

Rohit said his men were de-

When we played the last Test match here at the Oval, it looked very similar to this and then as the game went on, it got better and better and slower and slower, then the reverse-swing came into play on the fifth day. We are going to consider all those factors

ROHIT SHARMA

termined to learn from their mistakes on that occasion.

"The last time we played (in the final) we made a few mistakes, which we've already spoken about in this group," said the 36-year-old.

"It's a good challenge to have and we know exactly what went wrong for us in the last Championship final, so hopefully we won't repeat those kinds of things."

Australia coach Arnold wants 'revenge' over Messi's Argentina

AFP | Sydney

Australia coach Graham Arnold said yesterday he wants "revenge" over Lionel Messi's Argentina when his side meet the world champions in a Beijing friendly next week.

Messi terrorised the Socceros and scored a sublime goal in a 2-1 win in the last 16 at the World Cup in Qatar, before going on to lift the trophy.

But Arnold's unfancied team gave Argentina a scare and the



Argentina's forward Lionel Messi (C) fights for the ball with Australia's defender Kye Rowles (L) and Australia's midfielder Aaron Mooy (file photo)

Australia coach said they will be taking the match on June 15 in the Chinese capital seriously, even if it is a friendly.

"I am getting goosebumps now that we can play the world champions so soon after the World Cup and get revenge," Arnold said, as he named a young squad missing numerous established players through injury,

including Celtic's Aaron Mooy. "Conditions will be humid and warm, but younger players have that energy and will run all day and fight."

He added: "It is a fantastic opportunity for all of us to go out there and give it everything we've got -- the boys will have energy galore and I can't wait." Among those called up were

I am getting goosebumps now that we can play the world champions so soon after the World Cup and get revenge. Conditions will be humid and warm, but younger players have that energy and will run all day and fight

GRAHAM ARNOLD

19-year-old Parma defender Alessandro Circati, who has represented Italy at youth level.

Arnold, who surpassed expectations in guiding Australia to the knockout rounds in Qatar, said that he already has one eye on qualification for the 2026 World Cup.

"I don't feel there's any better way to test them out than against the world champions," he said of his youthful 23-man squad.



Graham Arnold surpassed expectations in guiding Australia to the knockout rounds at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar

Benzema signs for Al-Ittihad: source

Karim Benzema signs three-year contract with Saudi Arabian club Al-Ittihad, according to club source

● Benzema admits Madrid departure 'hurts' ahead of Saudi switch

AFP | Riyadh

Real Madrid's Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema has signed for Saudi Arabia's Al-Ittihad for three years starting next season, a source in the Jeddah-based club said yesterday.

"Benzema has signed a contract for his transfer to Al-Ittihad for a three-year period starting next season," the Saudi club source said.

Real Madrid announced on Sunday that the 35-year-old was leaving the club after 14 seasons, the day after coach Carlo Ancelotti had said there was "no doubt" Benzema's future lay in the Spanish capital.

If the move is confirmed, Benzema will join his former Real Madrid teammate Cristiano Ronaldo in the Gulf kingdom after the five-time world player of the year moved to Al Nassr from Manchester United following last year's World Cup.

Lionel Messi, who is leaving



Real Madrid's Karim Benzema (C) applauds as he talks with coach Carlo Ancelotti at the end of a match

Paris Saint-Germain after two seasons, has also been linked with a move to Saudi Arabia.

Senior officials from another Saudi Arabian club, Al Hilal, have flown to France to try and seal a deal for Messi after the 35-year-old Argentinian played his last game for PSG at the weekend, two sources with knowledge of the matter told AFP on Sunday.

The Saudi delegation plans to meet Messi's father and agent, Jorge, with the aiming of completing the signing as soon as

possible.

Benzema joined Madrid in 2009 from Ligue 1 side Lyon.

He made 648 appearances for Madrid and is second on Real's all-time goalscoring list with 354 -- only Ronaldo has more.

He has lifted five Champions Leagues, four La Liga titles and three Copas del Rey with Madrid.

But after a stellar 2021-22 season when he led Real to Champions League glory and was rewarded with the Ballon d'Or, he was troubled by injuries in

5

Champions Leagues, four La Liga titles and three Copas del Rey have been won by Benzema with Real Madrid

the just-completed season and had to miss France's World Cup campaign in Qatar last year with a thigh problem.

Benzema held a goodbye ceremony at Real's training ground yesterday.

"It's a bit of a sad day, because I am leaving this club, it hurts me, because I had a dream in my head - to sign for Madrid, and finish at Madrid, but sometimes life gives you other opportunities," said Benzema in a speech during his farewell at Madrid's training ground.

"I will always watch Madrid's games, and thanks to the fans too, who pushed me on to play good games."

Benzema said he was grateful to Real Madrid president Florentino Perez for signing him.

"When I saw you, I said this

”

It's a bit of a sad day, because I am leaving this club, it hurts me, because I had a dream in my head - to sign for Madrid, and finish at Madrid, but sometimes life gives you other opportunities

KARIM BENZEMA

is the man who brought Zizou (Zinedine Zidane) and Ronaldo, now he wants me in his team," said Benzema.

"I will never forget Real Madrid, it's the best club in the world, in history, but now is the moment to leave and to see another story."

Perez thanked Benzema for his efforts over the past 14 years.

"Today it's not just another player going, today we're saying goodbye to one of the most incredible players in our history," said the president.

"Thank you for all you have given us, you arrived here as a boy and today, you leave as one of our legends."

Saudi Arabia has drawn up a



After a stellar 2021-22 season when Benzema led Real to Champions League glory and was rewarded with the Ballon d'Or, he was troubled by injuries in the just-completed season and had to miss France's World Cup campaign in Qatar last year with a thigh problem

list of more than 10 players who have won either the Champions League or the World Cup that it wants to lure to its league, a source close to the negotiations has said.

The list includes Real Madrid and Croatia midfielder Luka Modric, Tottenham goalkeeper Hugo Lloris and his France teammate N'Golo Kante. All are at the tail-end of their careers.

Guardiola warns Man City against Champions League final arrogance

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola has warned his Manchester City's stars that their confidence ahead of the Champions League final against Inter Milan cannot slip into arrogance as they aim to complete a historic treble.

Guardiola's men are one game away from becoming just the second side to win the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup in the same season.

City are huge favourites for the clash in Istanbul on Saturday, having thrashed Bayern Munich and Real Madrid on route to the final.

By contrast, Inter finished a distant third in Serie A and enjoyed a less demanding passage to the final as they beat Porto, Benfica and AC Milan.

However, the Italians boast the richer European Cup her-



Manchester City's manager Pep Guardiola reacts as he talks to his players

itage, with three triumphs to City's none, and Guardiola has urged his team not to become complacent.

"Of course we are confident, so optimistic, but at the same time I cannot deny the difficulties and qualities of the oppo-

nents," said Guardiola at City's pre-match media day yesterday.

"I have never done it and especially in the final of the Champions League."

City remain on course to match the treble achievement of Manchester United's class

”

We know a final is about how you behave for 95 minutes. It's not about history, for history they are better than us

PEP GUARDIOLA

of 1998/99 by beating the Red Devils 2-1 in the FA Cup final on Saturday.

Guardiola said that was far better preparation for the Champions League final than their only previous appearance in the European showpiece two years when his side lost 1-0 against Chelsea in Porto.

But he insisted City's stunning form in the past four months will count for nothing when it comes to getting the job done at the Ataturk Stadium.

Tottenham appoint Postecoglou as new manager



Celtic FC's head coach Ange Postecoglou (L) looks on as Sydney FC celebrate their victory after a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Tottenham have appointed Ange Postecoglou as their new manager on a four-year deal, ending their long search for a new coach.

The 57-year-old Australian, who won the domestic Scottish treble with Celtic this season, will replace Antonio Conte at the Premier League club.

Conte left Spurs by "mutual agreement" in late March, with Cristian Stellini and then Ryan Mason taking temporary charge.

Postecoglou will officially join the London club, who finished a disappointing eighth in the Premier League this season, on July 1.

"Ange brings a positive mentality and a fast, attacking style of play," Tottenham chairman Daniel Levy said yesterday.

"He has a strong track record of developing players and an understanding of the importance of the link from the academy -- everything that is important to our club."

The Greek-born Postecoglou

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trophies have been won by Postecoglou during his two years with Celtic

enjoyed huge success during two years in Glasgow, winning five trophies.

But the lure of the Premier League proved too much to resist as he takes on the challenge of trying to revitalise Spurs after a disastrous 12 months.

The club were still challenging for a top-four place when Conte departed but they ended up missing out on European competition.

Former Bayern Munich coach Julian Nagelsmann and ex-Barcelona, Spain boss Luis Enrique and Feyenoord manager Arne Slot were among the big names touted for the job.

'I don't support the war, I don't support Lukashenko': Sabalenka

AFP | Paris

Belarus tennis star Aryna Sabalenka outrightly condemned her country's role in the war in Ukraine yesterday and insisted she is not a supporter of president Alexander Lukashenko.

"I'm not supporting the war. I don't support war, meaning I don't support Lukashenko," the world number two said after reaching the French Open semi-finals by defeating Elina Svitolina of Ukraine.

The 25-year-old had come under increasing pressure to distance herself from her apparent close relationship with Lukashenko, a key military ally of Moscow in the ongoing conflict.

"We played a lot of Fed Cups



Belarus' Aryna Sabalenka (R) waits to shake hands with Ukraine's Elina Svitolina in Belarus. He (Lukashenko) was in our matches taking pictures with us after the match. Nothing bad was happening that time in Belarus or in Ukraine or

in Russia," she told reporters.

Sabalenka had cancelled two previous press conferences at Roland Garros, claiming she didn't feel "safe" after facing a

barrage of questions over her links to her country's strongman leader.

”

I don't want my country to be involved in any conflict. I said it many times. You have my position. You have my answer. I don't want sport to be involved in politics, because I'm just a 25-year-old tennis player. And if I would like to be political I wouldn't be here. I don't want to be involved in any politics

ARYNA SABALENKA

Al Najma through to semis

Bahrain champions punch tickets to final four in 25th Asian Men's Club League Championship in Isfahan

● Qassim Qambar receives Match Most Valuable Player award against RKOR Tashkent

● Al Najma to next face off with Group A winners Al Rayyan of Qatar in semis tomorrow

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Al Najma barged yesterday into the semi-finals of the 25th Asian Men's Club League Championship, currently taking place in Isfahan, Iran.

Najma secured their spot after routing RKOR Tashkent of Uzbekistan 44-28 in their concluding Group B game of the preliminary round.

The result earned them second place on their division standings and secured their tickets to the last four, where they will face off against Al Rayyan of Qatar, who finished as winners of Group A. Group B toppers Al Duhail, also of Qatar, lock horns with Kazma SC of Kuwait in the



Al Najma's Qassim Qambar, standing fourth from left, celebrates with teammates as he receives his Match MVP award

other semi-final clash.

Following a rest day today, both semis contests are scheduled to take place tomorrow. The winners then move on to the gold medal match on Saturday, while the losers battle for the bronze medals that same day.

The Bahrainis led 19-15 at the half in their game against Tashkent yesterday and then stepped it up over the final 30 minutes to extend their winning margin to 16 goals. That proved crucial

in their bid for the last four as it gave them the goal difference they needed to advance from the preliminaries.

Najma, Duhail and last year's Asian clubs champions Kuwait SC all finished with four wins and one loss from their five Group B games, with Duhail and Najma boasting the best goal differences.

Qassim Qambar was named the Match Most Valuable Player yesterday, and he was awarded a

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Al Najma welcomed yesterday Bahrain national team star and inspirational captain Hussain Al Sayyad to the team for his first game with them in the tournament



Al Najma's Mohammed Ahmed and Vuk Lazovic look to defend their Tashkent opponent

prize post-game for his efforts.

Najma also welcomed Bahrain national team star and inspirational captain Hussain Al Sayyad to the team for his first game with them in the tournament.

In other results yesterday, Duhail defeated Shahid Shamehli Kazeroon of Iran 29-23 and Kuwait SC beat Junior Club of China 41-37, both in Group B.

In Group A, Rayyan outclassed Oman Club of Oman 35-21, and Foolad Mobarakeh Sepahan SC of Iran beat T-Sports Club of India 10-0.

GROUP B STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
Al Duhail (QAT)	5	4	0	1	34	8
Al Najma (BRN)	5	4	0	1	30	8
Kuwait SC (KUW)	5	4	0	1	20	8
Shahid Shamehli Kazeroon (IRI)	5	2	0	3	-7	4
Junior Club (CHN)	5	0	1	4	-36	1
RKOR Tashkent (UZB)	5	0	1	4	-41	1

The championship has been organised and run by the Asian Handball Federation (AHF). The winners qualify for the 17th IHF Men's Super Globe, to be held from October 17 to 23 in Saudi Arabia.

Najma are hoping to replicate or improve on their finish in last year's Asian clubs competition held in Hyderabad, India, where they won the silver medals.

Bahrain juniors enter final preparations for handball worlds

● Bahrain Handball Association chief visits training session ahead of squad's departure for Athens

● 2023 IHF Men's Junior World Championship to be played June 20 to July 2 in Germany and Greece

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's junior national handball team have entered the final stages of their preparations locally before heading to Europe for their participation in the 2023 IHF Men's Junior World Championship.

The worlds are scheduled to be held in Germany and Greece from June 20 to July 2.

The Bahrainis are set to travel to Athens for their final lead-up to the competition. There, they will hold a training camp and play a number of



Bahrain's players and officials gather around Ali Issa during their training session

warm-up games against their counterparts from Greece and Morocco, along with other teams.

Bahrain Handball Association (BHA) president Ali Issa visited the squad during a local training session under head coach Essam Abdulla and his assistant Raed Al Marzouq.

The BHA chief encouraged the players to put in their best effort in the tournament and represent Bahrain handball to the best of their abilities.

Abdulla has been training with a roster of 22 players, including Abdulla Abdulkarim and Komail Fouad from Naj-

ma; Sadiq Jaafar and Hussain Ali from Tubli; Ahmed Redha, Ahmed Alwani and Jassim Khamis from Shabab; Mustafa Al Hayki, Hassan Khalil, Ahmed Al Zain and Hussain Al Hawaj from Ahli; Ali Al Asheeri, Hesham Isa and Mahmood Abdhussain from Al Dair; Mohammed Hameed, Ali Jameel and Ali Mahmood from Al Ettifaq; Yasser Mohammed and Ali Madan from Barbar; Ali Redha and Ali Al Fardan from Tadamun; and Mohammed Al Khunaizi from Al Ettihad.

The junior nationals are in Group F for the worlds, alongside Sweden, Slovenia and

Greenland. There are 32 teams in all competing, divided into eight pools of four for the preliminary round.

Group A features France, Poland, Croatia and the US. Group B comprises Algeria, Germany, Tunisia and Libya. Group C consists of Portugal, Brazil, Kuwait and Costa Rica; while Group D includes Spain, Faroe Islands, Japan and Angola. Group E features Hungary, Denmark, Argentina and Norway; while Group G comprises Serbia, Morocco, Chile and Iceland. The field is completed by Egypt, Greece, Cuba and Saudi Arabia in Group H.

Djokovic into French Open semi-finals for 12th time



Novak Djokovic plays a forehand return to Karen Khachanov

AFP | Paris

Novak Djokovic closed in on a potential blockbuster French Open semi-final against Carlos Alcaraz after beating Karen Khachanov 4-6, 7-6 (7/0), 6-2, 6-4 yesterday to reach the last four.

Djokovic, chasing a third French Open crown and record 23rd men's Grand Slam singles title, advanced to a 45th major semi-final and his 12th at Roland Garros.

He will take on world number one Alcaraz or Stefanos Tsitsipas, the player he beat from two sets down in the 2021 final, for a place in Sunday's championship match.

Djokovic dropped his first set of the tournament but dominated the second-set tie-break against Khachanov before putting his foot down to secure a ninth win in 10 meetings with the Russian 11th seed.

"I think he was a better

"I think he was a better player for most of the first two sets. I was struggling to find my rhythm. I came into the match quite slow but played a perfect tie-break and from that moment onwards played a couple levels higher

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

player for most of the first two sets," said Djokovic.

"I was struggling to find my rhythm. I came into the match quite slow but played a perfect tie-break and from that moment onwards played a couple levels higher.

"It's a big fight, something you expect in the quarter-finals. You're not going to have your victories handed to you, you have to earn them."

Laporte stretches Dauphine lead with stage win

AFP | Paris

Frenchman Christophe Laporte extended his overall lead in the Criterium du Dauphine by winning the third stage yesterday.

Jumbo-Visma's Laporte pipped Irishman Sam Bennett in second place and Dutch rider Dylan Groenewegen in third

after a 194.1km ride finishing in Le Coteau, to the east of Lyon.

With less than a month to go to the Tour de France, reigning Tour champion Jonas Vingegaard finished in the main group as did 2019 winner Egan Bernal.

Laporte now leads compa-

triot Julian Alaphilippe by 11 seconds in the overall standings thanks to a bonus for the stage victory with Ecuadorian Richard Carapaz third, 17 seconds behind.

Wednesday's fourth stage is a 31.1km individual time trial from Cours to Belmont-de-la-Loire.



Christophe Laporte (C) celebrates as he crosses the finish line