

Bahrain welcomes
 Oman's hosting of
 US-Iranian talks



Ministry of
 Foreign Affairs

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain welcomed Oman's hosting of high-level talks between the US and Iran, commending the Sultanate's constructive diplomatic efforts.

A statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed the Kingdom's hope that the talks would advance peaceful solutions through dialogue and negotiations, in accordance with international legitimacy and the United Nations Charter, and contribute to strengthening confidence building and consolidating security, stability, and peace at the regional and international levels.

Bills aim to raise marriage grants

Mohammed Darwish
 TDT | Manama

Three draft laws to raise the one-off marriage grant paid to widows and other female pension beneficiaries will go before Parliament on Tuesday, with the Services Committee urging MPs to reject all three on financial grounds.

The measures cover government employees under Law No. 13 of 1975, the military retirement scheme under Decree-Law No. 11 of 1976, and the Social Insurance Law under Decree-Law No. 24 of 1976.

Each bill would lift the grant to the value of 24 months of the recipient's pension and fix a minimum payment of BD1,000.

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Timely wages

Labour Ministry urges private sector employers to meet salary payments under labour law

Mohammed Darwish
 TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Labour has urged employers in the private sector to pay wages on time and avoid repeated delays that breach the Labour Law for the Private Sector (Law No. 36 of 2012).

This comes as complaints about unpaid or delayed wages rose from 353 in 2022 to 537 in 2025, even as the Ministry reported a 99.3 per cent compliance rate under the Wage Protection System as of 31 December 2025, in a written reply to MP Hisham Al Awadhi.

The Ministry said an employer's duty is only fulfilled once wages are paid in line with the law.

It pointed to the Wage Protection System, which requires employers to pay wages through approved banks or licensed payment service providers.

Complaints about unpaid or delayed wages rose from 353 in 2022 to 537 in 2025.

Payments

The system, the ministry said, lets it track payments and spot failures to pay on time, working with the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

Where wages are late, the ministry said workers are owed compensation under Article 40.

The rate starts at six per cent a year on the unpaid amount for delays of up to six months, then

rises by one percentage point for each further month, up to a cap of 12 per cent a year until payment is made.

Complaints

Workers can file complaints online through the ministry website, via the national "Tawasul" platform, or by visiting in person.

The ministry said cases are logged and reviewed, with ur-

gent complaints given priority in weekly inspection plans.

Inspectors then carry out site visits to check the claim.

If a breach is found, the employer may receive a written warning with a deadline to fix the position, or a violation report may be filed depending on the case.

The ministry said it also makes routine inspection visits to check that wages are paid

Patient protection

MP calls for regulated fees at private hospitals

Mohammed Darwish
 TDT | Manama

MP Dr Maryam Al Dhaen has urged authorities to regulate pricing for health services at private hospitals and clinics, saying clearer rules are needed to protect patients and curb wide gaps in charges.

Dr Al Dhaen said the lack of a clear pricing framework can leave patients facing unexplained differences in cost, add to their financial strain and weaken confidence in the health system.

She said the aim should be a balance between providers' ability to keep services running and improve, and patients' right to safe, good-quality care at fair and transparent prices.

She said pricing can go wrong in two directions.

Charges pushed too low, she argued, can raise risks around



standards and patient safety, as well as the long-term viability of health facilities.

Prices pushed too high, she said, can lead to patients being exploited and heavier bills.

Dr Al Dhaen said her proposal focused on putting controls in place for private-sector fees, including a "logical" minimum level for certain services, to support quality and patient safety

without allowing exaggerated pricing, either upwards or downwards.

Prices

"It is illogical and professionally unacceptable for complex medical procedures or surgeries to be offered at extremely low prices," she said.

Such pricing, she added, prompts questions about staff competence, the quality of materials used, sterilisation practices and tools, and the time allowed for diagnosis and follow-up.

She said a delicate operation priced at a level that does not even cover the cost of instruments should not be treated as a competitive advantage, but as a problem that needs to be addressed.

Competition

At the other end of the scale, she said some institutions

charge inflated fees, creating uneven competition, confusing citizens and residents and affecting trust in the system.

She cited laparoscopic procedures as one example, saying some centres offer them at prices that would not cover the cost of equipment, while other centres charge double.

"How do we ensure the patient receives the same level of safety?" she asked.

Concerns

She also raised concerns about laboratory tests offered at very low "promotional" prices, saying they can raise questions about the quality of materials used and the accuracy of results.

"The aim is to protect the patient first," she said, adding that regulation would help bring order and openness to the market, support safer services and make patients' rights clearer.

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Safe shelter

MPs push for national platform to repair homes of low-income families

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A national "Tarmeem" platform to repair the homes of low-income Bahrainis will be debated by Parliament on Tuesday, under a proposal to create a single route for spotting and fixing houses at risk of collapse across the country.

The proposal, put forward by MPs Basema Mubarak, Mamdouh Al Saleh, Dr Mahdi Al Shuwaikh, Deputy Speaker Abdulkarim Salman and Hanan Fardan, calls for the platform to be overseen by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, working with the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and the Ministry of Social Development.

MP Basema Mubarak said some low-income families were living in homes "liable to collapse, or strongly at risk of becoming liable to collapse".

She said early repairs would keep costs down, adding: "A simple repair will extend the life



of the building for many years and will be less costly."

The lawmaker warned that waiting could leave owners facing a heavier bill, saying: "If the property deteriorates more than that, it will be difficult to repair and it will carry large and exhausting costs."

The proposal says repairs would help extend the life of buildings and protect Bahrain's built character and long-standing Islamic heritage.

Plans

It also calls for making use of Bahraini engineering gradu-

ates to put forward repair plans aimed at keeping homes safe and fit to live in.

The platform would be funded through money set aside in the state budget, alongside donations and grants accepted by the ministry, according to the proposal.

It also calls for temporary housing for families during repair work, aiming to avoid extra burdens on households.

Mubarak said families should be offered suitable temporary accommodation during works for renewal, maintenance, fixing urgent structural defects, or necessary additions and changes.

A simple repair will extend the life of the building for many years and will be less costly

MP BASEMA MUBARAK

In its reply, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning said the aim of the proposal was already being met through renovation finance already offered to eligible citizens under existing rules.

It cited Decree-Law No. 10 of 1976 on housing, which sets out the ministry's role in providing services for low-income citizens, including finance to buy, build or renovate a home, and pointed to Ministerial Decision No. 868 of 2022 on financing services, which defines renovation finance as bank funding for renewal, maintenance, fixing urgent structural defects, or necessary additions and changes.

Indian Embassy inaugurates Maharashtra and Goa Tourism, ODOP walls



H.E. Ambassador Vinod K. Jacob with members of the Maharashtra and Goa communities

Neethu Vayalakkara
TDT | Manama

The Indian Embassy in Bahrain inaugurated the Maharashtra and Goa Tourism and One District One Product (ODOP) walls at its Consular Hall, with Ambassador H.E. Vinod K. Jacob presiding over the ceremony in the presence of members of the Maharashtra and Goa communities.

The walls showcase major tourist attractions and select products identified under the ODOP scheme, highlighting the cultural heritage and commercial strengths of the two western Indian states.

Culture

Speaking in Marathi and Konkani, H.E. Ambassador Jacob said the two-month focus on Maharashtra and

Goa would provide Indians in Bahrain and friends of India an opportunity to appreciate their culture while exploring avenues for stronger trade and commercial ties.

The initiative forms part of the Embassy's 'Focus State/Union Territory' programme, under which tourism and ODOP products of a selected state are promoted in Bahrain for around two months.

Several other Indian states have previously been featured under the initiative.

Located along the Konkan coast and Western Ghats, Maharashtra and Goa share maritime heritage and cultural similarities. Maharashtra's economy is driven by services and industry, with Mumbai as India's financial hub, while Goa's growth is largely tourism-led.

Pets' Day Out in Bahrain!

Bahrain Pet Festival 2026, A Mega Pet Show for Pet Parents and Pet Lovers of Kingdom

TDT | Manama

After increased success since 2013, the UAE's premier Pet Show will be held in the Kingdom of Bahrain at the Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Park in Hidd on the Friday the 13th and Saturday the 14th of February 2026, from 3pm till 10pm.

Promising animal and pet lovers a fun day packed with animal and family-friendly outdoor activities, this pet festival will celebrate lifestyle with pets with a variety of entertaining competitions and demonstrations.

The festival will also look to raise awareness about animal welfare, health and training, as well as the numerous pet products and services available in Bahrain.

Pre-registration

Guests can pre-register now for fast track entry by visiting the event website and social media pages.

The event is organised in Bahrain by South Management Co. WLL, in association with Showline (UAE) and various pet industry organisations of



Bahrain.

For this year's Bahrain Pet Festival, various segments of the pet world and pet industry have been combined in order to showcase the Kingdom's original Pet's Day Out.

Highlights

The highlights of the show are: The Bahrain Kennel Club (FCI) National Dog Show (Pure Breeds); All Breeds Open (Fun) Dog Show; Dog Sports & Agility Competitions; Bahrain Cat Beauty Competition Show; International Judges & Participants; Demonstrations by Dog experts & Trainers; Educational Petting Farm & Kids Play Zone; Pet Fashion Shows & Fancy Dress Competitions; Pets Adoption & Animal Welfare Activities; Multiple pet products and pet services vendors; Food & Beverage Trucks & Kiosks; and Veterinary Experts & Pet

Professionals.

The Pet Festival is an educational and entertaining animal fair designed to raise awareness about animal welfare and to educate individuals about pet products, pet food, pet fashion, pet health, pet training & all pet services - all that one needs for their best friends!

Competition

The event will have All Breeds Open Dog Show & Competitions for Dogs under various groups and categories, judged by renowned International All Breeds judge Mrs. Yashodhara (FCI International All Breeds Judge).

The show also features a Petting Farm; Kids play zone; stalls for pet products, service organisations and animal welfare programme; pet and veterinary specialists; fully licensed F&B stalls, and a handicrafts sale.

Business owner faces trial over BD240,000 VAT case

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A business owner will face trial on today accused of collecting more than BD240,000 in value added tax from customers and failing to pass it on to the National Bureau for Revenue.

The Head of the Tax Evasion Crimes Unit at the Financial Crimes and Money Laundering Prosecution said the unit received a report from the bureau after the man filed VAT returns but did not remit the sums due, in breach of the VAT law.

Prosecutors said investigators moved once the report

came in, ordering access to the accused's bank accounts and those of his establishment, which falls under the VAT regime.

Statements were taken from specialists at the National Bureau for Revenue and the case papers were reviewed.

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Modern upgrade

Ministry plans renovations to enhance safety and functionality at Jidhafs Market

Completion set for early 2027

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Work on Jidhafs Market will start in the coming months, with the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture expecting the site to be ready in the first months of 2027, the Undersecretary for Municipal Affairs, His Excellency Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, told Parliament.

H.E. Shaikh Ahmed said the ministry has already regularised the legal status of about 90 per cent of shops and activities in the market, including vegetable, meat and fish sellers, along with other trades.

He said work is ongoing with those still outside the process to sort out their status.

Needs

The Undersecretary said the market needs a full upgrade to meet today's needs, and that



Jidhafs Central Market

the ministry will carry out wide-ranging maintenance during this year.

The plan covers repairs inside and out, electrical work and upgrades to infrastructure, aimed at improving conditions across the site.

Addressing claims that some vendors and stalls were being removed, H.E. Shaikh Ahmed said the steps taken were not permanent removals but site organisation linked to safety and environmental rules.

He said the market sits on a busy road and needed better

control of movement to protect shoppers and nearby residents.

The Undersecretary said the ministry wants current stallholders and tradespeople involved, and asked them to stick to the rules and requirements needed to run their businesses.

Partners

He said they are partners in the market's upgrade.

H.E. Shaikh Ahmed said the ministry has faced challenges in arranging walkways and managing entry and exit routes, but has put practical solutions in place



The ministry has put practical solutions in place to ease access for residents and shop owners and improve the area around the market.

H.E. SHAIKH AHMED BIN MOHAMMED AL KHALIFA, UNDERSECRETARY FOR MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

to ease access for residents and shop owners and improve the area around the market.

He said the market would return in a new look, and repeated that work unfinished now would be completed in the coming period.

KCA set to launch 'Grandmaster India Quiz'

TDT | Manama

The Kerala Catholic Association (KCA) has announced the launch of the "Grandmaster India Quiz," a premier intellectual event dedicated to celebrating India's history, culture, and global contributions.

Scheduled for Friday, 17 April 2026, at 4:00 PM, the quiz aims to strengthen the deep-rooted cultural ties between India and Bahrain while fostering a spirit of learning among the diaspora.

The competition is structured into two categories: Grandmaster Juniors (under 18) and Grandmaster Seniors (above 18), with each team consisting of three members.

While the quiz focuses pri-



Dr. Raju Narayanaswamy

marily on India's governance, science, and sports, 10% of the questions will specifically highlight Bahrain, reflecting the shared friendship between the two nations.

Adding significant prestige to the event, Dr. Raju Narayanaswamy IAS, Principal Secretary to the Government of Kerala and a renowned figure in the Indian quizzing circuit, will serve as the Chief Quiz Master.

Known for his intellectual depth and engaging style, Dr. Narayanaswamy will be joined by Aruldas Thomas, a prominent coordinator of knowledge-based events in Bahrain.

The competition will kick off with a 30-question written preliminary round, leading to a grand stage final for the top six teams in each category.

Attractive cash prizes are up for grabs, with winners receiving USD 500, followed by USD

300 and USD 200 for the second and third positions, respectively.

KCA President James John emphasized that this initiative is part of the association's mission to nurture talent and promote cultural harmony.

Registrations

Online registrations open on 1 March 2026, with a fee of BD 6 for Juniors and BD 10 for Seniors per team.

The event is managed by an organizing committee led by Abraham John (Chairman) and Nithyan Thomas (Vice Chairman).

Interested participants and sponsors are encouraged to contact the KCA committee for further details.

Rain adds winter charm to the Farmers Market

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Light rain greeted visitors at the Farmers Market in the Budaiya Botanical Garden yesterday, setting a quieter tone for the winter-only event.

Gentle showers fell across the open garden as shoppers moved steadily between stalls, umbrellas in hand, embracing a slower rhythm under grey skies.

Bahraini farmers remained at their stalls despite the weather, presenting locally grown vegetables and fruits including lettuce, tomatoes and lemons.

The light rain appeared to sharpen the sense of freshness around the displays, reinforcing the farm to table character that defines the market during the winter season.

Cultivation

Conversations between vendors and visitors continued



Bahraini farmer's fresh produce

easily beneath umbrellas, with farmers sharing details about their crops and cultivation.

Foodtrucks became natural gathering points as visitors paused for breakfast items, hot drinks and freshly prepared offerings.

Coffee and warm beverages provided comfort against the cool air, turning the light rain into part of the experience rather than a disruption.

Footfall was lighter than on clear days, yet the market retained its community feel. Friends crossed paths between stalls, families took short walks through the garden and visitors expressed appreciation for the calm created by the weather.

The scene reflected a shared understanding that the market is as much about connection as it is about shopping.

Today's visit highlighted the Farmers' Market's place as a winter destination in Bahrain.

Mechanic awaits appeal verdict



Drug smuggling and drug use case

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court of Appeal has scheduled February 23 to issue its verdict in the appeal filed by a mechanic. He was previously sentenced by the Court of First Instance to 15 years in prison, fined BD10,000, and had seized items confiscated.

The court also ordered his deportation after serving his sentence, in connection with a case involving drug smuggling and drug use.

The Public Prosecution charged the 24-year-old defendant, who works as a mechanic, with smuggling and possessing cannabis (hashish) with intent to traffic during 2025, in violation of the law.

Authorization

He was also charged with smuggling and possessing morphine and the psychotropic

substances pregabalin and clonazepam for personal use without legal authorization.

According to the case details, a customs officer at Bahrain International Airport testified that on August 24, while inspecting luggage arriving from an Asian country through the X-ray scanner, he became suspicious of the defendant's suitcase and marked it with an "X" for thorough inspection.

The officer added that upon the defendant's arrival, he was diverted from the green channel to the red channel.

Denial

When asked whether he had anything to declare, the defendant denied carrying any prohibited items.

However, upon inspecting the suitcase, officers found a tobacco-like substance suspected to be narcotics weighing approximately 2.2 kilograms, along with 29 capsules suspected to be psychotropic substances, in addition to 30 narcotic pills concealed among the clothing inside the bag.

Investment firm to pay BD21,800 in unpaid rent

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

An investment company has been ordered by the High Civil Court to pay a building owner BD21,800 in unpaid rent, plus interest of 1 per cent a year from the due date until payment, after it fell behind on monthly rent for a property it leased in Hoora.

The court also ordered the company to pay the appropriate court costs and a contribution towards lawyers' fees.

The dispute centres on

a lease signed on 1 October 2024 for a three-year term, including two years described as mandatory.

The rent was set at BD12,000 a month.

The agreement gave the tenant a three-month grace period to carry out maintenance works and secure licences, with rent due to start on 1 January 2025.

Zuhair AbdulLatif, the lawyer acting for the landlord, said the contract required the tenant to insure the building and hand over 33 cheques covering the full term.

Stronger support for ADHD pupils

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A proposal urging the Ministry of Education to train school counsellors and strengthen support for pupils diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in public and private schools will be debated in Parliament on Tuesday.

The proposal was submitted by MPs Jaleela Alawi, Dr Ali Al Nuaimi, Mahmood Fardan, Lulwa Al Rumaihi and Muneeb Seroor, and has been backed by Parliament's Services Committee, which recommended approval.

It calls for a national programme to spot cases early and keep support in place through

the school years.

The accompanying papers say ADHD can affect behaviour and learning, and warn that some pupils face hurdles in staying in school, including being expelled mid-year, refused places in some private schools, or denied re-enrolment.

The proposal asks for surveys and field studies to measure how common ADHD is across Bahrain's public and private schools.

It also calls for school counselling and special education services to be reworked so they bring in specialists such as behavioural therapists, occupational therapists and school counsellors, alongside more training for teachers and school leaders on classroom support.

Crypto firm accidentally sends \$40 bn in bitcoin to users



A woman is reflected on a screen showing exchange rates of cryptocurrencies at Bithumb virtual currency exchange in Seoul

AFP | Seoul

A South Korean cryptocurrency exchange apologised yesterday after mistakenly transferring more than \$40 billion worth of bitcoin to users, which briefly prompted a sell-off on the platform.

Bithumb said it accidentally sent 620,000 bitcoins, currently worth more than \$40 billion, and blocked trading and withdrawals for the 695 affected users within 35 minutes after the error occurred on Friday.

According to local reports, Bithumb was meant to send about 2,000 won (\$1.37) to each customer as part of a promotion, but mistakenly transferred roughly 2,000 bitcoins per user.

"We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience caused to our customers due to the confusion that occurred during the distribution process of this (promotional) event," Bithumb

said in a statement released yesterday.

The platform said it had recovered 99.7 percent of the mistakenly sent bitcoins, and that it would use its own assets to fully cover the amount that was lost in the incident.

It admitted the error briefly caused "sharp volatility" in bitcoin prices on the platform as some recipients sold the tokens, adding that it brought the situation under control within five minutes.

Its charts showed the token's prices briefly went down 17 percent to 81.1 million won on the platform late Friday.

The platform stressed that the incident was "unrelated to external hacking or security breaches".

Bitcoin, the world's biggest cryptocurrency, sank this week, wiping out gains sparked by US President Donald Trump's presidential election victory in November 2024.

Trump signs order preparing for tariffs on Iran's trade partners



Traffic moves through a street in Tehran

AFP | Washington

US President Donald Trump on Friday signed an executive order threatening tariffs on Iran's trade partners, after he pledged a further round of talks with Tehran next week.

The order, effective from yesterday, called for a fresh "imposition of tariffs" on countries still doing business with Iran.

It comes amid heightened tensions between Washington and Tehran, with an American naval group led by an aircraft carrier in Middle Eastern waters and indirect talks held on Tehran's nuclear program in Oman on Friday.

The levies "may be imposed on goods imported into the United States that are products of any country that directly or indirectly purchases, imports, or otherwise acquires any

goods or services from Iran", the order said.

Trump issued a threat of 25 percent tariffs on any country trading with Iran last month.

This order establishes a process for his administration to impose tariffs on goods from those countries.

The rate is to be determined by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, although the order specifies that it could be "for example" 25 percent, the level first mentioned by the US president in mid-January.

Tariffs would affect trade with a number of countries including Russia, Germany, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

More than a quarter of Iran's trade is with China, with \$18 billion in imports and \$14.5 billion in exports in 2024, according to World Trade Organization data.

Syria, Saudis sign joint airline, telecoms deals

AFP | Damascus

Syria and Saudi Arabia signed deals yesterday that include a joint airline and a \$1-billion project to develop telecommunications, officials said, as Syria seeks to rebuild after years of war.

Saudi Arabia has been a major backer of Syria's Islamist authorities who took power after toppling longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad in December 2024.

The new authorities in Damascus have worked to attract investment and have signed major agreements with several companies and governments, including Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

Syrian Investment Authority chief Talal al-Hilali announced a series of deals including "a low-cost Syrian-Saudi airline aimed at strengthening regional and international air links".

The agreement also includes the development of a new international airport in the northern city of Aleppo, and redeveloping the existing facility.

Hilali also announced an agreement for a project called SilkLink to develop Syria's tele-



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (R) greeting Syria's interim president Ahmed al-Sharaa as US President Donald Trump looks on

communications infrastructure and digital connectivity".

For decades, Syria was unable to secure significant investments because of Assad-era sanctions.

But the United States fully removed its remaining sanctions

on Damascus late last year, paving the way for the full return of investments.

Syria and Saudi Arabia also inked an agreement on water desalination and development cooperation yesterday.

US to boost Argentina beef imports as cost worries bite

AFP | Washington

President Donald Trump signed an order Friday to allow more Argentinian beef imports into the US, a move aimed at cooling climbing prices of the staple meat as affordability worries grow.

But the decision could draw alarm from the agriculture sector, which previously warned that buying more from Argentina undercuts American family farmers and ranchers.

Friday's order raises the quota of beef allowed into the US under preferential tariff treatment by 80,000 tonnes.

This applies to lean beef trimmings, which are blended with fattier ones to make ground beef products like hamburgers, the document added.



Workers cut beef at the H&H meat-packing plant in Buenos Aires

The aim is to raise the supply of ground beef for US consumers. The quotas will be administered over 2026.

Beef and veal prices were up 16.4% from a year ago in December 2025, government data

showed, and are predicted to keep increasing as the US cattle herd size remains its smallest in decades.

The cost of ground beef rose to an average of around US\$6.70 per pound in December, the highest since the labor department started tracking such costs.

All this has added to budget pressures American households are facing. Cost-of-living issues are seen as a contributing factor to losses by Trump's Republican Party in several high-profile elections late last year.

In November, Trump said he had asked the justice department to investigate the meatpacking industry over high beef prices, as he faced mounting political pain over the issue.

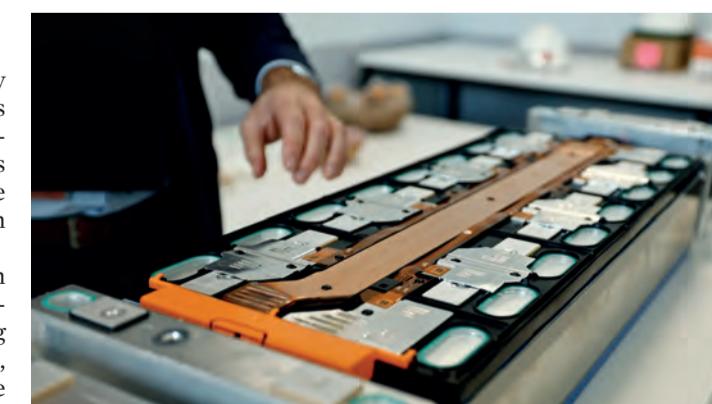
Stellantis-backed ACC shelves battery plant plans in Italy, Germany: union

AFP | Rome

The European vehicle battery venture Automotive Cells (ACC) has told unions it is shelving plans to build gigafactories in both Italy and Germany, the Italian metalworkers' union Uilm said yesterday.

In a statement, ACC, which is backed by Jeep-maker Stellantis, said it was considering shutting down the projects, which have been on hold since 2024 amid slower-than-expected growth for electric vehicles.

"ACC management confirmed to us this morning what we've long feared: that ACC's plan to



An employee shows a battery at the Automotive Cells Company (ACC) Gigafactory, which produces lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles (EVs), in Douvrin, northern France

build a gigafactory in Termoli as has the case in Germany," the union said in a statement.

The new ACC sites were among dozens of battery projects emerging in Europe as it seeks to reduce reliance on Chinese producers that dominate the market, but were halted as the company weighed shifting to a less-expensive battery technology.

"It is clear that the prerequisites for restarting ACC's projects in Germany and Italy... are not yet in place," ACC said in a statement yesterday.

The company was in talks with unions over "the modalities for a potential shutdown of the Gigafactory projects in Kaiserslautern and Termoli", it said.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Money Laundering Has Gone Corporate



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

Legal and financial expertise plays a central role. These schemes are not built to break the law outright, but to operate just beyond its reach. Regulatory gaps are exploited, compliance boxes are checked, and wrongdoing exists in practice while remaining difficult to prosecute under narrow legal definitions.

This is not the work of one bad actor. It requires a system: someone to propose the arrangement, others to approve it, justify it, sign it, and those who choose not to ask questions. When silence becomes part of the process, institutions meant to serve the public interest can quietly transform into vehicles for organized financial misconduct.

The irony is striking. Some of these same entities publicly promote transparency, host anti-corruption events, or align themselves with reform initiatives. Behind the scenes, however, they absorb expert

knowledge to refine their own methods of evasion. Media and public relations complete the picture, polishing an image that appears credible and untouchable.

Money does not disappear by accident. It moves because systems allow it to move, because oversight is weakened, and because accountability is avoided. When money laundering begins to look legitimate—wrapped in contracts, procedures, and professional language—the problem is no longer purely criminal. It becomes institutional. And that is precisely what makes modern money laundering so difficult to confront, and so dangerous to ignore.

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

News in brief



Takaichi talks tough on immigration on eve of vote

◆ Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi pledged yesterday to make Japan "more prosperous and safer", including through tougher immigration screening, in a final appeal to voters on the eve of snap elections. Opinion polls suggest that Takaichi's ruling bloc, led by the Liberal Democratic Party, could romp home in Sunday's vote and secure a two-thirds majority in the powerful lower house. "Pushing the button for growth is the

Takaichi cabinet's job. Japan will become more and more prosperous and safer," Takaichi, 64, told a campaign rally attended by thousands in Tokyo.

◆ The Pentagon is to cut all academic ties with Harvard University, ending military education, fellowships and certificate programs, it said in a statement on Friday. The move is the latest in the Trump administration's battle with Harvard over claims that the Ivy League institution promotes "woke" ideology. "For too long, this department has sent our best and brightest officers to Harvard, hoping the university would better understand and appreciate our warrior class," Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said in the statement.

Minibus crash kills 15 in northeastern Afghanistan

Afghanistan yesterday, police said, updating an earlier death toll. The bus "veered off course and fell into a valley" as it was travelling along a road in Badakhshan province towards its capital Faizabad, a provincial police spokesperson said, blaming the accident on "severe road damage". The victims include six children, five women, and four men, the spokesperson added. Three of them died at hospital after being taken there with serious injuries, raising the overall death toll from the accident to 15.

◆ Spain and Portugal yesterday braced for another storm heading for the Iberian peninsula, just days after the floods caused by Storm Leonardo killed at least one person in each country.

The latest depression, christened Storm Marta, has prompted the deployment of more than 26,500 rescuers in Portugal, where the foul weather has led three municipalities to postpone Sunday's presidential vote till next week. Both countries have issued warnings over the potential fresh floods, after inundations blocked hundreds of roads, disrupted trains and forced thousands to evacuate from the rising waters.

Pentagon to cut academic ties with Harvard: Statement



◆ At least 15 people were killed when a minibus overturned and crashed into a valley in northeastern

Spain, Portugal brace for fresh storm after flood deaths



Iran FM looks to more talks, but warns US

Tehran signals openness to dialogue while maintaining nuclear and defence red lines

● Indirect talks in Oman deemed a positive start

● Iran refuses to negotiate on its missile program

● Araghchi warns of strikes on regional US bases

AFP | Paris

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on yesterday he hoped talks with the United States would resume soon, while reiterating Tehran's red lines and warning against any American attack.

According to excerpts published on his official Telegram channel during an interview with the Al Jazeera network, Araghchi said that Iran's missile programme was "never negotiable" in Friday's talks in Oman.

He warned that Tehran would target US bases in the region if the US attacked Iranian territory.

However, Araghchi also said that despite the talks in Muscat being indirect, "an opportunity arose to shake hands with the American delegation".

He called the talks "a good start", but added that building trust would take time. He said the talks would resume "soon".

US President Donald Trump on Friday called the talks "very good", and pledged another round of negotiations next week.

Despite this, he signed an executive order effective from yesterday that called for the "impo-



US sailors direct an EA-18G Growler, attached to Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 133, on the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln in the Arabian Sea

sition of tariffs" on countries still doing business with Iran.

The United States also announced new sanctions against numerous shipping entities and vessels, aimed at curbing Iran's oil exports.

More than a quarter of Iran's trade is with China, with \$18 billion in imports and \$14.5 billion in exports in 2024, according to World Trade Organization data.

Araghchi told Al Jazeera that nuclear enrichment was Iran's "inalienable right and must continue".

'Defence issue'

"We are ready to reach a reassuring agreement on enrichment," he said.

"The Iranian nuclear case will

only be resolved through negotiations."

YOU KNOW WHAT

Despite months of hostility, Araghchi revealed that in Oman "an opportunity arose to shake hands with the American delegation" – a symbolic gesture not seen in over a decade

He also said Iran's missile programme was "never negotiable" because it relates to a "defence issue".

Washington has sought to address Iran's ballistic missile programme and its support for militant groups in the region -- issues which Israel has pushed to include in the talks, according to media reports.

Tehran has repeatedly rejected expanding the scope of the negotiations beyond the nuclear issue.

Friday's unprecedented talks between the two arch enemies came amid a major US military buildup in the region in the wake of Iran's crackdown on protests that began in late December, driven by economic grievances.

Trump refuses to apologize for racist clip of Obamas as monkeys

AFP | Washington

President Donald Trump refused to apologize Friday for a video posted on his social media account depicting Barack and Michelle Obama as monkeys, though he said he condemned the post as the White House shifted the blame to staff.

The video shared on Trump's Truth Social account late Thursday night sparked censure across the US political spectrum, with the White House initially rejecting "fake outrage" only to then blame the post on an error by a staff member.

"I didn't make a mistake," Trump said on Air Force One late Friday when asked if he would apologize for the post.

Asked if he condemns the racist imagery in the video, Trump replied: "Of course I do."



US President Donald Trump speaks during an event

conspiracies about Republican Trump's 2020 election loss to Joe Biden, the Obamas were shown with their faces on the bodies of monkeys for about one second.

The video, uploaded late Thursday amid a flurry of other posts, repeated false allegations that ballot-counting company Dominion Voting Systems helped steal the election from Trump.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt initially played down the row, saying the images were "from an internet meme video depicting President Trump as the King of the Jungle and Democrats as characters from The Lion King."

"Please stop the fake outrage and report on something today that actually matters to the American public," Leavitt said in a statement to AFP.

Democrats slammed Trump as "vile" over the clip of the Obamas -- the first Black president and first lady in US history -- while a senior Republican senator said the video was blatantly racist.

Near the end of the one-minute-long video promoting

1587

Mary, Queen of Scots, is beheaded at Fotheringhay Castle at age 44 after being convicted of plotting to assassinate Elizabeth I in the Babington Plot

1672

Isaac Newton reads his first optics paper before the Royal Society in London



1807

Battle of Eylau ends inconclusively between Napoleon's forces and the Russian Empire, first battle Napoleon isn't victorious

1971

NASDAQ Composite stock market index debuts with 50 companies and a starting value of 100

US pressing Ukraine and Russia to end war by June, Zelensky says

Peace push accelerates but disagreements over territory remain major obstacle



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky (C-L) chairs a meeting with journalists at his office in Kyiv

AFP | Kyiv

The United States wants Ukraine and Russia to end their nearly four-year war by June, and has offered to host talks between the two sides in Florida next week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

US-led efforts to end Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II have stepped up a gear in recent weeks, but Moscow and Kyiv remain at odds over the key issue of territory.

Russia, which occupies around 20 percent of its neighbour, is pushing for full control of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region as part of any deal and has threatened to take it by force if talks fail.

But Ukraine says ceding ground will embolden Moscow and so it will not sign an agreement that fails to deter Russia

rounds of negotiations between the two sides in Abu Dhabi since January, brokering a major prisoner exchange but failing to reach a breakthrough on territory.

Both Moscow and Kyiv said talks have been difficult.

'Free economic zone'

Zelensky has repeatedly expressed frustration that his

country is being asked to make disproportionate compromises compared to Russia.

Ukraine has proposed freezing the conflict along the current front lines.

Russia has rejected this and Washington has instead pushed for Kyiv to convert the land it currently controls in the Donetsk region into a "free economic zone" where neither side has



The US has suggested converting contested parts of the Donetsk region into a "free economic zone" without military control, a proposal Ukraine says requires fair and reliable rules to be viable

military control.

"Even if we come to the creation of a free economic zone, we will need fair and reliable rules," Zelensky said.

The two sides have also failed to reach a "common understanding" on the issue of control over the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Zelensky said. Russian forces seized the plant, the largest in Europe, at the start of the conflict and have held onto it since.

Ukraine will not tolerate Russia and the United States making deals about Ukraine behind its back, Zelensky added.



With our teams reporting a hurricane of violence against women and girls, I joined @UNFPA global leadership team to listen and plan how to be there for those at such horrific risk. @unfpachief @UNReliefChief

02



Celebrating the India-Malaysia people-to-people connect! PM Anwar Ibrahim and I are heading to the community programme in Kuala Lumpur. @anwaribrahim @narendramodi

03



The Olympic Games show what humanity can achieve when we meet in the spirit of fairness and respect. Even in challenging times, unity remains within reach. #MilanoCortina2026 @UN_PGA

04



To all the athletes representing @TeamUSA: I'm so proud of you. Your talent and perseverance have brought you to this moment, and Michelle and I will be joining Americans from across the country cheering you on. @BarackObama

'Mrs Doubtfire': Queen's image on new Australian coins ridiculed



The newly launched coins with the image of the late Queen Elizabeth II

AFP | Sydney

Australia's royal mint has defended a widely-lampooned image of the late Queen Elizabeth II on new commemorative coins celebrating her life.

"There's a reason most portraits are from the side. Looks like she just ran into a wall," said another.

Queen Elizabeth, who died in 2022, reigned for more than 70 years and had strong ties with Australia, which has the British monarch as its head of state.

The Australian mint posted an explanation of the coins' details, including motifs celebrating the late monarch's love of horses and corgi dogs.

"Our coin images don't always capture the full beauty of a design once it's etched in metal," it conceded.

"No, stop don't release it, melt them all and get at proper portrait of The Queen not a screen

Clintons call for their Epstein testimony to be public

AFP | Washington

Former US president Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary are calling for their congressional testimony on ties to convicted sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein to be held publicly, to prevent Republicans from politicizing the issue.

Both Clintons had been ordered to give closed-door depositions before the House Oversight Committee, which is probing the deceased financier's connections to powerful figures and how information about his crimes was handled.

Democrats say the probe is being weaponized to attack political opponents of President Donald Trump -- himself a longtime Epstein associate who has not been called to testify -- rather than to conduct legitimate oversight.

House Republicans had previously threatened a contempt vote if the Democratic power couple did not show up to testify, which they have since agreed to do.

But holding the deposition behind closed doors, Bill Clinton said Friday, would be akin to being tried at a "kangaroo court."

"Let's stop the games & do



Bill Clinton, 42nd US President and his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton, 67th US Secretary of State, arrive at the Booksellers Room of the White House (file photo)

this the right way: in a public hearing," the former Democratic president said on X.

Hillary Clinton, former secretary of state, said the couple had already told the Republican-led Oversight Committee "what we know."

"If you want this fight...let's have it in public," she said Thursday.

The Justice Department last week released the latest cache of so-called Epstein files -- more than three million documents, photos and videos related to its investigation into Epstein, who died from what was determined to be suicide

while in custody in 2019.

Bill Clinton features regularly in the files, but no evidence has come to light implicating either Clinton in criminal activity.

The former president has acknowledged flying on Epstein's plane in the early 2000s for Clinton Foundation-related humanitarian work, but said he never visited Epstein's private island.

Hillary Clinton, who ran against Trump for president in 2016, said she had no meaningful interactions with Epstein, never flew on his plane and never visited his island.

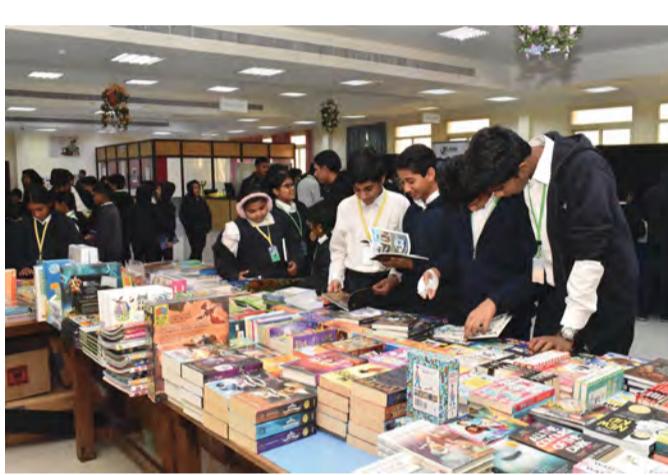
Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

Third Edition of "Indian in Bahrain" Festival Celebrates 55 Years of Diplomatic Ties



The vibrant third edition of the "Indian in Bahrain" Festival was held at Dana Mall, marking a significant milestone in the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Bahrain. The event was jointly inaugurated by H.E. Mr. Vinod K. Jacob, Ambassador of India, alongside H.E. Mr. Abdulnabi Al Shoala, Mr. Abdulrahman Juma, and Dr. Varghese Kurian. This year's celebration, a successful collaboration between the Indian Embassy and Dana Mall, featured a rich tapestry of cultural programs. A notable highlight was the Bahraini cultural dance performed by members of the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam, symbolizing the deep bond between the two nations. The festival also showcased India's diverse heritage through traditional dance forms such as Bharatanatyam and Kathak, while community stalls offered a variety of authentic regional cuisines and aesthetic traditional attire. The festivities extended beyond the mall, as the Indian Embassy cricket team faced off against the Kanoo Group earlier that day to emphasize the importance of sports in bilateral ties.

ISB Celebrates Literary Excellence During Book Week 2026



The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) successfully concluded its vibrant Book Week held from February 2 to 5, 2026. This annual event remains a cornerstone of the school's efforts to promote reading habits, creativity, and literary appreciation, moving the culture of learning well beyond the confines of standard textbooks. The celebration commenced with a traditional lighting of the lamp by Principal VR Palaniswamy, symbolizing the illumination of knowledge. The inaugural ceremony was attended by Vice-Principal G. Satheesh, Staff Representative Parvathi Devadas, and Librarian L Lakshmanan, alongside dedicated faculty and students. A series of spirited competitions highlighted the week's agenda. In the Grade IV Fancy Dress category, Joan Cijo secured the top spot, while Aadhis Arunima Rakesh and Reyhan Thomas Mathew jointly won the Grade V News Reading competition. Creative honors also went to Filza Fathima for her Grade VI Library Logo Design, Upanya C. Unnikrishnan for Grade VII Short Story Writing, and Shagufta Shaikh for the Grade VIII Book Review challenge. The event was further enriched by the participation of reputed bookshops including Book Land, Book Mart, and Bookcase.

Sacred Heart School Hosts Vital Road Safety Workshop



In an effort to instill lifelong safety habits in its youngest learners, Sacred Heart School hosted a dedicated Road Safety Awareness Workshop at its Isa Town campus. The session was conducted by experts from the Directorate of Traffic, Kingdom of Bahrain, specifically tailored for Junior 1 students. Approximately 120 students, accompanied by their teachers, participated in the interactive session. The workshop focused on the fundamental rules of the road, including the importance of using pedestrian crossings, understanding traffic signals, and maintaining vigilance while walking near vehicles. The hands-on session allowed students to ask questions and engage with traffic officers, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world safety.

MESC Chargers Triumph in Inaugural Kavalani Premier League



Kavalani & Sons, a premier industrial equipment supplier, recently celebrated the successful conclusion of the Kavalani Premier League (KPL) 2026 - Season 1. The inaugural season featured six teams representing various departments and partner organizations, including Gemini Gladiators, Bitumode Bisons, INET Strikers, MESC Chargers, Spartan United, and Eclipse Kings. After weeks of spirited competition, the MESC Chargers emerged as champions after a thrilling final against the INET Strikers. The closing ceremony was attended by Managing Director Mr. Mukesh Tolaram Gandhi Kavalani and Directors Mr. Prashant Raj Gandhi and Mr. Kamal Dev Gandhi. A special highlight of the event was the presentation of the Champions Trophy by Mr. Sami Ali, President of the Bahrain Cricket Federation. Beyond the pitch, the company honored Mr. Rajesh Kumar for his remarkable 25 years of service, emphasizing the organization's commitment to loyalty and long-term growth.

Free Medical Camp



The Voice of Trivandrum-Bahrain Forum (VOT) organized a comprehensive free medical camp and health awareness seminar for the expatriate community. Held in collaboration with Al Hilal Premier Hospital in Segaya, offered essential screenings including blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, uric acid, and BMI. Complementing the clinical tests, Consultant Urologist Dr. Arun Antony led an awareness session on "Prostate Diseases and Kidney Stones."



The Kozhikode District Pravasi Forum (KPF Bahrain) Ladies Wing has garnered widespread appreciation for its "Meal of Care" project, a humanitarian initiative aimed at supporting the local labor community. In a heart-warming event held at the Manama Central Market, the group distributed biryani kits to numerous workers. What set this initiative apart was the personal touch, as the meals were home-cooked by the Ladies Wing members themselves, adding a sense of warmth and solidarity to the charitable act. The event was spearheaded by Ladies Wing Convener Sajna Shoop, with active coordination from Joint Convener Anjali Sujesh and dedicated members Sangeeta Roshil, Prajila Prajeesh, and Sreelatha Shaji.



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HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Attends the 18th Race Amid Thrilling Competition and Wide Participation

Manama

In the presence of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Prime Minister's Court and Chairman of the High Committee of the Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC), the Club held today the 18th race of the 2025/2026 season at its racecourse in Al Raffah, Sakhir. The race was held for the Bahrain Jewellery Centre Cup, Porsche Cups, the Fatees Al Hajeri Cup, and the Jockey Club Cup.

The race was attended by a number of Their Highnesses and Excellencies, along with representatives of the sponsoring entities, and was marked by a highly competitive atmosphere, complemented by a range of accompanying entertainment activities and events.

The winners of the race cups were crowned, as Mr. Ali bin Mohammed Al Hajeri presented the Fatees Al Hajeri Cup to the winning trainer, Yousif Tather, while Mr. Ahmed Shirazi, Managing Director of Bahrain Jewellery Centre, presented the fourth round trophy to Mr. Faisal Mefareh Al Ajmi, and



the sixth round trophy to the winning owner, Abdullah Fawzi Nass.

Meanwhile, Sophie Able,

General Manager of the Jockey Club, presented the seventh round trophy to the winning owner, Hadi Al Afoof, while Mr.



Timothy Price, General Manager of Porsche - Bahrain, presented the eighth round trophy to Hasan Mefareh Al Ajmi.

The racing evening was marked by strong competition across the races.

India survives massive USA scare

● Suryakumar steers nervy T20 World Cup win

AFP | Mumbai

A sparkling unbeaten 84 from India captain Suryakumar Yadav and three wickets from late call-up Mohammed Siraj in Mumbai yesterday helped India to avoid a shock defeat to the United States as they opened their defence of the T20 World Cup.

India were in trouble at 77-6 before Suryakumar took them to a competitive 161-9 at a packed Wankhede stadium and won by 29 runs as the USA could only muster 132-8 in reply.

Chasing 162 for a massive upset, the Americans were quickly reduced to 13-3 as Siraj, only added to the squad 24 hours earlier as a replacement for the T20 International since July 2024, celebrated his recall by taking a wicket with his fourth ball.

A 58-run fourth wicket partnership between Milind Kumar (34) and Sanjay Krishnamurthi (37) put the USA on course for a stunning win.

A 58-run fourth wicket partnership between Milind Kumar (34) and Sanjay Krishnamurthi (37) put the USA on course for a



India's captain Suryakumar Yadav (R) plays a shot

They were still in the hunt at 98-4 in the 16th over when spinner Axar Patel took two wickets in two balls to end their hopes.

Suryakumar paced his 49-ball innings brilliantly, shepherding the tail and smashing 10 fours

and four sixes as India plundered 75 off the final six overs.

Siraj, who had not played a T20 international since July 2024, celebrated his recall by taking a wicket with his fourth ball.

USA opener Andries Gous had just hit Siraj for six but next ball could only find Tilak Varma who took a low catch.

Arshdeep Singh got in on the act at the other end, removing captain Monank Patel, who was

Scorecard

India 161 for 9 (Suryakumar 84*, van Schalkwyk 4-25, Harmeet 2-26) beat USA 132 for 8 (Ranjane 37, Krishnamurthi 37, Siraj 3-29, Arshdeep 2-18) by 29 runs

caught by Shivam Dube off a leading edge.

That left the USA at 11-2 which became 13-3 when Siraj struck again to remove Saiteja Mukkamalla for two.

Siraj finished with 3-29 after trapping Shubham Ranjane lbw with the final ball of the innings.

Mini-collapse

After US captain Patel won the toss and opted to field, his decision was rewarded with the prize wicket of the dangerous Abhishek Sharma off the first ball he faced.

The left-handed Abhishek attempted a typically flamboyant back-foot drive for six off the bowling of Ali Khan to be caught on the cover boundary by Sanjay Krishnamurthi.

Number three Varma announced his arrival with a six and two fours off Saurabh Neotralkar.

Faheem blitz sees Pakistan avoid Netherlands shock at T20 World Cup

AFP | Colombo

Faheem Ashraf smashed an unbeaten 29 off 11 balls as Pakistan scrambled past the Netherlands by three wickets to avoid a massive shock in the curtain-raiser of the T20 World Cup in Colombo yesterday.

Pakistan were made to sweat as the Netherlands took a flurry of late wickets to leave them needing 29 off the last two overs with only three wickets in hand at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground.

Faheem then hit 24, including three sixes, off a 19th over that also saw him dropped in the



Faheem Ashraf plays a shot

deep by Max O'Dowd and then completed the chase with three balls to spare.

"We had to do it the hard way," admitted Pakistan captain Salman Agha.

"We did well with the bat. We batted well earlier on but then in T20 cricket a few bad overs can change the complexion. All credit to Faheem," he added.

"Happy with our bowling. We did a good job. A target of 148 we would take that any day on this kind of surface. It was a good bowling performance."

Pakistan had begun well, racing to 61 for two after the six-over power play.

Sahibzada Farhan looked in prime touch, cracking 47 off 31, but his exit swung the pendulum the Dutch way.

Right-arm quick Paul van Meekeren produced a double-wicket maiden to turn the screws.

When the unconvincing Babar Azam perished in the next over for a scratchy 15, Pakistan were in trouble having lost three wickets for two runs in the space of 10 deliveries.

With the chase wobbling, Faheem stitched a priceless unbroken 34-run stand for the eighth wicket with Shaheen Shah Afridi to see Pakistan home.a

'Victorious Bahrain' goes European

His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa Visits Paris FC

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Nasser, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, visited the headquarters of French club Paris FC, which competes under the banner of "Victorious Bahrain". The visit was part of his ongoing follow-up on international sports partnerships and efforts to strengthen Bahrain's presence in European football.

He was received by Pierre Ferracci, President of Paris FC, and Jean-Marc Gallo, the club's General Manager.

During the visit, Shaikh Nasser toured the club's facilities, including the training grounds, stadiums, and technical, medical, and administrative departments. He also observed part of the first team's training session, met players and staff, and re-



His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa

ceived a detailed presentation on the club's long-term sporting and commercial strategy.

On the occasion, he emphasised that the partnership with Paris FC represents a strategic platform to enhance Bahrain's global visibility, highlighting



HH Shaikh Nasser inspects Paris FC's pitch with Ferracci and Gallo

the marketing value and international impact of "Victorious Bahrain".

He added that the collaboration also supports the promotion of Bahrain's investment and tourism sectors, showcasing the Kingdom as an attractive destination for international sporting events.

Shaikh Nasser praised Paris FC's steady progress toward its ambitious goals, noting that the club strengthens the "Victorious Bahrain" initiative as a comprehensive platform for sports, economic, and tourism promotion, reflecting Bahrain's commitment to sustainable international partnerships.

Pierre Ferracci expressed his pride in hosting Shaikh Nasser, stating that the visit reflects the strong relationship with Bahrain and provides valuable support as the club continues pursuing its objectives.

Thrilling semi-finals set at ITF Junior Tennis in Bahrain



TDT | Manama

The ITF Junior Tennis Tournament (J30) in Bahrain has reached the semi-final stage after a series of closely contested quarter-final matches in the boys' and girls' singles competitions.

In the boys' draw, Russia's sixth seed Nikita Davidovsky delivered one of the biggest upsets by defeating top seed Javier Montes Jimenez of Spain 7-6, 7-5. Fellow Russian Andrey Li also advanced after beating compatriot Sergei Bankov 7-5, 6-2, while Canada's Philip Malis secured his place with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over

Russia's Yakov Mazin. Second seed Akhmad Makhanov of Kazakhstan completed the semi-final lineup after a 6-0, 7-6 win over Romania's Tudor Alexandru Zekiro.

In the girls' singles, Turkey's Asya Ay continued her strong run by overcoming Russia's Maria Kovaleva 6-1, 7-6. Russia's Sofia Bizyanova advanced with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over compatriot Stefania Kadzova, while third seed Daniella Isina defeated Turkey's Kaira Benbay 6-0, 6-4. Russia's sixth seed Yulia Andreeva rounded off the semi-final field with a comeback 4-6, 7-6(5), 6-2 win over India's Vasundra Balaji.

Man Utd make hay after Spurs' Romero sees red

AFP | London

Manchester United profited from Tottenham captain Cristian Romero's red card to stretch their perfect start under Michael Carrick to four games with a 2-0 win at Old Trafford in the Premier League yesterday.

Goals from Bryan Mbeumo and Bruno Fernandes ended an eight-game winless run against Spurs for the Red Devils, who

cemented their position in the Premier League's top four.

United close to within two points of third-placed Aston Villa and open up a five-point cushion over Liverpool in sixth.

A place in the top five is likely to secure a place in next season's Champions League due to the strong performance of English sides in European competition.

Dar Kulaib stay unbeaten with second straight win

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Dar Kulaib continued their impressive run in the 4th West Asian Men's Clubs Volleyball Championship in Kuwait yesterday, recording a straight-sets victory over Kuwait's Burgan SC in Group C.

The match, held at the Kuwaiti Volleyball Federation Hall, ended 3-0 in favour of Dar Kulaib, with set scores of 25-15, 25-19, 25-15. The win lifts the Bahraini side to six points from two matches, while Burgan remain without a point after suffering back-to-back defeats.

Under the guidance of head coach Ivan Joksimovic, Dar Kulaib produced a composed and

collective performance across all phases of play. Mahmoud Abdulwahed, the team captain, led the side as they imposed their rhythm on all three sets.

The point margins in the second and third sets — 14-7 and 20-10, respectively — allowed Dar Kulaib to play with confidence, leaving the home side unable to mount any significant challenge.

The team returns to action today for their final group match against Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad at 1 PM, a game that will decide the Group C standings. In Group B, Al Ahli take on Kuwait SC at 6 PM in a key clash for top spot, with the Bahraini side on six points and the hosts on five.



Dar Kulaib captain Mahmoud Abdulwahed rises to block an attack from Burgan SC

Hidd Stun Riffa in Convincing Win

Red Wolves Climb Back to NPL Summit in Matchday 14

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Al Hidd pulled off a surprise 3-0 victory over Riffa at Khalifa Sports City on Matchday 14 of the Nasser Bin Hamad Premier League, while reigning champions Muharraq returned to the top of the table with a narrow win against Al Malkiya.

Under new Tunisian coach Chokri Bjeaoui, appointed just last week, Al Hidd started strongly. Adnan Fawaz opened the scoring in the 17th minute with a superb side-footed volley from a Walid Karoui long-range free kick, leaving Riffa goalkeeper Abdulkarim AlFardan with no chance. The hosts doubled their lead in the 63rd minute when substitute Ahmed Musa played a clever low pass to Karoui, who struck a clean volley into the far corner. Nine minutes later, Mohamed Al Akash completed



Al Hidd players celebrate Walid Karoui's stunning opener against Riffa

the scoring following a swift counter-attack. Ebrahim AlOuali's run down the left wing and skilful nutmeg set up Al Akash, who fired powerfully into the bottom corner.

Al Hidd were later reduced to

10 men in the 77th minute when Abdulla Al Ajmi was sent off, but the result was never in doubt.

Riffa, managed by Mohammed Mashaan, missed the chance to

stay level with league leaders Al

Khalidiya and Muharraq and re-

main third with 30 points, while Al Hidd climb to fifth with 18 points, giving Bjeaoui a winning debut.

At Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Stadium, Muharraq struggled to break down a well-prepared Al Malkiya side, with the first half ending goalless. The deadlock was finally broken in the 58th minute when Brazilian striker Edimar Ribeiro da Costa, capitalised on a spilled cross from Anderson Leite to score his 11th league goal and remain topscorer.

Muharraq's victory takes them to the summit with 33 points and a game in hand, with Al Khalidiya close behind and the chance to reclaim top spot in their next match.

Matchday 14 continues on Wednesday when Al Shabab face Al Khalidiya at 7pm at Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Stadium.