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Muharraq to meet Al Ahli or Al Ettifaq in Final 4 | **P16**

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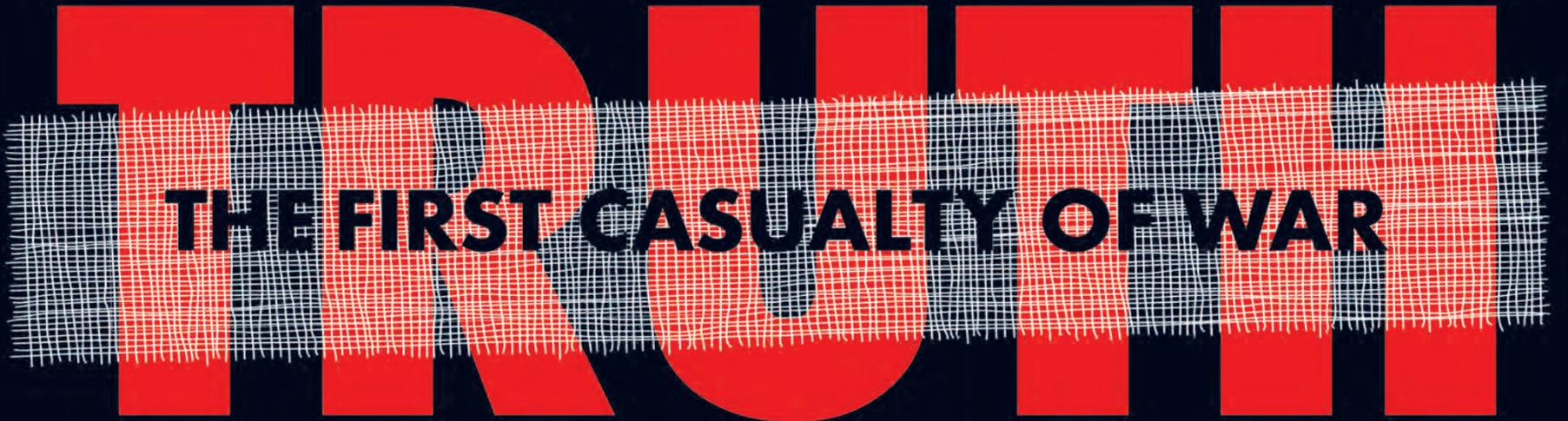
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'Key force in progress'

MP Al Dhaen highlights Bahraini women's major contributions to protecting Bahrain and supporting development

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahraini women have once again been described as a key force in protecting the country and supporting its development.

MP Dr Maryam Al Dhaen said their contributions in security, healthcare, public services and voluntary work had demonstrated their vital role during a testing period for Bahrain.

Marking International Women's Day on 8 March, Dr Al Dhaen said this year's UN theme, "ALL women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment", underlined the need to support women and widen their part in development and in shaping the future.

Gains

She said Bahraini women had made strong gains under the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, with support from the government led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa,



Bahraini women would remain a main partner in building and development through the skill, experience and resolve they bring

MP DR MARYAM AL DHAEN

the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and Prime Minister.



Those gains, she said, had helped women play a stronger part across key fields, with Bahrain's path on women's empowerment seen as a model in the region and beyond.

Dr Al Dhaen also praised the Supreme Council for Women,

chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, wife of His Majesty the King, for its work in supporting Bahraini women and helping widen their progress.

The lawmaker said the council's policies and national plans

had helped build women's skills, meet their needs and strengthen their presence across public life and the country's development drive.

She said the conditions and tests faced by Bahrain in recent times had once again shown the

scale of the role played by Bahraini women in serving their country.

Women had been present in many posts, she said, from security, healthcare and services to community work and voluntary drives, showing a strong sense of duty and belonging.

Support

Dr Al Dhaen also praised volunteer efforts that had drawn wide support from Bahraini men and women, saying women's part in them showed clear national awareness and a wish to support national efforts and strengthen social solidarity in all circumstances.

She said Bahraini women would remain a main partner in building and development through the skill, experience and resolve they bring.

Their active part across many fields, she said, showed the strength and cohesion of Bahraini society and its ability to face tests and carry on with confidence and firmness.

Public Prosecution warns against sharing images of attack incidents

● Calls for strict compliance to avoid criminal liability

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The Public Prosecution has warned citizens and residents against pub-

lishing or circulating any images or footage related to the recent Iranian attacks and their aftermath, including scenes of interception operations, their locations, or security measures taken by the relevant authorities.

The Public Prosecution stressed that sharing such content could undermine national efforts to confront the attacks and may expose members of the

public and the country's security to potential risks.

It noted that publishing or distributing such images constitutes a criminal offense under the laws in force in the Kingdom, making those responsible liable to legal accountability.

The warning extends to anyone involved in the dissemination of such content by any means, including those who forward or circulate it, who would

be treated under the law in the same manner as the original publisher.

The Public Prosecution also called on the public to adhere strictly to the instructions and guidance issued by the relevant authorities and to act responsibly in ways that support the measures undertaken by state institutions to maintain security and social stability during these exceptional circumstances.

Pet owners facing evacuation dilemma

Neethu V
TDT | Manama

Pets are often the most overlooked victims during crises.

When emergencies strike, the focus quickly shifts to evacuation plans and shelters to protect human lives, and rightly so.

Yet in the rush, the needs of our four-legged companions are often forgotten, despite the confusion and distress they experience too.

Reality

In Bahrain's Juffair area, this reality became painfully evident when several residents were forced to make difficult decisions during a recent evacuation situation.

While many sought safer accommodation away from high-risk zones, pet owners encountered an unexpected barrier - the lack of pet-friendly hotels.

For some residents, the choice was heartbreaking.

With hotels not allowing pets, a few chose to remain in

their apartments rather than leave their four-legged companions behind.

Family

For many owners, pets are family and not something to abandon.

The situation also highlights a larger issue - emergency planning often overlooks animals, with few provisions available for pets during evacuations.

"Leaving our pets behind was never an option. They're family," said a resident from Juffair. "When we couldn't find a single pet-friendly hotel, the only choice we had was to stay back with them."

Choices

This gap leaves responsible owners with difficult choices.

Some may risk their own safety by staying in unsafe areas, while others struggle to find last-minute solutions.

As communities adapt to new emergency responses, it may be time to ensure that pets are also part of the conversation.

Stranded Bahrainis return home safely from Mashhad

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Most Bahraini citizens stranded in the Iranian city of Mashhad during recent regional tensions have safely returned to the Kingdom of Bahrain, bringing relief to families waiting for their loved ones.

Travel office operators confirmed to The Daily Tribune that they arranged bus journeys for citizens wishing to return, allowing them to leave Mashhad through available border crossings and continue their route back to Bahrain.

Several travel agents told The Daily Tribune that the process was carefully coordinated to ensure the safe departure of Bahrainis who were unable to travel earlier due to the rapidly developing situation in the region.

Groups began their journeys in stages over the past days, travelling by land by buses through neighbouring countries before eventually reaching Bahrain without incident.



Reunited with their loved ones

Advisory

The return of the stranded citizens follows the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an early advisory urging all Bahraini nationals present in Iran to leave immediately through available exits to safeguard their safety and wellbeing.

The ministry also called on citizens to register their information through its official electronic portal to ensure direct communication and support

if needed. Tourism campaign organisers were further urged to cooperate fully by collecting and registering the details of all Bahraini citizens travelling with them and coordinating their departure arrangements.

Coordination

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed that it continues to follow the situation around the clock and is facilitating the safe return of Bahraini citizens abroad through land crossings

in coordination with relevant authorities in the Kingdom and counterparts across the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Citizens abroad were once again encouraged to update their contact and residence details through the ministry's online registration portal to ensure swift assistance when required.

For emergencies, Bahrainis can contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 24-hour contact and follow-up centre at 0097317227555.

War causes Eid orders delay

Ghadeer Alkumaish
TDT | Manama

Online shopping has become the preferred choice for many in the Middle East, especially during Ramadan, as customers enjoy more options and can avoid crowded malls.

Many rely on platforms like Amazon, Temu, and Shein to get gifts and clothes for Eid.

However, ongoing disrupt-

tions in Bahrain and the GCC are affecting deliveries, leaving shoppers uncertain about receiving their orders on time.

Major platforms have updated their delivery timelines: Temu now estimates 6-20 days (previously 7-15 days), Shein 8-10 days (previously 5-8 days), and Amazon shows some products taking 35-45 days (previously under 35 days).

New attacks in Gulf as Iran vows for more

AFP | Dubai

Gulf neighbours yesterday reported new missile and drone attacks, while Iran vowed to press on with its strikes against neighbouring countries.

Loud explosions were heard in Dubai, the Qatari capital Doha and Bahrain, while attacks were later reported in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait, where the national oil company announced a "precautionary" cut to production.

It came despite Iran's president earlier apologising to Gulf countries for prior strikes, saying they would no longer be targeted unless strikes were launched from their territory.

Hours later, Iran said it would continue conducting strikes on sites in Gulf countries which were "at the disposal of the enemy".

UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan said in a rare televised address that the Emirates were in "a period of war" and "will emerge stronger" from the war, which has entered its second week.

Earlier in the day, Dubai closed its main airport - the world's busiest for international traffic - after authorities said an unidentified object was intercepted nearby.

House, buildings damaged by fire

AFP | Manama

An Iranian attack yesterday caused a fire in Bahrain's capital of Manama, damaging a house and other buildings, the Interior Ministry said without specifying if there were casualties.

"The Iranian aggression caused a fire and material damage to a house and several surrounding buildings in Manama," the ministry said. "Civil Defence is taking the necessary measures to extinguish the fire."

220 fils (includes VAT)



Spain reaffirms solid support for Bahrain

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received a telephone call from HM King Felipe VI of Spain.

During the call, HM King Felipe VI expressed full solidarity with the Kingdom of Bahrain and condemned the Iranian at-



HM the King



HM King Felipe VI

tack targeting the Kingdom's territory.

He affirmed support for Bahrain in all measures it undertakes to safeguard its sovereignty and protect its security and stability.

HM King Hamad noted that the people of the Kingdom are peaceful and believe in toler-

ance and coexistence, and that it remains committed to the path of peace and supports efforts that enhance security and stability in the region and the world.

His Majesty expressed appreciation to HM King Felipe VI for the support conveyed to the Kingdom.

Security success

Jamal Fakhro: Years of strategic spending on Bahrain's armed forces are paying off

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

"Every dinar that was spent over the past years to develop the security apparatus in Bahrain and our armed forces has now borne fruit," Jamal Fakhro said.

He argued that years of spending on defence had helped Bahrain meet missile and drone threats, maintain public life on an even keel, and reassure investors during a challenging period for the region.

Speaking to Bahrain TV, the First Deputy Chairman of the Shura Council said the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), police and other armed services were ready for any emergency.

He said more than 80 per cent of Iranian missiles and drones heading towards Bahrain had been turned back, and said this showed both the standard of training and the strength of the weapons in use.



Jamal Fakhro
Weapons

"Our men have proven that they were indeed trained, and we have the best weapons that have, in fact, helped to repel more than 80 per cent of the missiles or drones heading towards Bahrain. They protected the sky and they protected the land," he said.

Fakhro said Bahrain had already shown in past crises that it could cope under strain, pointing to the Covid-19 period as one

such case.

He said the current conditions, which he described as the hardest seen in decades, had again shown close work between state bodies and strong backing from the public to keep citizens and residents safe.

"We have proven that we are ready to face any disaster, and I hope this is the last disaster for Bahrain," he said.

Money

He said safety and calm were

close tied to trade and investment, adding that money looks for places where risks are low and order holds.

Bahrain, he said, had built that kind of setting for local and foreign investment since the 1970s, and there had been no sign of funds leaving the kingdom during the current strain.

"Capital, as they say, is cowardly, and therefore capital must find a safe place for it," he said.

Fakhro also pointed to public unity as a key line of defence in hard times, warning against attempts to spread rumours or drive people apart.

Awareness

He praised Bahrainis for their awareness and for the trust they place in the leadership and government, saying social unity helps shield the country from harm.

"We have a conscious and cultured people who trust their leadership and their govern-

ment, a people who believe that their cohesion is a protection for this land," he said.

He added: "It is in the best interest of any loyal Bahraini citizen to his country, his king, and his people, not to deviate and be estranged from the rest of the people."

Sources

He also urged people to rely on trusted public sources rather than unofficial channels, saying the spread of phones and social media had turned each citizen into a publisher of sorts.

He praised the Interior Ministry's recent awareness drive on rules for publishing and photography, and said state media had a key part to play in showing people where the legal line lies.

"Today, every citizen has become a media person, and therefore citizens should not rely on unofficial media. Official media is important," he said.

Debris danger

Public warned over missile, drone fragments

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior has urged citizens and residents to follow safety guidelines if they encounter fragments from missiles or drones, in light of recent developments in the region.

The ministry stressed the importance of not approaching or touching such debris, warning that it may contain hazardous

materials, and called on the public to keep others away from the site to ensure safety.

It also advised against photographing or sharing images of the fragments on social media, urging people to rely on official sources for information and avoid spreading rumours.

The public was further

urged to report any such incidents immediately by calling the emergency hotline (999), enabling the relevant authorities to respond and take the necessary measures.

The ministry said cooperation with authorities and prompt reporting play a key role in enhancing public safety.

Earlier, the Public Pros-

ecution had warned citizens and residents against publishing or sharing any images or footage of the Iranian attacks, their aftermath, the response operations and locations, or security measures taken by the authorities, as this could undermine national efforts and put the safety of the community and the country at risk.

Safety Guidelines in Case Missile Fragments Are Found

Dear citizens and residents,
If missile or drone fragments are found as a result of the Iranian aggression, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not approach or touch the fragments, as they may contain hazardous materials.
- Do not photograph or share images of the fragments on social media.
- Obtain information only from official sources and avoid spreading rumours.
- Keep others away from the site to ensure everyone's safety.
- Immediately report the incident to the relevant authorities by calling the emergency number 999.
- Immediate reporting and cooperation with the authorities contribute to maintaining public safety.

May God protect Bahrain



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Life goes on amid tensions

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Despite ongoing regional tensions, Bahrain has observed a noticeable return to daily activity, particularly as the weekend holiday brought many residents back into public spaces.

During a field tour conducted by The Daily Tribune, markets across several areas showed strong movement.

Shoppers filled stores and corridors as families began preparing for Eid.

Shopping malls were noticeably busy, with many residents turning to local retailers after the suspension of air and sea travel disrupted the arrival of clothing shipments from abroad.

Deliveries

Retailers said some customers



Shoppers are slowly returning to shopping malls

who had ordered things from international online platforms found their deliveries delayed or cancelled, prompting them to visit Bahrain's markets to secure their Eid outfits instead.

The shift was clearly visible

in clothing shops, where fitting rooms and payment counters remained active throughout the day.

Restaurants and cafes also remained open and crowded, with families and groups of friends

gathering for meals, coffee, or tea.

Buffet

The Daily Tribune also observed that Ramadan buffet venues saw heavy crowds return



The scenes across markets and cafes suggest that residents are continuing their routines while remaining attentive to official guidance.

during iftar time, with many families choosing to dine out together after sunset.

The Daily Tribune also observed that movement noticeably decreases after midnight on weekends, with many residents appearing to prefer returning home earlier amid the current situation. Several cafes have also begun closing around midnight, whereas many previously remained open until the early hours of the morning.

While daily life continues, au-

thorities have also stressed the importance of public safety.

Recently, the Civil Defence Council banned gatherings in streets and public squares as a precaution against the Iranian attacks targeting the Kingdom with missiles and drones, which pose a serious risk to the safety of citizens and residents.

The decision was issued to ensure adherence to public safety responsibilities and to strengthen civil protection measures during this sensitive period.

Over 137,000 households receive living allowance

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

More than 137,000 households receive Bahrain's cost-of-living allowance, MPs were told.

Social Development Minister, His Excellency Osama Al Alawi, said eligibility is capped at BD1,000 a month for the head of household, while other support schemes have no income ceiling.

H.E. Al Alawi told Parliament that the ministry's two biggest direct cash schemes were the Social Security Service and the Financial Support Service, known as the cost-of-living allowance.

He said every social security beneficiary receives the allowance "automatically".

"Any adjustment to the three categories of the cost-of-living allowance benefits social security categories automatically," he said.

Payments

Most social security beneficiaries, he added, receive the



top band of BD130 a month, alongside their social security payments.

He pointed to the latest changes in December 2025, when the allowance bands were raised to BD130, BD97 and BD75 a month.

An earlier rise came in January 2022, when cash support paid under the social security and financial support schemes increased by 10 per cent, he said.

Al Alawi told MPs that February 2026 figures show 137,984 beneficiaries across the three allowance bands.

He said the ceiling for enti-

Any adjustment to the three categories of the cost-of-living allowance benefits social security categories automatically

H.E. OSAMA AL ALAWI, MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

tlement is based on the head of household's salary, up to BD1,000 a month.

The Minister said social assistance provided by the ministry is governed by Law No. 18 of 2006 and its amendments, which provide monthly cash payments to Bahraini families and individuals, alongside automatic entitlement to the cost-of-living allowance.

February figures, he said, show 17,710 beneficiaries across categories set out in the law, including widows, divorcees, orphans, families of prisoners, those unable to work, persons with disabilities and older people.

Car sale voided over fake deal

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A court has voided a car sale after finding that a Ford Mustang was sold on the basis it would be brought in from the UAE, when it was already in Bahrain, ordering the seller to repay BD3,000 and pay BD500

in compensation.

Lawyer Jassim Al Issa, acting for the buyer, argued the deal was built on a false description of the car's source and state, and the court also dismissed a separate claim by the seller to recover BD10,000 he had transferred as part of a settlement linked to an earlier crim-

inal complaint. Court records show the dispute began with an agreement for a Mustang priced at BD13,000.

The buyer said he was told the vehicle would be sourced from the UAE and shipped over, and that he paid extra sums said to cover shipping, clearance and related costs.

Highway funding deal review

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Two legislations will go before the Shura Council today. Members are set to de-

bate a BD128.6 million highway expansion deal and a proposed change to the 1989 medical law that would allow abortion in tightly drawn cases involving grave foetal deformities incom-

patible with life after birth.

A draft law approving the framework agreement aims to help finance Phase Two of the Shaikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah Highway Development Project.

Safety guidelines for Qiyam prayers

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Qiyam prayers and Itikaf will proceed in mosques across Bahrain during the final ten days of Ramadan, following specific guidelines aimed at ensuring public safety amid the current situation in the Kingdom. The General Direc-

torate of Sunni Endowments announced that the arrangements reflect its continued commitment to facilitating the performance of religious rites and reviving the blessed nights of Ramadan while safeguarding the wellbeing of worshippers.

According to the directive, the duration of Qiyam prayers must not exceed sixty

minutes.

Mosques have also been instructed not to use external loudspeakers during prayers, particularly during Taraweeh and Qiyam. Internal sound systems within mosques will be used instead. The guidelines were issued in light of the current circumstances facing the Kingdom.



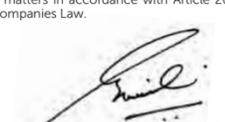
Invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting

Trafco Group BSC (CR No. 8500), is pleased to invite its shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting, starting at 10:30 am on Sunday 29th March 2026 and the shareholders are invited to participate in the said meeting by personal attendance or through delegated proxy in person or through electronic means. In the event meeting quorum is not met, the second meeting will be held on Thursday 9th April 2026 and a third meeting if required will be held on Thursday 16th April 2026 at the same time and location at the Gulf Hotel (Awal Hall No. 2) or through participation via electronic means of communication (ZOOM). The AGM will be held to discuss the following agenda items. We request Trafco shareholders to follow the below instructions to ensure their participation in the meeting:

- Send an e-mail request with subject "Trafco Group BSC -Annual General Meeting" mentioning the investor / shareholder number and attaching a copy of a valid passport or ID card of the shareholder or his/her representative, to e-mail: bahrain.helpdesk@kfintech.com, at least 24 hours before the scheduled date of the meeting. Also, please include the contact number and email address of the person who will participate in the online meeting session.
- After receiving all the required documents and information, those who wish to attend will be provided with a link to the virtual communication system (ZOOM) and steps to join the session via the electronic communication network, noting that the device used to participate in the session must be compatible with the requirements for operating video and audio telecommunication services. We also urge the shareholders to abide by the instructions to ensure that the meeting proceeds smoothly in line with the applicable laws and regulations.

Annual General Meeting Agenda:

- 01 To approve the Minutes of the previous Ordinary Annual General meeting held on 26th March 2025.
- 02 To discuss and approve the Board of Directors report for the financial year ending on 31 December 2025.
- 03 To read the external auditor's report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025.
- 04 To discuss and approve the Consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025.
- 05 To approve the Board of Directors' recommendation to allocate the net profits for the year ended 31 December 2025 as follows:
 - a) To transfer BD 50,000 to the general reserve.
 - b) **To distribute cash dividends at 15% of the share par value (15 fils per share), amounting to BD 1,112,844 (Excluding Treasury Shares).**
- 06 To approve the recommendation to allocate BD 84,050 as remuneration to the Board of Directors for the year ended 31 December 2025, after the approval of the Ministry of Industry & Commerce.
- 07 To discuss and approve the Corporate Governance Report for the year 2025 in compliance with the requirement of the Central Bank of Bahrain and the Ministry of Industry & Commerce.
- 08 To present the Related Party Transactions carried out during year ended 31 December 2025 as stated in note 26 of the Company's audited financial statements in line with Article 189 of the Bahrain Commercial Companies Law.
- 09 To approve and authorize the Board of Directors to purchase treasury shares with a maximum limit of 10% of the issued and paid-up capital for the purpose of supporting liquidity of the shares, after the approval from Central Bank of Bahrain.
- 10 To absolve the members of the Board of Directors from liability arising in connection with their duties during the year ended on 31 December 2025.
- 11 Re-appointment of the External Auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2026 and authorize the Board of Directors to determine their fees.
- 12 Any additional matters in accordance with Article 207 of Bahrain Commercial Companies Law.



Ebrahim Mohamed Ali Zainal
Chairman of Board of Directors

Important notes for shareholders:

- You can obtain the financial statements for the fiscal year ending on 31 December 2025 on the Bahrain Bourse website www.bahrainbourse.com or from the company's website www.trafco.com.
- You can obtain a copy of the proxy card through office of Kfin Technologies (Bahrain) LLC. Tel. 17215080 or Trafco Group offices in Mina Salman area.
- Any shareholder whose name is registered in the shareholders' register of the company on the date of the meeting has the right to attend in person or to authorize in writing any person on his behalf to attend the meeting and vote on his behalf, taking into consideration that this agent is not a chairman, members of the board of directors, or employees of the company.
- In the event that the shareholder is a company, the agent who attends the meeting must present an authorization letter from the shareholder, authorizing him to be the authorized representative of that shareholder, and the authorization must be in writing and issued by the person delegating the company and sealed with the company's stamp and must be submitted before the deadline for depositing the power of attorney.
- The power of attorney (Proxy card) must be deposited at least 24 hours before the date of the meeting with the office of Kfin Technologies (Bahrain) LLC - Office No. 74, 7th Floor, Zamil Tower Building, P.O. Box 514 Manama. The proxy card can be delivered by hand, by mail or by fax (17212055) or by e-mail to bahrain.helpdesk@kfintech.com, making sure to receive it before the deadline ends. It is worth noting that the power of attorney card presented after the deadline has expired is considered invalid for the purpose of the meeting.
- For any inquiries, please contact the secretary of the Board of Directors at (17279000) Extn:300.

Below are the key dates to consider:

Event	Date
AGM Date (Shareholders' approval date)	29 March 2026
Cum - Dividend Date (Last day of trading with entitlement to dividends)	30 March 2026
Ex - Dividend Date (First day of trading without entitlement to dividends)	31 March 2026
Record Date (The day on which all shareholders whose names are on the share register will be entitled to dividends)	1 April 2026
Payment Date (The day on which the dividends will be paid to the entitled shareholders)	15 April 2026

c) To allocate BD 50,000 for charity and donation.
d) To transfer BD 6,096 to retained earnings.

Engine chaos

Incidents of loud car exhausts and reckless driving disrupt calm in neighborhoods

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

In a time when calm and reassurance are needed the most, some irresponsible drivers are choosing the opposite path.

During field observations on Thursday and Friday nights, The Daily Tribune recorded repeated incidents of motorists deliberately producing extremely loud engine and exhaust noises in several areas, particularly in Seef, Saar, and Hamala.

The behaviour was observed both individually and in small groups, with drivers revving engines or accelerating through streets.

Under normal circumstances such actions might be dismissed as reckless driving.

Consequences

Yet in the current climate of tension in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the consequences are far more serious.

Across social media platforms, many residents have expressed



frustration and anxiety over these disturbances.

One mother told The Daily Tribune that the loud sounds have repeatedly startled her family at night.

She explained that every sudden blast from modified exhaust systems makes her children believe it could be an incoming missile or an explosion.

Terrible

"In the middle of the night we wake up thinking something terrible has happened," she said.

"My children are frightened every time they hear it."

The psychological impact, residents say, is very real. With tensions already weighing on public nerves, unnecessary noise only deepens fear and uncertainty.

The General Directorate of Traffic at the Ministry of Interior announced that it will take legal measures against anyone deliberately producing disturbing noises, performing dangerous stunts, driving recklessly, or engaging in behaviour that

Every sudden blast from modified exhaust systems makes my children believe it could be an incoming missile or an explosion

MOTHER

disrupts public calm and safety.

Arrest

The ministry also confirmed that authorities have already arrested several drivers and confiscated their vehicles for 60 days after the drivers caused panic among citizens and residents.

Yet many residents believe stronger enforcement may still be needed.

Greater police presence in areas such as Seef, Saar, Hamala especially The District Mall could deter these acts and reassure the public.

Bahraini families and institutions express full solidarity with Kingdom

TDT | Manama

Bahraini families and institutions have issued statements reaffirming their support for the Kingdom, national unity, and loyalty to the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

The declarations come amid regional tensions affecting Bahrain and other Gulf states, following acts of aggression by Iran.

Additional statements were issued by 1,000 Bahraini families, community figures, business leaders, sports and cultural clubs, and civil society organisations.

Unity

The statements confirmed their unity around the national leadership under His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and expressed confidence in the measures taken by the government, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to confront the Iranian aggression.

They commended the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) and

its personnel for their high readiness, competence, and vigilance in responding to attacks targeting civilian sites and private property.

The statements described these assaults as serious violations of the principles of good neighbourliness and religious ties, and as a direct threat to regional peace and security.

Efforts

The statements also commended the Ministry of Interior and its personnel for their efforts in addressing the consequences of the attacks, expressing pride in the dedication and professionalism of national personnel working across various sectors in service of the Kingdom.

They reiterated that the Kingdom of Bahrain, under the leadership of His Majesty the King and with the support of HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, will continue its firm approach in supporting peace, enhancing regional and international stability, and promoting principles of good neighbourliness, mutual respect and coexistence among peoples and nations.

Jobseekers 'shuns' security roles

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Some jobseekers are staying away from work in certain fields, including security and guarding, Tamkeen has told Parliament.

It said a price gap between Bahraini and foreign labour can steer employers towards hiring from abroad, and that much of the work is run through outsourced contractors.

The labour fund made the remarks during a meeting with Parliament's Financial and Economic Affairs Committee, as it answered questions linked to points raised in the National Audit Offices's annual report for 2024-2025.

Tamkeen said it is working on new forms of support that put job continuity first.

Rules

It also spoke of stricter professional rules and entry standards for foreign workers seeking to work in those roles, while focusing on programme quality and fit with labour market needs.

The fund said its core aim is to help Bahrainis into work

and into the labour market, rather than simply paying part of firms' costs.

Any programme that does not meet that aim is reviewed and a decision is taken on its future.

Audit

Tamkeen also accepted an audit point that its support programmes policy manual did not include target values for some performance measures.

It said these targets will be set out in detail in new programmes being developed as part of its four-year plan.

Reasons

On the audit point that some schemes did not hit their numerical targets, Tamkeen said there were several reasons, adding that the issue is handled through programme reviews and updates.

On training and education providers, Tamkeen said it applies strict standards and stops dealing with any provider that fails to reach the required employment rate or that does not place trainees into jobs linked to the specialism they trained for.

BD33m for Juffair and Adliya works

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Road and sewerage works in Juffair and Adliya have been rolled out across Capital's Fourth Constituency, with the Ministry of Works pointing to near-full sewerage coverage in developed areas and listing projects worth more than BD33 million, according to a written reply to MP Hassan BuKhammas.

The ministry said it completed an integrated package of works in Juffair, Block 324, in July 2025, combining a new sewerage network with

internal road upgrades, storm-water drainage, pavements, lighting improvements and safety signage. The total cost was BD3,470,067.

In its response, signed by Minister of Works Ebrahim Al Hawaj, the ministry said sewerage coverage in developed parts of the Fourth Constituency stands at about 99 per cent, while remaining areas will be assessed for connection under future term contracts.

Across the wider Capital Governorate, sewerage coverage has reached 93 per cent, with the balance to be delivered through future projects.

Generosity and volunteerism stand out in times of crisis

TDT | Manama

In a remarkable display of generosity and community spirit, food packs and grocery items were distributed to affected individuals through the kindness of the couple King and Gab.

The effort was carried out along with Pilgreg Allaga Baod, owner of Atarah's Eatery in Gudaibiya.

Their timely initiative delivered much-needed relief to families facing uncertainty, providing not only essential supplies but also renewed hope during a challenging time.

Their act of kindness provided much-needed relief and support to members of the community during this challenging time.

Gratitude

Beneficiaries mostly from members of Cordillera Overseas Filipino Workers Solidarity Bahrain (COSB) expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the assistance, saying the donations brought both comfort and hope amid uncertainty.

The initiative reflects the spirit of volunteerism and compassion among Filipinos abroad, proving that even in difficult

situations, there are individuals willing to extend help to those in need.

Josephine Salvador, 58, a cleaner holding a flexible visa and currently working at a school, said she voluntarily stopped going to work out of fear due to the difficult situation.

Assistance

Salvador, who also serves as the Cultural Affairs Officer of COSB, expressed her heartfelt gratitude for the assistance she received.

"Thank you to Mr. King and Ms. Gab, and also to the president of COSB, Pilgreg Allaga. The food pack is a big help and serves as support during this time," she said.

Despite the uncertainty caused by the ongoing conflict in the region, a Filipina sales representative in Bahrain remains hopeful and deeply grateful for the kindness she continues to receive.

Rhea Rost, 41, from Cebu, has been working as a Sales Representative at the Shein Hoora branch for 3 years. Amid the challenging situation, Rost shared that while the events unfolding were unexpected, she



Even in challenging times, there are individuals willing to extend help to those in need

finds comfort in the generosity of people around her.

"What's happening is unexpected, but despite everything, there are still people who are willing to help," she said.

Appreciation

She expressed sincere appreciation for those extending assistance during this difficult time, saying their support has been a source of strength and encouragement.

King and Gab, well-known humanitarians, said they gave from the heart to help distressed OFWs and other nationalities.

They began distributing food packs from the shelter where expatriates were evacuated and have been assisting people from various nationalities.

Their efforts are part of ongoing charitable work to support those affected during this difficult time.



King, Gab and Pilgreg serve as a reminder that hope, resilience, and unity can shine even in the most challenging circumstances.



Kuwait's national oil company announces production cut

● **Due to Iranian attacks and threats to the Strait of Hormuz**

AFP | Kuwait City, Kuwait

Kuwait's national oil company yesterday announced a cut to its production of crude due to Iranian attacks and threats to the Strait of Hormuz, a



An undated handout picture provided by the Al-Zour oil Refinery shows a view of the facility, in al-Zour, south of Kuwait City.



The Al-Zour oil Refinery

key transit point for Gulf hydrocarbons.

"In light of the ongoing aggression by the Islamic Re-

public of Iran against the State of Kuwait, including Iranian threats against safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, KPC (Kuwait Petroleum Corporation) has implemented a precautionary reduction in crude oil production and refining throughput as part of its risk management and business continuity strategy," it said, adding that it would be "reviewed as the situation develops".

Sweden seizes false-flagged ship with suspected stolen Ukrainian grain

AFP | Stockholm, Sweden

Police in Sweden have seized a false-flagged cargo ship off its southern coast believed to belong to Russia's shadow fleet and suspected of transporting stolen Ukrainian grain, authorities said Saturday.

The 96-metre (315-foot) *Caf-fa* left Casablanca in Morocco on February 24 and was headed for Saint Petersburg, Russia when armed Swedish police boarded it on Friday off the southern town of Trelleborg.

"The vessel is on the Ukraine sanctions list. Information indicates that it has essentially been used to transport grain that is stolen, as we understand

it, from Ukraine," the coast guard's acting head of operations, Daniel Stenling, told a press conference.

"We have been able to establish that the vessel is sailing under a false flag. She is registered in Guinea, but that registration is in fact false," he added.

"A majority" of the 11 crew members were Russian, Stenling said.

The Russian embassy in Stockholm said it had been informed by the Swedish coast guard that 10 of the crew were Russian citizens.

"The Russian embassy in Sweden is in contact with the competent Swedish authorities and is ready, if necessary, to

provide consular assistance to the Russian nationals among the crew," it wrote on Telegram.

One crew member was under investigation for violation of the maritime code on seaworthiness and on ship safety, Stenling said, refusing to disclose the suspect's identity or crew role.

"The investigative measures we have taken so far reinforce our suspicions and our view that there are extensive maritime safety deficiencies on this vessel," he said.

The Swedish Transport Agency was to inspect the ship and determine whether it was seaworthy and authorised to continue its journey.

Iran Guards say targeted Marshall Islands-flagged tanker in Gulf

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said its forces have targeted a Marshall-islands flagged oil tanker yesterday

in the Gulf as the war with Israel and the United States raged.

"An oil tanker with the trade name 'Louise P' with the flag of the Marshall Islands, one

of the assets of the terrorist America, was hit by a drone in the middle of the Persian Gulf," the Guards said on their website Sepah News.

Dubai airport says 'partially' reopens operations

AFP | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Dubai airport, the world's busiest for international traffic, said Saturday it was partially resuming services shortly after it suspended operations.

"We have partially resumed operations from today, 7 March, with some flights operating out of DXB and DWC," it said, referring to Dubai's main airport as well as the city's Dubai World Central - Al Maktoum International Airport.

"Please do not travel to

the airport unless you have been contacted by your airline that your flight is confirmed, as schedules continue to change," it told passengers, after an aerial interception in the area during attacks from Iran forced the airport to suspend operations.

Google gives CEO new pay deal worth up to \$692 million

New York, United States

The CEO of Google and its parent company Alphabet could earn up to \$692 million over the next three years under a new compensation plan published Friday by the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

The deal would make Sundar Pichai, who has been chief executive of Google since 2015 and of Alphabet since 2019, one of the highest paid CEOs in the world.

Under the plan, Pichai's three-year salary of \$6 million, or \$2 million per year, would remain unchanged.

The remainder of his compensation would be paid in the form of Alphabet stock, as well as shares in two subsidiaries -- the autonomous vehicle company Waymo and the drone de-



Google CEO Sundar Pichai gestures during a meeting with France's President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi

livery service Wing.

The SEC filing suggested Pichai could receive about \$130 million from Waymo and \$45 million from Wing.

The allocation will depend on the performance of the shares and, for Alphabet, on the amount of dividends paid.

In the event of his dismissal,

Pichai would forfeit all stock options that are not yet exercisable, according to the document.

"Current and previous incentives in Mr Pichai's compensation have benefited Alphabet and its stockholders significantly," the company said in the filing.

Al Baraka Islamic Bank B.S.C.(c)



Invitation to the Annual General Meeting No. (43) of Al Baraka Islamic Bank (Bahrain) B.S.C. (Closed).

In accordance with Article (55) of the Articles of Association of Al Baraka Islamic Bank B.S.C (Closed) the Board of Directors of the Bank is pleased to invite the Shareholders to attend the Bank's Annual General Meeting No. (43) to be held successively on Sunday 29 March 2026 at 11:00 am at the Head office of Al Baraka Bank Tower, Shaikh Saleh Kamel Hall, Bahrain Bay, Kingdom of Bahrain to discuss the following Agenda.

(1) The Agenda for the Annual General Meeting No. (43) shall be as follows:

1. Review the Board of Directors Report on the activities of the Bank for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2025.
2. Review Sharia Supervisory Board's Report for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2025.
3. Review and discuss the External Auditors' Report for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2025.
4. a) Discuss and approve the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2025.
b) To approve the transactions with regards to the Related Parties as stated in Note No. (26) of the Financial Statements in (a) above.
c) To approve the allocation of BHD (76,091) as Zakat on behalf of the shareholders and to authorize the management of the Bank to distribute such amount as per the rules of Zakat in Sharia.
5. To absolve the Directors from liability for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2025.
6. To approve the appointment of the External Auditors for the year 2026 subject to the approval of the Central Bank of Bahrain and to authorize the Board of Directors to fix their remuneration.
7. a) To approve the Board of Directors recommendation to pay the Board Members a remuneration of 108 Thousand Bahraini Dinars after obtainment of the approval of the concerned authorities.
b) To approve the aggregate benefits and remuneration of the members of the Sharia Supervisory Board for the financial year ended on December 31st 2025
8. To review the Corporate Governance Report as per CBB Instructions including:
a) The Evaluation of the Performance of the Board of Directors, the Board Committees and Secretary of the Board.
b) The Evaluation of the Performance of the Sharia Supervisory Board.
c) The Performance of the attendance of the Board of Directors at the Board Meetings for the year 2025.
d) Report of Corporate Governance Disclosure in accordance with CBB requirements.
9. To elect and reappoint the Board of Directors for the Term (2026-2029), subject to CBB approval.
10. To discuss any urgent matter arises in accordance with Article (207) of the Commercial Companies Law.2001.

Chairperson of the Board
Al Baraka Islamic Bank B.S.C. (Closed).

Notes to the Shareholders:

- 1-The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be valid if attended by shareholders representing more than 50% of the issued capital. If the said quorum is not obtained, the AGM shall be postponed for half an hour after the time mentioned above. The Second Meeting shall be valid irrespective of the number of shareholders present.
- 2-In case of Proxy, Shareholders are requested to deposit the Proxy Form (copies will be sent to Shareholders) at least 24 hours before the Meeting.
- 3-Copies of the Meeting documents will be sent by mail and will be available on the Meeting Date at our website : www.albaraka.bh

Iran vows no surrender

Pezeshkian issued an apology to his Gulf neighbours, which host major US military bases, saying that they would only be targeted if their territories were used as launch sites for attacks.

● The Iranian health ministry put the civilian death toll at 926 on Friday, with around 6,000 injured

● Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz on Saturday warned Lebanese President Joseph Aoun that his country would pay a "very heavy price" if it failed to disarm Hezbollah.

● Israeli commandos also launched an unsuccessful mission overnight to try to retrieve the remains of a navigator lost in 1986.

● Trump has also promised to help rebuild the country's economy if Tehran installs someone "acceptable" to him to replace Iran's late supreme leader.

● The Emirates said it was targeted with 16 ballistic missiles and more than 120 drones.

● Israel's military said Saturday it had struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon's south and east, killing commanders from the Lebanese armed group, and hitting military

● Missile targeting Saudi base falls 'in uninhabited area': ministry

● Lebanon ministry registers 454,000 people displaced by war

● A strike targeted a military base belonging to the former paramilitary coalition Hashed al-Shaabi in northern Iraq on Saturday, two Hashed sources told AFP. "An airstrike, likely American, hit a Hashed base south of the city of Mosul," an official said. Another source confirmed the strike took place.

Iran has repeatedly targeted its Gulf neighbours in response to the aerial offensive, with some strikes aimed at civilian infrastructure -- although Tehran maintains it only attacks US assets or bases.



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted an area in the southern coastal city of Tyre



This video grab taken from UGC images posted on social media shows smoke rising from the Dubai International Airport.

UAE will emerge 'stronger' after war: president

● There were air raid alerts and explosions heard above Jerusalem as well as Gulf cities Dubai, Manama and near Riyadh

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Israel says targeted Tehran airport in wave of overnight strikes

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel's military said on Saturday it had struck aircraft belonging to Iran's Revolutionary Guards at Tehran's Mehrabad airport, as part of a wave of strikes overnight on the city.

"The Israeli Air Force... completed a broad wave of strikes across Tehran and on military infrastructure located at the 'Merabad Air-

port' in Tehran", it said in a statement.

"16 aircraft of the 'Quds Force' unit of the IRGC were precisely dismantled", it said, referring to the branch of Iran's Revolutionary Guards that oversees its foreign operations.

"Also targeted were several Iranian fighter jets that posed a threat to Israeli Air Force aircraft operating in Iranian airspace", the statement added.



An oil tanker with the trade name 'Louise P' with the flag of the Marshall Islands, one of the assets of the terrorist America, was hit by a drone in the middle of the Persian Gulf

THE GUARDS SAID ON THEIR WEBSITE SEPAH NEWS

Iran vows to continue attacking neighbours aiding enemies

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's hardline judiciary chief said the Islamic republic would continue targeting regional neighbours offering its enemies "points... used in aggression against our country".

"Evidence from Iran's armed forces shows that the geography of some countries in the region is openly and covertly at the disposal of the enemy," said Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, who is also a member of the interim leadership council.

Iran Guards say struck US base in Bahrain in response to desalination plant bombing

President Donald Trump threatened to escalate the bombing of Iran yesterday as Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian vowed that he would never surrender, despite a fresh blitz of US and Israeli air strikes that set a Tehran airport ablaze.

"Today Iran will be hit very hard!" Trump posted on his Truth Social media platform.

"Under serious consideration for complete destruction and certain death, because of Iran's bad behavior, are areas and groups of people that were not considered for targeting up until this moment in time."

Iranian President Pezeshkian struck a defiant tone in a speech broadcast on state TV in which he appeared to address Trump's demand on Friday for "unconditional surrender".

Iran's enemies "must take their wish for the unconditional surrender of the Iranian people to their graves," Pezeshkian replied.

Iran also hit back yesterday, demonstrating that it retains the ability to launch missiles and drones despite the relentless targeting of its military infrastructure over the last seven days.

There were air raid alerts and explosions heard above Jerusalem as well as Gulf cities Dubai, Manama and near Riyadh -- where Saudi Arabia intercepted a ballistic missile fired at an air base housing US military personnel.

The UAE said it had intercepted 15 ballistic missiles and 119 drones yesterday, but video footage showed one projectile crashing into Dubai airport, the world's busiest for international traffic in usual circumstances.

Dubai airport briefly closed

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Dubai's main airport, a key global transport hub, was forced to briefly close yesterday as Iran launched missiles and drones at targets across the Gulf. The barrage came despite Iran's president apologising to neighbouring

countries for its attacks, saying they would no longer be targeted unless strikes were launched from their territory. Attacks were reported in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait, with the Emirates saying it was targeted with 16 ballistic missiles and more than 120 drones.

Saudi warning

Saudi Arabia's Defence Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman urged Iran to "avoid miscalculation", following missile and drone launches against the kingdom.

In a series of statements, the

Saudi defence ministry said it had thwarted repeated missile launches at an air base which houses US military personnel and drone attacks at a major oil field.

US starts using UK bases for 'defensive' Iran operations

Fairford, United Kingdom

The United States has started using British bases for certain operations against Iran during the Middle East war, the UK govern-

ment announced yesterday. Britain's defence ministry said the US had begun using the military sites for "specific defensive operations to prevent Iran firing missiles into the region".

Iran FM accuses US of attacking desalination plant on Gulf island

Tehran, Iran

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi accused the United States yesterday of attacking a desalination plant on a Gulf island, saying it had set a precedent.

"The US committed a blatant and desperate crime by at-

tacking a freshwater desalination plant on Qeshm Island," said Araghchi in a post on X.

"Water supply in 30 villages has been impacted. Attacking Iran's infrastructure is a dangerous move with grave consequences. The US set this precedent, not Iran."

last week, according to military spokesman Mustafa Hayari.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards also said they had fired at the oil tanker Prima in the Gulf as it attempted to cross the narrow Strait of Hormuz, a key choke-point for global shipping that Iran has effectively closed.

Israeli security forces and left-wing activists scuffle during a protest against the war between Israel and the US against Iran in HaBima Square in Tel Aviv



A US Air Force B-1 Lancer bomber is worked on by military personnel at RAF Fairford in south west England shortly after sunrise



Rubble of destroyed buildings is seen at the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted Beirut's southern suburbs Burj al-Barajneh neighborhood



Trump warns will hit hard

War entered its second week

UAE says intercepted 15 ballistic missiles, 119 drones

Trump threatens to expand Iran strikes with new targets



The Iranian ship IRIS Bushehr after a US submarine attack, off the coast of Colombo.

Sri Lanka to treat Iranian sailors according to 'international law'

AFP | New Delhi, India

Sri Lanka will treat Iranian sailors rescued from a torpedoed frigate according to international law, a minister said yesterday, following reports Washington was pressuring Colombo to not repatriate them.

Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath told a conference in New Delhi that Sri Lanka was caring for 32 sailors from the Iranian frigate IRIS Dena under Colombo's international treaty obligations.

The frigate was sunk by a US submarine on Wednesday just off Sri Lanka's southern coast.

Sri Lanka sent its navy to rescue survivors and recover 84 bodies.

Asked if Colombo was under pressure from the US to not repatriate the Iranians, Herath did not answer directly.

"We have taken all the steps according to international laws," Herath said.

Sri Lanka also provided safe haven to a second Iranian war-

ship, the IRIS Bushehr, and evacuated its 219 crew a day after the Dena was torpedoed. The ship was taken to Trincomalee on Sri Lanka's northeast coast after reporting engine problems.

India, meanwhile, said yesterday it had allowed a third Iranian warship, the IRIS Lavan, to dock in one of its ports on "humane" grounds after it too reported operational problems.

The three ships were part of a multi-national fleet review held by India before the war in the Middle East started last Saturday.

"I think it was the humane thing to do and I think we were guided by that principle," Indian Foreign Minister Subrah-

manyam Jaishkar said. The Lavan docked in the southwest Indian port of Kochi on Wednesday.

"A lot of the people on board were young cadets. They have disembarked and are in a nearby facility," said Jaishkar.

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake said this week that Colombo would follow the Hague Convention, which requires a neutral state to hold combatants of a warring state until hostilities end.

A senior administration official said Colombo was in talks with the International Committee of the Red Cross to deal with the survivors of the torpedoed ship.

International humanitarian law applied to the survivors from the Dena, an official said, and the wounded could be repatriated at their request.

Iranian diplomats in Colombo said they have asked for the remains of 84 sailors killed in the US attack to be taken back to Iran.

Debris from intercepted projectile hits Dubai Marina Tower

AFP | Kuwait City, Kuwait

Authorities in Dubai said late yesterday that no injuries were reported after debris from an intercepted projectile caused minor damage to the façade of a residential tower in Dubai Marina, with smoke seen rising from part of the building's exterior. The incident occurred amid the ongoing US-Israel-Iran conflict in the region.

Officials said air defence systems intercepted an incoming aerial threat over the city. Debris from the interception fell onto the tower's exterior, causing slight damage to the façade.



Jordan accuses Iran of targeting key installations

AFP | Amman, Jordan

Jordan accused Iran yesterday of directly targeting sites in the kingdom, firing 119 missiles and drones in the week since US-Israeli strikes triggered a regional war.

Jordanian military spokesman Brigadier General Mustafa Hayari told a news conference that 108 of the projectiles had been intercepted.

"These missiles and drones were targeting vital installations inside Jordan and were not passing through our territories," he said.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

The Broken Promise: How Saturday's Attack Changes the Strategic Equation for the GCC



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

For years, Gulf diplomacy has been built on a careful balance of dialogue, restraint, and strategic partnerships. The events of Saturday may have fundamentally tested that balance.

For years, the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have carefully walked what might best be described as a geopolitical tightrope. Leaders in Riyadh, Manama, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Kuwait City and Doha have navigated a complex regional landscape defined by competing interests, shifting alliances, and persistent security concerns.

On one side stands the Gulf's longstanding strategic partnership with the United States. On another is the gradual opening toward economic cooperation with Israel, reflected in initiatives such as the Abraham Accords and the creation of Palestinian state. At the same time, Gulf states have maintained channels of dialogue with Iran, seeking to reduce tensions and prevent the region from sliding into broader confrontation.

By launching a major offensive amid already heightened tensions, Iran has escalated the immediate conflict while simultaneously raising questions about the durability of the fragile diplomatic framework that has taken years to construct.

The strategic objective behind this delicate balancing act has been clear: safeguarding regional stability while ensuring that the Gulf does not become the battleground for conflicts not of its making.

In recent years, GCC diplomacy has consistently conveyed three complementary messages. To Washington, Gulf states reaffirmed their role as reliable security partners. To Israel, they signalled openness to pragmatic economic engagement and regional integration. And to Tehran, the message was equally direct: the Gulf would not serve as a launchpad for hostility against Iran.

This approach rested on an implicit understanding that Gulf states themselves would remain outside broader regional confrontations so long as they maintained that neutrality.

The events of Saturday, however, have placed that understanding under considerable strain.

By launching a major offensive amid already heightened tensions, Iran has escalated the immediate conflict while simultaneously raising questions about the durability of the fragile diplomatic framework that has taken years to construct. For months, GCC states had visibly emphasized restraint, dialogue, and de-escalation rather than military alignment.

What is now becoming increasingly evident is that the strategic environment of the Gulf is evolving faster than the diplomatic arrangements designed to stabilize it. Assurances that once appeared sufficient may no longer provide the same level of confidence in a region where tensions can escalate with little warning.

The likely consequence is a gradual recalibration of Gulf security thinking. In the years ahead, GCC states may feel compelled to pursue stronger and more structured regional defence arrangements—precisely the scenario many actors in the region have long sought to avoid.

In today's Middle East, the lesson is becoming clearer: neutrality may help preserve stability, but lasting security ultimately requires credible partnerships and dependable strategic frameworks.

For the Gulf, the events of Saturday may well mark the moment when careful balance gives way to a new strategic reality.

(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)

Turkey mulls sending F-16s to northern Cyprus amid Mideast war

AFP | Ankara, Turkey

Turkey is considering the possibility of sending F-16 fighter jets to Northern Cyprus

as a security measure, a Turkish defence ministry source said yesterday, days after the island was targeted by a drone attack.

"In light of recent developments, phased planning is being carried out to ensure the security of the TRNC," the source said referring to the Turkish

Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).

"The deployment of F-16 aircraft to the island is among the options being considered."

India to push ahead with Russian oil imports: government source

India insists it did not need Washington's permission to do so

● **Washington temporarily eased economic sanctions against Russia on Thursday**

● **India yesterday raised the price of household liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders**

AFP | New Delhi, India

An Indian government source said yesterday that New Delhi was pushing ahead with imports of Russian oil, after a temporary US waiver to import crude from Moscow due to war in the Middle East.

But India insists it did not need Washington's permission to do so, the source added.

The US-Israel campaign against Iran and Tehran's retaliatory attacks across the Gulf region have upended the world's energy and transport sectors, causing a surge in global oil prices.

Washington temporarily eased economic sanctions

against Russia on Thursday to allow Russian oil stranded at sea to be sold to India.

Still importing

But India is not dependent on "a short-term waiver" for such purchases, the government source in New Delhi said.

"India has never depended on permission from any country to buy Russian oil," they added.

"India is still importing Russian oil even in February 2026, and Russia is still India's largest crude oil supplier."

Washington rolled back a 25 percent duty on Indian exports

in February as part of an interim trade deal after what it described as New Delhi's "commitment" to stop buying Russian oil.

But this purported promise finds no mention in the joint statement and has neither been confirmed nor denied by the Indian government, which has maintained its oil procurement is guided by national interest.

"well stocked"

The government source said India was "well stocked" with more than 250 million barrels of crude and petroleum products to "handle short term



India is the world's second-largest LPG buyer and purchases more than 90 percent of its supply from the Middle East, according to data intelligence firm Kpler.

disruptions".

However, India yesterday raised the price of household liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders used for cooking by seven percent.

Globally, crude soared 8.5% on Friday and was up nearly 30% for the week after President Donald Trump said only the "unconditional surrender" of Iran would end the Middle East war.

Earlier in the week, India's petroleum ministry ordered refiners to ramp up LPG output, asking for propane and butane streams to be utilised for production.

Takaful International Company B.S.C. Invitation to the Annual General Meeting To be held on Sunday 29th March 2026 at 10:30 am



The Board of Directors of Takaful International Company B.S.C. (CR. No. 21100, Trading Code: TAKAFUL) would like to invite the Shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will be held on **Sunday 29th March 2026 at 10:30 am, at the Company Headquarters (Seef Area)**. In the absence of quorum, a second meeting will be held on Sunday 5th April 2026 at the same time and place. In the absence of quorum on the second date, a third meeting will be scheduled on **Sunday 12th April 2026**, to discuss and adopt the agenda items below.

Agenda for the Annual General Meeting:

1. Approve the previous minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 24 March 2025.
2. Discuss and approve the Board of Directors report for the financial year ended 31 December 2025.
3. Listen to the Shari'a Supervisory Board's report for the financial year ended 31 December 2025.
4. Listen to the external auditors' report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025.
5. Discuss and approve the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025.
6. Discuss and approve the following recommendations of the Board of Directors in allocating the net profits for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 as follows:
 - a) Transfer BD 141,822/- to the statutory reserve.
 - b) Distribution of BD 1,275,000/- cash dividends to shareholders (15 Fils per share, at a rate of 15% of the paid-up capital), as follows:

Event	Date
Cum-Dividend Date (Last day of trading with entitlement to dividends)	30 March 2026
Ex-Dividend Date (First day of trading without entitlement to dividends)	31 March 2026
Record Date (The Day on which all shareholders whose names are on the share register will be entitled to dividends)	1 April 2026
Payment Date (The Day on which the dividends will be paid to the entitled shareholders)	15 April 2026

c) Transfer of BD 1,400/- to the retained earnings.

7. Approve the recommendation to allocate BD 110,000/- as remuneration to the Board of Directors for the year ended 31 December 2025, which is subject to the approval of the relevant authorities.
8. Inform shareholders about their total liability on Zakat of BD 319,373/- (i.e., BD 3.757 for everyone thousand shares held) for the year ended 31 December 2025.
9. Inform shareholders about related party transactions during the year ended 31 December 2025 as detailed in note (30) of the financial statements.
10. Discuss and approve the Corporate Governance report for the year 2025 and the Company's compliance with Central Bank of Bahrain's requirements.
11. Discharge the Board of Directors for all the matters related to their conduct for the financial year ended 31 December 2025.
12. Appointment/ Re-appointment of the External Auditors for the financial year 2026, subject to the approval of the Central Bank of Bahrain and authorize the Board of Directors to fix their fee.
13. Election of ten out of ten board members for the upcoming three years (2026-2029), subject to the approval of the Central Bank of Bahrain.
14. Any additional matters in accordance with article 207 of Bahrain Commercial Companies Law.

Important notes to the shareholders:

1. All registered Shareholders at the annual general meeting date are eligible to attend the meeting in person or appoint, in writing, a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf provided that such proxy is not a director or employee of the Company, as prescribed in article (203) of Bahrain commercial Companies Law.
2. In the case of an institutional shareholder, the representative attending the meeting must submit the proxy signed by an authorized signatory of the relevant institutional shareholder. The proxy must be sealed by the institutional shareholder's stamp.
3. A copy of the proxy form is available on the Company's website www.gigtakaful.bh and Bahrain Bourse's website www.bahrainbourse.com.
4. The proxy form should be submitted to Takaful International Company B.S.C. on its address Building 680, Road 2811, Block 428, Seef District - P.O. Box 3230, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, no later than 24 hours before the scheduled meeting date. Proxy forms may be delivered by hand, post, or by email: grc@gigtakaful.bh. Any proxies received after the deadline will not be valid for the AGM.
5. All shareholders appointing a proxy to attend the meeting must submit the proxy holder's identification document or passport in addition to the proxy.
6. The financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 are available on the Company's website www.gigtakaful.bh and Bahrain Bourse's website www.bahrainbourse.com.
7. For any inquiries, please call the Board of Directors' Secretary on 17565686.

Chairman of the Board

www.gigtakaful.bh

Licensed by the CBB as a General and Family Takaful Company

Iran to choose new supreme leader

A member of Iran's Assembly of Experts said Saturday the body would meet within a day to choose the country's next supreme leader, Iranian media reported.

Trump hails war progress

AFP | Iran

US President Donald Trump told Latin American leaders at a Florida summit: "We're doing very well in Iran, and you

see the result." Repeating his claim that Iran had been close to having a nuclear weapon, he added: "They're crazy and they would have used it. So we did the world a favour."

Earlier, in a post on his Truth Social Platform, he warned the United States would hit Iran "very hard" and threatened to expand strikes to include new targets.

Indonesia seeks suspension of concessions against EU in palm oil dispute



Villagers standing next to palm oil seeds at a riverside village in Singkil, Indonesia's southern Aceh province.

AFP | Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia will file for a suspension of concessions against the European Union at the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement body over a palm oil case, the trade minister said Saturday.

The move was taken after the 27-member bloc failed to meet a deadline to adjust its policy based on the WTO body's ruling and recommendation in a palm oil dispute case, the trade ministry said in a statement.

WTO experts in January 2025 largely upheld EU restrictions on the use of palm oil in biofuels following complaints by Indonesia.

Trade Minister Budi Santo-

so said the suspension of concessions would be focused on goods, but added Indonesia was "open" to asking the dispute settlement body permission to apply the measure to other sectors.

"We will ensure that the losses are accurately calculated and the case is handled effectively while simultaneously maintaining bilateral relations with the EU," Budi said in a statement.

The dispute concerns the EU Renewable Energy Directive of 2018 (RED II), which limited the eligibility of crop-based biofuels to count towards member states' renewable energy targets, and phased out the eligibility of palm oil-based biofuels altogether by 2030.

The EU has deemed that the production of palm oil is not sustainable.

Indonesia took the move to safeguard its rights in the future if the EU could not adhere to the WTO panel's ruling, Budi said. He did not specify which obligations the EU had failed to comply with.

Suspension of concessions is a temporary trade sanction which, under the WTO dispute settlement body, can be filed against another WTO member to enforce compliance with a dispute ruling.

Indonesia, the world's leading producer of palm oil, in 2019 requested an expert panel review of the EU restrictions.

Classifieds



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Failed Israeli commando operation to find airman remains kills 41 in Lebanon

The Israeli military had issued evacuation warnings for the area

● Operation overnight in Lebanon was to find Arad's remains but had failed to uncover any trace

● Lebanon's military said it witnessed a commando operation by Israeli forces

● Hezbollah said earlier Saturday it had confronted Israeli troops that infiltrated an east Lebanon

● Lebanon's health ministry said at least 294 people have been killed in Israeli air strikes over the last week, while Prime Minister Nawaf Salam has warned of a "humanitarian disaster"

AFP | Nabi Sheet, Lebanon



This photograph taken during a media tour organised by the Hezbollah shows a flag of Hezbollah installed on the balcony of a damaged building at Nabi Sheet town after an Israeli military operation in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon

An Israeli special forces operation that failed to find the remains of airman Ron Arad, captured in Lebanon in 1986, killed 41 people and wounded 40 in eastern Lebanon.

Gutted buildings, torn-off roofs, munitions scattered on the ground surrounded a large crater in Nabi Sheet, the town that witnessed the operation which involved air strikes and clashes.

"The sounds of the explosions were like something out of a movie," Nabi Sheet resident Mohammed Mussa, 55, told AFP during a media tour organised by the Iran-backed group Hezbollah.



This photograph taken during a media tour organised by the Hezbollah shows a dug-out grave reportedly during an Israeli military operation at a cemetery in Nabi Sheet town in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon



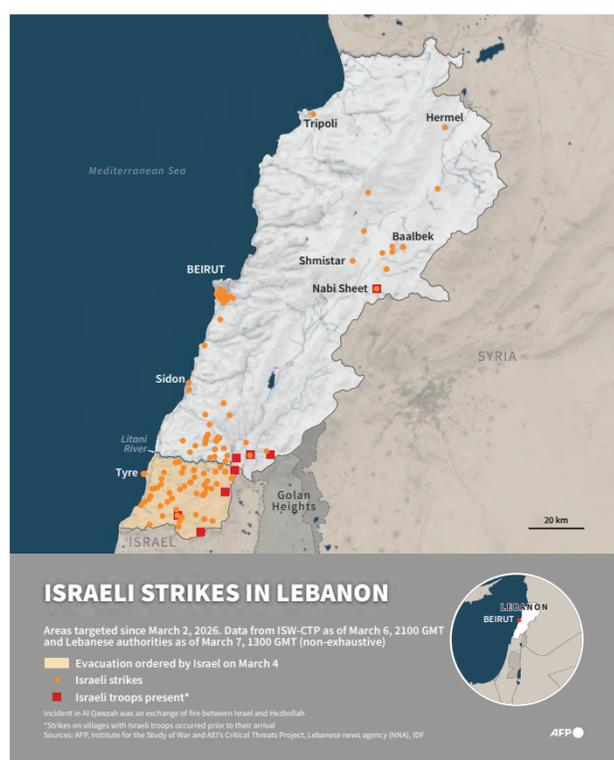
Rubble of destroyed buildings is seen at the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted Haret Hreik neighbourhood in Beirut's southern suburb

Israeli army warns remaining residents of Beirut's south suburbs to evacuate
Jerusalem, Undefined

The Israeli military yesterday warned the remaining residents of Beirut's southern suburbs, where Hezbollah holds sway, to evacuate immediately.

"Urgent warning to residents of Beirut's southern suburbs, especially those who have not yet evacuated the area. We reiterate -- save your lives and evacuate your homes immediately," Arabic-language spokesman for the military Avichay Adraee said on X.

Tens of thousands of residents have fled the suburbs, known as Dahiyeh in Arabic, since Israel first issued an evacuation warning on Thursday ahead of its strikes.



"We later understood that there was a commando operation underway." The operation was met with

'Infiltration'

Hezbollah said earlier Saturday it had confronted Israeli troops that infiltrated an east Lebanon town overnight by helicopter.

The group said its fighters had "observed the infiltration of four Israeli enemy army helicopters from the Syrian direction".

After landing and disembarking, the advancing troops "were engaged" by Hezbollah fighters as they reached a cemetery in Nabi Sheet, it added.

"The clash escalated after the enemy force was exposed," Hezbollah said, adding that Israeli troops launched strikes before evacuating.

An AFP correspondent in eastern Lebanon, where Hezbollah holds sway, heard warplanes and intense gunfire throughout the night.

Lebanon's military said it witnessed a commando operation by Israeli forces, adding that "three soldiers and a number of civilians were killed as a result of the violent enemy shelling" that accompanied the attack.

Arad has been missing since he was captured after he ejected from his combat jet over Lebanon in 1986 as the aircraft went down.

He is presumed dead, though his remains have never been returned. The Israeli army said it "will continue to operate relentlessly, day and night, out of a deep commitment to bringing all of Israel's sons, the fallen and the missing, back home".

Arad's wife Tami thanked the military but said the lives of soldiers should not be put "at risk" in the hunt for traces of her husband, Israeli media reported.

'Resist'

In the town's cemetery, an AFP journalist saw a hole that looked like a dug-up grave, surrounded by other tombstones.

Earlier on Saturday, a Hezbollah official in the Bekaa region, where Nabi Sheet is located, told AFP that the cemetery the Israelis raided belonged to the Shukr family.

Last month, Lebanese authorities charged four people with kidnapping Ahmad Shukr -- whose brother Hassan is suspected of involvement in Arad's capture -- on behalf of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency.

As the Israelis withdrew after the failed operation, mayor Moussawi said "the bombing became indiscriminate and very heavy, resulting in destruction in dozens of locations".

"It cost a great deal: infrastructure, destruction and the blood of our sons," he added, insisting however that "as long as Israel exists, we will continue to resist it".

Israel has launched numerous strikes and sent ground troops into Lebanon since Hezbollah fired missiles at Israel to avenge the killing of Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei.

Lebanon's health ministry on Saturday said Israeli attacks on the country had killed nearly 300 people since Monday.

Arad's wife Tami thanked the military but said the lives of soldiers should not be put "at risk" in the hunt for traces of her husband, Israeli media reported.

Lebanese military chief Rudolphe Haykal said the Israeli soldiers wore military uniforms similar to those of the Lebanese army

"resistance" he said, referring to Hezbollah fighters in the area, adding that it had "escalated into clashes and attacks against the Israelis".

The explosions were powerful enough to send a car onto a building's second floor.

Another damaged home showed the shredded remains of posters of Hezbollah leaders.

The strikes on Nabi Sheet and its surroundings killed 41 people and wounded 40, Lebanon's health ministry said.

The Israeli military had issued evacuation warnings for the area at noon on Friday.

"With this warning, we prepared and evacuated the children from the town to protect them," Nabi Sheet mayor Hani Moussawi said.

Israel's military said Saturday it had carried out an operation overnight in Lebanon to find Arad's remains but had failed to uncover any trace of the navigator missing since 1986.

"No findings related to him were located... No IDF (military) injuries were reported," the army said.

Lebanese military chief Rudolphe Haykal said the Israeli soldiers wore military uniforms similar to those of the Lebanese army and used military vehicles and ambulances similar to those of the Hezbollah-linked Islamic Health Authority.

Haykal added that Israeli attacks targeting Lebanon were hindering the implementation of the army's plan to disarm Hezbollah.

Stranded by war, Doha's cruise passengers hit the road for flights home

● The war has spread to the otherwise stable Gulf, shutting shipping lanes, grounding flights and unexpectedly stranding travellers, including around 15,000 cruise ship passengers in the region, according to the United Nations' migration agency.

AFP | Doha, Qatar

Two attack helicopters, their forward-facing guns silhouetted against Doha's clear blue sky, flew low over the city's cruise ship terminal as stranded passengers boarded buses and cars on Saturday for Riyadh, hoping to catch flights home.

"Eight days we are here in Doha and it's enough. We want to go home," Meral, 47, who lives near Dusseldorf told AFP as she and her partner Hussein, 52, wheeled their bags to a waiting private car to speed them to Saudi Arabia.

Their vessel, the Mein Schiff 5, and another, The Celestyal Journey -- two towering, multi-story cruise ships -- have been anchored at Doha's Mina port since Iran launched a retaliatory missile and drone campaign against Gulf neighbours following US-Israeli strikes.

The war has spread to the otherwise stable Gulf, shutting shipping lanes, grounding flights and unexpectedly stranding travel-



A cruise ship is seen anchored at the old port of Doha

lers, including around 15,000 cruise ship passengers in the region, according to the United Nations' migration agency.

Meral, who asked to be identified only by her first name, said passengers at the port had heard explosions overhead as Qatari air defences intercepted Iranian missiles and drones and passengers were instructed to shelter and stay far from windows.

"I was afraid... I think 99 percent of the passengers have never experienced something like this," she said.

'Happy to leave'

The German national said the pair had privately arranged their own transfer for the roughly 570-kilometre overland journey to Riyadh, a lifeline for stranded tourists in Qatar where sea and air travel were suspended on February 28 and only a handful of flights have departed through a secure air corridor.

Several passengers told AFP that hundreds of people remained on the Mein Schiff 5 with a batch of 290 due to be evacuated through arrange-

ments by German tour operator TUI for Riyadh later on Saturday.

TUI did not immediately respond to a request for comment from AFP.

As some passengers went for walks around the port or climbed into waiting vehicles later on Saturday, a government alert sounded from mobile phones warning of an elevated threat level and ordering people to take shelter.

In the city centre, past the brightly coloured buildings of the Old Doha Port tourist dis-

trict, warning sirens wailed.

Later Qatar's defence ministry said the military intercepted a missile attack from Iran.

Dozens of passengers from The Celestyal Journey, some of whom said they were from central Asia, hung back in the shade of Doha's cruise ship terminal and were counted onto an idling bus that would also take them to Riyadh.

"We are happy to leave," Doniyor, 16, from Tashkent, Uzbekistan told AFP as he carried his family's bags to the bus filling

with passengers.

'No information'

Doniyor said his mother, grandmother and brother would travel eight hours by bus to Riyadh before catching flights, adding it was "sad" their trip had ended on such a low note.

Greece-based operator of Celestyal Journey, Celestyal Cruises also did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Passengers said the first to be evacuated from the Mein Schiff 5 were to be families and those with medical needs.

Yacqas Daamen, 79, from Rotterdam said he expected to be waiting several more days before he could leave.

"And now we are waiting to go out but there is no information for us. We hope in the next days that we can fly back to Holland," he said.

Daamen explained how his greatest concern was for his family at home who were the most worried about him.

Hubert Sirch, 57, from Munich, said he boarded a flight from Doha following his cruise, but the flight turned back after about half an hour when the airspace was suddenly closed as the attacks began.

At the airport, he described "chaos" before returning to the ship. Sirch said before embarking on his trip he had not anticipated the dangers of a possible war with Iran.

"I didn't think about this because the government didn't make any risk announcement," he said.



A US Air Force B-1 Lancer bomber lands at RAF Fairford in south west England. Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer has given approval for Washington to use the bases of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean and RAF Fairford in south-west England to bomb Iranian missile sites, after several Gulf countries were targeted by Iranian retaliations.

Explosions heard in Iraq's Baghdad, Erbil

AFP | Baghdad, Iraq

Explosions were heard on Saturday night in Iraq's capital Baghdad and in the city of Erbil in the autonomous Kurdistan region, AFP journalists reported.

The cause of the loud bangs in Baghdad was still unknown,

but a witness near the fortified Green Zone, which houses the US embassy, reported seeing air defences activated over the area.

Several drones have been intercepted near Baghdad airport since the start of the war in the Middle East.

In Erbil, the capital of the

Kurdistan region, an AFP journalist reported hearing the sound of a drone followed by at least three loud bangs.

Since the start of the war, drones have repeatedly been intercepted over the city of Erbil, which is also home to a major US consulate complex.

'Be careful' Turkey warns Iran after missile shot down: foreign minister



Iranian nationals wait for busses in Turkey after passing through the Razi-Kapiköy border crossing in Van, north-eastern Turkey, a day after Turkey and Iran have mutually suspended day-trip crossings at their border as Israeli-US strikes continued to pound the Islamic Republic.

Turkey warns efforts to stir civil war in Iran 'extremely dangerous': foreign minister

Protesters come out for Iran, against war in spots across the globe

AFP | Paris, France

Lion-emblazoned flags of pre-revolution Iran fluttered in cities across the world on Saturday as demonstrators took to the streets a week after the start of the war in the Middle East.

Some protesters came out in support of Reza Pahlavi, the US-based son of the country's late shah, while others denounced the option.

Others demonstrated against the war and some in support of Iran's late supreme leader Ali Khamenei, who was killed in the first US-Israeli strikes of the conflict.

Paris saw two demonstrations: one supporting the son of the late shah to head up a transition, and another denouncing that scenario.

"I support Pahlavi who is calling for a revolution," Masoud



Supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran political group wave Iran's pre-Islamic revolution Lion and Sun flags as they take part in a rally "Neither Shah, nor Mullah" to protest against the Islamic Republic of Iran government in Paris

Ghanaatian, 35, a student, told AFP at a protest in southern Paris, where participants carried photos of the late shah's son and waved US, Israeli and pre-revolution Iran flags.

"He's a democrat. He can oversee a transition and promises to organise elections."

Hundreds of pro-Pahlavi demonstrations also gathered in Stockholm, holding up pictures of him and his late father.

But farther north, protesters wearing yellow vests reading "Free Iran" showed off stickers on their hands that read "No Shah, no Mullah".

In Amsterdam protesters snaked along one of the city's canals, holding up Israeli, American and pre-revolution Iran flags, as they called on the government to invite Pahlavi to the country and to close the Iranian embassy.

Shortly after dawn in Britain,

anti-war protesters gathered at the entrance of an air force base in Fairford, southwest of England, holding signs reading "Hands off Iran," "Peace" and "Yanks go home".

A demonstrations against the war also took place in Cyprus.

In South Africa -- which has dragged Israel to International Court of Justice, accusing it of genocide during the Gaza war, a charge Israel denies -- dozens gathered in front of the US consulate in Johannesburg, holding up photos of Khamenei, the Islamic republic's flag and signs bashing Israel.

In Cape Town, Iranian pro-democracy activists and supporters of Israel waved Israeli flags and chanted slogans in the Albert Waterfront shopping mall.

Several counter-protesters carried signs denouncing Israel and in support of the Palestinians.

Cuba 'next' on agenda, after Iran: Trump

● "We're really focused on this one right now. We've got plenty of time, but Cuba's ready -- after 50 years," he added, explaining that Secretary of State Marco Rubio would be his point man on Cuba.

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump said Friday Cuba was next on his agenda after Iran, predicting that the communist-run island, crippled by a US energy blockade, is "gonna fall pretty soon."

"They want to make a deal so badly," Trump told CNN in a phone interview, a day after suggesting that he would turn to an unspecified project for Cuba after the war against Iran.

"We're really focused on this one right now. We've got plenty of time, but Cuba's ready -- after 50 years," he added, explaining that Secretary of State Marco Rubio would be his point man on Cuba.

"He's doing some job, and your next one is going to be, we want to do that special Cuba," Trump said.

Both Trump and Rubio -- the son of Cuban immigrants -- have made no secret of their desire to bring about regime change in Havana following their overthrow of Washington's other bete noire in the Caribbean -- Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro.

The US State Department's coordinator for Cuban affairs, Rob Allison, met recently in Havana with senior representatives of the Catholic Church, the US Embassy in Havana said Friday on X, without saying when the meetings took place.

The embassy posted a picture of Rob Allison and the US charge d'affaires in Cuba, Mike Hammer, meeting with Cardinal



U.S. President Donald Trump and U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth (R) walk to a vehicle after arriving on Air Force One at Dover Air Force Base



A man shows a vacuum-sealed pack of chicken meat, part of the humanitarian aid donated by Mexico for Cuban families, in a grocery in Havana

Juan de la Claridad and Bishop Arturo Gonzalez, president of the national bishop's conference.

The four discussed humanitarian aid sent by Washington to the island "and the need for change to improve the situation in Cuba," the embassy added.

No oil tankers since January

Trump has repeatedly said that he believes the Cuban regime is ripe for collapse.

In an apparent attempt to precipitate its demise, he imposed an energy blockade on the Caribbean nation.

The Cuban state has received no oil shipments since January 9, forcing airlines to curtail or suspend flights to the island and deepening a long-running economic crisis.

Havana accuses Trump of seeking to strangle Cuba's economy.

The island, under a US trade embargo since 1962, has for

years been mired in a severe crisis marked by extended power cuts and shortages of fuel, medicine and food.

Washington recently eased its oil blockade slightly to allow private companies in Cuba to import small amounts of oil.

On Wednesday, two-thirds of the island suffered a blackout after a breakdown at the Antonio Guiteras power plant, the island's largest.

Power has since been restored to most households.

The Catholic Church has previously served as a mediator between Washington and the Cuban government.

Pope Francis negotiated a resumption of diplomatic relations with Washington under president Barack Obama in 2015, after decades of Cold War estrangement.

The Vatican also negotiated a deal between Havana and former US president Joe Biden, under which Havana released hundreds of political prisoners in return for being removed from a US list of state sponsors of terror.

Trump put Cuba back on the terror list on his first day back in power in January 2025.

One person killed in Dubai by debris from aerial interception: authorities

Rocket attack intercepted over US embassy in Baghdad: security sources

Israeli army says has conducted 3,400 strikes on Iran since war began

'Significant' acceleration of global warming since 2015: study

AFP | Paris, France

Global warming has accelerated in a "statistically significant" way since 2015, according to a study published by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK).

"Over the past 10 years, the estimated warming rate has been around 0.35C per decade, depending on the dataset, compared with just under 0.2C per decade on average from 1970 to 2015," the study found.

"This recent rate is higher than in any previous decade since the beginning of instrumental records in 1880," it added.

The study relied on observational data on climate change from NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Berkeley Earth, a California-based non-profit research organization.

Study co-author Grant Foster said that the researchers had "filtered out" natural influences likely to obscure the underlying temperature trend, such as the El Nino phenomenon, volcanic eruptions, and variations in solar activity.

In this way, "the 'noise' is reduced, making the underlying long-term warming signal more clearly visible," Foster added.

"The adjusted data show an acceleration of global warming since 2015 with a statistical certainty of over 98 percent," said Stefan Rahmstorf, PIK researcher and lead author of

the study. "If the warming rate of the past 10 years continues, it would lead to a long-term exceedance of the 1.5C limit of the Paris Agreement before 2030," Rahmstorf added.

Scientists say the last 11 years have been the warmest ever recorded, with 2024 topping the podium and 2023 in second place.

"After correcting for the effects of El Nino and the solar maximum, 2023 and 2024, which were exceptionally warm years, become somewhat cooler, but remain the two warmest years since the beginning of instrumental records," the PIK study says.

The question of a potential increase in the rate of planetary warming has sparked debate within the scientific community.

Zeke Hausfather, a climatologist at Berkeley Earth, told AFP that "there is now pretty widespread (if not quite universal) agreement that there has been a detectable acceleration in warming in recent years".

But the methods used in the PIK study to remove natural variability are "decidedly imperfect and will likely leave some remaining effects", he added.

In 2024, a study published in the Communications Earth & Environment journal argued that the available data do not show a statistically robust recent acceleration of warming above and beyond the increase already observed since the 1970s.

'I have great love for this country'

Bahrain National Team Coach Talajic Declines Return Offer to Croatia

Hussain Maskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's national football team coach, Dragan Talajic, has confirmed that he turned down an offer to return to his native Croatia, reaffirming his commitment to the country. "I will remain here as the coach of the Bahrain national team because I have great love for this country, its leadership, and its people," he stated.

The highlight of Talajic's tenure so far came in early 2025, when he led Bahrain to its sec-



Dragan Talajic proudly raises the Bahrain flag following their Gulf Cup victory last year

ond-ever Gulf Cup victory in Kuwait, a historic achievement that strengthened his bond with both the team and its supporters.

Amid the current regional situation, he also urged the public to prioritize their safety: "I call on the people of Bahrain to take care of themselves, and I hope that things will return to normal soon."

By staying put, Talajic demonstrates his loyalty and dedication, reinforcing the strong connection he has built with Bahraini football even during challenging times.

Bahrain Super Cup Final Set



Muharraq's Hardan challenges Al Khaldiya's Anas Ouahim during early 2026 clash

Hussain Maskati
TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Football Association has confirmed that the 2025-2026 Super Cup final will be played on March 18, keeping the originally scheduled date despite calls from supporters to postpone the match due to ongoing regional concerns. The fixture will take place the night before Eid al-Fitr, with kickoff set for 9:30 PM at Khalifa Sports City Stadium.

Muharraq, coached by Portuguese Fernando Manuel de Jesus Santos, will face Al Khaldiya, led by Tunisian Lassad Al Chabbi. Muharraq enter the match as reigning Nasser bin Hamad Premier League champions, while Al Khaldiya claimed last season's King's Cup.

The Red Wolves enter the Super Cup in confident form, buoyed by a 2-1 friendly win over Um Al Hassam on Friday, which also served as preparation for their upcoming league clash with Riffa.

Traditionally, the Super Cup pits the league champions against the King's Cup holders. However, this year's matchup is even more compelling as both clubs are closely matched in the current league campaign. Al Khaldiya currently top the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League with 36 points, while Muharraq sit second with the same total, trailing only on the head-to-head tiebreaker. The two sides have already met once this season in early January, with Al Khaldiya edging a 1-0 victory courtesy of an early goal from Joel Beya.

Both clubs have also enjoyed strong runs in cup competitions this season, advancing to the King's Cup semi-finals and keeping their hopes alive for another domestic title.

In recent days, supporters of both teams had called for the Super Cup to be postponed, citing regional difficulties and hoping for a later date that would allow more fans to attend. Despite this, the Bahrain Football Association has confirmed that the match will proceed as planned on March 18.

Russell leads Mercedes 1-2 for Australian GP as Verstappen crashes

AFP | Melbourne, Australia

George Russell powered to pole position on Saturday for the season-opening Australian Grand Prix ahead of Mercedes teammate Kimi Antonelli, but there was disaster for Max Verstappen as he crashed out.

On a fine day at Melbourne's Albert Park, Verstappen's Red Bull partner Isack Hadjar came third in chaotic qualifying as the pecking order became clearer after the biggest regulation shake-up F1 has seen in years. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc will keep Hadjar company on the second row with McLaren's Oscar Piastri and world champion teammate Lando Norris starting fifth and sixth.

Russell eclipsed his rivals with a flying lap of one minute 18.518 seconds on soft tyres, 0.293 ahead of Antonelli.

"A great day. We knew there was a lot of potential in the car,"



Pole position qualifier Mercedes' British driver George Russell (L) receives his Pirelli Pole Position award from Australian snowboarder Scotty James on stage after qualifying for the Formula One Australian Grand Prix at Albert Park Circuit in Melbourne

said the Briton.

"Really happy to have Kimi here next to me as well, as the team did an amazing job in the garage today."

Incredibly, Antonelli showed up after crashing heavily in final practice earlier in the day and writing off his Silver Arrow. The 19-year-old Italian left the

car in a mess but his mechanics miraculously managed to stitch it back together and he got on track with just three minutes left of Q1 to stay alive.

'No pressure, no fun', says India's Suryakumar ahead of World Cup final

AFP | Ahmedabad, India

India skipper Suryakumar Yadav said on Saturday there would be "butterflies in the stomach" when he walks out for the T20 World Cup final against New Zealand, with expectations sky-high for the hosts.

The blockbuster final in Ahmedabad on Sunday is expected to attract over 100,000 fans at the Narendra Modi Stadium and hundreds of millions more watching on TV.

Defending champions India are targeting a record third title and looking to become the first team to win back-to-back trophies. No country has previously won the T20 World Cup on home soil.

Suryakumar played a key part when Rohit Sharma's India lifted



India's captain Suryakumar Yadav (R) arrives at Ahmedabad airport ahead of the 2026 ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup final match against New Zealand in Ahmedabad

ed the World Cup in Barbados in 2024, taking over the captaincy later that year after Rohit retired from international T20s.

"Leading such a wonderful side into a final that (is also on) home soil, it's always a special feeling," Suryakumar told reporters at a packed news conference.

"Of course there are nerves, there will be butterflies in the stomach but as I always say, 'if there is no pressure, there is no fun'. All the boys and the support staff and I am sure the whole of India is excited for tomorrow."

Top-ranked India have been the team to beat in the tournament and lost just one game en route to the final, when South Africa ended their 12-match

unbeaten streak in the Super Eights stage.

India have since won three straight matches, holding off England in a tense semi-final as the bowlers, led by Jasprit Bumrah, held their nerve to win by seven runs in a high-scoring thriller.

Bumrah, who was India's hero in their win against South Africa in the 2024 final, bowled a near-perfect 18th over at the Wankhede Stadium to deny England and Jacob Bethell, who hit a valiant 105.

The 35-year-old Suryakumar said having players with experience of major international tournaments adds to their armoury.

"There's a lot of benefit because there are a lot of players in this team who have played a

lot of ICC events right from our coach (two-time World Cup winner Gautam Gambhir)," said Suryakumar.

"So their experience is also important. And there are a lot of players, like Bumrah, Hardik (Pandya), Axar (Patel), there are a lot of players who have played in ICC events, in pressure situations."

Suryakumar said he learned a lot from Rohit, who was joined by Virat Kohli in retirement after the 2024 T20 World Cup.

"The way, where he left, I got to learn a lot of things from him when I was playing under him," said Suryakumar.

"I tried to implement the same things with a few thoughts of mine as well. And it's worked really well."

Riffa Advance to King's Cup Semi-Finals

Muharraq to meet Al Ahli or Al Ettifaq in Final 4

Hussain Maskati
TDT | Manama

The King's Cup, Bahrain's premier football competition, saw Riffa secure a place in the semi-finals with a 4-1 victory over Bahrain Club. Muharraq will face either Al Ahli or Al Ettifaq in the semi-finals, as their quarter-final went into extra time and extended past the TDT deadline, leaving the semi-final pairing pending the final result.

At Khalifa Sports City, seven-time winners Riffa (1972/73, 1984/85, 1985/86, 1997/98, 2009/10, 2018/19, 2020/21) looked every bit the side chasing silverware, aiming to add to the Khalid bin Hamad Cup they won earlier this season. They dominated from the first whistle against two-time winners Bahrain Club (1970, 1971). Inside the opening minute, Serbian forward Dejan Georgijevic raced down the right and slotted a composed finish into the bottom corner. Bahrain Club, who have not beaten Mohammed Mashaan's side in their last ten meetings, struggled to regain rhythm as the Sky Blues controlled possession and probed relentlessly.



Riffa players celebrate a goal in their quarter-final win over Bahrain Club yesterday

In the 30th minute, a slick move on the right saw Wellington Moreira loft a measured ball into the box, where Samuel Toscas

backheeled it into the path of Ali Madan, who doubled the lead. Six minutes later, Georgijevic completed his brace after a de-

fensive lapse, calmly placing the ball into the net. Riffa made it 4-0 in the 63rd minute when substitutes combined perfectly: Sayed

Redha Isa delivered a low cross that Ebrahim Al Khattal volleyed home. Bahrain Club pulled one back in the 76th minute via an

own goal from Ali Haram, but Riffa's dominance was never in doubt, and the Sky Blues advanced 4-1.

Meanwhile, at Bahrain National Stadium, nine-time King's Cup winners Al Ahli (1959/60, 1967/68, 1976/77, 1981/82, 1986/87, 1990/91, 2000/01, 2002/03, 2023/24) faced First Division leaders Al Ettifaq in a tense, end-to-end contest. Al Ettifaq took the lead in the 12th minute through Mauritanian winger Ahmed Koory, but Al Ahli equalised from a penalty in the 20th minute, converted by Abdulla AlHashash. Seven minutes later, Victor Gabriel tapped in Joao Victor Coutinho's low cross to put Al Ahli ahead. Despite rattling the crossbar twice and producing a sensational scorpion-kick effort saved by Sayed Shubbar Alawi, Al Ettifaq forced a dramatic 2-2 equaliser in the last minute through a penalty from Moroccan Abdelghafour Mehri.

With the quarter-finals concluded, Muharraq will face either Al Ahli or Al Ettifaq in one semi-final, while Al Khaldiya meet Riffa in the other, completing the line-up for the final four of this year's King's Cup.

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