

Unstoppable India target Olympic gold after making World Cup history
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HM King: Bahrain promotes peace and cooperation

● **His Majesty visits Royal Bahraini Air Force, hails combat readiness**

TDI | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment to a firm approach based on wisdom, moderation, and the promotion of peace and cooperation.

He highlighted the Kingdom's continued efforts to strengthen fraternal relations with Arab, regional, and international partners to support regional security and stability.

HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, was speaking as he visited the Royal Bahraini Air Force yesterday.

His Majesty was briefed on several fighter jets of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), which rank among the best in the world.

In a speech delivered on the occasion, HM the King com-



mended the Royal Bahraini Air Force for their high level of combat readiness, skill, and team-

“The Kingdom is today more united and stronger, and stands as one around the flag of the dear homeland.”

— HM KING HAMAD BIN ISA AL KHALIFA, SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES

work in joint operations with the Air Defense and other branches of the Bahrain Defence Force.

“They are the best people we can always rely on,” HM King Hamad said

He praised their dedication to defending the homeland, preserving civilizational progress, and safeguarding citizens.

His Majesty praised the discipline, competence, and sense of responsibility shown by members of the BDF.

He emphasised that they remain a strong shield for the nation and a firm support in preserving its security, stability, and development.

HM the King expressed his

gratitude to the Royal Air Force and Air Defense for their dedication in safeguarding Bahrain's land, waters, and airspace.

He noted that the Kingdom is today “more united and stronger, and stands as one around the flag of the dear homeland.”

His Majesty also instructed senior officers to convey his greetings and appreciation to all officers, non-commissioned officers, and personnel of the Air Force across all units, wishing them continued success and prosperity.

‘World must act now’

HRH Prince Salman: Diplomacy cannot succeed under shadow of missiles and drones

TDI | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday stressed that diplomacy cannot succeed under the shadow of missiles and drones.

He also called on the international community to act decisively to protect maritime traffic and uphold international peace.

HRH Prince Salman delivered the remarks while participating in a remote meeting with leaders from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Arab states, and the European Union to discuss regional security.

“No state can accept attacks on its territory or threats to its people,” he said.

Violations

His Royal Highness condemned recent Iranian missile

“Bahrain has consistently advocated for dialogue and diplomacy as the path to lasting stability.”

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

and drone strikes against Bahrain and allied countries as “blatant violations of international law and international humanitarian law”, highlighting their impact on civilians and critical infrastructure.

He also called for urgent international action, stating: “The international community needs to act decisively to ensure the



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister participates in a remote meeting with H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs

protection of international maritime traffic and the flow of goods through the Straits of Hormuz.

“We call on the European Union and the United Nations Security Council to act with urgency and resolve,” HRH Prince Salman said.

He warned that failure to respond “will lead to further aggression and undermine international peace and security.”

Attacks

Bahrain, along with other GCC states, Jordan, and regional part-

ners, has faced unprecedented attacks targeting residential areas, energy facilities, and water desalination plants, His Royal Highness noted.

He emphasised the country's commitment to dialogue while asserting its right to self-defense

under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

He added, “Bahrain has consistently advocated for dialogue and diplomacy as the path to lasting stability. But let us be clear: diplomacy cannot succeed under the shadow of missiles and drones.”

Support

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister also reaffirmed Bahrain's support for regional partners, including Lebanon and Syria, and called for strengthened cooperation with the European Union and the wider international community.

His Royal Highness underscored the need for unified global action, stressing that “the international community must send a clear message” to deter further aggression and ensure the safety of civilians and strategic maritime routes.

Cabinet condemns Iran targeting of civilians

● **Grave violation of Kingdom's sovereignty**

● **BDF's air defence systems commended for effectiveness**

TDI | Manama

The Cabinet yesterday condemned the targeting of residential areas and civilians across Bahrain, describing it as a grave violation of the Kingdom's sovereignty. It expressed hopes for a swift recovery to those injured by the hostile Iranian aggression, while praising the professionalism of Bahrain's security and medical personnel for safeguarding the nation.

The Cabinet commended the bravery of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) and the effectiveness of its air defence systems in intercepting and neutralising the attacks.

It reaffirmed pride in the Kingdom's military and security



HRH Prince Salman chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting

institutions and their readiness to protect citizens and residents.

Emphasising the importance of national security, the Cabinet urged the public to follow official directives, rely on approved sources of information, and avoid circulating rumours or content that could undermine the Kingdom's defences.

In a related initiative, the Cabinet highlighted the launch of the National Volunteering Platform, inviting citizens and residents to participate and contribute to safeguarding the Kingdom's stability.

During the weekly meeting chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al

Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, the Cabinet reviewed the latest regional developments following the hostile Iranian attacks.

The Cabinet expressed gratitude to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and allied nations for their solidarity, affirming Bahrain's pride in these longstanding partnerships.

It reiterated Bahrain's support for GCC member states, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and other allies targeted by the Iranian aggression, while affirming the Kingdom's legitimate right to self-defence and coordinated action to preserve its sovereignty.

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YEARS عاماً

Written by You كتبت بايديكم

For the First Time in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Under a New Concept “Designed by You”..

Al Salam Bank Engages Clients in Designing the “Danat 2026” Scheme and Offers 4 Grand Prizes of BD 1 Million Each

Al Salam Bank has announced the launch of the new edition of its “Danat” Scheme for 2026, introducing an innovative concept “Designed by You” that is the first of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Through this concept, clients will vote to decide how the BD 1 million grand prizes will be distributed, reflecting the Bank’s commitment to enhancing client engagement and involving them in shaping their savings experience.

“Danat 2026” witnesses an increase in the number of BD 1 million prizes from 3 to 4 grand prizes distributed quarterly, each valued at BD 1,000,000. The distribution of each grand prize will be announced based on clients’ voting, whether awarded to one winner or distributed among multiple winners will be based according to the clients’ choice, further enhancing excitement and engagement, and reinforcing Danat’s position as one of the most impactful savings and investment schemes in the Kingdom.

The Bank has also increased the number of winners in the monthly grand draw, raising it from one winner in the previous edition to 6 winners every month, with each winner receiving BD 10,000, amounting to a total of BD 60,000 monthly. This reflects

the Bank’s responsiveness to client feedback and requests to distribute major prizes among a larger number of winners.

In appreciation of client loyalty, the Bank has increased the number of exclusive “Loyalty” prizes for Danat Plus account holders from one winner to 10 winners monthly, with each winner receiving BD 1,000. This enhancement reinforces the added value of the Danat Plus account and encourages clients to benefit from its exclusive features.

The scheme continues to offer monthly cash prizes of BD 500, in addition to exclusive youth prizes valued at BD 200, with a special feature for youth granting one entry for every BD 5 saved, reaffirming the Bank’s commitment to instilling a culture of savings across different age segments.

Clients will receive one entry into the draw for every BD 50 invested in a Danat or Danat Plus account. Danat Plus further grants additional chances that enhance the probability of winning, whereby clients receive bonus entries for every additional month they maintain their balance, up to a maximum of 12 additional chances for every BD 50 invested, rewarding long-term commitment to saving.



— Mohammed Buhijji



On this occasion, Mr. Mohammed Buhijji— Chief Retail Banking Officer at Al Salam Bank stated: “The launch of Danat 2026 reaffirms our continued commitment to developing an innovative savings and investment experience that reflects our clients’ aspirations. This year, we have elevated the prize concept to a new level under the ‘Designed by You’ concept, granting our clients a genuine opportunity to participate in determining how the BD 1 million grand prizes are distributed — a first-of-its-kind initiative in the Kingdom. We have also increased the total grand prizes to BD 4 million, BD 1,000,000 prize every three months, in addition to raising the number of monthly grand draw winners and Loyalty prize winners, in response to our clients’ suggestions and to further promote broader prize

distribution.”

Mr. Buhijji added: “At Al Salam Bank, we believe that saving should be a rewarding and continuous experience. Therefore, we have designed Danat 2026 to offer recurring grand prizes throughout the year, multiplied winning opportunities for Danat Plus account holders, and special prizes for youth, further strengthening the association between Danat and rewarding savings habits and reinforcing its position as one of the leading savings schemes in the Kingdom of Bahrain.”

The “Danat 2026” Scheme will run for 12 months, with voting opening prior to each grand prize. Voting results will be announced, and the distribution mechanism of the prizes will be revealed accordingly, strengthening clients’ role in shaping the prizes and giving them the opportunity to win in line with their aspirations.

Clients can open a Danat or Danat Plus account and invest directly through the Al Salam Bank App to benefit from the multiple winning opportunities offered under the scheme.

**For more information,
please contact us via
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For The First Time in Bahrain

A Bank That Lets You Decide The Prize

Regret, sorrow and pain

Children among 32 injured Bahraini citizens in Iran drone attack on Sitra

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Injuries, damage to homes and calls for calm followed the Iranian drone attack on Sitra, as two MPs spoke of the toll on families and praised the emergency response on the ground.

Mohammed Al Olaiwi said he deeply regretted the attack, which left 32 citizens hurt, and wished them a speedy recovery.

Four people are in critical condition, including children. A 17-year-old girl suffered severe head and eye injuries.

Among the injured were two children, aged 7 and 8, as they sustained serious injuries to their lower limbs. The youngest victim is a two-month-old infant. All injured victims are Bahraini citizens.

Medical teams are closely monitoring the patients' conditions and providing treatment.

Al Olaiwi praised the work of the agencies involved, the fast



MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi



MP Jaleela Alawi

reaction by the authorities, the skill of staff and the readiness of health centres and hospitals, with Salmaniya Medical Complex among the first to receive the injured and give them treatment.

The lawmaker said the authorities were expected to count the damage done to a number of homes in Sitra and assess the losses caused by the attack, with work then due to follow to help life in the area return to its usual course. He urged the people in Bah-

rain to act responsibly, take their information from trusted sources and follow the guidance issued by the relevant bodies.

Al Olaiwi ended with a prayer that Bahrain be kept safe from harm and aggression.

Mark

Jaleela Alawi, MP for the area, also spoke of her sorrow over the attack, saying it had left a painful human mark on families in Sitra and on many who followed what happened.

She wished the injured a speedy recovery and said she hoped calm and reassurance would return to affected households as soon as possible.

During a visit to the site, she looked at the damage to homes and property and later checked on a number of the injured in hospital.

Alawi also praised the quick arrival of ambulance crews and security teams, saying they dealt with the scene in a professional way.

Tribute

She paid tribute to the medical teams at health centres and hospitals, led by Salmaniya Medical Complex, for receiving the injured and giving them the care they needed.

The lawmaker called for people to pull together, saying Bahrainis had long been known for standing by one another in hard times and that Sitra's residents had a clear record of doing just that.

'What really happened'

US embassy rejects Russian, Iranian media claims over missile incident

TDT | Manama

The US Embassy in Bahrain has dismissed claims by Russian and Iranian state media that a US Patriot missile accidentally struck a neighbourhood in Bahrain while attempting to intercept an incoming threat.

In a post on Instagram citing a report by News of Bahrain, the embassy said reports circulating in Russian and Iranian media alleged that a US Patriot missile had missed its target while intercepting an Iranian missile or drone and inadvertently hit a residential area in Bahrain. "Russian and Iranian

media claimed earlier today that a US Patriot missile missed while intercepting an Iranian missile or drone and inadvertently hit a neighbourhood in Bahrain. LIE," the embassy said in the post.

The embassy added that the claims were false, stating that an Iranian drone had struck a residential neighbourhood in Bahrain.

"What really happened: An Iranian drone struck a residential neighbourhood, injuring 32 civilians in Bahrain, including children who required medical treatment, according to Bahrain's government. TRUTH," the statement said.

Physical damage, emotional scars



Acting on the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, the Governor of the Capital Governorate, His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Hamoud Al Khalifa, visited Sitra to check on the safety of citizens following the Iranian drone attack on the area. The strike left a number of citizens injured and caused damage to homes and vehicles. The governor said the government, through coordination among the relevant authorities, was closely monitoring the condition of those affected and assessing their needs. He noted that HRH Prince Salman had directed the government to address the damage resulting from the attack.



Insurance

Liva Insurance B.S.C. (c)

Consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2025		
	31-Dec-25 USD '000 (Audited)	31-Dec-24 USD '000 (Audited)
Assets		
Property and equipment	1,691	1,489
Intangible assets	2,290	1,130
Right-of-use asset	1,637	760
Investment in an associate	60,214	58,501
Investments	336,238	167,109
Insurance contract assets	254	35
Reinsurance contract assets	97,657	157,475
Other receivables	70,014	65,091
Deferred tax asset	-	1,977
Deposits with banks	243,671	160,541
Cash and cash equivalents	51,306	35,338
Total assets	864,972	649,446
Equity and Liabilities		
Equity		
Share capital	54,312	54,312
Statutory reserve	27,156	27,156
Fair value reserve	5,745	1,994
Merger Reserve	52,227	-
Actuarial reserve for end of service benefits	983	999
Retained earnings	192,702	152,272
Equity attributable to equity holders of Parent	333,125	236,733
Non-controlling interest (NCI)	60,999	55,718
Total equity	394,124	292,451
Liabilities		
Employees' end of service benefits	9,668	8,029
Insurance contract liabilities	398,671	277,213
Reinsurance contract liabilities	34,390	36,831
Other liabilities and provisions	26,562	34,328
Lease liabilities	1,557	594
Total liabilities	470,848	356,995
Total equity and liabilities	864,972	649,446

Chairman

Director

Consolidated statement of comprehensive income For the 12 months period ended 31 December 2025		
	31-Dec-25 USD '000 (Audited)	31-Dec-24 USD '000 (Audited)
Insurance revenue	530,459	336,842
Insurance service expense	(410,172)	(408,241)
Insurance service result before reinsurance contracts held	120,287	(71,399)
Allocation of reinsurance premiums	(99,898)	(102,243)
Amount recoverable from reinsurance for incurred claims	14,120	161,468
Net (expense) / income from reinsurance contracts held	(85,778)	59,225
Insurance service result from direct written business	34,509	(12,174)
Share of surplus from insurance pool	508	(107)
Total insurance service result	35,017	(12,281)
Insurance finance expense for insurance contracts issued	(7,959)	(1,524)
Reinsurance finance income / (expense) for reinsurance contracts held	13,518	(133)
Net insurance financial result	5,559	(1,657)
Net finance result from insurance operations	40,576	(13,938)
Net income from investments	18,319	14,065
Share of profit of an associate	239	4,499
Other operating expenses	(10,252)	(13,312)
Finance cost	(62)	(4)
Other income	271	-
Profit / (loss) for the year before zakat and tax	49,091	(8,690)
Zakat and income tax (charge) / reversal	(4,910)	1,390
Profit / (loss) for the year (a)	44,181	(7,300)
Other comprehensive income		
Items that may be reclassified to profit and loss in subsequent periods		
Share of other comprehensive income / (loss) of an associate	1,475	(285)
Change in fair value of investments	727	(37)
	2,202	(322)
Items that will not be reclassified to profit and loss in subsequent periods		
Actuarial (loss) / gain on end of service benefit	(31)	34
Change in fair value of investments	3,094	5,721
	3,063	5,755
Total other comprehensive income for the year	5,265	5,433
Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the year (b)	49,446	(1,867)
(a) Profit / (loss) for the year attributable to:		
Shareholders of the parent	40,430	(11,465)
Non-controlling interest	3,751	4,165
	44,181	(7,300)
(b) Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the year attributable to:		
Shareholders of the parent	44,165	(8,906)
Non-controlling interest	5,281	7,039
	49,446	(1,867)

Iran aggression ‘unjustified and shocking’

TDT | Manama

His Excellency Alastair Long, the UK Ambassador to Bahrain, has condemned Iran's attacks on Bahrain and its partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

He described them as unjustified, shocking and a clear violation of international law.

In a video posted on the website of the British Embassy in Bahrain, the Ambassador said the UK strongly condemned the attacks targeting Bahrain and other GCC countries.

“These attacks are completely unjustified, shocking and illegal,” he said.

Sad

H.E. Ambassador Long said he was deeply saddened to learn that a number of people had been injured in Bahrain as a result of the strike that targeted the kingdom overnight.

He noted that the limited



H.E. Ambassador Long

number of injuries so far reflected the exceptional efforts made by Bahraini authorities to protect the public.

The Ambassador added that Iran's actions were unacceptable and stressed that the UK would join Bahrain in condemning the attacks at the United Nations Security Council.

Iran launched the attack on the Sitra area late on Sunday night, leaving around 32 citizens injured, including children.

Six Asians arrested over attack videos

TDT | Manama

Six Asian nationals have been identified and arrested for filming, publishing and reposting videos related to the aftermath of the Iranian attack, the Interior Ministry said.

The ministry said the Anti-CyberCrime Directorate at the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security carried out the arrests after the individuals expressed sympathy with and glorified the hostile acts in a manner that harms security and public order.

The videos were circulated through their social media accounts, contributing to misleading public opinion and spreading fear among citizens and residents.

Legal procedures have been taken, and the suspects have been referred to the Public Prosecution.

The Interior Ministry also urged everyone to obtain information from official sources and refrain from circulating or reposting unverified videos or news to avoid legal accountability and to help safeguard the nation's security and safety.

102 missiles, 171 drones destroyed

● Since start of Iranian attacks

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) General Command announced that its air defence systems have continued to successfully intercept successive waves of the Iranian terrorist aggression.

Since the onset of hostilities, BDF forces have intercepted and destroyed 102 ballistic missiles and 171 unmanned aerial vehicles directed at the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The BDF General Command commended the exceptional combat readiness and operational excellence demonstrated by its personnel throughout this period, and affirmed that Bahrain's airspace remains

protected.

The public is urged to remain indoors and to go out only when absolutely necessary, taking all necessary precautions.

People are advised to stay away from affected areas and any suspicious objects, to refrain from filming military operations or debris sites, to avoid spreading unverified information, and to rely solely on official sources for updates and advisories.

The General Command further stated that the targeting of civilian sites and private property using ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles constitutes a clear violation of international humanitarian law and the United Nations Charter.

These indiscriminate attacks represent a direct threat to regional peace and security.

Invisible damage

Missile and drone incidents leave smoke and debris over parts of Manama

● Explosions and fires briefly worsen air quality

TDT | Manama

Air quality in Manama has drawn attention following recent missile and drone incidents that caused explosions, fires, and plumes of smoke across parts of the capital.

Residents reported loud blasts, smoky haze, and debris from intercepted projectiles.

While no major injuries occurred, the incidents briefly worsened local air conditions.

Warning

Experts warn that explosions and burning materials release dust, chemicals, and fine particulate matter (PM2.5), tiny particles that can irritate the lungs and worsen respiratory conditions.

In Manama, where traffic and construction already contribute to background pollution, explosions and fires can briefly raise pollution levels, affecting people with asthma, allergies, or other respiratory issues.



Explosions over Manama spark concern about air conditions

Explosions and fires can briefly raise pollution levels, affecting people with asthma, allergies, or other respiratory issues.

Experts note the impact is usually short-lived and local-

ized, with sea breezes helping disperse smoke.

Authorities have not issued specific air-quality alerts, but the events highlight an often-overlooked consequence of regional tensions: even when physical damage is limited, urban air quality and public health can be affected.

Residents are advised to mon-

itor visible smoke, limit outdoor exposure during haze, and stay updated on air-quality reports, particularly if sensitive to pollution.

These incidents underscore that the environmental effects of conflict can reach far beyond immediate blast zones, a factor rarely discussed in news coverage.

Ma'ameer facility fire



The Civil Defence announced that a fire broke out at a facility in the Ma'ameer area following a blatant Iranian attack. Emergency teams successfully brought the blaze under control, and no injuries or loss of life were recorded during the incident.

Electricity, water systems operating at full capacity

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's electricity and water production, transmission, and distribution systems are operating at full capacity and efficiency, ensuring stable supplies and the continuity of vital services under all circumstances.

This was affirmed by His Excellency Yasser bin Ibrahim Humaidan, Minister of Elec-

tricity and Water Affairs.

The statement came during an inspection visit to a desalination plant that sustained material damage following a drone attack attributed to Iranian aggression.

During the visit, the minister reviewed operational processes, production systems, and the monitoring of production facilities, as well as transmission and distribution networks.

He also followed up on technical and operational measures implemented to mitigate the effects of the attack and ensure uninterrupted service.

His Excellency noted that water supplies were unaffected and that production and operations continued normally, while specialized technical teams carried out assessments and remediation work to repair damage to the site.

Show of support

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain strongly condemned the Iranian attack that targeted a residential facility in Al Kharj, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which resulted in the death of two civilians and the injury of others.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs described the attack as a flagrant violation of international law and international humanitarian law, and a dangerous escalation that threatens the security and stability of the region.

Cultural initiatives move forward

● Street naming and mosque registration

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Two proposals reflecting the cultural and community identity of neighbourhoods in the Northern Governorate moved forward during the latest session of the Northern Municipal Council, focusing on both heritage recognition and support for places of worship.

Councillors approved a recommendation to name Street 1018 in Hamala after Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, honouring one of the most respected figures in Islamic history.

Street names reflect the history and collective memory of a place.

Members said the initiative aims to preserve the Islamic and cultural identity of local communities while recognising historical figures whose legacy continues to shape the values and traditions of society.

Directions

For many residents, street names are more than simple directions on a map.

They often reflect the history and collective memory of a place, linking everyday spaces to cultural heritage and shared identity.

In the same session, councillors also approved a proposal to register the land of Abdulrahman bin Auf Mosque in Hamad Town under the Sunni Endowments Directorate.

Death for treason

Prosecutors seek capital punishment for defendants accused of colluding with enemy

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

The Public Prosecution urged the court yesterday to hand down the death penalty to the defendants in a case alleging collusion with the enemy, saying the charges amount to treason against Bahrain.

Addressing the court during what it described as a procedural hearing, the prosecution said it had not yet been given the chance to make its full case or lay out the evidence it says stands against the accused.

It said it wanted, from the opening stage of the trial, to make plain the scale of the acts in question, the motives said to lie behind them and the meaning of the case now before the court.



The prosecution placed the case against the backdrop of what it called an Iranian attack on Bahrain.

It said the country was facing hard days in which people were living with fear and strain, while the state was using all it had to defend the country and keep order.

In those circumstances, it said, some had chosen to side with the attackers and betray Bahrain by making contact with



The prosecution said that justice would reach all those who seek to harm Bahrain's sovereignty and safety.

what it described as a terrorist group engaged in violent acts, with the aim of carrying out hostile acts against the kingdom.

It also told the court that the defendants were accused of taking photographs of sites and places where photography is

banned, with the aim of passing on a defence secret linked to the country.

Loyalty

The prosecution said the case showed that the security and sovereignty of Bahrain stood above all else, and that loyalty to the country was not a matter for bargaining.

It said the acts alleged in the case could not be brushed off as a passing breach, but amounted to treason deserving the harshest sentence under the law: death.

The prosecution ended by saying the law would stay firm against anyone who gives up the country's security or dares to betray it, and that justice would reach all those who seek to harm Bahrain's sovereignty and safety.

Rainwater drainage halts A'ali walking track proposal

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Plans to create a dedicated walking and jogging track in A'ali have halted after technical studies found that the proposed site conflicts with existing rainwater drainage infrastructure.

The proposal called for establishing a pedestrian track along Road 4273 in Block 742 to provide residents with a safe and organised space for walking and daily exercise.

However, the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture informed the Northern Municipal Council that the location cannot accommodate the project because part of the area functions as a rainwater drainage channel.

Officials explained that the drainage network plays an essential role in preventing flooding during heavy rainfall.

Small fee, cleaner facilities

Northern Council backs 100 fils charge for using public toilets at several parks and seaside locations

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

The Northern Municipal Council approved a proposal to introduce a symbolic 100 fils fee for using public toilets at several parks and seaside locations in the Northern Governorate.

Councillors voted to raise a recommendation to the Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture that the fee be implemented at three locations frequently visited by residents: Al Malkiya Coast, A'ali walking track and Abu Subh Coast.

Members stressed that the proposal was designed with the community in mind. Elderly residents and children will be



2. Public parks provide green spaces for recreation, relaxation, and community gatherings.png

exempt from the fee, ensuring that the facilities remain accessible to those who rely on them the most.

Councillors said the decision aims to improve the condition of public toilets in recreational areas that receive large numbers of visitors throughout the week.

They noted that maintaining cleanliness and comfort in these facilities is essential for people who spend time walking along the coast or exercising in public spaces.

In recent years, some of these facilities have suffered from repeated misuse and damage, including broken fixtures and vandalised equipment left behind by unknown individuals.

Concrete benches boost for Salman City public spaces

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Residents walking through Salman City's open spaces may soon find more places to pause and rest after the Northern Municipal Council backed a proposal to install concrete benches in public areas.

Council members approved a recommendation to provide several benches in Block 581 of Salman City.

They will coordinate with the Northern Municipality to determine suitable locations and the mechanism for implementation.

Initiative

Members said the initiative aims to improve comfort for residents who regularly use the city's walkways and open areas, particularly during the evening



The city's walkways and open areas

hours when many people step outside for fresh air and daily walks.

For many residents, a simple bench can make a meaningful difference. It provides a place to rest during long walks, a quiet spot for elderly residents to sit comfortably, and a moment of pause for those spending time outdoors with their families.

Several residents said that

while the open spaces in Salman City are widely used for walking and relaxation, the lack of seating often makes it difficult for people to stay outdoors for extended periods.

Evening walks have become a daily routine for many, especially when the weather is pleasant. A place to sit, even for a few minutes, can turn a short walk into a more enjoyable experience.

Security cameras proposed inside tunnels in Hamad Town

● Safety concerns prompt A'ali road measures

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Road safety concerns in Hamad Town and A'ali were raised during the Northern Municipal Council session, along with proposals to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians.

Council members reviewed a proposal to install security cameras inside the tunnels at Roundabout 6 and Roundabout 14 on Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway in Hamad Town. The recommendation was referred to the Ministry of Interior for its views.

Members said the camer-



Tunnel cameras to monitor traffic and enable faster responses to accidents

as could help monitor traffic inside the tunnels and allow quicker response in case of accidents or incidents, particularly because the tunnels are used daily by large numbers of motorists travelling between residential areas.

In the same session, the council also discussed safety concerns at the intersection on Road 4262 near the petrol

station in A'ali. According to the Ministry of Works, structural changes such as building a roundabout are not feasible due to limited road space and nearby private properties.

Instead, safety improvements will include clearer traffic signs, repainting road markings and installing a speed hump to enhance driver awareness.

Alba promotes Shoji Takeuchi to lead Asia Pacific sales

Manama

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), the world's largest aluminium smelter on one site, announced the promotion of Shoji Takeuchi to Manager Sales - Asia Pacific, as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen its presence in high-growth markets.

Shoji joined Alba in December 2020 and played a pivotal role in establishing Alba's Singapore Branch, which now serves as the Company's sales hub for Asia. Over the past few



Alba CEO Ali Al Baqali



Shoji Takeuchi

years, he has been instrumental in deepening Alba's presence in Asia Pacific, including successfully penetrating the Japanese market where Alba supplies all Value-Added Products (VAP), while building a strong reputation for product quality and customer service. His efforts have also supported Alba's expansion into other markets such as Thailand and across the wider Far East.

Commenting on the promotion, Alba's Chief Executive Officer said: "Shoji has consistently demonstrated a strong customer-centric

mindset and a deep understanding of regional market dynamics.

His promotion reinforces our focus on delivering reliable supply, high-quality products and long-term value to our customers across Asia Pacific."

Prior to joining Alba, Shoji worked at UACJ, Japan's largest rolling mill and extrusion company, where he gained extensive experience in VAP and P1020 procurement and trading, as well as derivatives trading. He holds a Bachelor's degree in politics from Senshu University, Tokyo.

Lufthansa, Air France extend Mideast flight suspensions

AFP | Frankfurt, Germany

Lufthansa and Air France on Monday extended the suspension of flights to key destinations in the Middle East as the US-Israeli war on Iran continued into a second week.

The German aviation giant said it was cancelling flights to and from Dubai and Abu Dhabi, as well as Dammam in Saudi Arabia, until March 15.

The group, which also operates Eurowings, Austrian, Swiss and Brussels airlines, said services to Tel Aviv in Israel were now axed until at least April 2.

Last week, Lufthansa had already decided to extend the suspension of services to Amman in Jordan and Erbil in Iraq until March 15, to Beirut until March 28 and to Tehran until April 30.



Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs) are pictured between the two US Air Force Boeing B-52 Stratofortress bombers at RAF Fairford in south west England

Air France said it had extended the suspension of flights to and from Tel Aviv and Beirut until March 13 inclusive.

Flights to Dubai and those to

and from Riyadh are suspended until March 12 inclusive, the French airline said. Flights departing from Dubai are suspended until March 13.

Russia ready to supply energy to Europe if it asks: Putin

AFP | Moscow, Russia

Russia would supply oil and gas to European buyers, provided such co-operation was "long-term" and did not put political pressure on Moscow, President Vladimir Putin said Monday.

"If European companies and European buyers suddenly decide to reorient themselves and provide us with long-term, sustainable cooperation, free from political pressures, free from political pressures, then go ahead. We've never refused,"

Putin said in a televised meeting.

"We're ready to work with Europeans, but we need some signals from them that they're ready and willing to work with us and will ensure this sustainability and stability," he added.

Stocks slide as oil soars past \$100

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Stock markets slumped as energy prices soared yesterday as supply disruptions from the Middle East war drove volatility and fanned inflation fears.

Oil prices rocketed above \$100 a barrel for the first time since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, after Iran retaliated to US-Israeli strikes by targeting sites in crude-producing Gulf nations.

After increasing by around 30% during Asian trading, international benchmark Brent and the main US oil contract WTI both pared gains and slid back under \$100 per barrel.

The jump in prices was even more vertiginous than after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, when oil touched \$130.50 per barrel.

Brent is currently up around 38% from right before the war and up 64% from the start of the year.

WTI has climbed 43% since the eve of the war and 67% since

Key figures at around 1630 GMT

Brent North Sea Crude:	▲ 7.6% at \$99.76 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 5.3% at \$95.67 per barrel
New York - Dow:	▼ 0.8% at 47,141.95 points
New York - S&P 500:	▼ 0.3% at 6,717.96
Nasdaq Composite:	■ at 22,395.73
London - FTSE 100:	▼ 0.3% at 10,249.52 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 1.0% at 7,915.36 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 0.8% at 23,409.37 (close)
Seoul - KOSPI:	▼ 6.0% at 5,251.87 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 5.2% at 52,728.72 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▼ 1.4% at 25,408.46 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.7% at 4,096.60 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.1591 from \$1.1604 on Friday
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3396 from \$1.3385
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 158.15 yen from 157.88 yen
Euro/pound:	▼ at 86.52 pence from 86.67 pence

the start of the year.

Iranian retaliatory attacks have all but halted maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz through which a fifth of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas pass.

Asian stocks fell sharply as oil prices spiked.

But equities in Europe and on Wall Street cut their losses as oil prices gave up their gains, even as G7 nations held off releasing oil from their strategic reserves.

The Nasdaq Composite even pushed higher in midday trading in New York.

S E E F / س ع ع ف

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF SEEF PROPERTIES B.S.C.

In light of the current circumstances, and in line with the directives issued by the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as in consideration of public safety, Seef Properties B.S.C. ("Seef") announces that the Annual Ordinary General Meeting scheduled to be held on **Sunday 15 March 2026 at 1:00 p.m** shall be convened electronically through the electronic meeting platform administered by Bahrain Clear. If the required quorum is not met for the abovementioned meeting or a technical issue/glitch occurs during the meeting at the electronic platform, a second meeting will be held on **Wednesday 25 March 2026** or a third meeting, if required, will be held on **Wednesday 1 April 2026** electronically at the same time.

IMPORTANT NOTES TO SHAREHOLDERS :

- Shareholders can download the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025, the Corporate Governance Report, all other related documents and the Proxy Form from the following websites:
 - Bahrain Bourse (Company Announcements) www.bahrainbourse.com
 - The Company's website <https://www.seef.com.bh/investor-relations/general-meetings/>
- All shareholders or their proxies who intend to attend the meeting are kindly requested to register in advance to receive the invitation and meeting link by following the required steps outlined in the following website: <https://eagm.bahrainclear.com/>
- Registration of the attendance of shareholders and/or proxyholders electronically will commence two (2) days prior to the meeting and shall close 24 hours before the meeting time by visiting the following link: <https://eagm.bahrainclear.com/>
- Electronic voting will be adopted for all agenda items.
- For more information, please contact Investor Relations on +973 77911111 and email investors@seef.com.bh
- The meeting will be recorded electronically for record-keeping purposes.
- We recommend that the shareholders attend the electronic meeting from their personal computers or laptops to ensure better quality services, however, the shareholders may attend the meeting using tablets or smartphones.
- The shareholders will not be able to change his/her vote after they cast the same in accordance with the resolution issued by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce No. (63) of 2021 regarding measures for meeting by electronic means and the system in the general assembly of the joint-stock company.

● Iran's health ministry said Sunday that at least 1,200 civilians had been killed and around 10,000 wounded -- figures AFP could not independently verify.

● Saudi Arabia said Sunday that two people were killed and 12 wounded as a projectile landed in Al-Kharj province.

● In Israel, Iranian missile attacks have killed 10 people, according to authorities. Two soldiers were killed in Lebanon, the military said.

● European gas prices surge 30% on Mideast war. The Dutch TTF natural gas contract, considered the European benchmark, jumped to 69.50 euros, before paring gains slightly.

● Hezbollah says fighting Israeli forces who landed in east Lebanon

● US Secretary of State Marco Rubio accused Iran of taking the world hostage through its retaliatory strikes and insisted that the United States was on track with its war objectives.

Hezbollah pledges allegiance to new Iran supreme leader

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Hezbollah yesterday welcomed the selection of Mojtaba Khamenei as Iran's new supreme leader, pledging allegiance after his predecessor and father Ali Khamenei was killed in US-Israeli attacks.

"We in Hezbollah extend our warmest congratulations and blessings on this occasion. We renew our pledge of loyalty to this blessed approach and our steadfastness on the path of allegiance," the group said in a statement.

Hezbollah entered the Middle East war a week ago by attacking Israel in response to Ali Khamenei's killing.

Lebanese president accuses Hezbollah of working towards 'collapse' of state for Iran



Smoke plumes billow from the site of an Israeli air strike in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital Beirut



A fireball rises from the site of an Israeli air strike in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital Beirut

Khamenei's son **takes charge**

US President Donald Trump said he would hold a news conference Monday, his first formal question-and-answer session with reporters since launching military operations against Iran. Trump said on his Truth Social network that the news conference would take place at around 5:30 pm in the ballroom of his Doral golf club near Miami, where he spent the weekend, before returning to Washington.

AFP | Manama, Bahrain

Iran launched fresh strikes on energy installations in the Gulf yesterday, including a petroleum complex in Bahrain, as oil prices soared on fears over supply disruptions due to the Middle East war.

Bahrain's sprawling Al Ma'ameer oil facility was hit, causing a fire and damage, with the country's state-owned energy firm Bapco declaring force majeure -- the latest Gulf producer to activate the legal clause.

Energy producers in Qatar and Kuwait earlier made similar declarations, which are a warning that events beyond their control

Zelensky says 11 countries asked Ukraine for drone help against Iran

AFP | Kyiv, Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said yesterday that 11 countries had tapped Kyiv for help in how to counter Iranian drones,

Ukraine touts itself as having world-class drone defence capabilities, built up through fending off nightly barrages of Iran-style attack drones launched by Russia, an ally of Tehran.

"As of now, there are 11 requests from countries neighbouring Iran, European states, and the US. There is clear interest in Ukraine's experience in protecting lives, relevant interceptors, electronic warfare systems, and training," Zelensky said.

He did not specify which countries

US, Israel 'despair'

Iranian security chief Ali Larjani said the election of Mojtaba Khamenei to succeed his father had left Israel and the United States in "despair".

may lead them to miss export targets.

Bapco said it "hereby serves notice of force majeure on its group operations which have been affected by the ongoing regional conflict in the Middle East and the recent attack on its refinery complex", according to a statement posted by the company.

Bahrain later said that the blaze at the oil facility had been brought under control.

Asian stock markets plunged on Monday as oil prices surged, with investors running for the hills as crude rocketed to its highest level since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The market instability came as Iran continued to target the Gulf with missile and drone barrages, with authorities scrambling to contain the fallout.

Two Emirati servicemen were meanwhile killed after their hel-

Putin backs new ayatollah

Russian President Vladimir Putin pledged his "unwavering support" to Khamenei.

"At a time when Iran is confronting armed aggression, your tenure in this high position will undoubtedly require great courage and dedication," the Russian leader added.

icopter crashed due to a "technical malfunction", Abu Dhabi's defence ministry said.

The aircraft went down while the crew were performing national duty inside the country, it added.

Evacuation

Saudi Arabia's defence ministry meanwhile said the kingdom took down and destroyed two waves of drones heading towards the Shaybah oil field in the southeast of the country.

The Emirati military deaths bring to 23 the number of people killed in the Gulf since Iran began its attacks, including 10 civilians and seven US service members.

The latest strikes came after

Iran blames Europe

Iran said European countries including France had created the conditions that led to the United States and Israel attacking the Islamic republic, accusing them of not standing up to Washington's "bullying".

Washington ordered embassy staff to leave Saudi Arabia, following a rash of attacks targeting the kingdom.

The State Department said in a travel advisory it had "ordered non-emergency US government employees and US government employee family members to leave Saudi Arabia due to safety risks".

Drones hit the US embassy in the Saudi capital Riyadh last week, and drones have also caused damage at the US diplomatic missions in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Waves of drones

On Monday, Bahrain said another Iranian drone attack on the island of Sitra injured 32 people overnight. All of the wounded were Bahraini citizens and there were four "serious cases", in-

Qatar arrests 313

Qatari authorities have arrested more than 300 people for sharing images and "misleading information" during days of attacks by Iran, the interior ministry said.

cluding children, the health ministry said in a statement carried by the state news agency.

They included a 17-year-old girl who suffered severe head and eye injuries, and a two-month-old baby, according to the ministry.

Explosions were also heard on Monday both overnight and later in the day in Doha and emergency sirens sounded in Manama, AFP journalists said.

Qatar said it intercepted 17 ballistic missiles and six drones launched from Iran with no casualties reported.

The UAE said its air defences detected 15 ballistic missiles, destroying 12 while three fell into the sea, and intercepted 17 of 18 drones.

Kuwaiti authorities announced a missile and drone attack on Monday and the the defence ministry said its military was working to intercept the salvo.

Saudi Arabia says intercepted drone attack targeting oil field

EU ready to 'enhance' operations to protect Mideast maritime traffic

Iran security chief says Strait of Hormuz unsafe as long as war goes on

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's security chief Ali Larjani said yesterday that security in the strategic Strait of

Hormuz cannot be restored as long as the war with the United States and Israel continues.

"It is unlikely that any securi-

ty can be achieved in the Strait of Hormuz amid the fires ignited by the United States and Israel in the region," said Larjani

in a post on X, after France said it and its allies were preparing a "defensive" mission to reopen the waterway.

Commuters queue to refuel their vehicles ahead of a nationwide petrol price rise announced to take effect from midnight, at Nanjing in China's eastern Jiangsu province



Iranian refugees stand with their belongings after crossing the border from Iran to Armenia at a border check point in the southern Armenian town of Meghri



The Kingdom skyscraper is lit with text that reads, 'Lord, make this country safe' in the Saudi capital Riyadh



A US Air Force Boeing B-52 Stratofortress bomber jet lands on the runway, beyond USAF Rockwell B-1 Lancer bomber jets, at RAF Fairford in south west England

BY INVITATION

Communication in Times of Crisis: When Silence Becomes a Risk



ZAHRAA TAHER, CEO, FINMARK COMMUNICATIONS

In times of stability, corporate communication may appear routine—something that can be managed flexibly or even postponed. However, when uncertainty rises and crises emerge, communication becomes a critical leadership tool and a strategic necessity.

Communication is important in both good times and challenging ones. Yet during periods of uncertainty—such as the sensitive and evolving circumstances our region may experience—its importance becomes even more evident. For the private sector in particular, communication plays a vital role in maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, including employees, suppliers, clients, and the wider community.

When unfamiliar crises occur, organizations often experience what can be described as a “communication paralysis.” This does not usually happen due to a lack of willingness to communicate, but rather because of shock, uncertainty, or the absence of a clear picture during the early stages of a crisis. However, silence during such moments can create an information vacuum—one that is quickly filled by speculation, rumors, and misinformation, ultimately eroding trust.

Effective corporate communication does not begin with a crisis, nor should it end when a crisis subsides. It is a continuous process built on transparency, trust, and engagement with stakeholders. Organizations that recognize this treat communication as an integral part of their strategy—not merely as a reactive response when challenges arise.

It is also important to distinguish between corporate communication and advertising campaigns. The communication required during times of uncertainty is not about marketing messages or promotional activity. Advertising serves its own commercial objectives, while strategic communication and public relations focus on managing relationships, delivering clear messages, and sustaining trust among stakeholders.

Communication during crises must therefore be strategic rather than reactive. It requires organizations to define clear key messages, identify their different target audiences, and determine the most appropriate channels to reach them. Employees, for example, need reassurance and transparency from their leadership. Clients need clarity and continuity. Suppliers need visibility and understanding of what lies ahead.

The global experience during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the powerful role of communication in navigating crises. Organizations that maintained clear, consistent communication with their employees and clients were better able to sustain trust and stability during uncertain times. Those that remained silent or delayed communication often faced greater challenges later—particularly in rebuilding trust and protecting their reputation.

At the same time, effective communication does not mean excessive communication. Over-communicating can overwhelm audiences and dilute important messages. What organizations should aim for instead is balanced communication—clear, honest, and consistent messaging delivered at the right time.

One of the greatest risks organizations face during crises is stopping communication altogether. When institutions remain silent, the conversation does not stop; it simply moves elsewhere. And when that happens, narratives are often shaped by speculation rather than facts.

For this reason, organizations today must prioritize the development of clear internal and external communication strategies, guided by experienced professionals who understand how to manage messages responsibly and effectively. Communication management is not a secondary function—it is a critical component of institutional stability and reputation.

Ultimately, crises may pass, but the way organizations communicate during those moments often leaves a lasting impression. In many cases, it becomes the defining factor between organizations that preserve trust—and those that lose it.

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

Effective corporate communication does not begin with a crisis, nor should it end when a crisis subsides.

Crude tops \$100

Bahrain reported 32 people wounded overnight by drone attack on Sitra

The wounded include a 17-year-old girl who suffered severe head and eye injuries, and a two-month-old baby. All of the wounded were Bahraini citizens and there were four “serious cases”, including children.

\$100 and rising

The benchmark price for a barrel of crude soared beyond \$100 for the first time since Russia's invasion of Ukraine four years ago.

Trump dismissed the price spike, a politically sensitive issue in the United States, as a “small price to pay” for removing the alleged threat of Iran's nuclear programme.

US don't expect a quick end

In a sign that the United States does not expect a quick end to the war, the State Department ordered non-emergency staff to leave Saudi Arabia, days after a drone hit the US embassy.

As questions swirl over the length and goals of the war, Trump told the Times of Israel that any decision on when to end hostilities will be a joint one with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

“I think it's mutual... a little bit. We've been talking. I'll make a decision at the right time, but everything's going to be taken into account,” Trump said. threat of Iran's nuclear programme.

UAE ‘will not partake in any attacks’ on Iran: ambassador

P10

France, allies preparing ‘defensive’ mission to reopen Strait of Hormuz

● “This is essential for international trade, but also for the flow of gas and oil, which must be able to leave this region once again,” said Macron in Paphos on the southwestern coast of Cyprus.

AFP | Paphos, Cyprus



President Emmanuel Macron yesterday warned that an attack on Cyprus was an attack on all of Europe and said France and its allies were preparing a “defensive” mission to reopen the Strait of Hormuz as the Middle East war entered its second week.

Speaking during a visit to Cyprus to discuss regional security, Macron said the mission would be aimed at escorting container ships and tankers in order to gradually reopen the Strait of Hormuz “after the end of the hottest phase of the conflict”.

“This is essential for international trade, but also for the flow of gas and oil, which must be able to leave this region once again,” said Macron in Paphos on the southwestern coast of Cyprus.

Speaking alongside Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Macron said a “purely defensive, purely support mission” will be put together by European and non-European states.

The European Union on Monday said it was ready to “enhance” its operations to protect maritime traffic in the Middle East.

The EU has been discussing reinforcing its naval mission in the Red Sea after US-Israeli attacks on Iran triggered a broader regional war.

Maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, a key Gulf waterway through which a fifth of global crude passes, has all but halted since the war broke out on February 28.

Macron visited Cyprus after the island nation and EU member was targeted by Iranian-made drones in early March.

The French leader said an attack on Cyprus was an attack on all of Europe.

“When Cyprus is attacked, it is Europe that is attacked,” he said.

“We will not accept that the slightest piece of European territory, like Cyprus, be exposed to danger,” added Mitsotakis.

The drone attack in Cyprus led to France's deployment of the Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier to the Mediterranean, as well as a frigate and air defence units to the island.

Paris has insisted its stance in the region is “strictly defensive”.

NATO intercepts second Iran missile in Turkish airspace

Incirlik air base is an important NATO facility that has been used by US troops

● The US embassy in Turkey said it had closed its consulate in Adana

● In a post on X, presidential communications chief Burhanettin Duran said Turkey would not hesitate to protect its airspace and border security

AFP | Ankara, Turkey

Ankara yesterday said a second ballistic missile was shot down by NATO defences in Turkish airspace, as Washington urged all of its citizens to leave southeast Turkey over security concerns.

Since the US-Israeli attacks began on February 28, Iran has retaliated with missile and drone strikes across the Middle East in a bid to hit US assets.

So far, Turkey appears to have been spared, despite US troops being stationed at several of its bases, one of which is the Incirlik airbase which lies just outside the southern city of Adana.

But on Monday, the US embassy in Turkey said it had closed its consulate in Adana and advised non-essential staff to leave, with the State Department urging all US citizens to leave the southeast.

"On March 9, 2026, the Department of State ordered non-emergency US government employees and US government employee family members to leave Consulate General Adana due to the safety risks," the embassy said on X.

It referenced a State Department travel advisory saying: "Americans in southeast Turkey are strongly encouraged to depart now."

Barely an hour later, Turkey's defence ministry confirmed another ballistic missile fired from Iran had been intercepted in Turkish airspace by NATO defence systems in the second such incident in five days.

"A ballistic munition launched



Part of a second Iranian ballistic missile destroyed by NATO in Turkish airspace

Erdogan warns Iran against 'provocative steps' after second missile intercepted

Ankara, Turkey

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday again warned Tehran against taking "provocative steps" after NATO defence systems intercepted a second Turkey-bound ballistic missile launched from Iran.

"Despite our sincere warnings, extremely wrong and provocative steps continue to be taken that will jeopardise Turkey's friendship. One should not engage in such

behaviour," he said, adding: "Persistence and stubbornness in wrongdoing should be avoided".



from Iran and entering Turkish airspace was neutralised by NATO air and missile defence assets in the eastern Mediterranean," it said in a statement.

Incirlik air base is an important NATO facility that has been used by US troops for decades which is located just 10 kilometres outside Adana.

Fragments hit construction

Some fragments from the weaponry fell in open territory in the Gaziantep area, about 200 kilometres (120 miles) east of Adana, causing no injuries, the ministry added.

"At around 11:30 am (0830 GMT), a fragment of ballistic munition fell onto an empty area above the TOKI housing estate in the Guneysehir district of Gaziantep," the governor's

office said, adding there was no damage.

Images from the scene appeared to show the missile fragment lying on the ground at a building site.

"We were sitting at home when suddenly we heard a big bang. Since there's a construction site here, we thought the noise was coming from there. But when we came and looked, we saw the missile fragment," local resident Ramazan Akpinar told DHA news agency.

He said it made a loud noise but there was "no explosion".

In a post on X, presidential communications chief Burhanettin Duran said Turkey would not hesitate to protect its airspace and border security.

"We once again strongly reiterate our warning to all parties, particularly Iran, to refrain from actions that could endanger regional security and put civilians at risk," he wrote.

On March 4, NATO troops intercepted a Turkey-bound ballistic missile launched from Iran, prompting the alliance to strengthen its "ballistic missile defence posture".

Bangladesh scraps light displays as Mideast war worsens fuel crunch

AFP | Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh has tightened security at filling stations, sent students home and even scrapped light displays for independence and Ramadan celebrations, officials said Monday, as the Middle East war worsens the country's energy crunch.

The South Asian nation of 170 million people imports 95 percent of its oil and gas needs.

Following the US and Israeli attacks on Iran, and Tehran's retaliatory strikes throughout the Gulf, the national oil company, Bangladesh Petroleum

Corporation (BPC), restricted fuel sales for most vehicles on Sunday.

The BPC said in a statement that if fuel consumption can be cut by 25 percent, Bangladesh will have 14 days of diesel left. The government has requested people to stop panic buying.

The government has ordered mobile courts to begin operating in the capital Dhaka, to charge and fine those accused of breaching rules on fuel hoarding, smuggling or selling fuel on the open market.

Long traffic queues backed out far from filling stations for a second day yesterday.

Falling shrapnel kills man in Israel

AFP | Yehud, Israel

Falling shrapnel killed one man and seriously wounded another in central Israel on Monday, first responders said, as blasts rocked the area after the military said missiles were fired from Iran.

Paramedics said the victim was working on a building site in a town just north of Israel's main airport when a barrage of shrapnel tore through the location.

An AFP journalist at the scene saw a newly installed escalator riddled with impact holes that emergency workers said were caused by munitions.

"After performing resuscitation efforts, we had to pronounce the death of a man, approximately 40 years old," the Magen David Adom (MDA) emergency response organisation said in a statement.

Another man was seriously

injured and evacuated to hospital for treatment, the rescuers added.

"It was a difficult scene. The two casualties were lying unconscious and suffering from severe shrapnel injuries to their bodies," MDA paramedic Liz Goral was quoted as saying by her organisation.

Israel's main opposition leader Yair Lapid, who has backed the government on the war with Iran, told journalists at the scene that Tehran was "targeting civilians on purpose".

"Do you see any military facilities around you?" he said. "What they're trying to do is to move this war from a war between armies to a war against civilians."

First responders say 11 people have been killed and dozens injured in Israel since Iran began firing missiles at the country in retaliation for joint US-Israeli strikes.

Israel says killed head of Hezbollah unit in south Lebanon

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel announced on Monday that its military had killed the head of Hezbollah's Nasr unit operating in part of southern Lebanon during renewed fighting with the Iran-backed armed group.

Defence minister Israel Katz "was briefed on the elimination of the commander of

Hezbollah's Nasr Unit", Abu Hussein Ragheb, during an overnight strike, a statement from the defence ministry said.

The Nasr unit operates in an eastern sector south of Lebanon's Litani River and opened Hezbollah's cross-border attacks on Israel following Hamas's attack in October 2023.

UAE 'will not partake in any attacks' on Iran

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

The United Arab Emirates decried Monday that it was being targeted "in a very unwarranted manner" in the Middle East war, stressing it would "not partake in any attacks against Iran".

"The UAE does not seek to be drawn into conflict or escalation," said Jamal Al Musharakh, the UAE's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva.

"We've been very clear before and leading up to the current events we are witnessing in the region that as the UAE we will not partake in any attacks against Iran from our territory, and that we will not be involved

"We've been very clear before and leading up to the current events we are witnessing in the region that as the UAE we will not partake in any attacks against Iran from our territory, and that we will not be involved in such a conflict"

JAMAL AL MUSHARAKH, THE UAE'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA

in such a conflict," he told the UN correspondents' association ACANU.

"Our bases are not being used to attack Iran."

Musharakh said the UAE was calling for a return to the negotiating table.

The United States and Iran held a third round of indirect talks through Omani negotiators, on Iran's nuclear programme, in Geneva on February 26.

Two days later, the United States and Israel launched the



de-escalation," Musharakh said. "And we have constantly informed that our territories would not be used for any attacks against Iran. Yet we are being targeted, frankly, in a very unwarranted manner."

He said the UAE had been subjected to more than 1,400 attacks since the conflict began -- including attacks with cruise and ballistic missiles, and drones -- of which "the vast majority were intercepted and neutralised" by the country's armed forces.

He said the "unprovoked targeting" of civilian infrastructure such as desalination and energy plants, was "unacceptable".

"Tragically, these attacks have resulted in four civilian fatalities, as well as 114 minor injuries," the ambassador said.

"The UAE and other Gulf countries are not parties to the conflict... There is no legal basis for targeting third-party states that are not involved in hostilities."

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian apologised on Saturday to neighbouring countries for attacks launched during the war.

Regarding that apology, Musharakh said: "The actions on the ground speak for themselves: my country is being attacked. Enough said."

What we know about alleged strike on Iran school

AFP | Paris, France

A new investigation by the New York Times has shed more light on events surrounding a reported attack on a school in Iran at the start of the Middle East war.

Iran has accused Israel and the United States of conducting a strike on an elementary school in the southern city of Minab, which it said killed more than 150 people.

US President Donald Trump has blamed Iran, while the Pentagon has said it is investigating the incident.

AFP has been unable to access the location to independently verify the circumstances or the toll from any such incident.

Iranian authorities have to give explicit approval to foreign media organisations wishing to report outside Tehran.

Tomahawk

The New York Times has authenticated video uploaded by Iran's semi-official Mehr News showing a US Tomahawk cruise missile striking a structure described as a clinic inside a Revolutionary Guards' base next to

the school.

According to the Times, in this war, the only military using Tomahawks is the United States.

The footage showed dust and smoke rising from the direction of the school, indicating at least one earlier explosion.

"A body of evidence assembled by The Times -- including satellite imagery, social media posts and other verified videos -- indicates that the Shajarah Tayyebah elementary school building was severely damaged by a precision strike that occurred at the same time as attacks on the naval base," the paper said.

US Central Command has released footage of Tomahawk launches filmed on February 28, the day Minab was hit, while senior US officers briefed that early salvos included Navy Tomahawks across Iran's southern flank.

The Times had previously reported that US military statements indicating forces were attacking naval targets near the strategic Strait of Hormuz, where a Revolutionary Guards' base is located, "suggest they were most likely to have car-

ried out the strike".

Near strategic waterway

Earlier footage filmed from a parking lot showed black smoke billowing from a damaged building adorned with murals featuring drawings of crayons, children and an apple.

AFP has geolocated the clip to a building in Minab, though it has not been able to independently verify the nature of the site.

AFP has confirmed the building was located in close proximity to two sites controlled by the Revolutionary Guards.

The Shahid Absalan clinic, under the supervision of the Guards navy's medical command, lies 238 metres (780 feet) from the site, while the Seyed al-Shohada IRGC cultural complex is 286 metres away.

AFP could not independently verify the date the footage from the car park was filmed.

What Iran says

Iran has said more than 150 people were killed in what President Masoud Pezeshkian described as US-Israeli strikes on the

school.

According to state media, Iran held funerals for at least 165 people including students killed in the alleged attack.

State television carried images showing a large crowd of mourners weeping over what appeared to be bodies wrapped in white shrouds.

Other images released by state media showed individuals preparing coffins draped in the Iranian flag -- some bearing photographs of children.

Another aerial image showed excavators digging out at least 100 graves at an unidentified mass burial site.

AFP has been unable to independently verify the date the images were taken or access the location to verify the circumstances surrounding the events.

Trump blames Iran

President Trump has blamed Iran.

"We think it was done by Iran. Because they are very inaccurate, as you know, with their muni-

tions. They have no accuracy whatsoever," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Saturday.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio last week said the United States would not intentionally target a school.

"The United States would not deliberately target a school. Our objectives are missiles, both the ability to manufacture them and the ability to launch them," he told reporters.

The Pentagon is investigating the alleged incident, he added.

Israel not aware

Israel's military said it was not aware of any US or Israeli strike on a school.

"At this point not aware of an Israeli or an American strike there... We're operating in an extremely accurate manner," military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Nadav Shoshani told reporters.

Human rights group

Norway-based rights group Hengaw said the school was holding its morning session at the time of the reported attack and had about 170 students present.

Sailors aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Preble (DDG 88) conduct an operational tomahawk missile launch while underway in a training area off the coast of California



Lebanese president lashes out at Hezbollah

Says open to negotiations with Israel

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Monday accused Hezbollah of working towards the "collapse" of the state, after the pro-Iran group launched an attack on Israel, expressing Beirut's readiness for "direct negotiations" with Israel.

Begun after Hezbollah launched rockets towards Israel a week ago, Israel's bombing campaign has killed at least 394 people and displaced more than half a million.

"Whoever launched those missiles wanted to bring about the collapse of the Lebanese state, plunging it into aggression and chaos... all for the sake of the Iranian regime's calculations and this is what we have thwarted so far and what we will continue working to bring down and foil," Aoun told top European officials in an online meeting.

He added that the party's rocket launches "were an al-



Lebanese President Joseph Aoun

most transparent trap and ambush for Lebanon, the Lebanese state, and the Lebanese people".

To stop the war, the Lebanese president proposed a four-point initiative and called on the international community to help implement it.

It included "establishing a full truce" with Israel, "logistical support" for the army to disarm Hezbollah, and "direct negotiations (with Israel) under international auspices".

Kuwait emir lambasts 'brutal' Iran attacks

Affirms right to self-defence

AFP | Kuwait City, Kuwait

Kuwait's emir yesterday condemned Iran's attacks on his country, where 12 people have been killed so far, as Tehran strikes out at the Gulf in response to US-Israeli attacks.

"Our country has been subjected to a brutal attack by a neighbouring Muslim country, which we consider a friend, even though we have not permitted the use of our land, air-space, or coasts for any military action against it, and we have repeatedly informed them of

this through our diplomatic channels," said Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah in a televised speech.

He also insisted on Kuwait's "full and inherent right to self-defence", speaking for the first time since Iran's attacks began on February 28.

Iran 'regime' cannot be changed 'through bombings alone': Macron

AFP | Aboard The French Aircraft Carrier Charles de Gaulle, Undefined

France's Emmanuel Macron said yesterday that "profound" changes to Iranian leadership could not occur "through

American-Israeli bombings alone", adding that war in the Middle East could continue for "several weeks".

"I don't think you can achieve profound regime change or changes in the political system through bombings alone,"

Macron said aboard France's Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier currently stationed in the Mediterranean. The war triggered by US-Israeli strikes on Iran, "in this intense phase", could last "several days, perhaps several weeks", he said.

Trump reviewing 'all credible options' on oil prices: White House
Washington, United States

President Donald Trump is reviewing "all credible options" for controlling oil prices amid the joint US-Israeli operation against Iran, the White House said yesterday, insisting that the current spike was "short-term."

Israel using white phosphorus in new Lebanon attacks

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Human Rights Watch yesterday accused Israel of "unlawfully" using white phosphorus over residential parts of a southern Lebanese town last week. "The Israeli military unlawfully used artillery-fired white phosphorus munitions over homes on March 3, 2026, in the southern Lebanese town of Yohmor," the New York-based rights group said in a report.

Classifieds



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank You Bahrain for Protecting All Residents

As expatriates living in the Kingdom of Bahrain, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the leadership and government for their unwavering commitment to protecting all residents during these challenging times.

Your vigilance, timely alerts, and the measures taken to ensure safety and preparedness have given us a strong sense of security and reassurance. Despite the tensions around us, Bahrain has remained calm, organized, and well protected.

We also extend our deepest respect and salute to the brave military officers and security forces who have worked tirelessly to intercept threats and safeguard the nation. Their dedication and courage have protected countless lives.

We stand together with the people and leadership of Bahrain to face this challenge with unity and strength. With faith and collective effort, we believe that this difficult time will soon pass.

With heartfelt appreciation and respect.
- Aditi Sanjay

Bahrain -My Second Home

In times of uncertainty and conflict, many of us quietly ask ourselves a difficult question: How do we continue to live and move forward if this kind of war and instability continues? Fear and worry can easily take hold of our hearts, especially for those of us who are far away from our own homeland.

But even in these challenging moments, we witness something powerful – the strength of unity, compassion, and humanity.

Here in Bahrain, we have seen how a nation comes together to protect and care for its people. The efforts of the government and the kindness of the community remind us that leadership is not only about authority, but about responsibility and compassion for every life.

Even during difficult times, they continue to work tirelessly – providing evacuation shelter, food, and assistance. These actions show a deep commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone living here.

For many of us who came from different parts of the world, Bahrain has become more than just a place where we work or live. It has become a second home – a place where we feel protected, supported, and respected.

From the bottom of our hearts, we express our sincere gratitude to the Kingdom of Bahrain, to its leaders, and to every individual who continues to serve and protect the community during these difficult times.

Moments like this remind us that what truly matters is not where we come from, but how we stand together. Through prayers, kindness, understanding, and solidarity with one another, we can overcome even the most difficult challenges.

Let us continue to support each other, to choose compassion over fear, and to believe in the strength of unity.

Because when people stand together with hope and humanity, no hardship is impossible to overcome.

Bahrain, my second home – a place where I feel safe, protected, and deeply grateful.

By : Joyce Bagang

Proud and Grateful: Saluting Bahrain's Protectors

I want to express my gratitude to the Bahrain Defence Force and our government for keeping us safe. Their dedication and quick action in times of uncertainty give all of us peace of mind.

We are especially thankful for the leadership and security forces who work tirelessly around the clock to maintain Bahrain's safety and stability. Their commitment protects not only our security but also our sense of community and trust in our nation.

As a resident, I feel proud and reassured knowing that Bahrain's leaders and defenders are always looking out for us. We do not take their efforts for granted, and we are truly grateful for their service.

Hamsa Sherif
Manama Resident

PICTURE OF THE DAY



Photo : Anchalo

NEWSTOON



WHAT'S ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Evacuations expose lack of pet-friendly options in Bahrain

When emergencies force evacuations, pets are often the forgotten victims. In Juffair, some residents chose to stay in their homes rather than abandon their animals after struggling to find pet-friendly hotels. The situation highlights the growing need to



TOP COMMENTS

kendrainpeace
I have moved to 5 countries with my cat and Bahrain was by far the most insane. It took us thousands of dollars and months of planning. Luckily the Hilton was incredible and accommodated him. I feel for all the pet owners in Bahrain.

eman1996x
They really need to allow pets. I don't even understand why they don't. Like furniture is nothing and can always be upholstered. Let us have our babies!!

laleh_973
Look at what Dubai's municipality doing to protect abandoned pets! I wish if our municipality follows the same!

iamkatharinepierce
I would never leave my animals. They are part of my family

aisha7128
So, what exactly will people do in this situation? Will the government take responsibility of our pets while we evacuate to safety or will they help us take our beloved pets with us, so they can be safe too? Why is the government lagging?

We would love to hear from you.

If you have anything you'd like to say or share with us, please feel free to write to us at online@newsofbahrain.com

Fact-Check Before You Share

In today's fast-moving digital world, news spreads within seconds. While this helps us stay informed, it also means that unverified information can travel just as quickly. A single forwarded message or social media post can easily create confusion or unnecessary panic if the facts are not checked first.

This is why it is important for all of us to pause and verify information before sharing it with others. Taking a moment to confirm the source, check official updates, or read beyond a headline can make a big difference. Responsible sharing helps ensure that accurate information reaches people and prevents the spread of rumors.

In times when reliable information matters most, every individual has a role to play. By being careful and thoughtful about what we share, we contribute to a more informed and calm community.

- Roopesh

KEEP AWAY FROM REMAINS OF MISSILES!



Spot the seven differences



'T20 kings': nation celebrates Indian romp to World Cup glory

Fans celebrate nationwide after India secures record-breaking third global title

● Virat Kohli hails "phenomenal" team display

● Fans celebrate across all major cities

AFP | New Delhi

Millions of euphoric Indians celebrated yesterday what cricket great Virat Kohli hailed as a "phenomenal" display in winning the T20 World Cup for a record third time.

The co-hosts and pre-tournament favourites swept aside New Zealand by 96 runs in Sunday's final in front of 86,000 spectators at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium.

India became the first team to lift the trophy on home soil, the first to retain it and are now the most successful side in the history of the global showpiece.

Indian newspapers praised Suryakumar Yadav's men for their dominant performance, with the mass-circulation Times of India saying they had rewritten history in "bold strokes".



India's players celebrate with the trophy

"India didn't so much win the title as stroll to it. It was a coronation rather than a final," it said in a front-page report headlined, "Three-mendous: T20 kings keep the crown."

The English-language Indian Express said it was the first

time India had won a showpiece event without a "larger-than-life megastar".

It credited coach Gautam Gambhir with "sowing the seeds" of belief in the team, calling him the "architect" of India's triumph.

Cricket is a national obsession in the world's most populous country, woven deeply into its cultural and social fabric.

Star players enjoy adulation and the game serves as a rare unifying force in an otherwise diverse nation.

”

Absolutely no match for the explosive cricket played by us throughout the tournament

VIRAT KOHLI

Celebrations across country

As the victory became inevitable late Sunday, thousands of delirious fans converged on Delhi's India Gate monument waving tricolour flags, beating drums and dancing to blaring Bollywood hits.

Drivers came out of their cars on the broad avenues around the monument to join impromptu street celebrations that stretched long into the next day.

The scene was replicated in cities, towns and villages across the country.

Batting great Sachin Tendulkar hailed the Indian team as "totally deserving and rightful winners".

"What a fantastic performance by our team and a special brand of cricket on display," he said, referring to their fearless attacking game.

The 50-year-old shared a photo of fans gathered outside his Mumbai residence long after midnight, writing: "Not in Mumbai to witness the celebration... but it's happening all over the country."

Thousands of fans also celebrated outside the Ahmedabad stadium, where India suffered heartbreak in the 2023 50-over World Cup final.

"India has now won back-to-back. So we hope in the next World Cup we will win as well," Akshay, a 35-year-old engineer, told AFP.

Daval Shah, another fan, said he thoroughly enjoyed the game even though it was pretty one-sided.

"It's always been in one corner of our mind that we were defeated here," said Shah, 40, referring to the 2023 loss to Australia.

"It's like a jinx, but we have broken the jinx today."

Indian batting superstar Kohli, who retired from the shortest format of the game after India's 2024 title win, called the performance "phenomenal".

"Absolutely no match for the explosive cricket played by us throughout the tournament," he wrote on X.

Double super-over drama to Allen's record ton: T20 World Cup moments

AFP | Ahmedabad

India thrashed New Zealand in the final of the T20 World Cup in Ahmedabad to retain their crown in style.

Here are some memorable storylines from the tournament:

Double super-over drama

South Africa and Afghanistan played out a tie followed by a first-ever double super over in a T20 World Cup to decide the winner of their gripping group contest.

The drama unfolded after Afghanistan posted 187 all out in response to South Africa's 187-6 in Ahmedabad.

The teams were tied again after a breathless first super over before South Africa won off the final ball of a heart-thumping second sudden-death showdown.

Afghanistan batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz needed four sixes off four balls in the second super over to pull off a win but only managed three before being caught out.

Shock Australia exit

Former champions Australia suffered a shock loss to the tournament's surprise packages Zimbabwe in a group game after they were dismissed for 146 while chasing 170 for victory.



India's Sanju Samson (C) and Kuldeep Yadav (C, right) celebrate with the trophy during a victory lap

Without injured fast bowlers Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood, Australia suffered another defeat to Sri Lanka to leave their campaign hanging by a thread.

Zimbabwe's rained-off match with Ireland showed Australia the door as the 2021 winners failed to make the second phase for only the second time in the event's history.

Australia signed off with a thrashing of Oman but skipper Mitchell Marsh said: "It's a bitterly disappointed changing room."

Off-pitch tensions

There was an acrimonious and chaotic build-up to the tournament.

Pakistan vowed to boycott their group game against arch-rivals India in support of Bangladesh, who refused to play in India and did not take part in the competition as a result.

They were replaced at the 11th hour by Scotland.

After frantic negotiations with the International Cricket Council, the Pakistan government made a U-turn and the

blockbuster match went ahead in Colombo.

India beat Pakistan but it was tense on the field and there were no handshakes between the two captains and teams.

Samson's redemption

India batsman Sanju Samson redeemed himself in a winner-takes-all contest against the West Indies as his unbeaten 97 helped the co-hosts chase down 196 and reach the semi-finals.

Samson was not in the original plans as opener but a loss of form for Abhishek Sharma and



Finn Allen celebrates his century

Allen's record 100

New Zealand opener Finn Allen struck the tournament's fastest-ever century, off 33 balls, to own the stage in the first semi-final against South Africa.

South Africa, unbeaten until the knockout match, wilted in the face of Allen's onslaught as he smacked 10 fours and eight sixes.

New Zealand romped to the victory target of 170 with 7.1 overs to spare.

It was a brutal show of power-hitting by Allen, who surpassed the previous fastest century record, in 47 balls, by West Indies' Chris Gayle in 2016.

Emotional Italy make history

Debutants Italy, the lowest-ranked side in the 20-team tournament, hammered Nepal by 10 wickets for a historic first win.

It left some of the Italy players in tears of joy and sparked dreams about a bright future for cricket in the football-mad country.

"I don't think you'll see many players cry on the field after a win in the group stages," stand-in captain Harry Manenti said.

"I think you've got to appreciate what Italy cricket is bringing to the game, understand that the passion is slightly different with the Italians."

the need to break a left-handed combination at the top got the wicketkeeper-batter back for the Super Eights.

After a cameo against Zimbabwe, Samson made the stage his own at Kolkata's Eden Gardens as India depended on his 50-ball knock laced with 12 fours and four sixes.

Samson, a devout Catholic, said a silent prayer after he hit the winning boundary and struck another match-winning knock of 89 in the semi-final against England, then starred once more in the final.

Sinner sets up Fonseca clash, Zverev advances at Indian Wells

Sinner eases past Shapovalov as Brazilian teen Fonseca continues dream run

● Sinner beats Shapovalov 6-3, 6-2

● Fonseca, 19, beats Tommy Paul 6-2, 6-3

● Alexander Zverev wins three-set battle vs Nakashima

AFP | Indian Wells

World number two Jannik Sinner took another step toward a first Indian Wells Masters title on Sunday, easing past Denis Shapovalov 6-3, 6-2 to reach the fourth round and a clash with exciting Brazilian teenager Joao Fonseca.

After dropping just two games in his second-round opener against Czech qualifier Dalibor Svrčina, Sinner was caught napping to drop his serve in the opening game.

He responded with confidence against a potentially tricky opponent known for producing winners.

Sinner quickly recouped the break and grabbed another in



Jannik Sinner of Italy plays a forehand against Denis Shapovalov of Canada in their third round match

the eighth game.

"It's a very tough second match for me," the Italian said. "He's a very high-quality player... he had great wins in the past so I'm very happy about today's performance."

With one set in his pocket Sinner was in full control in the

second, opening with a break on the way to a 5-2 lead and closing it out with a love game.

"I tried to stay solid on the baseline but also a bit more aggressive in the second set," Sinner said. "It was a tough start for me with a break down but I'm happy how I reacted."

Sinner faces the 19-year-old Fonseca for a place in the quarter-finals.

Fonseca, who saved two match points in his second-round victory over Karen Khachanov, beat another seeded player, American Tommy Paul, 6-2, 6-3.

Fonseca brought the heat,

”

We tennis players, we look to playing against top players so it's going to be a pleasure -- and hopefully I can get the win

JOAO FONSECA

displaying thunderous groundstrokes as he reached the fourth round of a Masters 1000 for the first time.

He said he was eager for the chance to test himself against four-time major winner Sinner.

"We tennis players, we look to playing against top players so it's going to be a pleasure -- and hopefully I can get the win," he said.

Fourth-seeded German Alexander Zverev held off a determined Brandon Nakashima 7-6 (7/2), 5-7, 6-4.

Zverev didn't have a break point against the 30th-ranked American until the third set. He missed his first two opportunities before finally making one count, breaking Nakashima in the final game to seal the victory. "He played a fantastic match today," Zverev said of Nakashi-

ma, who had 17 aces to Zverev's 15.

"He served like I have never seen before. He was hitting his spots well. Every ace was more or less on the line for him, so I've got to give credit to him. He played a great match."

Zverev gained the upper hand in a close-run contest with a dominant first-set tiebreaker, but the American converted his fifth break chance for a 6-5 lead in the second and leveled the match with a love game.

"Definitely happy to get the win because that was a difficult match," said Zverev, who next plays American Frances Tiafoe.

Tien tops Shelton

Frances Tiafoe beat Flavio Cobolli 6-1, 6-2 in a rematch of last week's final in Acapulco won by the Italian.

Rising US talent Learner Tien knocked off eighth-seeded compatriot Ben Shelton 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 6-3.

Tien peppered big-serving Shelton with 15 aces while Shelton, apparently still feeling the effects of the illness that slowed him in a second-round win over Reilly Opelka, produced just eight.

Sabalenka, Osaka set fourth-round clash as Gauff retires injured

AFP | Indian Wells

Aryna Sabalenka and Naomi Osaka lined up a fourth-round clash at Indian Wells on Sunday as fourth-ranked Coco Gauff retired with a left arm injury.

World number one Sabalenka powered past Romania's Jaqueline Cristian 6-4, 6-1 to book a last-16 meeting with former champion Osaka.

Japan's Osaka, seeded 16th, pounced for a 6-1, 3-6, 6-1 victory over Camila Osorio to avenge a demoralizing first-round loss to the Colombian here last year.

They were joined in the fourth round by the Philippines' rising star Alexandra Eala, who was leading Gauff 6-2, 2-0 when the American retired with a left arm injury.

Gauff said the pain "felt like a firework going off inside of my arm, and then my whole arm felt like it was on fire."

"And then as the match played, it got progressively worse, even on shots that I wasn't even using my left arm for ... it was a scary feeling."

Gauff trailed 5-2 in the first when she took a medical timeout, a trainer massaging and manipulating her left arm and shoulder.

After Eala broke to take the set on a double fault from Gauff the trainer wrapped her left



Aryna Sabalenka plays a backhand in a match against Jaqueline Cristian of Romania

forearm.

It was to no avail, and after 54 minutes Gauff went to the net and told Eala she was calling it a day.

"I really didn't want to win this way," said Eala, who was cheered on as usual by a big contingent of Filipino fans.

"But this is still a really big moment for me to be able to play on Stadium One of Indian Wells and against such a great competitor," she added, wishing Gauff a speedy recovery.

Earlier action was relatively drama-free.

"So many things I felt like I did great today," Sabalenka said after overpowering Cristian

with a performance that included 23 winners. "Serving well, happy with the way I stayed focused no matter what (and) of course happy with the win."

Sabalenka is chasing a first title in the prestigious ATP and WTA Masters 1000 event after twice coming up empty in the final.

Osaka won her first title in Indian Wells in 2018, going on to win the US Open that year in a run that included a victory over Sabalenka.

That's the only meeting to date between the two -- who are now both four-time Grand Slam champions.

"I'll have a chance to get a

revenge, hopefully," Sabalenka said.

Attitude adjustment

Osaka, playing her first tournament since withdrawing before her Australian Open third-round match with an abdominal injury, roared through the opening set against Osorio but lost her way in the second.

The Colombian broke Osaka for a 4-2 lead and fended off a break point in the ninth game to take the set.

That proved the end of her resurgence. Osaka broke on the way to a 3-0 lead in the third as she brought it home without facing another break point.

”

I felt it, like, the second game of the first set. I guess a simple way to put it, it felt like a firework was going off inside of my arm, and then my whole arm felt like it was on fire. And then as the match played, it got progressively worse, even on shots that I wasn't even using my left arm for

COCO GAUFF

Wemby shines as Spurs thrash Rockets, Lakers down Knicks

AFP | Los Angeles

Victor Wembanyama scored 29 points as the San Antonio Spurs laid down a playoff marker with a dazzling 145-120 thrashing of the Houston Rockets on Sunday.

French superstar Wembanyama was one of six Spurs players to reach double figures as San Antonio bombarded Western Conference rivals Houston with a stream of 21 three-pointers.

Wemby dominated at both ends of the court, fleshing out his stat line with four blocks and two steals in addition to eight rebounds.

The towering Frenchman



San Antonio's Victor Wembanyama swats away a shot by Tari Eason

was backed with 23 points from Stephon Castle and 20 points apiece from De'Aaron Fox and Keldon Johnson.

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Unstoppable India target Olympic gold after making World Cup history

Captain Suryakumar eyes 2028 Olympic gold after back-to-back T20 World Cup triumphs

● **Champions maintain “fearless” attacking style**

● **Coach Gambhir focuses on team legacy**

● **Fans flood streets in celebration**

AFP | Ahmedabad

Captain Suryakumar Yadav said gold in 2028 on cricket's return to the Olympics was India's next big aim after extending their T20 domination with back-to-back World Cup titles.

Co-hosts India hammered New Zealand by 96 runs in the final in Ahmedabad on Sunday to be the first team to retain the T20 world crown and first to win it three times.

It was also the first time a team have won the title on home soil, and they did it with a brand of fearless, attacking cricket.

“It has been very special,” Suryakumar told reporters at a celebratory midnight press conference, as fans across the



India's players celebrate with the trophy

country flooded into the streets. “And definitely the next goal is Olympics, Olympic gold and also the T20 World Cup that year.”

Los Angeles 2028 will see cricket return to the Olympics for the first time since 1900. Led by then captain Rohit

Sharma, India won the T20 World Cup two years ago in Barbados for their first major title since the 2013 Champions Trophy.

Rohit and fellow stalwart Virat Kohli retired from the shortest format after the final against

South Africa and Suryakumar took over as captain.

“I think that drought ended in 2024 after a really long time and from there we never looked back,” said the 35-year-old.

“We played a different brand of cricket in 2024 and from there

“We played a different brand of cricket in 2024 and from there we understood how this team needs to work (going) forward. And it's been a wonderful journey since then

SURYAKUMAR YADAV

we understood how this team needs to work (going) forward.

“And it's been a wonderful journey since then.”

Suryakumar added: “We wanted to do something special in front of the home crowd. We want to continue doing that... and never stop.”

India won the 50-over World Cup in 2011 at home under M.S. Dhoni, who led the team to a T20 World Cup in the inaugural edition in 2007.

After that was a comparative drought in the biggest events by India's sky-high standards.

Two-time World Cup winner Gautam Gambhir, who succeeded Rahul Dravid as coach after



India's 2024 T20 World Cup win under then-captain Rohit Sharma ended a major title drought dating back to 2013, setting the stage for the current dominant run under Suryakumar's leadership

the 2024 World Cup win, wants to carve out his own legacy.

“I don't believe in inheriting anything, I believe in creating something,” said Gambhir, who has not always been universally popular with fans and pundits as the coach.

“And hopefully we've created something which probably all of you guys could be proud of, that the kind of brand of cricket we've played.”

Premier League teams are faster: Atletico's Simeone on Spurs clash



Atletico Madrid's players react during a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone highlighted the speed of Premier League sides' play yesterday ahead of the Champions League last 16 tie against Tottenham Hotspur.

Despite becoming embroiled in a relegation battle in the English top flight Spurs finished fourth in the league phase of Europe's top competition.

Five English sides finished in the top eight while six have reached the last 16, compared to three Spanish sides, the next most represented country.

“(English teams) have a faster pace. I don't know why, I can't quite put my finger on it,” Simeone told reporters before Tuesday's game at the Metropolitan stadium.

“Some say the referees let the game flow more, I don't know if it's the tactics or the pre-game preparation, but it's true that the speed is faster.”

“When you watch it on television, you can see that the speed is faster than in Spain, Italy, Germany... it's the fastest league.”

Despite that Simeone said that “technical quality” would also play its part in deciding the game, and that Tottenham could not win “just by intensity”.

The Argentine coach did not agree that Atletico were favourites going into the match, even though Igor Tudor's side have lost five straight matches.

“When you step onto the pitch, you don't remember where you are in the standings or what moment you're in,” continued Simeone.

Laporta stopped Messi Barca return to avoid power struggle: Xavi

AFP | Barcelona

Former Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez said the club's president Joan Laporta scuppered the return of all-time great Lionel Messi in 2023 to avoid a power struggle.

The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner left Barca for Paris Saint-Germain in 2021 and then two years later moved to MLS side Inter Miami.

“Leo was signed in January 2023 after winning the World Cup, we got in touch and he told me he wanted to come back,” Xavi told Spanish newspaper La Vanguardia late on Sunday.

“We had the green light from LaLiga (financially), but it was the president who threw it away...”

“Laporta told me, word for word, that if Leo came back he was going to wage war against him and that he couldn't allow that. And then suddenly Leo



Lionel Messi reacts during a match (file photo)

stopped answering my calls because he'd been told that it couldn't be done.”

Xavi said everything was ready for Messi's return, there was “no doubt” in a football sense and “we were going to do

a last dance, like (former NBA star Michael) Jordan's”.

Laporta, who resigned as president a few weeks ago to run for re-election this week, suggested yesterday former coach Xavi was bitter and said Messi's

father and agent Jorge had told him the superstar had decided not to come back.

“With Xavi I saw we were going to lose and with (current coach Hansi) Flick that we will win,” Laporta said at a presidential debate yesterday.

“I understand that (Xavi) is hurt – with the same players Flick wins.”

Laporta said he sent a contract to Jorge Messi who later came to his house and told him that “here there would be too much pressure” if the forward returned.

Messi is Barcelona's all-time top scorer with 672 goals and won a club-record 34 trophies at Camp Nou.

Laporta also claimed Barca rejected a €250 million (\$288 million) offer from PSG for teenage superstar Lamine Yamal, reported to have been made in the summer of 2024.

Real Madrid's Carreras to miss Man City game, Mbappe not training

AFP | Madrid

Real Madrid defender Alvaro Carreras will miss Wednesday's Champions League match against Manchester City, while superstar striker Kylian Mbappe did not train yesterday with his team-mates as he recovers from a knee sprain.

Madrid's top goalscorer Mbappe is not expected to feature at the Santiago Bernabeu against Pep Guardiola's side



Alvaro Carreras

because of the knee problem which has bothered him since last December.

Carreras “has been diagnosed with a muscle injury in the calf of his right leg”, Madrid said in a statement yesterday, without specifying how long he is expected to miss.

Los Blancos have several absences ahead of the clash against Man City, with Jude Bellingham, Eder Militao, Rodrygo Goes, Dani Ceballos and David

Alaba all recovering from injuries.

The biggest worry for Madrid is Mbappe's likely absence, without a clear timeline for when the France captain will be back in action, although Spanish media say he is targeting the return leg next week.

Mbappe has missed Madrid's last three matches and recently went to Paris for tests and treatment on his knee.