

**Fireworks expected in King's Cup Semi-Finals**

Al Khaldiya meet Riffa tonight at Khalifa Sports City in a King's Cup semi-final, with controversy adding extra edge. | P12

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**Gulf Air Returns to Skies with Riyadh Route**



Gulf Air operations are back  
TDT | Manama

Gulf Air resumed its operations from Bahrain International Airport yesterday following the reopening of the Kingdom's airspace after a 40-day closure.

Marking the return to normal operations, the airline's first flight took off to Riyadh. The airline expressed appreciation for the support and coordination provided by Saudi authorities during the disruption, which ensured operational continuity despite regional tensions.

**Safety alarm**

TDT | Manama

As President of the UN Security Council for April, the Kingdom of Bahrain chaired a briefing in New York focused on the protection of humanitarian personnel in conflict zones under Resolution 2730 (2024).

Chaired by Ambassador Jamal Fares Alrowaie, the session heard senior UN and Red Cross officials highlight growing threats faced by aid workers, including attacks, detentions, and operational risks across multiple conflict areas.

# Strategic Security Talks

Cooperation across political, security, defence, and military sectors

● Long-standing Bahrain-UK strategic ties

TDT | Manama

HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer at Sakhir Palace in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, as part of the British leader's regional tour aimed at ensuring the continued reopening of the Strait of Hormuz following the ceasefire agreement between the United States and Iran.

His Majesty underscored the historic relationship between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Kingdom, which spans more than 200 years, describing it as a strong alliance built on solid foundations.

Talks also covered regional and international developments, particularly their security and economic implications.



HM the King and HRH Prince Salman with Prime Minister Keir Starmer

Both sides expressed support for efforts aimed at reinforcing regional stability and addressing shared concerns.

Separately, HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa held talks with the UK Prime Minister, reaffirming the strength of the strategic partnership, supported by His Majesty the King and King Charles III.

The Crown Prince stressed

the need for Iran to fully cease hostile actions, ensure the complete reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, and uphold international obligations, including compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. He noted that recent attacks targeting civilians and infrastructure across Bahrain and the region underscore the urgency of a firm international

response. Prime Minister Starmer, in turn, strongly condemned attacks targeting Bahrain and other regional countries, reiterating the United Kingdom's support for Bahrain's security and stability. He also praised the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad and commended the unity and resilience demonstrated by the Bahraini people.

**Firm Shut, Asian Owner Jailed Over Expired Food Scam**

Rehab Mohammad  
TDT | Manama

A company has been shut down for six months and fined BD5,000 after a court found it guilty of re-labelling expired food and putting it back on sale with fake dates, posing a serious risk to public health.

The Second Lower Criminal Court sentenced the company owner to three years in prison, imposed a BD10,000 fine, and ordered his deportation after serving his term. Five other defendants received jail sentences ranging from three months to three years, with two also facing deportation.

**Operation**

Authorities seized and ordered the destruction of all spoiled and counterfeit goods, along with the tools used in the operation. The court also ruled that the verdict be published at the defendants' expense once finalised.

The case was uncovered after a tip-off led police to raid a residence and a commercial facility, where large quantities of expired and repackaged food items with falsified labels were found. Officials said the original expiry dates had been removed and replaced to mislead consumers.

The Public Prosecution stressed that such violations endanger consumer safety.

## Push for Safe Navigation: Bahrain Gains Arab Backing



Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani



Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud



Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan



Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani



Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Morocco



Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council

● Calls made for international action

● Reaffirmed commitment to diplomatic coordination

TDT | Manama

In a coordinated round of high-level diplomatic calls, Bahrain's Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani discussed regional developments and maritime security concerns with several Arab foreign ministers and officials.

The discussions focused on escalating regional tensions, including alleged Iranian attacks on several countries in the Gulf region and Jordan, as well as the wider implications of any disruption to navigation in the Strait of Hormuz on global trade and energy supplies.

Dr. Al Zayani also briefed counterparts on Bahrain's dip-

lomatic initiatives at the United Nations Security Council, where the Kingdom is currently serving as a non-permanent member and holds the presidency for the month of April.

The foreign ministers he spoke with included Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani of Qatar, Nasser Bourita of Morocco, and Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

During the calls, Arab ministers and the GCC Secretary-Gen-

The discussions focused on escalating regional tensions, including alleged Iranian attacks on several countries in the Gulf region and Jordan.

eral expressed strong support for Bahrain's diplomatic efforts, particularly its initiative to present a draft resolution—on behalf of GCC states and Jordan—aimed at securing maritime navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

They described the initiative as a responsible step to safeguard one of the world's most critical shipping lanes, ensuring stability in global energy mar-

kets, protecting supply chains, and reinforcing international peace and security.

The officials also emphasized the importance of continued Arab coordination and sustained diplomatic engagement to address regional challenges. They called for international efforts to ensure adherence to international law and the safe reopening of the Strait as a global maritime

**Appreciation**

Dr. Al Zayani, in turn, expressed appreciation for the unified Arab support, highlighting Bahrain's commitment to continued consultation with regional and international partners.

He reaffirmed that Bahrain will continue its diplomatic efforts at the Security Council to strengthen international stability and protect global economic interests, particularly in light of rising risks to energy security and international trade routes.



# Iraq Religious Body Condemns Attacks on Bahrain

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, received a message from Dr. Muhammad Ubaid Al-Kubaisi, Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of Muslim Scholars in Iraq, expressing strong solidarity with the Kingdom of Bahrain, its leadership, government, and people.

The message conveyed the organisation's condemnation of recent alleged attacks and hostile actions attributed to Iran, which it said affected Bahrain's sovereignty, security, and stability.

The Secretary-General strongly denounced all forms of aggression that violate international laws and norms, stressing that targeting states or interfering in their internal affairs is an unacceptable practice that undermines regional and international peace and escalates tensions in an already



HM the King

fragile region.

He also reaffirmed the full support of the Iraqi scholars' body for Bahrain's right to safeguard its sovereignty and security in accordance with international law, expressing solidarity with the Kingdom during this

sensitive period.

The message further highlighted the importance of unity, stronger cooperation, and collective efforts to address current challenges and preserve peace and stability in the region.

## HM King Hamad Praises Pakistan's Role in Regional Stability

TDT | Manama

Regional developments and bilateral cooperation were at the forefront of a telephone conversation between HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and

Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The two leaders discussed the latest regional and international developments, focusing on issues of mutual concern and their implications for stability

and security.

HM commended Pakistan's sustained efforts to promote security and stability in the region, recognising its constructive role in addressing ongoing challenges.

## NHRI Monitors Impact of Iranian Aggression on Rights



Engineer Ali Ahmed Al-Derazi chairs the meeting

Rehab Mohammad  
TDT | Manama

Reinforcing its commitment to protecting and documenting human rights developments in the Kingdom, the Office of the Board of Commissioners of the National Institution for Human Rights (NHRI) held its fourth regular meeting at its headquarters in the Seef District, chaired by Engineer Ali Ahmed Al-Derazi, with the participation of the Deputy Chair, heads of permanent specialized committees, the Child Rights Commissioner, and the Secretary-General.

The office began its proceedings by reviewing actions taken by the Institution within its mandate since the onset of the Iranian aggression against the Kingdom of Bahrain. These actions included professional monitoring and documentation of human rights violations, evidence collection, and continuous



Discussions focused on strengthening field cooperation and enhancing joint efforts to support the protection and promotion of human rights.

coordination with relevant authorities to ensure prompt response to affected cases and provide necessary support. This effort also led to the establishment of a specialized subcommittee tasked with monitoring and documenting the crimes of Iranian aggression and their impact on human rights in the

Kingdom.

Review

The meeting further reviewed updates on the Institution's ongoing work and examined progress in coordination with civil society organizations. Discussions focused on strengthening field cooperation and enhancing joint efforts to support the protection and promotion of human rights.

The office also emphasized the importance of sustained collaboration with civil society institutions, describing them as key partners in reinforcing Bahrain's human rights framework and advancing shared national objectives.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the Institution's commitment to continue following up on its plans and strengthening its role in safeguarding and promoting human rights in line with national priorities and future aspirations.

## Court Overturns Decision in Forged Resignation Case

Rehab Mohammad  
TDT | Manama

The High Civil Court annulled an administrative decision that had accepted a worker's resignation as valid, after establishing that the resignation was forged and linked to improper procedural conduct involving an attempted transfer to another employer.

The court ruled that the worker left his job in violation of work permit conditions and that a prior final judgment confirming absconding removed any legal basis for his labour claims.

According to lawyer Huda Saad, the worker attempted to move to another employer without informing his original employer and allegedly forged

a resignation letter by signing and backdating it to appear legitimate.

Procedures

She said the employer followed legal procedures and filed a work abandonment notification after the employee failed to comply with regulations. Although the worker later submitted a resignation via email, it did not follow approved formal procedures and included irregularities, including the disputed signature.

Despite this, the grievance was initially accepted and the resignation considered valid, prompting the worker to file claims for labour entitlements.

However, the court found that the administrative decision lacked a proper legal basis because it relied on an unver-

ified resignation and ignored established findings.

Judgment

The ruling referenced a prior final judgment confirming that the worker had absconded on March 7, 2024, based on witness testimony. The court also noted subsequent legal consequences, including cancellation of residency and a criminal ruling for illegal stay.

The High Civil Court concluded that the employment termination had already been definitively settled and could not be re-litigated, making the administrative decision invalid.

The court ultimately upheld the work abandonment notification, overturned the challenged administrative ruling, and ordered the worker to bear legal costs and attorney fees.

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## Bahrain Ensures Uninterrupted Energy Supply



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa chairs the board meeting

### ● HH Shaikh Nasser reviews mechanism

TDT | Manama

Bahrain reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening energy security and operational readiness, as Bapco Energies reviewed its first-quarter performance for 2026 amid evolving regional conditions.

Chairing the board meeting, HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa highlighted that the Kingdom's progress in the energy sector continues to be guided by the vision of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, which aims to position the Kingdom as a leading regional energy hub.

He also underscored the role of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa in advancing this vision through practical initiatives that enhance stability, strengthen preparedness, and enable the Kingdom to respond confidently to regional developments.

The board praised the strong operational discipline shown

Emphasis was placed on maintaining the highest standards of employee safety and safeguarding critical infrastructure.

across the group and its subsidiaries, ensuring uninterrupted energy supplies and smooth operations nationwide. Emphasis was placed on maintaining the highest standards of employee safety and safeguarding critical infrastructure.

During the meeting, Mark Thomas, Group CEO, presented a detailed report outlining progress on strategic projects, operational efficiency, and measures to enhance resilience and reliability across the organisation.

The session concluded with Bapco Energies renewing its commitment to maintain stable energy supplies, meet local demand without disruption, and uphold operational excellence while adapting to regional changes.

# Return to Calm

● A resident of over 20 years expresses confidence

● Safety and daily routine

Ghadeer Alkumaish  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain is gradually returning to normal life following the recent ceasefire in the regional conflict. Light rainfall over the Kingdom adds a symbolic sense of calm after weeks of heightened tension.

A gentle drizzle fell across Manama on Tuesday, creating what residents described as a quiet and reflective moment, as streets and public spaces slowly regained their usual rhythm.

For more than 40 days, the Kingdom remained on high alert. Despite the situation, daily life continued with limited disruption. Restaurants, malls, and shops largely remained open, closing only briefly when advised by authorities. Residents continued their routines—shopping, dining, and moving through public spaces—supported by what many described as strong public trust in national security institutions.

### Operations

The General Command of the Bahrain Defence Force announced that its air defence systems had intercepted and destroyed 194 missiles and 515 drones since the beginning of what it described as hostile attacks targeting the Kingdom. Officials said these operations demonstrated the country's preparedness and reinforced public



Rainy scenes over Manama and the Seef district during yesterday's calm weather, reflecting a peaceful atmosphere across Bahrain.



“Bahrain has always felt like a second home to me. I feel safe here.”



“Life here continues normally because people trust the country's security.”



“Even during difficult times, we can still go out and live our daily lives.”

confidence in national security systems.

At Oasis Mall, residents expressed continued reassurance. One long-term Arab expatriate, who has lived in Bahrain for over 20 years, said the Kingdom had become his second home. “I never think about going back to my home country. Bahrain is safe—it feels like my second home,” he said.

Younger residents also reflected similar confidence. A

teenager said his family allows him to move freely because of trust in the country's security. Another added that visible security presence, particularly near sensitive areas, contributes to a sense of safety and reassurance in daily life.

Across different communities, a shared sentiment remains consistent: Bahrain continues to be seen as a stable and secure place for both citizens and residents.

### Flights

With operations at Bahrain International Airport fully restored following a brief precautionary suspension, normal flight schedules have resumed, further signaling a return to routine life.

As calm returns, the combination of reopened public spaces, steady daily activity, and recent rainfall symbolizes a wider sense of reassurance across the Kingdom.

## Single Men's Housing Ban Sought in Family Areas

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

Complaints about homes being rented to single expats in family neighbourhoods are reaching MPs from across Bahrain, Mohammed Al Olaiwi said, as he called for a change to the property rent law to stop such lets in residential areas.

Al Olaiwi said the matter was being raised in every constituency, despite the differences between districts, which he said showed the need for a legal change to bar such housing in the midst of family homes.

“All MPs receive complaints

about bachelor housing, despite the fact that our areas differ,” he said. “That makes a law and an amendment to the rent law necessary, so renting to bachelors in the middle of residential neighbourhoods is banned.”

### Problem

He said the problem had dragged on since around 2006 and was still affecting Bahraini families, including residents in Muharraq.

According to Al Olaiwi, the trouble has not been confined to one part of the country. He said people in many areas were still dealing with harm linked



MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi

to such housing, with families left to live beside overcrowded properties rented to single workers.

He also blamed some land-

lords, saying they rent out homes with little care for nearby families or the effect on neighbours.

“Some landlords must bear blame as well,” he said. “Some do not care about the neighbours or about families living nearby. They rent the property to expats without caring about what this can bring upon those around them.”

Al Olaiwi said he had already shown videos in earlier sittings of Parliament which, he said, depicted Asian workers under the influence of alcohol, with some acting aggressively towards neighbours.

## Air Traffic Restarts



H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa inspects the airport facilities

TDT | Manama

Flight operations at Bahrain International Airport are steadily returning to normal following a temporary suspension, with officials confirming full operational readiness during an on-site inspection by senior leadership.

The Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, Dr. Sheikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, carried out an inspection visit to the airport to assess preparedness, coinciding with the departure of the first flights of national carrier Gulf Air after the reopening of airspace.

During the visit, the minister reviewed operational systems, passenger handling procedures, and coordination mechanisms in place at Bahrain International Airport, ensuring that all facilities were functioning smoothly as flight schedules resumed.

H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa reviewed operational systems, passenger handling procedures, and coordination mechanisms in place at Bahrain International Airport

He praised the joint efforts of airport personnel, security services, and civil aviation teams, highlighting their efficiency in restoring seamless operations and maintaining a safe environment for travellers throughout the transition period.

Expressing gratitude, he acknowledged the support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the temporary disruption, noting the importance of regional cooperation in ensuring continuity of air connectivity.

## Ministry Seeks Approval to Remove Falcon Monument

Hasan Barakat  
TDT | Manama

Plans to upgrade key roads leading to Bahrain International Airport could see the removal of one of Muharraq's most recognisable landmarks.

The Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture has asked the Muharraq Municipal Council to review and approve the removal of the falcon monument at the Falcon Interchange, as part of the ongoing road development scheme. In a letter to



The falcon monument at the Falcon Interchange

the council, the ministry urged members to study the engineering designs and share their views



An artist's rendition of the new road development project

before construction starts.

The wider project aims to ease congestion, improve traf-

fic flow, and enhance access to the airport terminal and nearby facilities. It is also expected to reduce pressure on major routes such as Arad Highway and Shaikh Khalifa Al Kabeer Highway, while supporting infrastructure growth in line with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030.

Phase 3A of the scheme focuses on the Falcon Interchange and includes a full reconstruction of the junction, along with upgrades to parts of Arad Highway and Shaikh Khalifa Al Kabeer Highway.

# Bahrain Councils Address Infrastructure Needs and Resident Complaints

## Land Dispute Cleared for A'ali - Salmabad Road Link Project

TDT | Manama  
Mohammed Darwish

A land dispute that had delayed the development of Road 4004 has been resolved, clearing the way for progress on a key road link between A'ali and Salmabad.

Abdullah Ashoor, representative for the sixth constituency on the Northern Municipal Council, said the project in Block 740 remains a top priority as it will significantly improve traffic flow and accessibility for residents and road users.

He said the project has now reached the final design stage following coordination with relevant authorities, with construction expected to begin once remaining technical and budgetary approvals are completed.

The main obstacle had been that part of the required land was not classified as public property. That issue has now been settled



through coordination between multiple government entities.

Ashoor confirmed that the land regularisation process was completed in cooperation with

the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, the Ministry of Works, the Urban Planning and Development Authority, and the

Electricity and Water Authority.

With this step completed, the project is now ready for asphalt works once final procedures and budget approvals are finalised.

He also noted continued coordination with Dr Salman Mohsen, representative for the fourth constituency on the Northern Municipal Council, in pushing forward the project in line with approved plans.

Ashoor said the road will benefit a large number of citizens, residents, and daily commuters, expressing appreciation to government bodies and local residents for their patience and cooperation.

## Capital Council Steps Up Response to Public Complaints

TDT | Manama

The Capital Municipal Council has intensified its follow-up on residents' complaints, holding 17 weekly meetings and conducting eight field visits to address service-related issues across Manama, including rainwater accumulation concerns.

Dr Khulood Al Qattan, Deputy Chair of the Capital Municipal Council and head of its Public Relations and Media Committee, said the council is closely monitoring complaints received through various channels as part of efforts to improve public services and respond to community needs.

She said the council has expanded its field monitoring, with committee members con-



ducting on-site inspections of reported issues. The Public Relations Committee also organised 11 community engagement events to directly hear residents' concerns.

Dr Al Qattan added that a dedicated communication line has been established to ensure

residents can easily reach council staff and receive quicker responses to complaints and suggestions. She said clear reporting mechanisms are in place, allowing issues to be submitted by phone, in person, or through the government's electronic portal.

She stressed that the council is working closely with relevant authorities to achieve effective solutions, noting that improving living standards in the capital is a shared responsibility.

Dr Al Qattan also thanked ministries, civil society organisations, and partner entities for their cooperation, saying their support helps translate community requests into practical improvements that enhance services and quality of life in Manama.

## Casino Garden Visitors May Pay for Selected Services



TDT | Manama  
Hasan Barakat

Visitors to Muharrag's renovated Casino Garden may soon pay small fees for selected facilities, under a proposal that keeps public access to the park completely free.

The Financial and Legal Committee of the Muharrag Municipal Council recommended approving charges for certain service facilities within the park while firmly rejecting any entry fee. This move ensures the park remains open and accessible to all community members.

Under the proposal, fees would apply to the use of restrooms and sports courts within the park. The aim is to improve service quality and maintain consistent standards of cleanliness and upkeep, particularly because these facilities require continuous care and rising operational costs.

The recommendation follows a request from Muharrag Municipality, which had initially sought the council's views on introducing an entry fee after the park's redevelopment. The municipality stated that the broader objective is to sustain maintenance, protect green spaces and recreational areas from overuse, and secure a stable income source to support ongoing operations.

## Road overhaul and parking expansion

TDT | Manama  
Hasan Barakat

Longstanding resident complaints prompted a major infrastructure decision in Isa Town, after the Southern Municipal Council approved a full redevelopment plan for Block 810 to improve roads and public services in the area.

The council reviewed several service-related proposals, with the redevelopment of Block 810 in Constituency One emerging as the most significant. Members also examined responses from relevant ministries regarding previously submitted councillor proposals.

The upgrade proposal, sub-



mitted by Southern Municipality council member Abdulla Saleh Daraj, received unanimous approval. It calls for a complete overhaul of the block's ageing infrastructure following repeated complaints about deteriorating internal roads that have exceeded their operational lifespan.

Daraj said the poor road con-



dition has affected traffic flow and raised safety concerns, stressing the need for urgent intervention.

The approved works include resurfacing internal streets using asphalt and interlock paving, installing a modern rainwater drainage system with underground storage tanks to reduce water accumulation, and

upgrading street lighting across the area.

Officials said the improvements are expected to enhance road safety, reduce accidents, and improve overall living conditions, while also preserving the urban character of the area in line with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

In a related development,

the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture confirmed progress on a separate proposal to convert two rest areas in Zayed Town into parking facilities.

The ministry noted that the Ministry of Works secured approval from the General Directorate of Traffic to proceed with developing parking at the rest area on Road 2002 in Block 720, after completing all necessary technical approvals and permits.

Implementation will follow the approved priority schedule and depend on budget availability, as part of broader efforts to improve infrastructure and ease traffic congestion across residential areas.

## Shura to Vote on Prison and Inmate Work Law Changes

TDT | Manama  
Mohammed Darwish

Two draft laws replacing references to prison and inmate work with reform, rehabilitation and training terms will go before the Shura Council on Sunday. This move is meant to address remarks from the International Labour Organisation regarding wording that could be read as allowing forced labour alongside jail terms.

The first bill would amend parts of the Penal Code issued by Decree-Law No. 15 of 1976 and attached to Decree No. 68 of 2025. The second would amend parts of the Reform and Rehabilitation Institution Law issued by Law No. 18 of 2014 and attached to Decree No. 69 of 2025. In both reports, the Shura Council's Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee recommended passage in principle after studying the lower chamber's decision, the attached papers, the opinion of the Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee,

and legal notes prepared for it.

In the Penal Code bill, Article 55 would be replaced in full. Article 210 would also change so that the phrase 'in prison' becomes 'in a reformation and rehabilitation centre', while the word 'prisons' would change to 'reformation and rehabilitation centres' wherever it appears in the same law. The third article deals with implementation.

The committee said the bill came in reply to remarks made by the ILO and its Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations regarding legal texts that might be understood as allowing compulsory work alongside a jail sentence. It said Bahraini law does not take that line, but the wording should change so the meaning is plain.

It said the new text for Article 55 would shift the focus from requiring a convicted person to carry out work inside prison to placing that person in rehabilitation and training programmes inside reform and rehabilitation centres. In the committee's view, that ties punishment more clearly to



correction and return to society, while removing any reading that may suggest forced labour.

The report also said the wording change in Article 210 and across the Penal Code would align the law with the terms already used in the 2014 Reform and Rehabilitation Institution Law. That, it said, would unify the language used in the two laws and match the shift from the old prison-based wording to one built around reform and rehabilitation.

Shura will also take up the second bill on Sunday, this time dealing with the Reform and Rehabilitation Institution Law itself. That draft law also has

three articles. Article 1 would replace the text of Article 18. Article 2 would make wider wording changes throughout the law, changing terms linked to work and employment to terms centred on rehabilitation and training. The third article deals with implementation.

Under those changes, the title of Chapter Two of Part Two would replace 'employment' with 'rehabilitation and training'. The phrase 'from work' in Articles 19 and 31 would become 'from rehabilitation and training'. The word 'employment' in Article 20 would also be replaced with 'rehabilitation and training', while 'work reward' in Articles 21 and 22 would become 'rehabilitation and training reward'.

The committee said this bill, too, came from ILO remarks on wording that could be misunderstood as allowing compulsory labour as part of a custodial sentence. It said the aim was to move the law away from an employment-based reading toward one that clearly shows training, skill-building and preparation for return to

society.

It added that Bahrain's reformation and rehabilitation centres now work through organised education and training programmes, along with health and social care, in a rights-based setting meant to improve the chances of reintegration. The bill, it said, would give that approach clearer legal wording.

The committee said the change to Article 18 mattered in particular because it would replace the word 'work' with 'rehabilitation and training', replace 'types of work' with 'rehabilitation and training programmes', and replace 'wage' with 'reward'. In its reading, that moves the duty placed on inmates from a work-based frame to a rehabilitative one, while removing wording that could be taken to imply compulsory labour.

After reviewing both bills and the views put by members, the committee ended by recommending approval in principle and passage of the draft articles in the form shown in the attached tables.

# Kanoo lauds election committee for smooth and professional chamber polls

TDT | Manama

The Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Nabeel Kanoo, received members of the Chamber's 31st Election Committee on Wednesday at the Chamber's headquarters, in appreciation of their efforts and to strengthen institutional cooperation.

Committee members congratulated Kanoo on his election, expressing confidence in his leadership and his ability to further



develop the Chamber's role in supporting the private sector.

Kanoo praised the committee for organising the elections

smoothly and professionally despite exceptional circumstances, highlighting strong coordination and efforts to facilitate proce-

dures for participants.

He said the elections recorded strong organisation and voter turnout, reflecting the engage-

ment of General Assembly members. He also underscored the transparency and efficiency of the process, which reinforced

confidence in the results and strengthened governance principles.

Committee members, in turn, commended the Chamber's executive body for its cooperation and coordination in ensuring the success of the electoral process.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Ghassan Fakhro, Mr. Rashid Ibrahim, Mr. Ali Ahmadi, Mr. Mazen AlShehabi, Mr. Rashid AlSinan, Mr. Nasser AlAhli, Mr. Majed AlAmin and Mr. Ali Makki.

## Kanoo Highlights FGCCC's Role in Representing the Private Sector



Within efforts to strengthen cooperation between the Bahrain Chamber and the Federation of Gulf Cooperation Council Chambers (FGCCC), Chairman Nabeel Kanoo received Secretary-General Saleh Al Sharqi on Wednesday at the Chamber's headquarters, in the presence of CEO Atef Al Khaja. Al Sharqi congratulated Kanoo on his election, expressing confidence in the Chamber's ability to achieve further milestones under his leadership and enhance its role in supporting the private sector and economic growth. The meeting reviewed FGCCC achievements in promoting private sector development and Gulf economic integration, as well as initiatives to boost regional trade and investment. Discussions also explored future prospects to position the Gulf Cooperation Council as a global economic hub, highlighting the Federation's role in representing the private sector.

## BCFC reinforces a culture of excellence

### Announces promotion of national talent

TDT | Manama

Driven by its firm belief that national talent is the foremost pillar of success and the most worthy of investment, and the engine of sustainable progress, Bahrain Commercial Facilities Company (BCFC) has announced the promotion of a number of its distinguished national employees across several of its key departments, in recognition of their proven competence, exceptional performance, and unwavering dedication to the company.

These promotions reflect the company's steadfast commitment to empowering its national

workforce, as it consistently rewards outstanding performance and invests in leadership potential, providing young talents with genuine opportunities to grow and contribute to the company's journey. In doing so, BCFC affirms its role as an active partner in advancing the goals of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, which places the private sector as a key pillar in building a productive economy led by qualified national professionals, and creates a fair working environment that transforms the ambitions of Bahraini citizens into a true success story.

On this occasion, Ms. Hanan Al-Ali, Chief People & Culture Officer: "These promotions re-



Hanan Al-Ali, Chief People & Culture Officer of BCFC

flect our strong belief that national talent is the main driver of our success and long-term sustainability. Investing in the development and empowerment of Bahraini talent remains a strategic priority for the Com-

pany. We continue to strengthen national leadership pipelines and build a strong bench of future leaders capable of driving our next phase of growth. We are confident that these promotions will enhance their leadership impact and support the Company's future aspirations."

It is worth noting that the promoted employees bring years of accumulated experience and well-established expertise, with their promotions serving as the culmination of a sustained journey of self-development and outstanding performance, a true embodiment of the company's enduring principle that lasting success begins with investing in its people first.

## Oil prices jump back toward \$100 on Mideast ceasefire doubts

● **Brent North Sea Crude: UP 3.5 % at \$98.03 a barrel**

● **West Texas Intermediate: UP 5.3% at \$99.41 a barrel**

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Oil prices jumped and most stock markets fell yesterday as investors weighed the prospects of a shaky Middle East ceasefire and a re-opening of the Strait of Hormuz, crucial to restoring oil and gas shipments.

Traders were also locking in profits from Wednesday's relief rally as the first-quarter earnings season gets underway.

Equity markets across the globe had soared and crude oil futures plunged Wednesday after US President Donald Trump announced the two-week halt in the war against Iran, and Tehran said it would reopen the waterway transporting one-fifth of the world's oil and gas. But the ceasefire has been placed in doubt, largely by Israel's ongoing attacks against Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Tehran has also said it will impose a toll on ships transiting Hormuz. The main US oil contract, West Texas Intermediate, rebounded over five percent to reach almost \$100 a barrel as international calls mounted for the ceasefire to be extended after a massive wave of Israeli strikes on Lebanon killed more than 200 people.

# Lawmakers seek six-month relief on utility charges for Bahraini businesses

## MPs propose six-month suspension of utility, municipal and labour fees

● **Move aims to support SMEs hit by rising costs and weaker trade**

● **Lawmakers warn of business closures and job losses without relief**

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama



Jaleela Alawi, MP

Bahraini business owners should be spared electricity and water charges, lawmakers said, citing excep-

tional conditions and economic strain caused by the Iranian attacks.

Four MPs have submitted an

urgent proposal to also suspend municipal and labour fees for six months, aiming to support Bahraini-owned firms, particularly small and medium enterprises hit by weaker trade and rising costs.

Jaleela Alawi, Mohsin Al Asbool, Hisham Al Ashiri and Mahmood Fardan said rising expenses and fixed obligations are making it harder for businesses to operate, warning that continued payments could force some to scale back or temporarily shut, affecting jobs and the wider economy.

They said a temporary sus-

pension would give firms breathing space to stabilise operations and gradually restore trade, while maintaining economic balance and supporting the private sector during this exceptional period.

### Swift government action

The proposal, submitted on an urgent basis, calls for swift government action to ease financial pressure and keep businesses running.

Its explanatory note highlights the direct impact of the Iranian attacks on key sectors, noting that Bahraini firms, re-

liant on daily trade and steady cash flow, are among the hardest hit. It adds that rising costs and ongoing obligations are intensifying pressure, underscoring the need for support to sustain economic activity and protect jobs.

The note says the proposal is based on current exceptional conditions, higher operating costs, the burden of essential payments and the need to prevent business disruption. It aims to provide temporary relief, help firms continue operating and preserve economic stability.

Iran's supreme leader says does not seek war in written message

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's new supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei in his latest written message said that the Islamic republic does not want war with the United States and Israel, but would protect its rights as a nation, state television reported yesterday.

"We did not seek war and we do not want it," he said in the message read out on state TV, coinciding with 40 days since his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was killed on February 28, the first day of the war.

"But we will not renounce our legitimate rights under any circumstances, and in this respect, we consider the entire resistance front as a whole," he added, in an apparent reference to Lebanon where Israel is fighting a war with Tehran's ally Hezbollah.

IMF expects to provide vulnerable economies hit by Iran war up to \$50bn

AFP | Washington, United States

The International Monetary Fund expects to have to provide up to \$50 billion in immediate financial assistance to countries affected by the Middle East war, its managing director said yesterday, with the crisis likely to have lasting economic effects.

"Given the spillovers of the Middle East war, we expect near-term demand for IMF balance-of-payments support to rise to somewhere between \$20 billion and \$50 billion, with the lower bound prevailing if the ceasefire holds," Kristalina Georgieva said, according to prepared remarks shared with AFP.

The IMF chief also highlighted the ripple effects of the crisis, including food insecurity for at least 45 million people.

Beirut bans weapons

Lebanon's cabinet instructed security forces to restrict weapons in Beirut exclusively to state institutions, a day after Israeli strikes across the country, including in the heart of the capital.

Information Minister Paul Morcos said the decision prompted objections from Hezbollah's two ministers in the cabinet.



People who fled Beirut's southern suburbs threatened by the latest Israeli bombing warning take refuge on Beirut's summerland beach

Israel seeks Lebanon talks

At least 203 people were killed and 1,000 wounded in the bombardment on Wednesday

● Even as Netanyahu spoke, Israel's military issued a new evacuation order for Beirut's southern suburbs

● Russia says Mideast ceasefire must cover Lebanon

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered his ministers yesterday to begin direct talks with Lebanon, pushing for Hezbollah's disarmament amid mounting concern that its ongoing strikes could cause the fragile US-Iran truce to unravel.

A Lebanese government official told AFP shortly after Netanyahu's announcement that Beirut "wants a ceasefire" declared before starting any negotiations with Israel, a day after deadly strikes across the country.

At least 203 people were killed and 1,000 wounded in the bombardment on Wednesday, the Lebanese health ministry said, while Hezbollah said it was engaged in close quarters combat against Israeli forces on the ground on Thursday in the south Lebanon town of Bint Jbeil.

Lebanon PM asks Pakistan to confirm country's inclusion in Mideast truce

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam asked his Pakistani counterpart yesterday to confirm Lebanon's inclu-

sion in the Iran war ceasefire, a day after Israeli strikes on the country killed more than 200 people.

In a statement, Salam's office said he phoned Shehbaz Sharif,

praising Islamabad's efforts in securing the truce and asking him to "confirm that the ceasefire includes Lebanon to prevent a recurrence of the Israeli attacks witnessed yesterday".

lishing peace relations between Israel and Lebanon.

Brussels, Moscow and Ankara demanded that the US-Iran ceasefire be extended to Lebanon.

"We view the situation in southern Lebanon with particular concern," Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz said, echoing statements from Paris and London.

"The severity with which Israel is waging war there could cause the peace process as a whole to fail, and that must not be allowed to happen," he warned. For their part, Iran's parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said Tehran sees Lebanon as an "inseparable part of the ceasefire" and President Masoud Pezeshkian said Israel's strikes rendered "meaningless" talks with US envoys planned for the end of the week in Pakistan.

Attacks on UN peacekeepers in Lebanon draw condemnation

AFP | United Nations, United States

Dozens of countries contributing troops to the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon called yesterday for a cessation of hostilities, after three blue helmets were killed as Israel and Hezbollah traded strikes.

The Indonesian peacekeepers died in late March. According to a preliminary UN investigation, one was killed by an Israeli tank shell, while the two others were killed by a homemade bomb likely planted by Iran-backed Hezbollah.

More than 60 countries that contribute troops to UNIFIL, the UN peacekeeping

mission in south Lebanon, denounced persistent attacks on blue helmets.

They included Indonesia, France, the United Kingdom, China and Turkey, and the group was joined by other nations like Russia.

"We condemn in the strongest terms the persistent attacks against UNIFIL, including the latest grave attacks which cost the lives of three Indonesian peacekeepers and injured several other peacekeepers from France, Ghana, Indonesia, Nepal and Poland," Indonesian Ambassador Umar Hadi said on behalf of all the countries.

Netanyahu's order for direct negotiations with Lebanon's government was focused on disarming Hezbollah and establishing peace, according to a statement from his office, but he offered no immediate respite from the bombardment.

"Lebanon wants a ceasefire before starting negotiations," said the Lebanese government official, who has knowledge of the matter and requested anonymity.

Even as Netanyahu spoke, Israel's military issued a new evacuation order for Beirut's southern suburbs, just a day after the wave of strikes.

"In light of Lebanon's repeated requests to open direct negotiations with Israel, I instructed the cabinet yesterday to begin direct negotiations with Lebanon as soon as possible," Netanyahu said. "Negotiations will focus on disarming Hezbollah and estab-

300

Lebanon's health ministry said Thursday that Israeli strikes across the country a day before killed more than 300 people and wounded at least 1,150.

Australian couple moves house from wrong plot

AFP | Sydney, Australia

An Australian couple has moved house, literally, after realising it was placed on the wrong plot of land.

Melanie and David Moor said they set up their home to "relax" at a five-acre block two hours' drive west of Melbourne.

They put up the pre-fabricated house in March 2024, including installing the plumbing and electricity, for a new life in rural Victoria.

Five months later, they got the bad news.

"We got the call from the council to say that we had to



A house getting ready to be moved to its correct location after being built on a neighbouring section, in Camperdown, west of Melbourne

stop works because it was on the wrong block -- and we actually owned the block next door," Melanie Moor told AFP on Thursday.

"It's just been a nightmare."

The couple said the plot's boundaries were unclear and they had relied on the local council and the real estate agent for the right advice.

A spokesperson for the Corangamite Shire Council declined to comment.

AFP was unable to reach the real estate agent.

The couple moved their house about 100 metres (330 feet) by truck to the right plot on April 2. They are now living in a caravan while the home is secured to the correct site.

They also need to connect the house's power, water and septic amenities -- at a heavy finan-

cial cost. Melanie Moor has an autoimmune disease, and her husband has liver disease, the couple said.

"The idea was that I could actually relax a little bit and work from home," David Moor said.

Under an agreement with the owners of the plot where the house was originally put, the couple said they have until May 2 to restore that land to its original state.

But they are thankful their home is now in the right place.

"It was a relief seeing the truck take the house across the property," Melanie Moor said.

1407

Lama Deshin Shekpa visits the Ming Dynasty capital at Nanjing and receives the title Great Treasure Prince of Dharma

1858

Big Ben, a 13.76-tonne bell, is recast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry



1972

US, USSR and 70 other nations agree to ban biological weapons at the Biological Weapons Convention

1998

The Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement) for Northern Ireland is signed by the British and Irish governments



People inspect the remnants of an Iranian missile that landed at the Israeli settlement of Shadmot Mehola in the Jordanian valley, in the northern Israeli-occupied West Bank



Rescuers search under the rubble at the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted a house in Abbasiyeh on the outskirts of the southern Lebanese coastal city of Tyre

# Strikes threaten truce

Pakistan hails 'restraint', slams Lebanon strikes ahead of US-Iran talks

## EU says strikes on Lebanon endangering US-Iran ceasefire

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

The European Union yesterday called on Israel to halt its strikes on Lebanon which it said were endangering the US-

Iran ceasefire.

"Israeli actions are putting the US-Iran ceasefire under severe strain.

The Iran truce should extend to Lebanon," the European Un-

ion's top diplomat Kaja Kallas said. "Hezbollah dragged Lebanon into the war, but Israel's right to defend itself does not justify inflicting such massive destruction," she said.

Hezbollah must disarm

"Israeli strikes killed hundreds last night, making it hard to argue that such heavy-handed actions fall within self-defence," she added.

"Hezbollah must disarm, as it agreed to do. The EU supports Lebanon's efforts to disarm" the Iran-backed group, Kallas added.

## Lebanon's sovereignty and security should not be violated: China

A spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry said "Lebanon's sovereign-

ty and security should not be violated. The safety of civilian lives and property must be

guaranteed" and that Beijing was urging "a cooling down of the regional situation".

## US Democrats fail in bid to curb Trump's Iran war powers

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump's Republicans yesterday blocked an attempt by the opposition Democrats to curb his authority to wage war in Iran, amid mounting frustration in Congress over his handling of the Middle East conflict.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries sought to pass a war powers resolution by

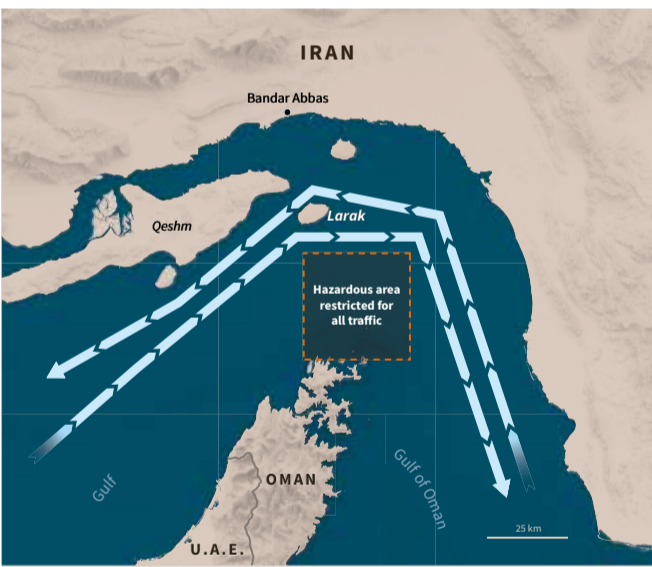
"unanimous consent" -- a procedure that bypasses the need to hold a recorded vote, provided no one objects -- but was stopped, as expected, by the Republican majority's presiding officer.

The maneuver, staged during a short procedural session while lawmakers remain out of Washington, was largely symbolic but underscored growing Democratic anger over a conflict that has

not been formally authorized by Congress.

Jeffries had urged colleagues to attend the session and press for immediate action, arguing a recently announced two-week ceasefire was "woefully insufficient" and calling for a permanent end to US involvement in the war.

Republicans, however, showed little appetite to challenge Trump's authority.



STRAIT OF HORMUZ  
Two alternative routes imposed by Iran to avoid sea mines

Map data: OSM, JAXA, GEBCO, NASA  
Source: map from Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy released by the Iranian news agency ISNA

## Melania Trump denies any links to Epstein abuse

AFP | Washington, United States

US First Lady Melania Trump yesterday made a surprise statement denying unspecified allegations about her and Jeffrey Epstein, a scandal that her husband President Donald Trump has long downplayed.

The 55-year-old former model's on-camera remarks at the White House came out of the blue, with no explanation for why she would bring up the late sex offender Epstein now.

"The lies linking me with the disgraceful Jeffrey Epstein need to end today," she said. "The individuals lying about me are devoid of ethical standards, hu-



U.S. first lady Melania Trump delivers a statement at the Grand Foyer of the White House

mility and respect." The Slovenian-born first lady gave a categorical denial of any ties to

social scene.

She said "fake images and statements about Epstein and me" had been circulating on social media "for years now. Be cautious about what you believe: these images and stories are completely false."

The statement will serve to reignite the Epstein scandal just as media attention starts to turn away from Trump's war in Iran.

Epstein died in federal custody in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges involving minors, but the scandal has repeatedly overshadowed Trump's second presidency.

The US Justice Department has over the past year released

huge tranches of files related to Epstein. The president has also denied any link to Epstein's crimes. "I have never had any knowledge of Epstein's abuse of his victims. I was never involved in any capacity. I was not a participant. Was never on Epstein's plane, and never visited his private island," Melania Trump said. "I have never been legally accused or convicted of a crime in connection with Epstein sex trafficking, abuse of minors and other repulsive behavior."

The first lady also urged Congress to hold a public hearing for survivors of Epstein's abuse to "give these victims their opportunity to testify under oath."



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



With the Cabinet approval of the K-mala Hydro Electric Project, we are strengthening India's clean energy ecosystem while advancing integrated development across Arunachal Pradesh with a focus on power, infrastructure and community welfare.  
@narendramodi

02



Unequivocally condemn the massive strikes by Israel across Lebanon on 8 April that resulted in hundreds of civilians being killed & injured, including children.

With the announcement of the ceasefire between Iran & the USA, the ongoing military activity in Lebanon poses a grave risk to the ceasefire & the efforts toward a lasting & comprehensive peace in the region.

Hostilities must stop immediately.

International law must be respected.

Civilians & civilian objects must be protected at all times. Attacks against them are unacceptable.

There is no military solution to the conflict.

@antonioguterres

03



I welcome the two-week ceasefire the US and Iran agreed last night. It brings much-needed de-escalation.

I thank Pakistan for its mediation.

Now it is crucial that negotiations for an enduring solution to this conflict continue.

We will continue coordinating with our partners to this end.

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

# No New Air Threats Detected Over UAE

● Total deaths since onset: 2 + 1 Moroccan civilian contractor; 10 civilian fatalities overall

● No injuries recorded in latest update

● Total injuries remain 224

The UAE Ministry of Defence confirmed on 9 April 2026 that the country's air defence systems did not detect any ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, or unmanned aerial vehicles launched from Iran in the past hours.

The Ministry said that since the beginning of what it described as Iranian attacks, UAE air defence systems have intercepted a total of 537 ballistic missiles, 26 cruise missiles, and 2,256 UAVs.

It added that no injuries were recorded in the latest reporting period, keeping the total number of injuries at 224. The injured include individuals of multiple nationalities.



The Ministry also stated that no fatalities have been reported in the past hours. It noted that since the onset of the attacks, the total number of deaths has reached two, in addition to one Moroccan civilian contractor with the Armed Forces. Overall civilian fatalities stand at 10, according

to the statement.

Reaffirming its position, the Ministry of Defence said it remains fully prepared to deal with any threats and will respond firmly to any attempts to undermine the UAE's security, sovereignty, and stability, while continuing to safeguard national interests.

# Lebanon to File Urgent UN Complaint Over Israeli Escalation



Following a Cabinet session at Baabda Palace, Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam spoke to reporters, outlining two key decisions the government took.

The first decision was to submit an urgent complaint to the United Nations Security Council regarding what the government described as escalating Israeli attacks on Lebanon. The statement highlighted a significant increase in strikes on Wednesday, April 8, including attacks in the capital, Beirut, that resulted in numerous civilian casualties. The government said this

escalation defies ongoing regional and international efforts to halt hostilities in the region. It further accused the attacks of violating principles of international law and international humanitarian law, adding that they represent a continued and serious breach of these rules.

The second decision, grounded in the National Accord Document (the Taif Agreement) and related Cabinet resolutions, focuses on internal security and state authority. To safeguard citizens, their security, and property, the Cabinet in-

**Guided by the Taif Agreement, the Cabinet ordered security forces to strengthen state control across Beirut to protect citizens and property.**

structed the Lebanese Army and internal security forces to immediately strengthen state control across the Beirut Governorate.

## UAE Calls for Nationwide Flag Display in Show of Unity

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, urged the public to raise the UAE flag as a show of loyalty to President His Highness



and reinforces the flag's role as a unifying symbol across society.

In a post on the social media platform X, Sheikh Mohammed called upon "the sons of the UAE and its residents... to raise it above homes, institutions and buildings as a symbol of our loyalty to our country's president and a shared sense of belonging."

"The UAE faced recent challenges united and has come through them stronger and more cohesive. Everyone stood behind one flag. The UAE flag reflects our strength and what we have built as a country. I invite everyone to raise it across homes and workplaces," His Highness said, adding, "We take pride in our country, our president, our Armed Forces, our economy, and all citizens and residents who move this country forward every day."



Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The call highlights a renewed focus on unity, national identity, and shared responsibility,

## Sultan of Oman receives written message from South Korean President



His Majesty the Sultan received a written message from the President of the friendly Republic of Korea, underscoring the strong relations between the two countries.

The message was delivered on behalf of His Majesty by the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs during a meeting with the Head of

the Presidential Office of the Republic of Korea, who is serving as an envoy of the Korean President.

The exchange reflects continued diplomatic communication and cooperation between Oman and South Korea, particularly in areas of mutual interest and economic collaboration.

## Oman Sultan, Macron Discuss Regional Ceasefire Efforts



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq held a phone call on Thursday with French President Emmanuel Macron. During the call, the two leaders discussed the latest regional developments in the context of the recently announced ceasefire.

Both sides underscored the

importance of reinforcing and building upon the ceasefire framework, while continuing international efforts to address the conflict's root causes. They stressed that such efforts are essential to strengthening security and stability at both regional and global levels.

## GCC calls for lasting solution to end regional crisis



The General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire between the United States of America and Iran.

In a statement, the secretariat underlined the significance of concerted regional and international efforts to

reach a permanent solution to end this crisis in order to ensure the security and stability of the region and the world.

The GCC general secretariat praised the significant efforts exerted by Pakistan as well as those of other regional and international parties in achieving the ceasefire. It called for an end to the ongoing conflict.

## Starmer Visits Saudi Arabia for Talks on Security and Economic Cooperation



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman welcomed British Prime Minister Keir Starmer to the Kingdom, and the two leaders met in the city of Jeddah.

The discussions occur amid ongoing regional tensions, with Starmer having previously condemned attacks on Saudi Arabia attributed to Iran in recent months.

According to London, the British Prime Minister was expected to focus on diplomatic efforts aimed at supporting and upholding the US-Iran

ceasefire. The broader goal is achieving a lasting resolution to the conflict and safeguarding both the UK and global economy from further instability.

Starmer previously visited Saudi Arabia in December 2024, traveling to the capital, Riyadh, where he pledged to strengthen bilateral relations and deepen the UK's engagement in the Middle East.

The latest meeting underscores both countries' continued efforts to expand cooperation on regional security and economic ties.

## celebs

# Cannes Film Festival: the 21 films vying for the top prize

AFP | Paris, France

The Cannes Film Festival listed 21 films in its main competition at next month's event, with at least one more movie set to be announced at a later date.

"Paper Tiger" with Adam Driver and Scarlett Johansson by American director James Gray has been widely tipped to join the line up.

Here are the films confirmed so far, listed with title and director:

**"Amarga Navidad" (Bitter Christmas) by Pedro Almodovar**

A seventh selection for the Spanish filmmaker with his latest film, already released in Spain, that tells the story of a director who draws on the lives of those close to her to write her stories.

**"Histoires Parallèles" (Parallel Stories) by Asghar Farhadi**

The exiled Oscar-winning Iranian filmmaker directs a French cast comprising Catherine Deneuve, Isabelle Huppert and Pierre Niney to tell "several stories that intertwine in a corner of Paris", according to festival director Thierry Fremaux.

**"La Vie d'une Femme" (A Woman's Life) by Charline Bourgeois-Tacquet**

French actress Lea Drucker plays a stressed-out surgeon in a hospital who encounters a novelist who comes to watch her work -- one of four French-made films in the line-up.

**"La Bola Negra" (The Black Ball) by Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi**

A Spanish historical film exploring gay lives, featuring Glenn Close and Penelope Cruz, that revisits a moment from the country's Civil War.

**"Coward" by Lukas Dhont**

This film from a highly rated young Belgian director is set in the First World War with visuals "inspired by the colour photographs of the period", Fremaux noted.

**"Das Getraumte Abenteuer" (The Dreamed Adventure) by Valeska Grisebach**

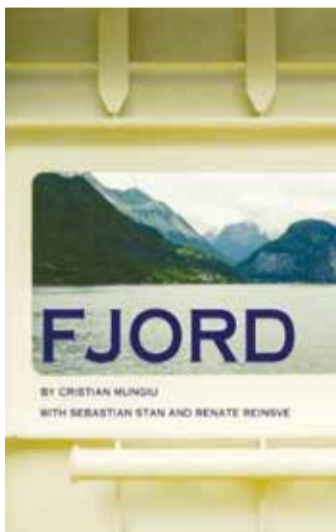
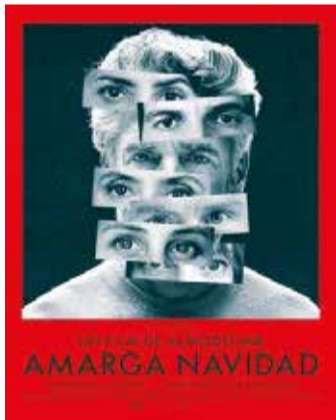
The story of a woman living in the border region between Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey who agrees to a deal to help a friend. From the German director of "Western".

**"Soudain" (Suddenly) by Ryusuke Hamaguchi**

After the worldwide success of "Drive My Car", the Japanese filmmaker returns with a film shot in France, with Virginie Efira as the director of a nursing home who befriends a Japanese



Cannes film festival General Delegate Thierry Fremaux (L) and Festival President Iris Knobloch pose after a press conference to announce the official selection of the 79th edition of the Cannes Film Festival, at the Pathe Palace cinema in Paris



The Cannes Film Festival, held each year in the city of Cannes, is one of the world's most prestigious film events, and its top prize, the Palme d'Or, is considered among the highest honours in cinema.

stage director.

**"L'Inconnue" (The Unknown Woman) by Arthur Harari**

The screenwriter of the 2023 Palme d'Or winner "Anatomy of a Fall" adapts the graphic novel he wrote with his brother about a man who wakes up in the body of a mysterious stranger.

**"Garance" by Jeanne Herry**

Cannes favourite Adele Exarchopoulos plays a heavy-drinking actress in this French production.

**"Sheep in the Box" by Hirokazu Kore-eda**

The latest film by the Japanese winner of the 2018 Palme d'Or for "Shoplifters" is about a couple who welcome a cutting-edge robot into their home.

**"Hope" by Na Hong-jin**

Starring Michael Fassbender and Alicia Vikander, this film about a port city facing unexplained events is by South Korea's sole representative in the main competition this year.

**"Nagi Notes" by Koji Fukada**

After tackling the pop industry's exploitation of young Japanese women in his last film "Love on Trial", Fukada heads to rural Japan for a feature about an encounter between two lonely souls.

**"Gentle Monster" by Marie Kreutzer**

The Austrian director brings together French stars Lea Seydoux and Catherine Deneuve -- both in two in-competition movies at Cannes -- in a story about a couple in which one partner suddenly reveals a monstrous side.

**"Notre Salut" (Our Salvation) by Emmanuel Marre**

The Belgian director revisits everyday life under the Vichy regime and the behaviour of civil servants attempting to govern the country.

**"Fjord" by Cristian Mungiu**

The Romanian winner of the 2007 Palme d'Or for "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days" this time

sets a story in Norway with Renate Reinsve about the emergence of a conflict between two families in a remote village.

**"Les Histoires de la Nuit" (Stories of the Night) by Lea Mysius**

The third feature from this rising French director is an adaptation of an award-winning novel by Laurent Mauvignier. It features Monica Bellucci alongside French stars Bastien Bouillon and Hafsia Herzi.

**"Moulin" by Laszlo Nemes**

The Hungarian director of the acclaimed "Son of Saul" returns to Cannes with a biopic about the life of French Resistance hero Jean Moulin.

**"Fatherland" by Pawel Pawlikowski**

The Polish filmmaker, who won the best foreign language film Oscar for "Ida" in 2015, presents a black-and-white movie about writer Thomas Mann's return to Germany in 1945.

**"The Man I Love" by Ira Sachs**

The story of an artist at the start of the AIDS pandemic in New York in the 1980s, starring Rami Malek, who won an Oscar for his role as Freddie Mercury in "Bohemian Rhapsody".

**"El Ser Querido" (The Beloved) by Rodrigo Sorogoyen**

The Spanish director of "As Bestas" and creator of the series "Los Anos Nuevos" appears in competition for the first time with a film about a director, played by Javier Bardem, who reunites with his actress daughter on a film shoot.

**"Minotaur" by Andrey Zvyagintsev**

The exiled Russian filmmaker follows up on previous visually stunning works "Leviathan" and "Loveless" with a film about the Russian bourgeoisie grappling with army conscription.

## Game of Thrones actor Michael Patrick dies at 35

TDT | agencies

Actor and writer Michael Patrick has died at the age of 35.

The Irish native, who appeared in a season 6 episode of Game of Thrones, died while in hospice care, his wife Naomi Sheehan announced on Instagram on Wednesday, April 8. Patrick had been battling Motor Neuron Disease, which rapidly "attacks the nerves that control movement so muscles no longer work" and is incurable, according to the MND Association. ALS is the most common form of the disease, though his family didn't reveal his exact diagnosis.

"Last night, Mick sadly passed away in the Northern Ireland Hospice," Sheehan began. "He was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease 1st February 2023. He was admitted 10 days ago and was cared for by the incredible team there. He passed peacefully surrounded by family and friends. Words can't describe how broken-hearted we are."



Michael Patrick

The MND Association states that the condition "leads the muscles to weaken, stiffen and waste," potentially impacting a person's capability to walk, talk, eat, drink and breathe. While symptoms vary among those affected, it is a "life-shortening" disease.

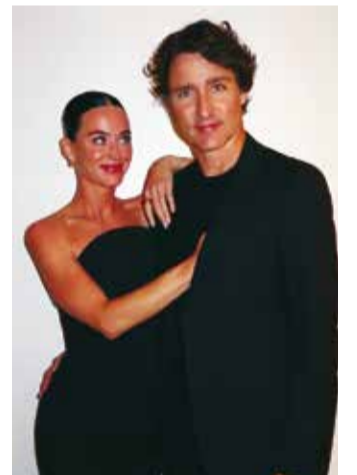
## Katy Perry shares new photo with Justin Trudeau, calls it "rewarding karma"

TDT | agencies

Pop star Katy Perry shared a new affectionate photo with Justin Trudeau on social media, captioning it, "Never knew karma could be so rewarding."

The image, part of a recent Instagram post, offered fans another glimpse into their growing relationship, which has drawn widespread attention. The post included a mix of personal moments, including pictures of Perry, Trudeau and other snapshots from her life.

The couple, first linked in 2025 and later confirming their relationship publicly, have continued to share light-hearted and affectionate updates online, signalling a strong and evolving bond.



Their relationship has remained in the spotlight, with fans reacting warmly to the latest post, which highlights their ongoing connection despite busy schedules and long-distance commitments.

## Amanda Seyfried to voice Cinderella in Netflix's 'Steps'

TDT | agencies

Amanda Seyfried is set to voice Cinderella in Steps, an upcoming animated feature by Netflix that offers a fresh twist on the classic fairy tale.

The film shifts focus from the traditional story to the often-misunderstood stepsisters, reimagining them in a more sympathetic light. Seyfried joins a voice cast that includes Ali Wong and Stephanie Hsu, who play the stepsisters.

Directed by Alyce Tzue and John Ripa, the film follows Lilit, one of the stepsisters, who is blamed for disrupting the royal ball with a stolen magic wand. In the process, she accidentally turns her sister into a frog and throws the kingdom into chaos. She must then team up with Cinderella

and others to restore order and prove that so-called villains deserve a second chance.

Filmmakers said Seyfried brings emotional depth and relatability to the iconic character, presenting a modern Cinderella who is both flawed and human.

The animated film is expected to premiere on Netflix later in 2026.



# Classifieds

## VACANCIES AVAILABLE

DELIVERY POINT LOGISTIC SERVICE CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SECRETARY, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66633383 or ateeq@deliverypointbh.com

SAID DAL 1923 RESTAURANT W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38365147 or SAIDDAL1923BH@MASDAR.COM.KW

Farsana Construction S P C has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39829689 or FARSANA-BAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

KABOOM ULTRA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 66643330 or

MASAR TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT BAHRAIN PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of REPRESENTATIVE(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 38865252 or INFO@TESLA-AD.COM

HAYAH BURGER W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33350356 or RASHED.ALKUBAIS4@GMAIL.COM

KIMSHEALTH HOSPITAL B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAD(MEDICAL UNIT), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33307994 or hussain.alali@royalbharn.com

H B C CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37211885 or bh.rashed12@gmail.com

SILK & PEARL LADIES FASHION has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38747755 or HAMADRAJAB91@GMAIL.COM

HAVEN WASTE RECYCLING CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36790770 or HAVENDRECYCLING@GMAIL.COM

KICHO MATCHA has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33633360 or YALLAMUTABAQ@GMAIL.COM

Dream World Construction Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34111999 or sharef.works@gmail.com

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## Robertson to leave Liverpool at end of season



Liverpool's Scottish defender #26 Andrew Robertson (L) and Liverpool's English defender #66 Trent Alexander-Arnold celebrate with the Premier League trophy at the end of the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Crystal Palace at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England

AFP | Liverpool, United Kingdom

Andy Robertson will bring down the curtain on his nine-year career at Liverpool at the end of the season, the faltering Premier League champions announced yesterday.

The 32-year-old has made 373 appearances for the club, winning two Premier League titles and the Champions League as a key member of the side that restored the Reds to the top of the English and European game under Jurgen Klopp.

However, he has dropped down the pecking order this season since the arrival of Milos Kerkez and his contract, which expires at the end of the campaign, will not be renewed.

The Scotland captain is the second high-profile departure from Liverpool in the coming months after Mohamed Salah announced he will also depart at the end of the season.

"I'll always look back on amazing memories at this football club, I've put my heart and soul into the club for nine years and I've not got many regrets," said Robertson.

"I've grown as a man and as a person. This club will always mean the world to me, the fans will mean the world to me. It has been a hell of a journey."

Less than a year on from winning the Premier League, Liverpool have endured a mis-

erable campaign, marked by tragedy off the field.

A close friend of Robertson's, forward Diogo Jota died in a car accident in July.

On the field, Arne Slot has struggled to find the right balance from an expensively assembled squad that sits fifth in the Premier League.

Liverpool were also dumped out of the FA Cup 4-0 by Manchester City last weekend and lost 2-0 in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final against Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday.

Robertson's rise was one of the success stories of Klopp's glorious reign at Anfield.

Signed from relegated Hull for £8 million (\$11 million) in 2017, he quickly became a fan favourite.

He sits behind only former team-mate Trent Alexander Arnold as the defender with most assists in Premier League history.

On top of Premier League and Champions League glory, Robertson won the FA Cup, two League Cups, the Club World Cup and UEFA Super Cup.

"I'm still fully focused on trying to end this season as positively as possible, to help these lads and to try to give a few more good moments to the fans," added Robertson.

"That's my aim and hopefully then we can do it and maybe closer to the end of the season you'll have me down a camera crying my eyes out."

## Sabalenka pulls out of Stuttgart Open with injury



Aryna Sabalenka poses with the Butch Buchholz trophy

AFP | Berlin, Germany

World No.1 Aryna Sabalenka on Thursday pulled out of next week's Stuttgart Open citing an injury sustained at the Miami Open in March.

The Belarusian wrote on social media that she had failed to recover in time for the clay court tournament, which starts on Monday.

"Unfortunately, I suffered an injury after Miami, and even though I tried everything to recover in time, I'm not ready to compete," Sabalenka said Thursday.

The 27-year-old did not specify the nature of the injury.

The four-time Grand Slam winner has made it to the final in Stuttgart in four of the past five years but is yet to win the tournament.

"I always love coming back to Stuttgart. The atmosphere, the fans, and the support I feel there are so special to me. And of course, I was really hoping to have another chance."

Sabalenka beat local favourite Coco Gauff 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 to win the Miami Open to make it a "sunshine double," having won the WTA 1000 at Indian Wells two weeks prior.

# Winless Bahrain Defeated by Türkiye

Hussain Al Maskati  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's youth men's national team concluded their 31st Albert Schweitzer Tournament campaign in Germany with a 57-86 defeat to Türkiye yesterday, finishing their debut appearance with five losses from as many games.

The Bahrainis started brightly, exchanging leads with their opponents in a thrilling first period. Türkiye surged ahead with a 9-2 run, but Ali Barhoom responded with six points to keep Bahrain within striking distance at 20-18.

The second quarter saw the Turks seize control. Kartal Boraimsek led their side with eight points in a 21-14 stretch, while Demir Öztürk and Ömer Alp Elitas added five and eight points respectively, giving Türkiye a 41-32 halftime advantage. Bahrain struggled to maintain momentum despite strong efforts from Hassan Abdulkadir and Somto Onoduenyi.

Türkiye's dominance became more pronounced in the third period, outscoring Bahrain 19-4. Elitas continued his fine form, while Kerem Sertakar contributed seven points as Bahrain found it increasingly difficult to break through Türkiye's defense.

In the final quarter, Türkiye kept their foot on the gas. Sertakar and Elitas combined for 12 points, with Öztürk finishing with 12 points and five rebounds, imsek 16 points,



Yousif Meshael in action against Türkiye

Elitas 19 points, and Sertakar 15 points. Bahrain's Onoduenyi led his side with 12 points, Abdulkadir added 16 points and 10 rebounds, Barhoom chipped in eight points, and Yousif Meshael scored 10 in a valiant effort.

The defeat completed Bahrain's preliminary round, which

included losses to hosts Germany, Sweden, Slovenia, and Japan. With a 0-5 record, the team now moves into classification contests to determine rankings from ninth to 12th place.

Following the preliminaries, the top two teams from each pool will progress to the semi-

finals, set for today, with gold and bronze medal games scheduled for Saturday, the tournament's final day. Bahrain will use the experience gained in Germany as preparation for the Gulf Basketball Association qualifiers ahead of the FIBA U18 Asia Cup 2026 in Qatar.

## Sinner and Alcaraz wobble but advance to Monte Carlo quarter-finals



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz

Monaco, Principality of Monaco

Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz both suffered second-set stumbles on Thursday in their race for the number one ranking but recovered to reach the last eight of the Monte Carlo Masters.

Sinner, who said he ran out of steam in the second set, beat the wildly erratic Tomas Machac, 6-1, 6-7 (3/7), 6-3.

Alcaraz followed Sinner on to the centre court and his match went to a similar pattern before he beat Tomas Etcheverry 6-1, 4-6, 6-3.

Alcaraz, the defending champion, could lose the No.1 ranking to Sinner, who was finishing a ban last year and has no ranking points to lose this week. The Italian came into Monaco after winning the Masters tournaments in Indian Wells and Miami.

On Thursday, Sinner galloped through the first set but slowed in the second, allowing Machac to hit his way back into the match.

"I was struggling a little bit, was a bit tired," Sinner said.

"I felt great before the match, in the second set I struggled a bit with trying to

find the right energy. This can happen. I tried to push myself through which I've done."

Machac squandered two set points on serve at 5-4 in the second but then romped through the tie-break.

That ended Sinner's record streak of 36 straight sets in 1000-level events but he stayed cool to stretch his run of Masters wins to 19.

Even with his opponent struggling, the Czech kept flailing for winners. He handed Sinner the third-set initiative when wild hitting handed the Italian a break to love in the third game.

Sinner held serve twice before breaking to love to wrap up victory in two hours and one minute.

His quarter-final opponent, sixth seed Felix Auger-Aliassime, needed to expend less energy. The Canadian was leading Casper Ruud 7-5, 2-2 when the Norwegian retired.

"I hope I can recover as much as I can for tomorrow," said Sinner.

Alcaraz also blazed through the first set.

"I was hitting the ball really well in the first set, like ten out of ten," said the Spaniard.

But in the second he made 23 unforced errors.

# Choudhary smashes Lucknow to dramatic IPL win over Kolkata

AFP | Kolkata, India

Youngster Mukul Choudhary played the innings of his life, smashing seven sixes on his way to an unbeaten 54 to haul Lucknow Super Kings to a dramatic, last-ball, three-wicket victory over Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL yesterday.

Chasing Kolkata's competitive 181-4 at Eden Gardens, Lucknow were in all sorts of trouble at 128-7 after 16 overs despite Ayush Badoni's fluent 54 when Choudhary, playing only his third IPL match, altered the script with a spectacular display of power hitting.

The powerful right-hander blasted a bouquet of sixes in the last four overs to score 52 off his last 19 balls and leave the home team still searching for their first victory.

"There is always pressure, but God has given us this opportunity, and I try to do what I can do," said the 21-year-old Choudhary, who revealed that he was playing only his second match under



Lucknow Super Giants Indian cricket player Mukul Choudhary (C) celebrates with captain Rishabh Pant (2R) after winning the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) T20 match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata

lights.

"My plan was to play till the end. I believe in myself so much that I knew if I batted till the end, I could take the team home."

Kolkata had recovered from a mid-innings slump after being put in, Rowman Powell providing the impetus with an unbeaten 39 during a 70-run

alliance for the fifth wicket with Cameron Green. Lucknow began brightly through Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram, who put on 41.

But once Vaibhav Arora dismissed both openers in the space of six deliveries in the fifth over, Kolkata applied relentless pressure.

Arora was tasked with defending 14 in the final over, but Choudhary and Avesh Khan scrambled the winning bye with one needed off the last ball.

Kolkata lost Kiwi opener Finn Allen in the second over of the contest, caught at third man off Prince Yadav, and were shackled in the first four overs by Mo-

ammed Shami's accuracy and swing, but once skipper Ajinkya Rahane and Angkrish Raghuvanshi spent a little time in the middle, they began to find their range.

The floodgates opened in the sixth over when Raghuvanshi smacked Avesh for two fours and a six, and with Rahane opening his shoulders, runs came at a decent clip. The second-wicket pair had added 84 when Lucknow broke through with leg-spinner Digvesh Rathi having Rahane smartly caught at mid-wicket by Shami.

That sparked a mini-collapse with the home side losing three for 12 in 19 balls, including Raghuvanshi for a fluent 45.

Lucknow surged back into contention by conceding just 17 runs from overs 11 through 15, requiring Powell and Green to first steady the ship and then deliver the acceleration.

Green, the most expensive buy at the December auction in Abu Dhabi at Rs 25.2 crore (\$2.8 million), shrugged off a

sluggish start with a flurry of late boundaries on his way to an unbeaten 32.

Powell was more enterprising, smashing four fours and two sixes, but both were trumped by Choudhary.



The Indian Premier League is the most valuable cricket league in the world, with its brand value crossing \$10 billion, making it one of the richest sports leagues globally—on par with major leagues like the NFL and NBA in terms of commercial impact.

# Fireworks expected in King's Cup Semi-Finals

**Hussain Al Maskati**  
TDT | Manama

**A**l Khaldiya and Riffa meet tonight at Khalifa Sports City in a King's Cup semi-final that carries far more than a place in the final. Last weekend's controversial clash still looms large. Riffa finished with eight men after three dismissals, prompting a strong protest from the club. Tonight offers a chance to reset and focus purely on silverware.

Kick-off at 5.20 PM brings together two of the top sides in the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League. Al Khaldiya arrive with a clear advantage, eight points ahead of Riffa and two above second place, but Riffa's pedigree ensures nothing will be straightforward.

Al Khaldiya, guided by Tunisian coach Lassaad Al Chabbi, are chasing a remarkable season. Winners of the Super Cup in March and defending King's Cup champions, they now aim to add further honours. With



Al Khaldiya players step up preparations ahead of the semi-final



Coach Mohamed Mashaan oversees Riffa training session

two King's Cup titles already, they are reinforcing a growing reputation for dominance at the top. Riffa, under Kuwaiti coach

Mohamed Mashaan, have ambitions of their own. Winners of the Khalid bin Hamad Cup in February and seven-time King's

Cup champions, they remain contenders on all fronts. Their route to the semi-finals, a 4-1 win over Bahrain Club, under-

lined their attacking firepower. Al Khaldiya's path was a composed 2-0 victory against A'ali, reflecting consistency across

competitions. Both sides are chasing what could become a treble, with league and cup ambitions very much alive as the season enters its decisive stretch.

Attention will then turn to the second semi-final on Saturday, also at Khalifa Sports City, where Muharraq, record 33-time King's Cup winners, face Al Ahli. Kick-off for that match is also at 5.20pm, promising another compelling contest.

Muharraq, led by Portuguese coach Fernando Manuel de Jesus Santos, cruised past Al Shabab 3-0 in the quarter-finals but arrive seeking redemption after defeats in the Khalifa bin Salman Cup and Super Cup. Al Ahli, nine-time winners, had a tougher path, needing penalties to overcome Al Ettifaq after a 2-2 draw.

For now, the spotlight is on Al Khaldiya and Riffa. In a season defined by fine margins and rising tension, this semi-final could well define how the campaign is remembered.

## FIFA unveils 52 referees for World Cup, including six women

AFP | Paris, France

**F**IFA on Thursday unveiled its list of match officials for the June 11-July 19 World Cup, including 52 referees, six of whom are women.

Football's governing body will

also take 88 assistant referees and 30 video match officials, who hail from all six confederations and 50 member associations.

"The selected match officials are the very best in the world,"

said Pierluigi Collina, FIFA's chief refereeing officer.

"They were part of a wider pool of officials that was identified and monitored over the past three years. They have attended seminars and officiated at FIFA

tournaments.

"In addition, their performances in domestic and international matches were regularly assessed."

The World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico will

be the biggest in history, with a 48-team line-up and 104 matches to be played.

There are 41 more match officials than at Qatar four years ago, where 32 teams played 64 matches. "The fact that six wom-

en match officials have been selected continues a trend that was started four years ago in Qatar as we aim to further develop women's refereeing," Collina said with six women having already refereed in 2022.

## Verstappen Red Bull future in doubt as engineer to join McLaren

AFP | London, United Kingdom

**F**our-time world champion Max Verstappen's future in Formula One was again cast in doubt on Thursday after it was confirmed that his long-time race engineer will leave Red Bull for McLaren.

After details of Gianpiero Lambiase's switch emerged earlier on Thursday, Red Bull and McLaren both confirmed the news in separate statements.

Red Bull said Lambiase will leave "in 2028, when his current contract expires" with McLaren confirming he will take on the role of chief racing officer with their team when he starts "no later than 2028".

The British-Italian engineer, known as 'GP', has worked with Verstappen since the Dutchman joined Red Bull a decade ago.

"The team look forward to welcoming Gianpiero Lambiase when his existing contract ends, no later than 2028," McLaren said in a statement.

"The role of the chief racing



officer already exists within the team's structure with overall leadership of the race team.

"These duties are currently managed by Andrea Stella in addition to his role as team

principal.

"Lambiase is the latest hire designed to strengthen and support the talent pool that exists at McLaren Mastercard, while also reaffirming the team's long-

term commitment to confirming its position as a Championship-winning team."

A Red Bull statement read: "Oracle Red Bull Racing confirms that Gianpiero Lambiase will leave the team in 2028, when his current contract expires. 'GP' is a valued member of the team, which he joined in 2015.

"Until his planned departure, 'GP' continues in his roles as Head of Racing and as Race Engineer to Max Verstappen. The team and he are fully committed to add more

Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen (L) and Red Bull Racing's French driver Isack Hadjar wave during the drivers' parade

success to our strong track record together."

Lambiase's exit will mark the departure of yet another senior figure from Red Bull, with Christian Horner sacked as team principal last year.

Design guru Adrian Newey and sporting director Jonathan Wheatley both left their posts before Horner's exit.

It also raises more questions about Verstappen, who last won the world title in 2024, and hinted during last month's race in Japan he is

ready to quit Formula One.

Verstappen, whose current Red Bull deal runs until 2028, is a lowly ninth in the championship -- with just 12 points from the opening three races.



**Max Verstappen** became the youngest driver ever to start a Formula One race when he debuted at just 17 years and 166 days with Scuderia Toro Rosso at the 015 Australian Grand Prix—before he was even old enough to legally drive on public roads in many countries.

