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Investigation Training Launched



Attorney General Dr. Ali bin Fadhel Al Buainain, inaugurated a specialised training programme on investigations and documentation under the Istanbul Protocol.

The programme is organised by the Special Investigation Unit at the Judicial and Legal Studies Institute and brings together officials from across the justice, legal and social sectors, alongside healthcare professionals and civil society representatives.

Dr. Al Buainain said Bahrain has built a strong legal framework to protect human rights, supported by institutions dedicated to safeguarding dignity, freedoms and justice. He added that the Kingdom continues to serve as a model in upholding the rule of law.

He stressed that ongoing training and professional development are essential to ensuring the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, noting that proper documentation and investigative procedures are key to credible outcomes.

Strategic Alliance and Regional Security Ties

Bahrain and Washington reaffirm commitment to countering Iranian aggression

TDT | Manama

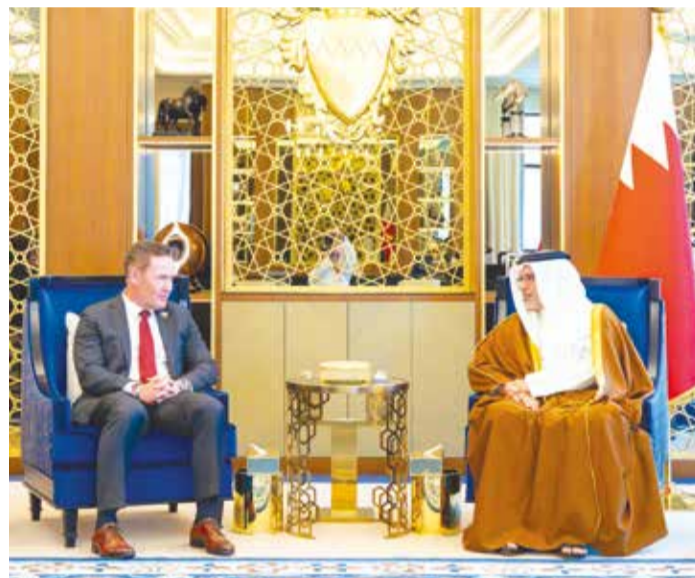
His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, received Ambassador Michael Waltz, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, at Gudaibiya Palace on Tuesday. The meeting underscored the enduring depth of Bahraini-American relations.

HRH the Crown Prince highlighted the growing cooperation between the two nations across multiple sectors and reaffirmed the shared commitment to strengthening the bilateral strategic partnership. Central to discussions was the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA), which both sides identified as a cornerstone for advancing coordination and future agreements.

HRH also addressed the broader role of the United Nations in fostering international cooperation, expressing appreciation for the collaborative efforts between the U.S., allied nations, and Bahrain through the UN system. He stressed the importance of deepening this cooperation to advance global security, stability, peace, and sustainable development.

Of particular note, HRH underscored the bilateral partnership's critical role in countering hostile Iranian aggression, while recognising the United States' pivotal contribution — alongside allied countries — in promoting peace and security across the region and beyond.

HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Prime Minister's Court,



HE Dr Abdullahif bin Rashid Al Zayani, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, and Ambassador Jamal Fares Al-rowaie, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations, were also in attendance.



In a separate meeting, Lieutenant General His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Advisor and Royal Guard Commander, also received Ambassador Waltz. Deputy National Security Advisor Shaikh Khalid bin Ali bin Jaber Al Khalifa was present.

HH Shaikh Nasser stressed the importance of intensifying joint efforts to address current regional and international challenges and described C-SIPA as a vital pillar for building and enhancing future cooperation. Both sides exchanged views on regional developments and reaffirmed their commitment to ongoing consultation on matters of mutual interest.

EWA Automates Discount System



The Electricity and Water Authority has developed the monthly fixed discount calculator service as a new digital service aimed at making it easier for subscribers to automatically and quickly know the value of the monthly fixed discount before applying for subscription, based on the subscriber's average consumption over the previous period in accordance with the applicable tariff, thereby improving service efficiency and enhancing the user experience.

Under the upgrade, the service is now fully digital, accessible via the Authority's website and the "Tawasul" app, eliminating the need to visit service centres or contact the call centre. The upgrade also achieved 100% digital transformation, with the service now provided automatically.

Man detained over AI misinformation posts



A 27-year-old man has been detained in Bahrain over allegations that he misused social media by publishing misleading content generated using artificial intelligence.

The General Directorate of Anti-Corruption, Economic and Electronic Security said the individual shared material online containing false claims and fabricated scenes produced through AI technologies.

Authorities said the content also included incitement and offensive material, which they warned could influence public opinion and threaten social cohesion and national stability.

The directorate confirmed that legal procedures have been taken against the suspect, and the case has been referred to the Public Prosecution for further action.

Tensions Grip Region

US Launches Retaliatory Strikes on Iran

Iran Downs US Apache Helicopter Over Strait of Hormuz

● Both pilots rescued safely; US military response on the table

● Ceasefire hangs by a thread as Tehran stays silent

President Donald Trump formally accused Iran of shooting down a US Army Apache helicopter during a routine patrol over the Strait of Hormuz, warning that America will respond.

Trump revealed the incident in a post on Truth Social, saying the US military had briefed him. "The Iranians shot down one of our highly sophisticated Apache

United States must, of necessity, respond to this attack."

US official indicated that current evidence points to an Iranian drone as the weapon used to bring down the aircraft. The two crew members were rescued within two hours of the incident and are in stable condition. In a notable first, the rescue operation was carried out by an unmanned sea drone.

The Strait of Hormuz — one of the world's most strategically vital waterways — remains under significant pressure from Iran, and Apache helicopters have played a key role in enforcing a US blockade on Iranian oil shipments aimed at forcing Tehran to the negotiating table.

The timing of the incident has raised serious alarm. The region was already reeling from a fresh exchange of fire between Iran



Helicopters while patrolling over the Strait of Hormuz," the president wrote. "There were two pilots involved, both are safe and uninjured. Nevertheless, the





NBB Group Promotions

Celebrating Growth, Recognising Talent & Fostering Leadership



NBB Group Announces Key Promotions to Further Strengthen Its Talent Pipeline

Manama, Bahrain

The National Bank of Bahrain Group (NBB Group), comprising the National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) and Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), has announced 124 internal promotions, including 94 from NBB and 30 from BisB. This further strengthens the Group's leadership pipeline in line with its strategic transformation priorities.

Confirmed during the second quarter of 2026, the appointments were determined through NBB's structured performance management framework, which incorporates annual appraisals, leadership evaluations, and internal development programmes to identify and nurture high-potential individuals. Bahraini nationals accounted for 91.1% of the 124 promotions, underscoring the Group's ongoing commitment to local talent enrichment and Bahrainisation across its operations.

Commenting on the

announcement, Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB, said, "These promotions represent the dedication of colleagues who have grown with NBB across our geographies and entities and continued to give their best to the Group. We are proud of the talent within our ranks, and proud that so much of it has been developed here in Bahrain. The professional calibre of our people is a genuine source of strength for us, and we highly appreciate the excellence they bring to their work every day."

Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Executive Officer of BisB, added, "Creating opportunities for professional growth is essential to building resilient and



"These appointments reflect the strength of our talent and our commitment to developing future leaders who will drive innovation and excellence in Bahrain's banking sector."

FATEMA ALALAWI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF BISB



"Our people are our greatest strength, and these promotions recognise the excellence and commitment they bring to the Group."

USMAN AHMED, GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF NBB



forward-looking institutions. These appointments reflect the strength of our talent, as well as the supportive environment we strive to cultivate across the Group. By investing in our

people and recognising their contributions, we are empowering the next generation of leaders who will continue driving innovation and excellence across the Kingdom's banking



sector." The latest promotions form part of NBB Group's broader commitment to a work environment that values

merit and encourages professional advancement. As a leading Bahraini financial institution with a growing regional footprint, the Group remains focused on developing capable leaders who can contribute to its continued progress across the markets it serves.

Bahrainis Shift from Europe to Cooler Gulf Breaks

Demand is driven by well-organised and high-quality tourism services

● Airfares are rising due to higher operating costs

● Some airlines have introduced additional fees of up to \$50 per ticket

● Hotel prices remain stable in most destinations

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Bahrainis are booking cooler, closer holidays this summer, with Salalah and Saudi Arabia's southern highlands gaining ground as parts of Europe and East Asia lose about 40 pc of last year's demand, travel office owners said.

Bookings have risen for Salalah in Oman and for Asir, Abha, Jazan, Najran and Al Baha in Saudi Arabia, where mountain weather and shorter travel times are drawing families seeking a summer break without long-haul flights.

Outside the Gulf, the Caucasus and Central Asia have also moved up the list, with Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Georgia among the destinations now drawing more Bahraini travellers.

Travel and tourism expert Waad Makki said world events and fast-moving regional conditions had led many people to rethink their travel plans, leaving them keener on nearby and safer options.

She said shorter, safer trips had become the first choice for many travellers who wanted a holiday without long flights or added hassle.



Waad Makki, travel and tourism expert

"From my work as executive director of a travel and tourism office, I see that the move towards nearby and safe destinations has become the preferred choice for a wide share of travellers," she said.

She said individual bookings this summer had been good for Turkey, Azerbaijan, East Asia and Europe, as travellers sought to use the summer break while keeping room to change their plans.

Travel offices, she said, were offering flexible bookings that allow

full refunds when emergencies or new developments prevent a trip from going ahead, under the agreed terms.

She said trips were being prepared for Dhofar's khareef season in Oman and the Asir season in Saudi Arabia, both known for mild weather, scenery and cultural activities.

The aim, she said, was no longer only to send travellers to a destination, but to give them fuller trips with new activities, local experiences and different places to stay.

Ms Makki said the Dhofar and Asir programmes were built around quality, with selected visits, private activities and varied stays that allow travellers to see the destination in greater depth than standard holiday packages.

"Travel is not a luxury, but a human need," she said. "It gives people a chance to renew themselves, move again and discover new places and experiences."

Travel and tourism expert Hassan Al Nafea said summer book-

ings were middling and around 40 pc lower than in 2025, but the choice of destination had changed.

He said many Bahrainis were now looking for milder weather, easier access and entry rules that spare Gulf travellers from visa paperwork. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania were among the countries benefiting from that shift, he added.

"Demand has risen for Salalah in Oman and southern Saudi Arabia," he said. "Many citizens are looking for mild weather and ease of access."

Mr Al Nafea said some European capitals had become costlier this year, while Gulf cities with resorts and leisure sites, including Abu Dhabi and Dubai, were drawing more visitors.

Georgia, Azerbaijan and the wider Caucasus, along with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, had become newer choices for Bahrainis, he said. Northern Turkey and Thailand also remained in demand.

What Happens When You Refuse to Give Up

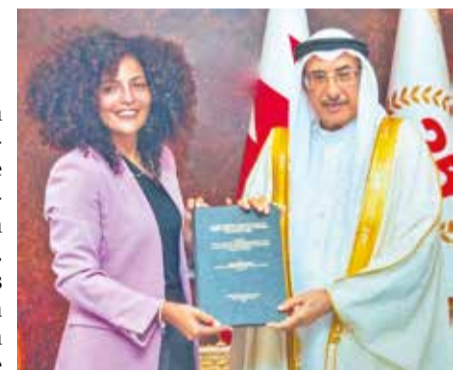
TDT | Manama
Ghadeer Alkumaish

Bahraini-Egyptian Dr. Esraa Al Babli has spent her life proving that limitations exist only when people accept them. Today, the world's first dentist born with total hearing loss in both ears has become a symbol of resilience, breaking barriers in healthcare, academia

and international advocacy. Today, Al babli has achieved a series of historic milestones. She became the world's first dentist born with total hearing loss, the first person with total hearing loss to earn a master's degree in her field, and the first official speaker at the United Nations representing the hearing-loss community.

Born without the ability to hear, Al babli grew up facing challenges in communication, education and social acceptance. Yet her parents refused to allow her condition to define her life. Instead, they encouraged her to believe in her abilities and pursue her ambitions without limits.

Reflecting on her experiences, Al babli said "I faced many challenges in my life the challenge of language when hearing was absent, the challenge of learning when people claimed that loss diminishes knowledge, and the challenge of society when doors were closed in my face. But I was never afraid of falling. Every fall became a path to rising again. I learned to turn



Dr. Esraa Al Babli, met HH Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa after the master degree

my weakness into my source of strength and to make my silence a voice the world could hear."

For Al babli, the real disability is not the loss of hearing but the loss of faith in oneself. Every doubt became motivation, and every obstacle became an opportunity to prove that determination is stronger than circumstance.

Today, she continues to advocate for inclusion and equal opportunity, believing that people with disabilities do not need sympathy as much as they need trust and access to opportunities. Through her work and public speaking, she hopes to inspire others to look beyond perceived limitations and pursue their ambitions with confidence.

Al babli's journey is ultimately not a story about hearing loss. It is a story about perseverance, courage and the power of self-belief. Her message is simple: the greatest barriers are rarely physical. More often, they are the limits people place on themselves and on others.

Young Talent Brings Dramatic Makeup to Life

Sixth-grade student develops cinematic makeup skills through self-learning

TDT | Manama
Ghadeer Alkumaish

Zainab Abbas Ahmed, a sixth-grade student at Karrana Primary Girls' School in Bahrain, has developed a growing talent in dramatic, theatrical, and cinematic makeup arts. Her journey began in early primary school, and she has since advanced her skills through continuous practice, self-learning, and strong support from her school and family.

Zainab's story highlights the importance of nurturing creative talent at an early age within schools. Supported by the Ministry of Education's focus on empowering student creativity in public schools, her progress reflects how structured encouragement and access to resources can help young students transform hobbies into potential future careers in the arts.

Her interest in makeup artistry began in Grade One, when she started experimenting with simple face painting and basic artistic designs. Over time, her interest developed into a deeper passion for realistic and expressive makeup styles, particularly in dramatic and



“My art teacher played a key role in my journey. She supported me, guided me, and gave me the tools I needed to improve. That encouragement helped me develop my creativity further and explore more advanced techniques.”

- ZAINAB ABBAS AHMED



cinematic effects.

The school played a significant role in her development, providing guidance, materials, and opportunities to showcase her work during school events.

This environment allowed her to refine her skills and gain confidence in her artistic abilities.

She continues to develop her skills through practice and learning, balancing her studies with her artistic interests. Her work has already gained attention within her school community, which has given her opportunities to participate in creative activities and school productions.

Dramatic and cinematic makeup is a specialized field often used in theatre, film, and television to create character transformations and visual storytelling effects. For a student at primary level, developing such skills early demonstrates both artistic potential and strong creative discipline.

Her aspirations extend beyond school activities, as she hopes to one day have her name credited in major film, theatre, and television productions. She also expressed interest in using her skills in charitable and community-based initiatives, combining art with social impact.

With continued support and dedication, Zainab Abbas Ahmed represents a new generation of young Bahraini creatives whose talents are being shaped early, pointing toward a promising future in the region's artistic and cultural industries.

New Security Complex Planned for Madinat Salman



TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

A new security complex in Madinat Salman's Block 580 will ease pressure on public service centres and cut trips between government offices, Northern Municipal Council member Bassem AbuDrees has said.

The Salman City Security Complex, he said, would bring related services into one site, helping residents finish paperwork faster and with less strain on existing offices in the Northern Governorate.

Mr AbuDrees said the project was needed as Madinat Salman grows, with new housing and a rising population adding more demand for nearby services.

He said placing the services in one compound would spare residents repeated journeys between separate government bodies, improving access and reducing waiting time.

The move would also help ease traffic on main roads and busy areas, he added, as fewer visitors would need to trav-



Bassem AbuDrees, Northern Municipal Council member

el from one office to another across the governorate.

The site in Block 580 was chosen after the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning allocated land for the project. Mr AbuDrees said the plot was fit for such a government facility and matched the area's growth plans.

He said the idea had first been raised by municipal council member Mohammed Saad Al Dosari, who proposed building it in Block 581, before the current site in Block 580 was adopted.

Mr AbuDrees thanked those behind community proposals that serve the public, saying the project would improve services for residents of Madinat Salman and the wider Northern Governorate.

Education Drive Boosts Student Success

Officials say success reflects coordinated national education efforts

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

MPs Mohsen Al Asbool and Dr Hisham Al Ashiri praised Bahrain's 96 per cent secondary school pass rate, describing it as a sign of continued progress in the Kingdom's education sector.

The lawmakers said the strong results reflected the combined efforts of students, families and educators, alongside the leadership of Education Minister Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma.

They also praised the minister's decision to personally congratulate top-performing students, saying the gesture encouraged academic excellence and motivated students to achieve more.

The MPs expressed appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His



Dr Hisham Al Ashiri and Mohsen Al Asbool

Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for their continued support of the education sector.

They added that preparations for the 2026-2027 academic year are already under way, with authorities working on logistical and organisational plans to ensure schools are fully

prepared. The MPs also welcomed the introduction of a new academic calendar, saying it would help families and educators plan more effectively.

They said the 96 per cent pass rate reflects coordinated efforts across Bahrain's education system and wished students continued success in the future.

Police Chief receives Canadian security adviser



Police Chief, Lieutenant General Tareq bin Hassan Al Hassan, received the Security Adviser at the Embassy of Canada accredited to the Kingdom and resident in Riyadh, Bridget Fournier, on Tuesday morning.

At the start of the meeting, the Police Chief welcomed the Canadian official and highlighted the importance of strengthening joint cooperation and coordination between the two sides.

He stressed that enhanced collaboration and the exchange of expertise in security-related fields would support shared objectives and contribute to improving overall security efforts.

Manama Reaffirms Cooperation with Nepal



Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs, met with Tirtha Raj Wagle in Manama.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed the state of relations between Bahrain and Nepal, and discussed ways to enhance coordination and cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Officials emphasised the importance of continued collaboration to support shared interests and deepen ties between the two friendly nations. They also addressed a range of topics and issues of common concern during the discussions.

Bahrain and Pakistan discussed military coordination

National Guard Chief, Lieutenant General Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, met the Chief of Air Staff of the Pakistan Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Babar Sidhu, during an official visit to Islamabad.

During the talks, Shaikh Mohammed praised the continued development of Bahrain-Pakistan relations, highlighting what he described as "advanced levels" of military coop-

eration between the two countries.

He stressed the importance of exchanging expertise and further strengthening coordination across military and defence fields.

The Pakistani Air Force chief welcomed the visit, describing it as significant in reinforcing military ties between the two countries, and reaffirmed Islamabad's commitment to expanding cooperation.



Hamad Town Traffic Woes Prompt Junction Review Calls

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Daily traffic congestion in parts of Hamad Town has renewed calls for authorities to reconsider plans for a proposed junction aimed at easing pressure on residents.

Municipal councillor Abdulla Al Qubaisi said he is seeking a review of a proposal to construct a roundabout, intersection or traffic island at the



Abdulla Al Qubaisi

junction of Road 3 and Road 30. He said the alternative location would improve traffic flow and road safety for residents of Blocks 1205, 1018 and 1016, who

use the route daily.

Al Qubaisi urged the Ministry of Works to carry out a comprehensive traffic study, warning that the ministry's current proposal may only benefit a limited section of the area while leaving congestion issues unresolved.

He added that the proposed intersection at Roads 3 and 30 would provide smoother vehicle movement, reduce delays during peak hours and improve access to residential areas for a larger number of residents.

GCC Eyes Unified Data Future

Bahrain Leads GCC Push for Smarter Statistics

TDT | Manama

Bahrain chaired a key Gulf meeting on regional statistical cooperation, with officials highlighting digital readiness's role in maintaining operations during recent regional tensions. The 14th meeting of the Permanent Committee for Statistical Work of GCC countries was chaired remotely by Mohammed Ali Al Qaed, chief executive of the Information & eGovernment Authority, as part of Bahrain's presidency of the 46th GCC session. Representatives from GCC national statistical offices discussed plans to strengthen regional data coordination, unify statistical standards and improve digital statistical platforms across member states. Al Qaed said closer cooperation among GCC statistical offices is essential to providing accurate data to support development and decision-making across the region.



Mohammed Ali Al Qaed, chief executive of the Information & eGovernment Authority

He also praised the technological preparedness of GCC countries, noting that advanced digital systems helped institutions maintain business continuity and respond efficiently to the impact of recent Iranian attacks targeting Bahrain and other GCC states.

- Committee reviewed GCC-Stat work from Sept 2025 to April 2026.
- Topics included training, workshops and digital platforms.
- GCC backed Saudi Arabia's hosting of the 2026 UN World Data Forum.
- Members reviewed the GCC Statistical Work Strategy for 2026-2030.
- Discussions included unified GCC statistical standards.

The meeting also reviewed progress on the GCC joint statistical work strategy for 2026-2030 and preparations for Saudi Arabia's hosting of the 6th United Nations World Data Forum in 2026.

Shura Member Warns Over Online Attention Race

Call for stronger ethical standards in media and digital platforms

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Trust and credibility must outrank the online chase for attention, Shura Council member Dr Ibtisam Al Dallal told a WPL forum on media and the digital age. Dr Al Dallal said His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's vision placed responsible media and aware digital communication among the main tools for holding society together, deepening public understanding and encouraging openness, clarity and useful civic life. Bahrain treats the media as a partner in building society, protecting its gains and aiding long-term development, she said. She was speaking by video link at the Ambassadors Forum, held by the Women Political Leaders network, or WPL. The forum discussed media and the risks of commercial rivalry for public attention in the digital age. Dr Al Dallal said the world



“At a time when attention has become a valuable commodity, trust and credibility remain the true capital of societies and states”

- DR IBTISAM AL DALLAL, SHURA COUNCIL MEMBER

faced a new test in what is often called the attention economy. In the digital age, she said, information no longer competes

only through accuracy and trustworthiness. It must also fight for the public eye. Some online platforms, she said, place disputed or highly charged content higher because it draws more clicks and replies. The result, she added, is the wider spread of misleading information, deeper polarisation and weaker trust in news and other sources of knowledge. Political leaders, Dr Al Dallal said, must do more than keep pace with technology. They must also ensure it is used in the service of truth, public awareness and social cohesion. During the discussion, she asked how media platforms could help widen women's role in politics instead of reinforcing stereotypes and bias. She also raised the need for laws and rules that can keep pace with fast-changing digital platforms, saying the world needs more flexible models to deal with artificial intelligence, misleading information and the effect of algorithms on public opinion.

Bahrain Moves to Bring in More Budget Flights

● Government aiming to attract more passengers

● Plans focused on increasing flight routes

● Bahrain International Airport positioned as regional hub

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Bahrain has already begun bringing low-cost flights into the kingdom through AirAsia and Gulf Air, the transport minister told Parliament, as MPs weigh a proposal for a budget airline with the private sector.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, said the ministry had taken practical steps to bring the low-cost travel model to Bahrain International Airport, aiming to draw more passengers and add routes.

The work, he said, included an agreement with AirAsia, one of the world's large budget carriers, along with work with national carrier Gulf Air to run flights to and from Bahrain.

He said the move would give citizens and residents cheaper travel choices while fitting with government plans tied to investment, tourism and trade.

The minister was replying to a proposal by MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi calling for the



Mohammed Al Olaiwi, MP

government to create a budget airline in partnership with the private sector.

A joint parliamentary committee between the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee and the Public Utilities and Environment Committee has recommended approval of the proposal.

The committee said the plan could help cut air fares, make travel easier for a wider share of the public and ease the cost of trips and holidays for citizens.

It said a low-cost carrier could also bring more tourists to Bahrain by opening direct routes to promising travel markets, while giving passengers more choice and adding more rivalry in the local and Gulf aviation market.

The proposal's explanatory note said Bahrain needed a stronger place in the region's aviation, travel and tourism markets, with air transport playing a part in economic and social growth.

It argued that a budget carrier could serve busy, price-sensitive destinations and open routes that differ from those

served by Gulf Air.

The note said the new airline would work beside Gulf Air rather than against it, with each carrier serving different parts of the market.

It also said Bahrain could draw travellers from GCC states and nearby countries by offering lower-cost flights from the kingdom, adding to transit movement and feeding trade and tourism.



The committee said the project could create jobs for Bahrainis, boost related sectors such as maintenance, logistics and catering, and strengthen Bahrain's position as a Gulf aviation hub while reducing pressure on the state budget through private-sector partnership.

From The Court TDT | Manama Rehab Mohammad

The Trap: How Two Young Sisters Were Fooled into Human Trafficking

Two Asian sisters, only 16 and 17 years old, left their home country hoping to find a job and help their poor family. Instead, a criminal network tricked them, and they ended up trapped in a nightmare in Bahrain. It all started because the sisters' family was going through a very hard time financially. A man living in a Gulf country took advantage of their poverty and their young age. He promised them a "great job" that would bring in a lot of money. The girls believed him and traveled for work. But when they arrived in Bahrain, they

realized they had been lied to. They were handed over to two people from their own country: a 32-year-old man and a 40-year-old woman.

Trapped with No Escape

As soon as the sisters arrived, the nice promises disappeared. The two suspects locked the girls up, threatened them, and forced them into prostitution. It was all about greed. The two suspects took all the money from the customers and kept it for themselves. The 32-year-old man used the money to pay for his expenses, while the 40-year-old woman lived entirely off what the girls were forced to make. The two young

sisters did not get a single penny. Luckily, the nightmare did not last forever. The police received information about a gang exploiting young girls. After investigating and confirming the story, the police raided the place, rescued the two sisters, and arrested the suspects. The Public Prosecution has officially charged the suspects with human trafficking, locking people up illegally, and forcing minors into prostitution. The First High Criminal Court has set June 15 to announce the final verdict and sentence the suspects.

Court upholds 5-year prison sentence for Asian man convicted of drug dealing

The Court of Appeal upheld a 5-year prison sentence against an Asian man convicted of drug dealing. The court also fined him 3,000 dinars and ordered his deportation after serving his sentence. All seized drugs were confiscated.

The case began when security authorities received information that the defendant was involved in selling drugs. Investigations confirmed this information, and police identified the suspect through a confidential source who established contact with him.



A controlled purchase was arranged for 130 dinars for marijuana. After agreeing on the location, police arrested the defendant while he possessed the marked money and other cash. Police later searched his home and found 48 packets of mar-

ijuana and other drug materials. The defendant told investigators that he received the drugs from different locations arranged with another person. The Public Prosecution charged him with selling marijuana without legal permission and possessing it for personal use. The court found him guilty and sentenced him to 5 years in prison, fined him 3,000 dinars, confiscated the drugs, and ordered his deportation after completing the sentence.

Government Lifelines Help Bahraini Businesses Stay Afloat

Relief measures including loan deferrals, wage support, and Tamkeen grants shielded over 7,250 firms from operational disruption

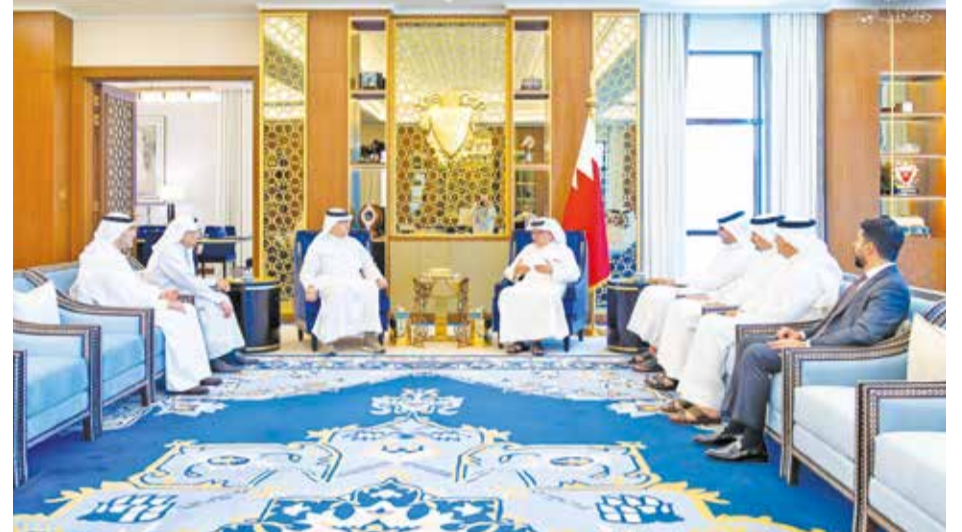
His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, met with Nabeel Khaled Kanoo, Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), at Gudaiyya Palace.

During the meeting, HRH the Crown Prince underscored that Bahrain's ongoing achievements rest on a longstanding partnership between the public and private sectors — what he described as “Team Bahrain” — in advancing the Kingdom's comprehensive development programme under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

HRH emphasised that cooperation between government entities and the private sector is a key pillar in strengthening national economic competitiveness and delivering sustainable growth. He reiterated the government's determination to empower the private sector and



HRH Crown Prince Meets BCCI Chairman at Gudaiyya Palace



expand its contribution across vital industries in pursuit of economic prosperity and national aspirations.

For his part, BCCI Chairman Kanoo expressed deep appreciation for HRH's steadfast support of the private sector, and specifically highlighted the

government's relief measures introduced in response to hostile Iranian aggression against the Kingdom. He credited these measures with enabling numerous businesses to sustain their operations and the national economy to continue pursuing its development targets.

Among the support measures cited were three-month loan deferrals for individuals and companies, a package of grants and financing extended by the Tamkeen Labour Fund to 7,250 Bahraini businesses, government coverage of salaries for insured Bahraini employees in

the private sector, and the deferral of certain government fees. Kanoo said these initiatives had accelerated business recovery, maintained operational continuity, and helped stabilise the national workforce.

The BCCI Chairman also affirmed the Chamber's commit-

ment to deepening cooperation with the public sector in the period ahead, particularly through continued coordination with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, to remove barriers facing the private sector and further cement Bahrain's economic and developmental standing.

GCC Advances Unified Investor ID Plan

Committee reports progress on cross-border securities integration

TDI | Manama

The GCC Financial Markets Committee announced the GCC Unified Investor Number (GCC-NIN) initiative, a strategic regional framework designed to support greater connectivity and interoperability across GCC capital markets.

The GCC-NIN initiative aims to establish a common investor reference identifier for GCC investors, supporting a more seamless experience across regional capital markets while enhancing operational consistency and efficiency across post-trade environments. The initiative reflects the Committee's ongoing efforts to strengthen regional market integration and advance the long-term develop-

ment of a more connected GCC capital market ecosystem.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa, Chief Executive Officer of Bahrain Bourse, said, “The GCC Unified Investor Number (GCC-NIN) initiative represents a significant milestone in advancing the integration of GCC capital markets and enhancing the overall efficiency of our market infrastructure. At Bahrain Bourse, we are committed to supporting initiatives that strengthen connectivity, simplify investor access, and promote a more seamless cross-border investment environment. This collaborative effort reflects a shared regional vision to build a more resilient, accessible, and globally competitive capital market ecosystem.”

Expected to be launched



during 2026, the GCC-NIN is intended to facilitate greater consistency in investor identification across GCC markets,

“
The GCC Unified Investor Number (GCC-NIN) initiative represents a significant milestone in advancing the integration of GCC capital markets and enhancing the overall efficiency of our market infrastructure.

SHAIKH KHALIFA BIN EBRAHIM AL KHALIFA,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF BAHRAIN
BOURSE

reducing duplication in investor identification processes, and support future regional custody, settlement, and asset ser-

vice capabilities, while fully respecting the regulatory and legal frameworks of each GCC jurisdiction.

This initiative reflects the

strong collaboration between GCC market infrastructure institutions and our shared commitment to enhancing operational efficiency, improving investor accessibility, and supporting the long-term competitiveness of GCC capital markets. We look forward to progressing its implementation during this year as part of our broader efforts to strengthen regional financial market integration.

The GCC Financial Markets Committee comprises representatives from leading exchanges and market infrastructure institutions across the GCC and aims to support the growth of regional capital markets, strengthen cross-border collaboration, and enhance the competitiveness of GCC financial markets globally.

Stocks slump as US tech rebound falters, oil dips below \$90

Stock markets fell Tuesday, giving back earlier gains as US technology stocks turned lower after weeks of solid gains on renewed doubts about prospects for AI names.

Oil prices fell meanwhile, with Brent crude briefly dipping below \$90 per barrel for the first time since April 14, after US President Donald Trump hinted at a deal with Iran in the coming days, despite renewed strikes by Israel on Hezbollah targets in Lebanon.

After opening higher, Wall Street indexes were solidly in the red, led by steep declines for tech heavyweights.

Apple shares were down more than four percent after lackluster

reviews for an AI update to its Siri voice assistant, spurring caution among investors who have seen tech valuations push equity markets into record territory.

The downturn followed heavy selling last Friday after strong US jobs data that raised the prospect of higher US interest rates to curb inflation, which would raise borrowing costs for AI firms planning massive spending on chips and data centres.

“Investors remain cautious after the sharp selloff at the start of the week,” said Anna Macdonald, investment strategy director at Hargreaves Lansdown.

OpenAI's announcement



that it had applied for an IPO of its shares -- just as Elon Musk's SpaceX is prepping a

record-smashing share sale this week -- also suggested that investors were selling their tech

holdings to buy into the new offerings.

But “the IPOs of SpaceX, Anthropic and OpenAI are less about buying into a business and more about buying into an idea,” noted Katherine Brooks, research director at trading platform XTB.

Peace deal hopes

Earlier in Asia, bargain buying saw Seoul's Kospi index surge on Tuesday after plunging more than eight percent on Monday, tracking the pre-weekend tech sell-off on Wall Street.

European indexes also retreated before the close, with London leading the downturn owing to a decline in the share price of British drugs giant GSK,

which announced an all-cash \$10.6 billion takeover of US cancer specialist Nuvalent.

Frankfurt and Paris stock markets had gained earlier after official data showed that industrial production in Europe's biggest economy Germany rose slightly in April alongside its exports.

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday said negotiations over a peace deal to end the Middle East war were in their final stages and a deal could come in “two or three days”.

“The market has heard that before, and even though it has yet to see an actual deal, it continues to respect the possibility,” said Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare.

GFH Signs MoU with OCTO Management

To Develop US\$300 Million Logistics and Industrial Platform Across Saudi Arabia and the UAE

As part of its participation in the 2026 Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, GFH Bank (“GFH” or “the Bank”) today announced the signing of a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (“MoU”) with OCTO Management Consultancies (“OCTO”) to collaborate on the development of a US\$300 million logistics and industrial real estate platform across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The partnership is aimed at capitalising on the strong growth fundamentals underpinning the logistics and industrial sectors across the GCC, driven by the rapid expansion of e-commerce, supply chain localisation, manufacturing growth and major infrastructure investments across both markets.

Under the agreement, GFH will act as Investment Manager and development partner for the platform. The platform will focus exclusively on logistics and industrial development opportunities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, including large-format warehousing, multi-let industrial assets,



cold storage facilities and distribution centres. The strategy will primarily target development-stage assets with a balanced mix of build-to-suit and speculative developments designed to capture growing occupier demand and attractive long-term value creation opportunities.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr Luay Ahmadi, Managing Director - Global Head of Institutions at GFH, stated: “We are delighted to partner

with OCTO on this strategic platform, which further strengthens GFH’s position as a leading regional developer and manager of high-quality industrial and logistics assets. The logistics sector across Saudi Arabia and the UAE continues to benefit from strong structural tailwinds supported by economic diversification strategies, expanding trade flows and sustained demand for modern warehousing and distribution infrastructure.”

He added: “This partnership reflects our continued focus on identifying thematic sectors with strong long-term fundamentals and delivering compelling investment opportunities for our investors through disciplined development and asset management capabilities. We look forward to leveraging our regional expertise and execution track record to build a high-quality portfolio of institutional-grade logistics assets

across both markets.”

On her part, Ms Jekaterina Cernova, Founder of OCTO Management, commented: “We are delighted to collaborate with GFH on this landmark initiative focused on one of the most attractive and fast-growing sectors in the region. Through this partnership, we aim to provide investors with access to high-quality logistics and industrial opportunities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, supported by strong market fundamentals and GFH’s extensive experience in wealth and investment management.”

The platform is expected to deploy into projects targeting attractive risk-adjusted returns through a combination of development expertise, active asset management and disciplined market selection.

GFH currently manages assets and funds valued at approximately US\$24 billion, including a global investment portfolio spanning the GCC, the United States of America and Europe, across sectors including logistics, healthcare, education, technology and real estate.

Experience the ultimate matchday atmosphere at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain

As the world’s biggest football tournament takes center stage across the United States, Canada and Mexico, The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain is inviting guests to gather, cheer, celebrate and soak up every unforgettable moment at La Med’s Football Fanzone.

Whether you’re supporting your home nation, backing an underdog, or simply there for the drama, the Football Fanzone, offers the perfect setting to experience the excitement of every match alongside fellow fans.

At the heart of the experience is a dedicated 3-metre screen showcasing all the action live, creating an electric atmosphere where every goal, save and last-minute winner can be enjoyed on the big stage. Additional viewing screens will be available at the entrance of La Med and at La Table Krug, where groups of 10 guests or more can book an exclusive private viewing experience.

No matchday experience is complete without great food. Guests can enjoy a menu of light bites, snacks and breakfast favorites inspired by the tournament’s host nations; the United States, Canada and



Mexico, making early kick-offs and late-night fixtures even more enjoyable.

Open to both hotel guests and the public starting June 11, the Football Fanzone is designed for friends, families, colleagues and football lovers alike. From dramatic penalty shootouts and surprise upsets to unforgettable celebrations, every match promises a reason to gather.

The Football Fanzone at La Med is proudly supported by Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Bahrain, National Hotel Services Company W.L.L. (NHSC), Percepta, and Allied Car Rental. Starting June 11, bring your

team colors, your matchday predictions and your loudest celebrations. The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain will take care of the rest.

For reservations or more information, please call +973 1758 6499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com.

For additional information about The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain, please call the hotel directly at (+973) 1758 0000, or visit The Ritz-Carlton website at ritzcarlton.com/bahrain. Follow the hotel on Facebook and Instagram @ritzcarlton-bahrain and join the conversation using #RCMemories.

Saudi Arabia, Russia Sign \$1.28bn Deals

Food Security Deals Among Key Agreements

● Veterinary vaccine production will be localised

● Poultry breeding and livestock supply chains targeted

● Saudi seafood exports to expand via Russian networks



TDT | Manama

Saudi Arabia and Russia signed 13 strategic agreements and memoranda of understanding worth 4.8 billion Saudi riyals, as the two countries seek to deepen economic and investment cooperation.

The deals concluded on the sidelines of the St Petersburg International Economic Forum, where officials and leading business figures from both countries gathered to expand trade ties and explore new areas of collaboration.

According to officials, the agreements span key sectors aimed at boosting long-term economic partnership and strengthening supply chains between the two nations.

Key sectors covered

- Veterinary vaccine manufacturing and animal health
- Poultry breeding and livestock production
- Feed supply chains and agricultural inputs
- Fisheries and seafood export expansion

A significant portion of the deals focuses on agricultural and food security cooperation. This includes plans to localise and develop veterinary vaccine manufacturing to improve animal health and biosecurity, alongside

initiatives to develop and multiply high-yield poultry breeds to support domestic production and enhance self-sufficiency.

The agreements also cover feed supply chains and livestock inputs, aiming to stabilize and expand the animal husbandry sector through more reliable and diversified sourcing networks.

In the fisheries sector, Saudi seafood exports are expected to increase under strategic arrangements with Russian importers and global distribution companies, opening new international markets for Saudi marine products.

Officials said the package of agreements reflects a shared interest in strengthening economic diversification and expanding commercial cooperation beyond traditional sectors.

UAE-Oman rail project reaches 40% completion

The Hafeet Rail Company says construction on the planned railway link between the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman is now 40% complete, marking a major milestone in one of the region’s most significant cross-border infrastructure projects.

The joint venture – involving Etihad Rail, Oman Rail and Mubadala Investment – is developing a 238-kilometre railway designed to strengthen economic integration, trade flows and logistics connectivity between the two Gulf neigh-



bours.

Once completed, the line is expected to provide a modern transport corridor linking key

industrial and urban centres, supporting both passenger and freight services.

Construction is currently



progressing at multiple strategic locations along the route, including Al Ain, Al Buraimi, Wadi Al Jazi and Sohar. Work

has required complex engineering solutions, including large-scale excavation works, bridges, tunnels, and integrated flood

protection systems designed to ensure safe and sustainable operation of the railway network. In a statement, Abdulrahman bin Salem Al Hatmi, CEO of ASYAD Group, said the pace of implementation reflects a strong commitment to delivering the project on schedule and beginning operations as planned.

The railway is considered a flagship initiative in regional transport development, aimed at improving connectivity and enhancing long-term economic cooperation between Oman and the UAE.

Israel minister Smotrich banned from France

AFP | Paris, France

France yesterday banned Israel's far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich from entering the country, the French foreign minister said, in the latest sanction slamming Israeli officials over policies towards Palestinian territories and pro-Palestinian activists.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said Smotrich "actively promotes the annexation of the West Bank, which he openly claims, the creation of new settlements in the West Bank, the re-colonisation of Gaza, the economic collapse of the Palestinian Authority and its harmful consequences for the Palestinian population".

"This is a policy that the overwhelming majority of the international community, firmly committed to the two-state solution, cannot accept," Barrot wrote on X.

He added that four leaders of settler organisations and 21 violent settlers were also banned from French territory.

Israel's foreign ministry quickly condemned the sanctions as "disgraceful".



Smotrich is the second member of the Israeli government to be forbidden from entering France in recent months, after National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir was barred on May 23 for mocking activists detained by Israeli soldiers from a Gaza-bound flotilla carrying aid for the Palestinian territory.

"The real essence of these steps is the attempt to impose a political stance regarding the right of Jews to settle in the Land of Israel and concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict -- camouflaged as measures against violence," ministry spokesman Oren Marmorstein said.

UK urges British firms to stop activities in illegal Israeli settlements

AFP | London, United Kingdom

The UK government yesterday urged British businesses and citizens to refrain from conducting financial activities in Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank deemed illegal under international law.

"I have strengthened our business risk guidance to make it clear and unambiguous: if you are a British citizen or business, you should

not conduct any economic and financial activities in illegal Israeli settlements," Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper told parliament.

"We believe that violent settler groups should not be profiting from the land that they have seized from Palestinians," Cooper added, saying the Israeli "government has condemned some settler violence, but that rings hollow when there is scant accountability".

Israel slams 'disgraceful measures' from 6 foreign govts against West Bank settler entities

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel's foreign ministry on Tuesday denounced a series of sanctions from six Western countries against settler entities in the occupied West Bank for their role in increased settlement building and violence against Palestinians.

"Israel firmly rejects the disgraceful measures adopted by foreign governments against

Israeli citizens, entities, and a government minister," ministry spokesman Oren Marmorstein said in a statement.

"The real essence of these steps is the attempt to impose a political stance regarding the right of Jews to settle in the Land of Israel and concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict -- camouflaged as measures against violence," he added.

Oil falls below \$90 a barrel on hopes of Iran deal

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Oil prices fell around 5% to below \$90 a barrel on Tuesday after US President Donald Trump again said an Iran peace deal could be close.

The international benchmark Brent crude fell below

\$90 for the first time since April 14, while its US counterpart, West Texas Intermediate crude fell to around \$86 a barrel.

The relief came just a day after crude surged as Iran and Israel briefly resumed strikes amid a fragile ceasefire in the Middle East war.

Pope Leo XIV met Bad Bunny in Madrid

AFP | Barcelona, Spain

Pope Leo XIV held a surprise meeting with Puerto Rican music star Bad Bunny at Real Madrid's Bernabeu stadium during his state visit to Spain, the Vatican said on Tuesday.

"Yes... I confirm it. He (Bad Bunny) was with his family and some other people", and Leo "greeted them briefly before leaving the stadium", Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni told reporters of the encounter on Monday.

Spanish media said the papal team and Bad Bunny's entourage were still deciding on the best moment to publish photos of their meeting.

Around 80,000 people packed the iconic football ground for a meeting between the pope and Madrid's diocesan community on day three of Leo's trip to Spain.

His stay in Madrid coincided with a series of concerts by Bad Bunny at the Metropolitano stadium of Real Madrid's cross-town rivals Atletico Madrid, part of his hit "Debi Tirar Mas



Pope Leo XIV and Cardinal Juan Jose Omella, the Archbishop of Barcelona in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross and Saint Eulalia in Barcelona

Fotos" ("I Should Have Taken More Photos") world tour.

Some observers pointed to modern youth being torn between spirituality and profane music in a historically Catholic country where traditional reli-

gious observance has declined for decades.

But as his plane headed to Madrid on Saturday, Leo told reporters he was "very pleased by the reports" that young people were increasingly interested

in the Catholic Church. "I think many will see Bad Bunny. But I think there will also be a few here to see the pope. And that says something," Leo said of the conflicting loyalties.

Puerto Rican music star Bad Bunny

Lebanon state media reports strike on Tyre after Israeli warning

Trump says deal in final stages

Deal possible in "two or three days"

● Trump says pilots 'fine' after report US helicopter down near Hormuz

● Tehran's international airport -- closed during the missile exchanges -- had reopened.

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump yesterday said negotiations over a peace deal to end the Middle East war were in their final stages, after Iran and Israel halted attacks that threatened to reignite the months-long conflict.

Iran and Israel "were going back and forth and now they both agreed through me to stop and we're in the final throes of

what will be a very, very good deal," the US leader told reporters on his return from an NBA Finals game. When asked whether a deal would be a matter of days or weeks, he said it would take "two or three days."

Trump, who has reportedly grown increasingly exasperated with Netanyahu, had earlier urged both sides to stop "shooting" and said that "final negotiations" towards peace would proceed "subject to ignorance or stupidity getting in its way".

US Vice President JD Vance told Fox News on Monday that while the United States and Israel shared interests, their positions did not always align.

"The Israelis and the United States, we have a lot of shared interests," Vance said. "But we also have some situations where our interests diverge."

Yesterday, Lebanese state media reported an Israeli strike on the southern city of Tyre after the Israeli military urged residents to evacuate, the first time it had done so for the entire city and its surrounding areas.

"Enemy warplanes launched a heavy strike on Tyre," the state-run National News Agency said.

"For your safety, we ask you to

We're in the final throes of what will be a very, very good deal,

TRUMP

immediately evacuate your homes... and move north of the Zahrani River," the Israeli military's Arabic-language spokesman Avichay Adraee said on X.

Trump said yesterday that two pilots were uninjured after reports that a US military helicopter went down near the Strait of Hormuz.

It was not immediately clear whether the Apache helicopter was shot down, experienced mechanical failure or encountered some other problem, the New York Times reported, citing two people briefed on the incident.

Local media reported early yesterday that Tehran's international airport -- closed during the missile exchanges -- had reopened, allowing flights carrying hajj pilgrims from Saudi Arabia to land.



EU orders Meta to open WhatsApp to rival AI chatbots for free

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

The EU ordered Meta yesterday to give rival AI chatbots access to its WhatsApp platform for free within five working days as it carries out an

antitrust probe, or risk a heavy fine.

Meta said it would appeal the order, which follows the launch in December of an EU investigation into the US firm's policy of blocking access for AI providers

other than Meta AI.

The European Commission, the EU's digital watchdog, said Meta will have to maintain access to competitors until Brussels wraps up its probe.

"Today, we require Meta to

restore access to WhatsApp for competing AI assistants while we investigate whether the restrictions may infringe EU competition rules," EU antitrust chief Teresa Ribera said in a statement.

Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa drowns while crossing the Saleph River in modern-day Turkey, leading an army to Jerusalem during the Third Crusade

A landslide dam on the Dadu River, caused by an earthquake ten days earlier, collapses and kills 100,000 in Sichuan province, China



US Marines land in Cuba during the Spanish-American War

Apple Computer ships its first Apple II computers



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



I'm deeply alarmed by the renewed escalation in the Middle East. All attacks must stop immediately. The ceasefires in Lebanon, Iran & Gaza must be fully respected. Any steps that could undermine ongoing diplomatic efforts must be avoided. I'm also deeply concerned by Israel's decision to close crossings into Gaza & reiterate my call for the immediate reopening of all crossings to ensure the rapid, safe & unhindered passage of humanitarian assistance at scale throughout Gaza. The exercise of navigational rights & freedoms, in accordance with international law, must be respected. There is no military solution to the conflicts in the Middle East. The only way forward is through dialogue & negotiations. I urge all concerned to work towards diplomatic solutions that advance regional & international peace & security.

@antonioGuterres

02



The New European Bauhaus is our shared effort to tackle what matters most to our citizens. Democracy. Affordable housing. The industries and infrastructures of the clean transition. For a sustainable, inclusive and beautiful future for Europe

@vonderleyen

03



Attended the Defence Investiture Ceremony 2026 (Phase-1) where Gallantry Awards were conferred upon our brave personnel. We are proud of their extraordinary courage, commitment and selfless service to the nation.

@narendramodi

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



The Patrouille de France conducts a flyover above the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of American independence, in New York City

UK schoolgirl arrested after 3 wounded in school stabbing

AFP | London, United Kingdom

UK police said yesterday they arrested a 14-year-old schoolgirl in the northwestern English city of Manchester after two students and a staff member were wounded in a school stabbing.

The girl was arrested on suspicion of assault and was in cus-

tody for questioning, Greater Manchester Police said in a statement.

Three people were injured -- a 14-year-old schoolgirl, a 14-year-old schoolboy and a 27-year-old man who is a member of staff -- with what were believed to be stab wounds.

"All were taken to hospital, however injuries are thankfully

not believed to be serious, and all are stable at this time," police said following the incident at the Co-op Academy north of central Manchester.

The school decided to go into lockdown following the attack, as emergency vehicles surrounded the building, the Manchester Evening News reported.

Hundreds flee giant Wellington waves

AFP | Wellington, New Zealand

Authorities evacuated hundreds of people from their seaside homes in New Zealand's capital on Tuesday as 11-metre (36-foot) waves lashed the coast.

Wellington Mayor Andrew Little declared a state of emergency on the eve of the swells for seaside residents in Owhiro Bay, Island Bay, Houghton Bay and Breaker Bay.

"You must stay away from the southern coastline," Little said in a statement, warning that emergency workers would not be coming to help anyone who stayed behind.

The evacuation order took effect on Tuesday morning, with police brought in to ensure people moved to higher ground.

Officers set up cordons on surrounding roads to prevent people from heading to the coast.

The council said a similar event in 2021 affected many homes in Breaker Bay, and waves during that storm were



Stormy seas pound the coastline in the Wellington suburb of Island Bay

about 6.5 metres.

Waves entering Wellington Harbour on Tuesday were measured at 11 metres, New Zealand's MetService said.

Wind gusts were so strong at Island Bay that two women were knocked off their feet as waves washed up over the road, an AFP journalist saw.

Some flights were cancelled at Wellington Airport where

wind gusts were recorded of up to 128 kilometres per hour (80 miles per hour).

A small plane from local carrier Golden Bay Air tipped onto its side in the wind while parked at the airport with no-one aboard.

Airline boss Richard Molloy told national broadcaster RNZ that fire fighters had secured the plane to the ground.

Anthropic opens most powerful AI model to public

San Francisco, United States

Anthropic, maker of the Claude artificial intelligence (AI) models, on Tuesday made the most powerful version of its technology available to the general public while restricting it from use in sensitive areas.

Dubbed Fable 5, the model is the first from the Mythos class

-- Anthropic's most advanced lineup of AI technology, unveiled in April but restricted over cybersecurity concerns -- to be made widely available.

Anthropic says Fable 5 is exceptionally good at writing and debugging software code, answering complex research questions and analyzing images.

In parallel, Anthropic is of-

fering an unrestricted version, Claude Mythos 5, to companies and organizations that already have access to this model family -- including cybersecurity partners enrolled in its Project Glasswing program.

That select group was expanded in early June to around 200 organizations in more than 15 countries and is expected to grow further.

Thailand officially frees ex-PM Thaksin after royal pardon

AFP | Bangkok, Thailand

Thailand's former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra is officially a free man, less than a week after receiving a royal pardon, the Department of Corrections said on Tuesday.

Thaksin, 76, served eight months of a one-year sentence for corruption and abuse of power before being released on parole last month due to his age and health.

The Department of Corrections said the former premier was required to wear an electronic monitoring device as a condition of his release.

The telecoms billionaire was among those eligible for a royal pardon on June 3, Queen Suthida's birthday, because he had less than one year remaining on his sentence.

The corrections department said on Tuesday Thaksin's electronic monitoring device had been removed.

"The prison issued the official release documents and certificate of discharge to Thaksin," it said in a statement.

It said Thaksin was



"no longer subject to criminal punishment, supervision or related conditions", noting that the same standards were applied to other eligible parolees.

Thailand regularly grants royal pardons to prisoners with good conduct to mark major royal occasions, including the birthdays of the king and queen.

Thaksin is one of the most influential figures in modern Thai politics and served two terms as prime minister.

His second term was cut short by a military coup in 2006, after which he spent more than a decade in self-imposed exile, largely in Dubai, before returning to Thailand in 2023.

Thai media reported that Thaksin was expected to travel to Dubai this month, although no reason for the trip has been disclosed.

His Pheu Thai Party and its predecessors have been among Thailand's most successful political movements of the 21st century.

The Shinawatra family has produced four prime ministers and has long enjoyed strong support among rural voters.

However, Pheu Thai recorded its worst election result in February, falling to third place and raising questions about the future of Thaksin's political influence.

Chile seizes 'historic' 100 tonnes of drugs hidden in lumber



AFP | Santiago, Chile

Chilean authorities on Monday announced the seizure of over 100 tonnes of drugs hidden in lumber shipments destined for Europe, hailing a record bust for the South American nation.

"Thanks to a joint effort by the prosecutor's office, maritime police, and customs, 1,080 tonnes of wood laced with various drugs were seized, marking a historic blow to organized crime in our country," the customs bureau said in a statement.

The drugs found in the lum-

ber were mostly cocaine and ketamine, with an estimated retail value of \$8.3 billion on the European market, the statement added.

Following a six-month investigation, authorities identified 45 containers arriving from Bolivia with the tainted lumber.

If the cargo had reached their intended destinations, the drugs would have to be extracted using "advanced chemical processes" in specialized labs, the customs officials said.

The total haul could grow as additional suspicious containers are examined.

Italian Luca Parmitano will be first European to join an Artemis mission: NASA

AFP | Johnson Space Center, United States

The Italian Luca Parmitano will be the pilot of NASA's Artemis 3 voyage, the first European to join one of the program's missions.

Parmitano, who will represent the European Space Agency, is one of four men named as crewmembers tasked with carrying out Artemis 3, which is targeting launch in late 2027.

India breaks through Himalayan tunnel to border zone

More than 3,000 workers have been involved since 2020

● At present, road travel between the cities is blocked during winter

● The project is part of a broader network of four major tunnels, including the 6.5-kilometre Sonamarg tunnel, a \$712-million initiative expected to be fully operational by 2028.

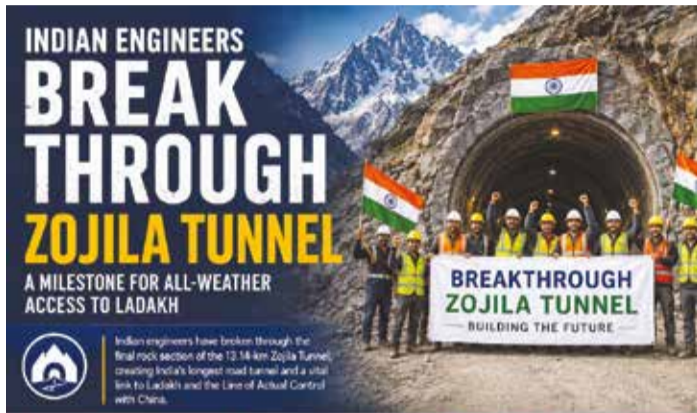
● Gadkari pressed a button to remotely trigger the final blast, connecting tunnels dug from both sides and creating what will be India's longest road tunnel.

AFP | Zojila, India

Indian engineers broke through the final rock section in the strategic Zojila tunnel through a Himalayan mountain yesterday, a milestone in providing all-weather access to the frontier Ladakh region with China.

The tunnel forms part of a broader infrastructure push, creating a link with roads and railways that will allow trade, troops and supplies to move year-round from India's sweltering lowland plains to the soaring icy border zones.

"This is not just a tunnel but a lifeline," said India's minister of roads, Nitin Gadkari, during a breakthrough ceremony on Tuesday at the high-altitude tunnel, which is part of a route designed to rapidly improve connectivity between Srinagar,



The Zojila tunnel, India's longest road tunnel project connecting Jammu and Kashmir state with the Ladakh region

the main city in Indian-administered Kashmir, and Leh, Ladakh's key city.

At present, road travel between the cities is blocked during winter due to heavy snowfall, which can often rise higher than a truck.

Diggers cut through the final stretch of rock in a milestone in the creation of the 13.14-kilometre (8.17-mile) Zojila tunnel, which will connect two sides otherwise cut off by snow during the bitter winters.

More than 3,000 workers have been involved since 2020 in excavating the tunnel, which passes beneath the 3,528-metre (11,575-foot) Zojila Pass.

Gadkari pressed a button to remotely trigger the final blast, connecting tunnels dug from both sides and creating what will be India's longest road tunnel.

"We have worked for this tunnel day and night in challenging weather conditions, and completed it without any accident," project engineer Manmohan Singh told AFP.

The project is part of a broader network of four major tunnels, including the 6.5-kilometre Sonamarg tunnel, a \$712-million initiative expected to be fully operational by 2028.

3.9-billion railway line

India has also developed a \$3.9-billion railway line connecting the lowland plains with Kashmir, including the construction of the Chenab Rail Bridge, currently the highest of its kind in the world.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened the railway route in June 2025.

The 272-kilometre railway begins in the garrison city of Udhampur, headquarters of the army's northern command, and runs through Srinagar.

Airbus-led group proposes alternative to Franco-German jet project



Frankfurt, Germany

A consortium led by Airbus has proposed developing a next-generation fighter jet after a high-profile Franco-German warplane project collapsed, one of the firms involved told AFP Tuesday.

The news came a day after Chancellor Friedrich Merz and French President Emmanuel Macron pulled the plug on the original programme after long-running disagreements between the firms involved. Munich-based defence electronics firm Hensoldt said that it had teamed up with Airbus Defence and Space, Autoflug, Diehl Defence, Rohde & Schwarz, Liebherr, MBDA, MTU Aero Engines to come up with an alternative plan.

The proposal had been sent to German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius, a company spokesman said. The Financial Times, which first reported the development, said it had also been sent to Merz's office.

The companies had "jointly drawn up a position paper on the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) and the associated Next Generation Weapon System (NGWS)", the Hensoldt spokesman said. The original FCAS project, started in 2017, came to be seen as a key test of European unity on defence as the region faces a hostile Russia and souring ties with the United States.

But it was dogged by bitter disputes between France's Dassault Aviation and Airbus, representing German and Spanish interests.

Tomatina



A man grabs a child during the 16th Tomato Fight Festival known as "Tomatina" in Sutamarcan, Boyaca department, Colombia

Global nuclear weapons spending hit record high in 2025: study

● The world's nine nuclear-armed states jointly increased their spending on their arsenals by nearly \$17 billion last year

● The study showed that all of the nuclear-armed states -- Britain, China, France, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, and the United States -- increased their spending last year.

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Nuclear-armed countries swelled their spending on atomic weapons by a fifth last year to a record high of nearly \$119 billion, with plans to ramp up those investments for decades, campaigners said yesterday.



The world's nine nuclear-armed states jointly increased their spending on their arsenals by nearly \$17 billion last year,

according to a new report from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

At a time of growing geopolitical tensions, "a new nuclear

arms race is upon us, one which the perpetrators themselves are preparing to last for decades", the ICAN report warned.

Susi Snyder, ICAN's director

of programmes and co-author of that report, said the scale-up, coupled with fears that artificial intelligence could increase the risk of nuclear weapons use, was deeply alarming.

"To be perfectly honest, I'm terrified," she told AFP.

The study showed that all of the nuclear-armed states -- Britain, China, France, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, and the United States -- increased their spending last year. Washington spent more than all the other countries combined, dishing out \$69.2 billion on nuclear weapons in 2025 -- an increase of \$12.4 billion from a year earlier, the report showed.

It was followed by China, which was estimated to have spent \$13.5 billion last year, then Britain at \$12.6 billion and Russia at \$9.5 billion, the report showed.

And over the past five years, ICAN, which won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize, found that

the nine countries had spent over \$470 billion on their arsenals.

Those investments are only expected to grow going forward.

Examining longer-term spending growth projections, ICAN highlighted figures from Britain, France and the United States showing plans to spend billions to develop and maintain such weapons systems well into the next century.

Other countries too were introducing new weapons systems with long lifespans, it said.

The report pointed out that new planned US Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missiles were expected to remain operational past 2100, while swelling US plutonium pit production indicated that the country's warheads would last through 2120.

That will mean significant investments, with US nuclear arms spending over just the decade between 2025 and 2034 projected at close to \$1 trillion, the report said.

Kenyan confirmed dead in demo over US Ebola centre: rights group

AFP | Nanyuki, Kenya

A Kenyan protester shot in the head during violent protests over an Ebola quarantine centre for US citizens has been confirmed dead, a human rights group told AFP yesterday.

The centre at Laikipia Air Base in the town of Nanyuki, under the shadow of Mount Kenya, is designed to quarantine Americans arriving from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which is battling a major Ebola outbreak.

Kenya has never recorded a case of Ebola and many oppose the idea of bringing potential carriers of the highly contagious disease into the country.

There were running battles around Nanyuki on Tuesday, with protesters lighting fires and throwing stones at police, who responded with teargas and water cannons, AFP journalists saw.

Gunshots were heard and AFP saw one man lying motionless after being shot in the head. The Red Cross said another person was injured by a teargas cannister.

"His death is confirmed. We are waiting for his family," Hussein Khalid, director of the NGO Vocal Africa, said of the victim.

Dozens were arrested, including by armed police in plain clothes, AFP saw.



A protester reacts while being arrested by a plainclothes Kenyan police officer during a demonstration against a controversial US-built Ebola quarantine centre slated to begin operations at Laikipia Air Base in Nanyuki

COP31 host unveils 'electrification' priority for climate talks

Around one-third of the world's electricity is still produced using coal

● The target is voluntary and does not require the approval of the nearly 200 nations that take decisions by consensus.

AFP | Bonn, Germany

COP31 host Turkey urged countries yesterday to join a voluntary push to make electricity account for 35% of global energy demand by 2035 as it announced its priorities for the UN climate talks.

The November summit in Antalya is taking shape as the Middle East conflict roils global energy markets, exposing fossil fuel importers to price spikes and supply shortages.

Boosting electrification could help insulate economies from fossil fuel price shocks and was "one of the key priorities" for COP31, incoming summit president Murat Kurum told delegates in Bonn.

Thousands of climate negotiators are gathering in the German city this week and next to lay the groundwork for the final decisions to be taken by political leaders at the summit due to



start November 9.

Turkey said raising the global share of energy demand met by electricity from around 20% to 35% by 2035 would speed up the shift from fossil fuels to renewable power.

Kurum said COP31 organisers would "work to build a strong global coalition for this goal" in the months ahead.

The target is voluntary and does not require the approval of the nearly 200 nations that take decisions by consensus during the hard-fought UN-sponsored climate summits.

Every year, countries are encouraged by COP hosts to sup-

port non-binding pledges on a parallel "action agenda" that is separate to the formal negotiations.

Australia, which is steering the formal negotiations in a COP31 co-hosting arrangement with Turkey, said electrification could cut emissions and shore up energy security.

"I see them as different sides of the same coin. Electrification reduces the need for fossil fuels," COP31 negotiations chief Chris Bowen, who is also Australia's climate and energy minister, told AFP in an interview in Bonn on Monday.

On Tuesday, Bowen said he

would "take inspiration" from Turkey's action agenda -- which also includes initiatives to reduce planet-warming methane emissions from waste -- into the negotiations.

'Deep contradiction'

In simple terms, electrification means replacing technologies that burn fossil fuels directly -- such as gas heating systems and diesel vehicles -- with electric alternatives.

But for electrification to drive down heat-trapping emissions and tackle climate change, the extra electricity must come primarily from clean sources like solar and wind.

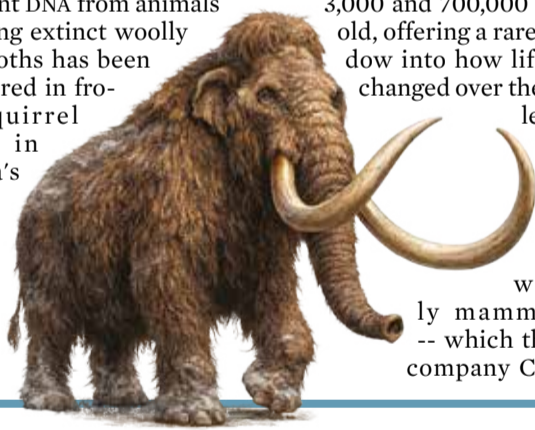


Around one-third of the world's electricity is still produced using coal, one of the most polluting sources of energy.

Woolly mammoth among trove of ancient DNA found in squirrel poo

AFP | Paris, France

A huge treasure trove of ancient DNA from animals including extinct woolly mammoths has been discovered in frozen squirrel faeces in Canada's remote Yukon territory, scientists said yesterday.



The DNA found deep inside sealed-off burrows is between 3,000 and 700,000 years old, offering a rare window into how life has changed over the millennia.

As well as DNA from woolly mammoths -- which the US company Colos-

sal claims it is trying to "de-extinct" -- genetic material was also found from wolves, bison, horses, a cheetah and hundreds of plants.

Tyler Murchie, a paleogenomics researcher at Canada's McMaster University and lead author of a new study, admitted that digging through squirrel poop might sound "less appealing" than discovering, say, a mammoth tusk.

However the "spectacular" amount of information they uncovered suggests that faeces is an overlooked way to see

into our planet's distant past, he added.

The scientists had just been expecting to study the squirrel's microbiome before coming across the "really surprising biodiversity of organisms", Murchie said.

It turned out that arctic ground squirrels were ideal subjects for this research because of their "natural archivist behaviour", he explained.

The squirrels are only conscious for around four months a year, spending the rest of their life in hibernation.

Killing the mood: smartphones reduce birth rate, studies say

● China's communist government abandoned its decades-long one-child policy in 2016

AFP | Washington, United States

As governments around the world struggle with ways to reverse plunging birth rates, new US studies suggest they have ignored a key culprit -- the smartphone.

"Is the iPhone Birth Control?" asked a paper published Monday by the National Bureau of Economic Research, delving into why US fertility rates have fallen by 22 percent since 2007.

For a while, experts linked the decline to the recession that struck in 2008 when the global financial system nearly imploded, driving millions of people into hardship. But when the



economy picked up, a rebound in births never came.

Myriad other reasons have been posited, such as increased use of contraception, more female education, and growing housing or childcare costs. However, no clear cause has been established.

So Middlebury College economist Caitlin Myers and her

student Ezekiel Hooper tested a hypothesis that smartphones -- which emerged with the arrival of the first iPhone in 2007 -- might have something to do with it.

Until 2011, iPhones were available from a single US cellular network, AT&T, so they compared US counties that had near-universal AT&T coverage

with those that had little or none during those years.

And they found that access to the iPhone correlated with reductions in births by 4.5-8.0 percent at ages 15-19 and by 3.2-6.6 percent at ages 20-24.

There were also statistically significant but smaller declines among older women.

While they stress that iPhones are not the "sole cause," the introduction of the smartphone "played a sizable role in the decline in US births" after 2007 as it shaped people's behavior with less in-person contact.

"As modern smartphones diffused, time spent with friends in person and sexual activity fell sharply alongside rising consumption of pornography, a possible substitute for partnered sex," they concluded.

'Technology shock'

Another study published in May by University of Cincin-

nati economists Nathan Hudson and Hernan Moscoso Boedo found evidence of similar trends and on a global scale since 2007.

They analyzed World Bank data measuring smartphone penetration and teenage fertility rates in 128 countries.

They found that the decline in birth rates accelerated once smartphones became widely available -- a phenomenon found across countries "with fundamentally different healthcare, welfare, economic, and cultural environments."

This, they concluded, points to "a common global technology shock."

Some academics remain skeptical. For example, teenage births in the United States have been falling since the early 1990s, long before the dawn of the smartphone.

Neither study examines how governments might utilize their

findings.

Both rich and poorer countries are grappling with declining birth rates which lead to aging societies and a shrinking workforce -- putting strain on social security systems and potentially dampening economic growth and productivity.

The Centers for Disease Control says US fertility rates are at an all-time low, while leading Asian economies all face the prospect of shrinking populations in the coming years.

China's communist government abandoned its decades-long one-child policy in 2016, while Japan and South Korea have invested heavily in pro-natal policies with little impact.

The world's poorest countries, such as in sub-Saharan Africa, often still have high birth rates, but middle-income countries like India and Brazil also face a fast-dropping fertility rates.

Nintendo to remake classic 'Zelda' game 'Ocarina of Time'



Paris, France

Japanese games giant Nintendo on Tuesday announced a new version of beloved 1998 action-adventure classic "The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time" for its latest Switch 2 console.

The company provided few details about the "Ocarina of Time" remake on a livestream presenting upcoming titles, saying only that the game will arrive this year, the 40th anniversary of the series.

Its original version on the Nintendo 64 console was a 1990s landmark, with an immersive, detailed 3D world and a combat system that allowed players to "lock on" to individual enemies -- today an industry standard.

Players controlled green-clad protagonist Link in a time-hopping adventure that straddled both his childhood and adulthood, as he confronted dark lord Ganondorf to save Princess Zelda.

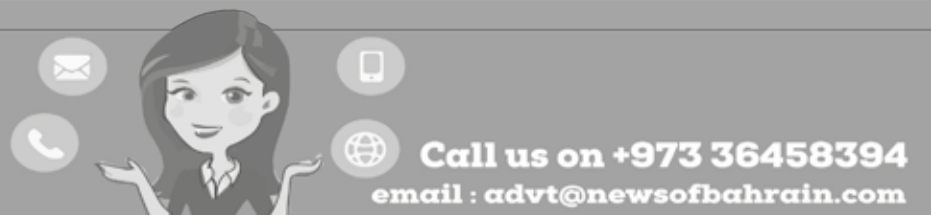
"Ocarina of Time" is regularly celebrated as one of the best games of all time in the gaming press, and has a 99 percent score on review aggregation site Metacritic.

A previous 2011 remake for Nintendo's 3DS handheld updated the original's graphics to take advantage of the machine's 3D capabilities.

More than 140 million "Zelda" games have been sold worldwide, with the last instalment, 2023's "Tears of the Kingdom", becoming the fastest-selling yet.

A live-action "Zelda" movie is planned for release in April 2027.

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region

Bahrain and Jordan Expand Gaza Assistance

Agreement focuses on sustainable development and relief projects in Gaza

The Royal Humanitarian Foundation of the Kingdom of Bahrain has signed a cooperation agreement with the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation to support development and relief projects in the Gaza Strip.

The agreement aims to implement several sustainable development and service initiatives designed to benefit Palestinians in Gaza, in cooperation with approved institutions and organisations.

The deal was signed on behalf of Bahrain's Royal Humanitarian Foundation by acting secretary-general Engineer Ibrahim Daller Al Doseri, while the secretary-general of the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation, Dr Hussein Al Shibli, signed on behalf of the Jordanian side.

The agreement forms part of the foundation's broader efforts to expand its humanitarian and relief partnerships and strengthen cooperation with organisations involved in humanitarian work. The two sides said the partnership would help

deliver sustainable development and service projects to meet the needs of those affected in Gaza.

Speaking after the signing, Engineer Ibrahim Daller Al Doseri praised the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa in supporting affected nations and communities. He said the Royal Humanitarian Foundation would continue its efforts to support the Palestinian people under the follow-up of Shaikh



The agreement reflects the strong ties between Bahrain and Jordan and their shared commitment to supporting Palestinians through sustainable humanitarian projects.

Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs.

He added that the agreement marked an important step towards enhancing joint humani-

tarian action and implementing development and relief projects aimed at improving living conditions and providing essential services to those affected in Gaza.

For his part, Dr Hussein Al Shibli expressed pride in the cooperation with Bahrain's Royal Humanitarian Foundation. He said the agreement would help unify efforts towards specialised development projects capable of creating sustainable impact and addressing the urgent needs of Gaza's residents during the current period.

Weekly toll rises in Gaza and West Bank

Gaza reports 38 deaths and over 200 injuries in one week Gaza

Israeli and Palestinian casualties and incidents of violence have continued across Gaza and the West Bank, according to figures covering the period from 2 to 8 June 2026.

The reported data outlines a further rise in fatalities, injuries, arrests, and settlement-related incidents amid ongoing conflict.

Between 7 October 2023 and 8 June 2026, the total number of reported incidents is said to have reached 380,975, including 74,143 people killed and 183,905 injured.

Gaza deaths and injuries last week

In the Gaza Strip, 38 Palestinians were killed over the past week, with one additional body recovered. A further 204 people were reported injured.

These figures add to the wider toll in the territory as hostilities continue, with emergency services operating under difficult conditions.



West Bank fatalities and arrests

In the occupied West Bank, two Palestinians were killed and 23 others injured during the same period.

Among those killed was an infant in Hebron. Two children were injured after one was struck by a military vehicle, while four children were also among those arrested.

Overall, 41 deaths and 227 injuries were recorded across Palestinian territories during the reporting period.

Military incursions and detentions

Israeli military forces carried

out 299 incursions into West Bank areas over seven days, during which 175 Palestinians were detained, according to the figures.

The operations formed part of ongoing military activity across multiple locations in the territory.

Settler violence and settlement activity

The report documented 141 incidents of settler-related violence during the week.

In addition, 24 settlement-related activities were recorded over the same period, indicating continued expansion and activity in the occupied West Bank.

UAE calls for global action on wildlife trafficking

The United Arab Emirates has called for stronger international cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking and environmental crimes, warning that such offences are increasingly linked to organised crime, corruption and climate change.

Speaking at a high-level United Nations debate, Colonel Saeed Al Dhaheri, Minister Plenipotentiary and Police Advisor, said environmental crime is no longer just an environmental issue but a growing transnational threat that undermines biodiversity, fuels illegal economies and impacts security



and livelihoods worldwide.

He highlighted the UAE-led International Initiative on Law Enforcement for Climate, launched in 2023 in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The initiative aims to strengthen cooperation among law

enforcement agencies, enhance training and improve global capacity to address environmental offences.

According to the UAE, the programme has connected more than 50 law enforcement agencies and international organisations and supported joint operations across key ecological regions, including the Amazon and Congo basins. Recent operations resulted in over 177 arrests and the seizure of illegally harvested timber and minerals, while training programmes reached more than 4,300 participants from 143 countries.

Mohamed Said Maalem rekindles fiery feud with Mohammad Fakhreddine

Manama

Mohamed "L'Ambiance" Said Maalem has finally scaled the summit of mixed martial arts, but the glow of championship gold has not dimmed the memory of a rival he refuses to forget.

Even after delivering a career-defining triumph, the Algerian-Swiss powerhouse finds himself drawn back into the orbit of Mohammad "The Latest" Fakhreddine.

At BRAVE CF 106 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on Saturday, June 6, Said Maalem authored one of the most dramatic turnarounds in recent memory.

Facing defending champion and rival Erko "The Bounty Hunter" Jun in a high-stakes rematch, he absorbed adversi-



ty before flipping the contest on its head, sealing a fourth-round stoppage to capture the BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight World Title in the co-main event.

Yet the celebration carried an unmistakable undertone of unfinished history.

During his post-fight conversation with play-by-play voice Phil Campbell, the newly

crowned king wasted no time redirecting attention toward a familiar adversary.

"Give me Fakhreddine. Fakhro, come here, boy," Said Maalem declared.

The response from the reigning BRAVE CF Middleweight World Champion came swiftly and without hesitation.

"Challenge accepted. I'm about to come and get your a** again," Fakhreddine replied on social media.

The hostility between the two is rooted in a turbulent shared past that has refused to fade with time.

Their first encounter at BRAVE CF 52 in August 2021 in Milan, Italy, saw Said Maalem seemingly reach the pinnacle of his career after overwhelming Fakhreddine and securing a

first-round technical knockout for the vacant BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight World Title.

He even left the arena with the belt wrapped around his waist, believing destiny had finally answered.

That moment, however, was short-lived. A post-fight review later revealed illegal strikes to the back of the head during the finishing sequence, prompting officials and the Italian commission to overturn the result to a no-contest.

The victory, along with the championship celebration, was erased from the record.

When fate brought them together again at BRAVE CF 57 — this time happening in Bahrain — in March 2022, Fakhreddine settled the score in definitive fashion, halting Said Maalem in

the second round to seize the vacant crown and firmly slam the door on his rival's redemption arc.

Now, with the belt once again resting on his shoulders, Said Maalem stands at another crossroads.

The ghost of Milan and the sting of defeat in their rematch continue to linger, and the path forward appears to lead back to the same man who has defined so much of Said Maalem's anguish.

With BRAVE CF's competitive landscape shifting once more, this renewed friction could pave the way for the most consequential trilogy clash in the promotion's history, and potentially the most heated rivalry the growing Arab MMA scene has ever witnessed.

Bahrain to compete in 2026 World Snooker Team Championship in China

TDT | Manama

Bahrain will participate in the 2026 World Snooker Team Championship, scheduled to take place in Guangdong Province, People's Republic of China, from June 16 to 19.

The national team will be represented by promising young players Abdullah Al Aali and Abdullah Mohammed, marking another important step in Bahrain's continued development of cue sports at the international level.

Organised under the International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF), the championship will be hosted by the

Chinese Billiard Sports Association (CBSA) in collaboration with the Guangdong Billiards Association. This will be the third consecutive year that the CBSA has staged the event, reflecting its ongoing commitment to promoting and developing cue sports globally.

The IBSF and CBSA have extended invitations to all member nations to participate; entries are required by May 15. A total of 24 teams will compete, each consisting of up to three players and one team delegate or coach. Excluding the host nation, China, each country is permitted to enter one team in accordance with qualification criteria.

Chery Bahrain Supports Local Sporting Talent as Title Sponsor of Badminton Tournament

Manama

Chery Bahrain, operating under The Bahraini Asian Motors W.L.L. by Motorcity, took part as the title sponsor of the CHERY-BBSF-POWERJADE Junior Ranking Circuit 2 and Eid Open Tournament held at Al Nasser Club in Juffair from May 29 to 31.

The tournament, organised by PowerJade Academy in collaboration with the Bahrain Badminton & Squash Federation (BBSF), brought together junior and senior badminton players from across the Kingdom.

The competition featured boys' and girls' singles and doubles matches across Under-9 to Under-19 categories, alongside senior and veteran events. A total of 279 players participated, with 48 winners and 48 runners-up recognised across various divisions.



Tournament Director Jinesh praised the partnership with Chery in supporting player development.

Suaid Mulla, Senior Marketing Manager for Chery, said the

company remains committed to supporting community initiatives that encourage youth development, healthy lifestyles and sporting excellence in Bahrain.

Stokes facing uncertain future as England captain after nightclub incident 'with rugby player'

AFP | London

Ben Stokes' position as England cricket captain was in jeopardy Monday after officials announced he was being investigated for a nightclub incident reportedly involving a Saracens rugby player.

Stokes and team-mate Gus Atkinson are facing a probe by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) for breaking team rules in the early hours of Monday morning following England's win in the first Test against New Zealand at Lord's.

It is the latest controversy concerning the England team following a tour of Australia where the side faced allegations of a drinking culture during a 4-1 Ashes series loss concluded in January.

If Stokes is stripped of the captaincy, vice-captain Harry Brook -- already the skipper of England's white-ball teams -- could lead the hosts in next week's second Test across London at the Oval.

This would represent a re-



England captain Ben Stokes (R) congratulates Gus Atkinson (L) during a match (file photo)

markable reversal for Brook, who was fined and censured for late-night drinking and clashing with a nightclub bouncer before captaining England in a one-day international in Wellington in October.

"The ECB is currently investigating a breach of team protocols following the conclusion of the first Men's Test against New Zealand," the governing body said in a statement issued Monday.

Wembanyama sparks Spurs past Knicks in NBA Finals as Trump booed

AFP | New York

Victor Wembanyama scored 32 points to inspire the San Antonio Spurs to a 115-111 victory over New York in the NBA Finals on Monday, snapping the Knicks' 13-game win streak with President Donald Trump booed as he watched on.

Frenchman Wembanyama added eight rebounds, six assists, three blocks and two steals at Madison Square Garden as the Spurs cut the Knicks' lead to 2-1 in the best-of-seven championship series.

"We've done what we were supposed to do but the job is absolutely not done," the 22-year-old Wembanyama said. "We're not even halfway. The hardest is yet to come."

The Spurs knew no team has ever won an NBA playoff series after losing the first three games, helping push them after



San Antonio's Victor Wembanyama, center, and teammate De'Aaron Fox react

late-game blunders cost them in a game-two home loss.

"Less mistakes, more control," the 7ft 4in (2.24m) Wembanyama said. "It's the little things. We were more serious. Less mistakes. Less turnovers."

Stephon Castle added 23

points for the Spurs while Dylan Harper had 13 off the bench.

"He has got great poise," Wembanyama said of Castle. "It's hard to put into words how valuable he is to us."

Jalen Brunson led New York with 32 points while OG

Anunoby added 28, but the Knicks shot 40-of-88 from the floor and only hit 13-of-37 from three-point range.

"What was better in the defense was communication, being early," said Wembanyama.

The Knicks' win streak was halted two shy of the NBA playoff-record 15 in a row won by Golden State on the way to the 2017 title.

The Spurs seek their sixth NBA title and first since 2014 while the Knicks won their only crowns in 1970 and 1973.

A raucous crowd created an electric atmosphere for the first NBA Finals game at Madison Square Garden since 1999.

That included boos for Trump, the first sitting president to attend an NBA Finals game, when he was shown on the arena videoscreen.

Somali referee axed after being denied entry to US

AFP | Los Angeles

Award-winning Somali referee Omar Artan has been dropped from officiating at the World Cup after being barred from entering the United States, world football's governing body FIFA said on Monday.

A FIFA spokesperson confirmed in a statement that Artan, who was refused entry to the US after arriving at Miami International Airport on Saturday, would play no part in the World Cup.

Artan would have been the first Somali to referee at a World Cup.

"FIFA can confirm that match official Omar Abdulkadir Artan will be unable to train and officiate at the FIFA World Cup 2026 after he was denied entry into the United States," the spokesperson told AFP.

FIFA emphasized that it was powerless to influence the decision, which it said was the sole preserve of tournament co-hosts the United States.

"FIFA is not involved in host country immigration processes, including visa adjudications, and has been informed by authorities that Mr Artan's status will not be changed at present," the spokesperson said.

"In line with previous FIFA events, a host government ultimately determines who receives a visa and who is admitted into



Somali referee Omar Abdulkadir Artan during a match (file photo)

their country."

A spokesperson for United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) said Artan was denied entry following a routine inspection.

"During processing, the traveler underwent additional inspection, a routine part of CBP's inspection process when officers need to verify information or determine admissibility," the CBP spokesperson said.

"Following inspection, the traveler, a referee for the FIFA World Cup, was determined to be inadmissible due to vetting concerns and was denied entry."

Somalia is one of several countries on a travel ban list introduced by President Don-

ald Trump's administration as part of a broader immigration crackdown.

In a statement to AFP, Artan said he wanted to concentrate on the future.

"Despite the circumstances I am in a positive mood and I am focused on the next challenges in my refereeing career," he said.

"I want to thank the football family for their messages and wish my colleagues all the best success during the World Cup and I look forward to joining them again in future competitions."

'Inspiration'

A government adviser in Mogadishu told AFP earlier Monday

that Artan had a valid visa for the US.

The tournament kicks off on Thursday.

"Omar Artan is among Africa's most respected referees and deserves the support of the entire football community," Ciise Aden Abshir, a senior adviser to Somalia's Ministry of Youth and Sports and a former national team captain, said.

Abshir said Artan flew back to Istanbul after being refused entry in Miami.

"Denying him entry to the United States and preventing him from officiating scheduled matches harms not only him personally but also undermines football's commitment to fairness, merit, and the spirit of fair play," Abshir added.



Artan had already made history as the first Somali chosen to officiate at a World Cup and was named African men's referee of the year in 2025

Brazil's Neymar 'recovering well' after injury ahead of opener



Brazil's forward Neymar acknowledges fans at the end of the international friendly football match between Brazil and Panama

AFP | Morristown

Neymar is "recovering well" from the calf injury that has made him a doubt for the start of Brazil's World Cup campaign, the team said in a statement on Monday.

Brazil's all-time record scorer underwent an MRI scan on Monday which showed he is "making good progress in his treatment" amid hopes that he will be able to play a part for Carlo Ancelotti's side in the United States.

"He will continue to follow the recovery schedule and fitness programme as planned by the Brazil team medical staff," the Brazilian Football Confederation said.

Neymar was diagnosed with a calf injury late last month and has since been in a race to recover fitness for the tournament, with Brazil kicking off

their campaign against Morocco at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey on Saturday.

He did not take to the field with his teammates for Monday's workout at Brazil's base, the new training ground of MLS outfit New York Red Bulls, around 50 kilometres (30 miles) west of Manhattan.

Instead he stayed inside to work in the gym.

Now 34, the former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain superstar has been an integral part of Brazil's last three World Cup campaigns but there was some surprise at his inclusion this time as injuries have prevented him from playing for his country at all since 2023.

He has played in just half of his club's games in the Brazilian league, cup and Copa Sudamericana this year due to various fitness issues.

Iran says US revoked World Cup ticket allocation for supporters



Members of Mexico's National Guard record with their mobile phones the arrival of the bus transporting Iran's national football team at the Caliente Stadium for a training session in Tijuana

AFP | Tehran

Iran's football federation yesterday said the United States has revoked its allocation of tickets for its World Cup group games, accusing the co-host of obstructing the attendance of Iranian supporters under the shadow of a bitter diplomatic row.

The US has presented a number of bureaucratic hurdles for Iran at the global football spectacle, including refusing to issue visas for some of its support staff, as the two countries remain at war after the US and Israel attacked the country in late February.

"With less than three days remaining until the start of the 2026 World Cup... the United

States has once again acted to obstruct the presence of Iranian supporters at the stadiums hosting the national team's three group stage matches," the federation said in a statement.

The Iranian football body said FIFA regulations dictate that it should be allocated eight percent of tickets for each match, which are given to participating federations for distribution to their supporters through official channels.

According to the statement, Iran had already begun ticket sales for group stage matches against New Zealand, Belgium and Egypt -- all to be held in the US -- after receiving its quota, with some fans having already made necessary arrangements.

Jota will be in Scotland skipper Robertson's 'heart' at World Cup, says widow

AFP | Paris

Diogo Jota's widow said in a letter to Scotland captain Andy Robertson she is sure her late husband will be in his "heart" when he leads the side out for their opening match in the World Cup on Saturday.

Jota and Robertson became close friends during their time at Liverpool before the former's spell there was cruelly cut short when he died, aged 28, in a car crash last July.

Robertson, who ended a trophy-laden nine year spell with Liverpool when he signed for Tottenham Hotspur last Friday, had paid tribute to Jota after the Scots secured their place at the finals for the first time since 1998.

"We spoke so much about going to the World Cup because he missed the last one with Portugal and I did with Scotland," Robertson said last November after the play-off win over Denmark.

"I know he'll be smiling over me today."

Rute Cardoso, the mother of Jota's three children, said in her letter -- which FIFA published along with a video of Robertson reading it -- his words that night had touched her deeply.

"When I heard your words and learnt what you felt on that day when Scotland qualified for the World Cup, after so many



Liverpool's Portuguese striker Diogo Jota (2nd L) celebrates scoring his team's second goal with Liverpool's Scottish defender Andrew Robertson (L) and Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino (R)

years of waiting, I realised that Diogo never truly left the pitch," wrote Cardoso, who married Jota days before he died alongside his brother Andre Silva.

"By achieving that moment and securing your place at the World Cup, you won't be going alone.

'Full of emotion'

"You'll be taking his dream with you too. And when you step on to the pitch, I know it

won't just be you walking out. Diogo will be with you in your thoughts, in your steps, in your heart.

"So today, I want to thank you. Thank you for not forgetting him.

"Thank you for taking him with you. Thank you for turning the pain of loss into strength and into something so beautiful.

"That's how we do it here at home too. Every day. He would be, and is, incredibly proud of



"I'll carry him in my heart and I know he'll be with me come the first game, come the second game, come the third game and hopefully beyond that

ANDREW ROBERTSON

you.

"Cherish that dream, Andy. Live it for yourself and for him."

Robertson said Cardoso's letter would stay with him for a "very long time".

"I'll carry him in my heart and I know he'll be with me come the first game, come the second game, come the third game and hopefully beyond that," said Robertson.

"He's always there. The memories are always something that we bring up and sometimes laugh, sometimes cry.

"And that will be no different, especially going into a tournament which is full of emotion. I know he'll be right at the front of my mind.

"I'm not only just playing for me. I'm playing for both of us."

Robertson will hope to honour the memory of Jota by becoming the first Scotland skipper to lead the side into the knock-out stages of the finals at the ninth attempt.

Exclusive

'Bahrain changed my career'

Departed coach Nandinho reflects on breakthrough in the Kingdom

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Recently departed Muharraq head coach Fernando Manuel de Jesus Santos, popularly known as 'Nandinho', has described his time in Bahrain as the most meaningful chapter of his coaching career. The Portuguese tactician bowed out following a successful spell that produced domestic dominance across three seasons with Al Ahli and Muharraq.

His Bahrain journey began with Al Ahli, where he guided the "Eagles" to the 2023-24 His Majesty the King's Cup, marking his first trophy in the Kingdom. He then took charge of Saudi side Al Bukiryah during the 2024-25 season before making a mid-season switch to Muharraq in January 2025, a move that immediately transformed the domestic landscape.

In his first season with the "Red Wolves", he delivered the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League (NPL) title, ending the club's seven-year wait for the league crown. He followed that with a sensational 2025-26 campaign, retaining the league title and extending Muharraq's record to 35 league titles. He also won the King's Cup, ending a six-year drought and taking the club's record tally to 20 cup triumphs.

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, Nandinho said the turning point in his career was not just the titles themselves, but the sense of validation that came with finally converting years of work across multiple countries into silverware.

"The main difference in my career here is that I won titles. In Portugal, Spain, and Saudi Arabia, I had good spells and strong performances, but I didn't get trophies over the line. In Bahrain, I finally did, and that made this experience very special," he said.

Beyond the silverware, the 53-year-old pointed to a deeper personal connection, describing how quickly Bahrain became more than just another coaching stop.

"The people are extremely kind. I was very well received at Al Ahli and again at Muharraq. I felt at home from



Coach Santos poses with Muharraq's league and cup trophies

the beginning, and now Bahrain feels like a second home," he said.

He also reflected on the football culture in the country, noting both its growing passion and structural gaps that still need long-term investment.

"In Europe, football is lived differently. The passion is stronger in places like Portugal, Spain, and Italy. Here, it is different, but there is still a clear passion for the game," he said. "To grow further, Bahrain needs stronger youth development, better academies, and improved facilities. That will help raise the level and allow the national game to compete more consistently in Asia."

Nandinho's 16-month spell at Muharraq was defined by rapid impact and sustained success. He established himself as the architect of multiple milestones in Bahraini football, culminating in a memorable title double.

"There is no single trophy that stands out. Winning is always special, but winning the league with Muharraq after seven years and the King's Cup after six, both in the same season, was historic for the club," he said. "We wrote a golden chapter together."

He also credited the collective mentality within the squad, including players, staff, and management, for helping



Muharraq players honour coach in championship celebrations

the team overcome challenges across both campaigns.

"We built more than a team. We built a family," he said. "From the start, we knew unity would be essential. Even in difficult moments, including criticism, we stayed focused. The support from the board was especially important. They were always present with strong backing, even when things were not easy."

Supporters, he added, played a key role in pushing the team through difficult stretches of both seasons.

"The fans were like a 12th player. They pushed us in tough moments

and gave us energy when we needed it most."

Despite his departure, Nandinho left the door open for a future return to Bahrain, a country he says he remains deeply attached to.

"I felt very welcome here from day one. Bahrain is like a second home to me. I don't know when, but I am sure I will come back one day – whether to coach again or simply to visit friends."

His exit brings down the curtain on a highly successful chapter at Muharraq, with the club now set to begin the search for a successor after a trophy-laden era under his leadership.

Al Najma face Sharjah in must-win Asian club clash



Bahrain's Al Najma handball squad

TDT | Manama

Al Najma will aim to secure their first points of the 28th Asian Men's Club League Hand-

ball Championship when they take on UAE side Sharjah SC tonight at 8pm in Kuwait.

Competing under new head coach Abdulrahman Mohamed, Al Najma are chasing a third

Asian club title. They previously lifted the championship trophy in 2017 and 2023, finished runners-up in 2015 and 2022, and claimed third place in 2001.

Standings

#	Team	MP	Won	Tied	Lost	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	Burgan SC (KWT)	3	2	1	0	80	71	+9	5
2	Al Khaleej (KSA)	3	2	1	0	94	89	+5	5
3	Kuwait SC (KWT)	3	2	0	1	88	82	+6	4
4	Al Duhail (QAT)	2	1	0	1	57	54	+3	2
5	Al Arabi (QAT)	3	0	2	1	75	80	-5	2
6	Al Najma (BRN)	2	0	0	2	51	59	-8	0
7	Sharjah SC (UAE)	2	0	0	2	48	58	-10	0

The Bahraini giants head into the contest after back-to-back defeats against Kuwait SC and Al Duhail, but have shown encouraging signs against strong opposition. Veteran star Mohammed Habib Ahmed has led the way, including a 10-goal performance against Al Duhail that earned him player-of-the-match honours.

Tonight's clash carries added importance, as both Al Najma and Sharjah are still searching for their first points of the campaign. Kuwait's Burgan and Saudi Arabia's Al Khaleej cur-

rently lead the standings with five points from three matches, while Kuwait SC are close behind with four. Qatar's Al Duhail sit fourth with two points from two games, and Al Arabi also have two points from three outings.

With the top four teams advancing to the semi-finals on June 15 and the medal matches scheduled for June 17, a victory would provide a timely boost to either side's hopes of reaching the knockout stage and keeping pace with the teams above them in the standings.

Man Utd to face AC Milan in Poland friendly

AFP | London

Manchester United will complete a busy programme of pre-season friendlies against AC Milan in Wroclaw, Poland, the English giants announced yesterday.

The game will take place on August 15, not long before the Premier League season starts later that month, with United looking to build on last term's encouraging third-place finish under manager Michael Carrick.

United open their pre-season against Wrexham in Helsinki on July 18 before facing Rosenborg in Trondheim, Norway the following Friday.