

Tonali saves Italy from World Cup disaster against Israel

Italy trail leaders Norway by three points and still have a chance of taking first place | P16

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HM King: Growing Bahrain-Saudi ties a source of pride

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa expressed pride in the deep-rooted and historical relations between the Kingdoms of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, and their mutual keenness to further strengthen and consolidate them for the benefit of both peoples. He highlighted the steady progress of cooperation, coordination, and joint action across all sectors, particularly cultural, scientific, and knowledge-related areas.

HM the King made the remarks as he received yesterday, at Al Safriya Palace, His Royal Highness Prince Faisal bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Special Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,



HM the King receives HRH Prince Faisal bin Salman

Chairman of the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives (Darah), and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the

King Fahd National Library.

HRH Prince Faisal bin Salman conveyed the greetings of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud,

the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud,

the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and their wishes for Bahrain and its people of further progress and prosperity.

HM the King relayed his greetings and best wishes to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, wishing them good health and wellbeing, and further prosperity and development to the Saudi people.

HM King Hamad also commended the keenness of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to strengthen Bahraini-Saudi relations, and commended the honourable historic stances of Saudi Arabia in support of Bahrain, as well as its pioneering role in strengthening joint Gulf and Arab action.

Apple launches latest iPhone 17

AFP | San Francisco, US

Apple yesterday showed off a new, slimmer iPhone “Air” model with “high density battery” and a brand new processor, as well as an iPhone 17, the latest upgrade to its flagship smartphone.

The iPhone Air model is the star of the annual product launch event, and Apple said the model is its most durable iPhone yet. **(Detailed report on Page 7)**

Iran agrees to new cooperation deal with IAEA

AFP | Tehran

Iran said yesterday it has agreed a new cooperation framework with the UN nuclear watchdog after its suspension of cooperation following June attacks by Israel and the US.

“Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have reached an understanding on how to engage under the new circumstances,” foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei told state television after a meeting in Cairo between Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi.

The head of the IAEA, Rafael Grossi, hailed a new framework agreement with Iran, calling it an “important step in the right direction”. In a post on X, he said he agreed with Araghchi “on practical modalities to resume inspection activities in Iran”.

● Bahrain condemns Israeli attack

● Expresses full solidarity

● Urges calm de-escalation

TDT | Agencies

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday expressed the Kingdom of Bahrain’s condemnation of the Israeli attack on the State of Qatar, considering it a violation of Qatari national sovereignty and the principles of international law.

The Kingdom expressed its full solidarity with the State of Qatar in all the measures taken to protect its security, sovereignty, and the safety of its citizens and residents, calling for calm and de-escalation to preserve regional peace and security.

The Shura Council and the Council of Representatives of the Kingdom also affirmed their full support and solidarity with the State of Qatar. The councils announced its backing for all measures and actions Qatar takes to protect its security, stability, and sovereignty, and to



Residential buildings housing Hamas political bureau members in Qatar targeted by Israeli attack

ensure the safety of citizens and residents on its territory.

Further, the councils condemned and denounced the Israeli attack on Qatar, describing it as a violation of Qatar’s sovereignty and a breach of international law and conventions. They emphasised Bahrain’s firm and unwavering stance in support of Qatar and its continued call for de-escalation to preserve regional peace and security.

The councils also commended the strong ties and relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the State of Qatar, highlighting the deep-rooted relations

between the two countries. They emphasised the strong relations among the Gulf Cooperation Council states, and hoped for the continued stability, security, and prosperity of the Gulf states under their leaderships.

Global condemnation

Germany called the strike “unacceptable” and warned that it risked derailing delicate hostage negotiations, a report said. Morocco, Sudan and Libya issued official statements condemning the strike, while Egypt and the Arab League also voiced support for Qatar and

denounced the violation of its sovereignty, reports said.

A White House spokesperson was cited as saying that the strike “does not advance Israel or America’s goals,” distancing Washington from the operation while stressing Qatar’s essential role as mediator. In a separate statement, Qatar’s government was reported to have rejected claims that it had been warned in advance, saying a U.S. official only called “during the explosions.”

Fatalities confirmed

Media reports quoting Hamas

officials said their top leadership survived the strike, but five members were killed. Another report said a Qatari Internal Security Force officer was among the dead.

As per news reports, the attack occurred while Hamas leaders were in a meeting discussing a U.S.-drafted ceasefire proposal, indicating that the strike directly targeted ongoing diplomatic efforts.

Israel claims responsibility

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted as saying that Israel bears full responsibility for what he described as a “precise strike” designed to limit civilian harm. He argued that the operation was necessary to hasten the end of the war.

Soon after the strike, air raid sirens sounded in Israel following a missile launch from Yemen, underscoring the wider regional fallout of the Doha attack, according to another report.

The strike on Qatar’s capital, widely described as unprecedented, has widened the circle of international condemnation and underscored Bahrain’s call for calm and de-escalation to preserve regional peace and security. **(Global condemnation – see detailed report on page 8)**



HM King calls for moderation, rejection of extremism

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa underscored the importance of upholding moderation and rejecting extremism, while strengthening shared human values.

He further highlighted the need to promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation among nations and cultures for the collective benefit of humanity.

Reception

HM the King was speaking as he received Archbishop Dr. Hosam Naoum, Archbishop of Jerusalem of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, and Bishop Sean Semple, Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf of the



HM the King receives Archbishop Dr. Hosam Naoum, in the presence of Bishop Sean Semple, Reverend Dr. Richard Fermer, and H.E. US Ambassador Alastair Long

Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, at Al Safriya Palace.

They were accompanied by Reverend Dr. Richard Fermer, Dean of Saint Christopher's Anglican Cathedral in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and Alastair Long, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Bahrain.

His Majesty welcomed the guests and addressed topics that advance a culture of tolerance, compassion and peace among peoples.

Pride

HM King Hamad emphasised that the Kingdom takes pride in its longstanding tradition of



coexistence and religious tolerance, where all faiths live together, united by mutual respect and awareness.

He also highlighted Bahrain's leading global initiatives that promote dialogue among religions and cultures and reinforce peaceful coexistence.

HM the King said that the Kingdom will continue to uphold its message of peace among people of diverse cultures and beliefs.

Appreciation

The attendees expressed their thanks and appreciation to His

Majesty for the care and attention extended to all religions in the Kingdom without distinction, and for providing places of worship for different faiths.

They valued the Kingdom's efforts in promoting the values of peace, coexistence, and compassion among peoples.

Greening the Gulf

Bahrain at the Forefront of a Green Future

● Heat, Drought, and Water Scarcity Take Center Stage

● GWECCC Drives Action on UN Climate and Sustainability Goals

Ashen Tharaka
TDT | Manama

“Sustainability is more than a goal; it is a responsibility we owe to future generations,” said H.E. Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, at the inauguration of the second edition of the Global Water, Energy and Climate Change Congress (GWECCC 2025).

The Congress, held under the patronage of H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister, at Exhibition World Bahrain, brings together global leaders, policymakers, and industry experts to discuss innovative solutions for sustainable water and energy management and to address the pressing challenges of climate change.

Climate challenges

Dr. Bin Daina highlighted the urgency of addressing climate challenges.

“We face rising temperatures, droughts, and delayed rainfall, all linked to climate change. Through regional cooperation, innovation, and policy integration, we can address these challenges and secure a sustainable future for our communities,” he said.

H.E. Jasem Mohamed Al Budaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, praised Bahrain's leadership in promoting sustainability.

Economic growth

“Through innovation, research, and investment in renewable energy, the GCC countries are balancing economic



H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister, inaugurates the GWECCC 2025 Exhibition



H.E. Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina



H.E. Jasem Mohamed Al Budaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council



Ahmad O. Al Khowaiter, Executive Vice President of Technology & Innovation at Aramco



Marco Arcelli, CEO of ACWA Power

growth with the preservation of natural resources,” he said.

Al Budaiwi also noted ambitious national targets across the region, including Bahrain's goal to generate 20% of energy from renewable sources by 2025 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

Further he stressed the importance of balancing conventional and alternative energy sources.

Conventional systems

“Even with trillions invested in alternative energy, conven-

tional systems remain essential for global energy security and water supply. Technologies such as carbon capture and storage, AI-driven efficiency improvements, and wastewater reuse are vital to ensure sustainable production and resource management,” he said.

The Congress also heard from global industry leaders, including Ahmad O. Al Khowaiter, Executive Vice President of Technology & Innovation at Aramco. He emphasized the dual chal-

lenge of advancing alternative energy while maintaining conventional energy systems.

Vital resources

“We must ensure that vital resources such as water and energy remain available and sustainable for future generations. Collaboration and innovation are key to achieving meaningful progress,” he said.

Marco Arcelli, CEO of ACWA Power, highlighted technological solutions in water and energy

management.

“Over the past 15 years, we have reduced water consumption per cubic meter by 87% and decoupled desalination from energy-intensive processes. Sustainability, affordability, and security must go hand in hand — and we need to act fast,” he said, stressing the importance of regional cooperation and cross-sector collaboration.

Energy solutions

GWECCC, Founding Partner, Aramco has enhanced water efficiency, cut CO2 emissions,

Key regional goals:

Kingdom of Bahrain: Generate 20% of energy from renewable sources by 2025 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

United Arab Emirates: Achieve global leadership in solar energy and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Source 50% of energy from renewables by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2060.

Kuwait: Achieve 16% renewable energy by 2035 and net-zero emissions by 2060.

and diversified its water sources, while ACWA Power has invested \$7 billion in renewable and low-carbon technologies, reduced energy use for water desalination by 87%, and is replicating sustainable water and energy solutions globally.

The Congress, a flagship initiative supported by all GCC governments, operates under the theme “Sustainable Water and Energy Transition: Innovating for a Secure Future.”

It provides a strategic platform for knowledge exchange, research, and actionable solutions aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and global climate commitments.

Regional hub

The Congress also highlighted Bahrain's role as a regional hub for innovation, sustainability, and climate leadership.

The Kingdom's initiatives in renewable energy, water security, and environmental conservation set a benchmark for the Gulf.

Through multi-sector collaboration, innovation, and shared expertise, GWECCC 2025 aims to accelerate the transition toward a sustainable, low-carbon, and water-secure future for the region and beyond.

Award’s eighth edition launched to empower Bahraini women

TDT | Manama

The Supreme Council for Women (SCW) announced the launch of the eighth edition of the HRH Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa Award for Bahraini Women Empowerment.

Established by Decree (5) of 2004, the award bears the name of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and President of the SCW, in recognition of Her Royal Highness’s commitment to supporting national efforts to enhance the status and progress of Bahraini women.

Dr. Ramzan bin Abdulla Al Noaimi, Minister of Information; Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Transport and Telecommunications; Yusuf bin Abdulhus-

sain Khalaf, Minister of Legal Affairs and Acting Minister of Labour; and Dr. Jaleela bint Al Sayed Jawad Hassan, Minister of Health, were present.

Lulwa Al Awadhi, Secretary-General of the SCW, highlighted the award’s importance as the Council’s first initiative to promote women’s empowerment.

She noted that it encourages ministries, public institutions, private sector entities, and civil society to implement programmes supporting women’s advancement and gender balance, while recognising individual initiatives contributing to the progress of Bahraini women.



HRH Princess Sabeeka

Practical mechanism

The Secretary General highlighted that the award serves as a practical mechanism to achieve equal opportunities and gender balance, recognising excellence among ministries, public and private institutions, civil society organisations, and individuals.

Evaluation is based on achievements in supporting working women, integrating their needs into national development plans, and facilitating women’s access to leadership and decision-making positions, according to criteria set by the award committee.

Ninety-Five

Bahrain unveils 95 ways to celebrate Saudi Arabia’s 95th National Day

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Bahrain is celebrating Saudi Arabia’s 95th National Day with 95 experiences that bring together concerts, comedy, heritage workshops and tourism offers, in a campaign that underlines the closeness of the two kingdoms.

The Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) yesterday launched ‘Manawwara Bshoofatkom’, which translates as “your presence makes us shine.” The month-long programme highlights the shared history and forward-looking vision binding Bahrain and Saudi Arabia while inviting Saudi visitors to enjoy authentic Bahraini hospitality.

BTEA Chief Executive Officer Sara Ahmed Buhejji said the initiative is a chance to broaden cooperation and showcase Bahrain as a distinguished tourism destination. “This is an opportunity to further strengthen these ties while offering authentic Bahraini hospitality,” she said.



Sara Ahmed Buhejji



and 26.

Shopping malls including City Centre Bahrain, The Avenues and Marassi Galleria will host traditional folk shows from September 23 to 27. Heritage venues will also come alive: Dragon City with cultural displays, Al Jasra Handicrafts Centre with artisan workshops, Bani Jamra Textile Factory with weaving demonstrations, and the Bahrain National Museum and Pearlring Path with dedicated programmes.

Tourism offers

To complement the cultural and entertainment line-up, BTEA has launched 40 special tourism packages with hotels and resorts. These include discounted accommodation, dining promotions, leisure activities such as boat trips, diving and pearl-diving excursions, and guided tours of heritage landmarks.

Further details of the ‘Manawwara Bshoofatkom’ campaign and Bahrain’s year-round events can be found at www.bahrain.com and on the BTEA mobile app.

With 95 ways to celebrate - from pearls to pop icons - Bahrain is ensuring Saudi Arabia’s 95th National Day shines as brightly in Manama as it does in Riyadh.

Domestic worker’s fraud case

● **African suspect accused of stealing BD778 from employer’s account**

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Court has scheduled a hearing on September 15 in the case of a 39-year-old African domestic worker accused of stealing BD778 from her employer’s account using an online payment application.

During a court session yesterday, the defendant admitted to using her 60-year-old employer’s banking PIN to access the mobile payment app and transfer funds for fraudulent purposes.

The defendant confessed that she exploited her employer’s absence while she was hospitalised, memorised the PIN, and transferred the funds under the pretext of renewing her residency in Bahrain.

The Public Prosecution charged her with unlawfully using the victim’s electronic signature, represented by the PIN, to gain access to the account and make unauthorised transfers.

Transfers

The money was allegedly passed on, in coordination with another person who received the transfers believing they were legitimate.

Investigations showed that the victim first noticed a suspicious BD180 transfer while checking her online payment account.

Further checks by her sister revealed four more unauthorised transactions, bringing the total amount to BD778.

The recipient of the funds told investigators she had received the transfers from the defendant and had returned the last payment.

Another witness confirmed the money was later handed over to the defendant’s relatives.

The defendant confessed that she exploited her employer’s absence while she was hospitalised, memorised the PIN, and transferred the funds under the pretext of renewing her residency in Bahrain.

Hijacking the Highway

● **Workers killed in crash**

● **Prosecution seeks no leniency**

● **Verdict set for October 14**

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

An attempt to overtake a truck on a two-way road ended in tragedy, leaving two workers dead and others injured, as prosecutors urged the court to impose the harshest penalty “without mercy or leniency.”

The First High Criminal Court has set October 14 to deliver its verdict against an African driver accused of causing the fatal accident.



passengers and left others with serious injuries, including the truck driver who suffered a broken leg and head trauma. Both vehicles sustained extensive damage.

The Public Prosecution called for the maximum sentence to be handed down, stressing that the accident was caused by clear violations and full responsibility lay with the driver. Prosecutors argued that such conduct resulted in grave consequences and should serve as a deterrent.

Awaiting the verdict

The case now rests with the court, which is due to announce its ruling next month. If the Prosecution’s call is accepted, the driver faces the strongest punishment under the law. The incident has reignited concerns about reckless driving and its deadly impact on Bahrain’s roads.

Condolences

With Great Sorrow
The CEO & all staff members
of Al Baraka Islamic Bank
convey faithful condolences to

Mr. Noor Ul Mobeen Hashmi
Corporate Banking Department

And to all his family members
on the death of his **“Father”**

May ALLAH shower his blessings upon
the departed soul and give his family
the courage and strength to face this
moment of trial and pain



Death Over a Snack

Trivial theft escalates into fatal assault

- Theft worth 600 fils
- Worker fatally assaulted
- Life sentence upheld

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

Cigarettes, a juice box, and a sandwich, together worth no more than 600 fils, ended with a worker's death and a man's life sentence.

The Court of Cassation has upheld rulings by the First Instance and High Criminal Appeals Courts, confirming the life sentence of a man in his thirties



Image used for illustrative purposes only

convicted of killing a cold store employee in East Riffa.

The case began when the defendant attempted to take the

three items without paying. The worker tried to stop him, but the defendant responded with punches and kicks. The blows caused



In Bahrain, 600 fils can still buy a pack of cigarettes, a juice box, and a simple sandwich - items at the center of this tragic case.

severe injuries that left the victim unconscious outside the shop. He was later taken to hospital, where he died days afterward.

Legal closure

The country's highest court confirmed that the defendant was criminally responsible at the time. A medical committee ruled out any diminished capacity, stating he was fully aware of his actions. Surveillance footage from a nearby home captured him striking the worker before fleeing with the stolen goods. Investigators later tracked him down with the help of confidential sources.

Payment

The victim's brother told prosecutors that the defendant, a neighbor, was known for repeatedly taking items without payment. On the day of the incident, when confronted again, he attacked the worker and escaped.

The store owner described the victim as a trusted employee who had worked there for years. He recalled the shock of finding him lying motionless outside the cold store, after which he was rushed to hospital.

During questioning, the defendant admitted the theft and assault. Records revealed he had prior cases of stealing from shops and attacking workers.

A grim lesson

What began as an attempt to take items worth 600 fils ended in tragedy, costing one man his life and another his freedom. With the Court of Cassation's decision, the life sentence is final, closing a case that shows how petty theft can escalate into fatal violence.

HH Shaikh Nasser's strong support contributes to 'Experience It' success

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) concluded the fourth edition of its pioneering program "Experience it," which is part of its corporate social responsibility initiatives.

This year, 33 students aged 15 to 18 participated in hands-on training experiences across 15 private sector companies.

The participating companies spanned various vital sectors, including: BAPCO, Aluminium Bahrain (ALBA), Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard (ASRY), Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, Ithmaar Bank, Gulf Air Group, Bahrain Airport Services, Kalam Telecom, First Motors, Bahrain Bourse, Nass Holdings, Parcel, Right Calories, Unipal, and Nuun Official.

The fourth edition was organized in partnership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Nasser Centre for Science and Technology, and Hope Talents,



BCCI Chairman Sameer Nass speaks at the event's fourth edition

which provided a comprehensive environment to support students in acquiring practical and technical skills while connecting them with vocational training opportunities aligned with labor market needs.

On this occasion, Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sameer Nass, emphasized that "Experience it" is one of the chamber's key initiatives aimed at empow-

ering Bahraini youth.

He noted that the program is not just a training opportunity but a pioneering experience reflecting the chamber's commitment to equipping young generations with practical expertise for entering the job market.

He mentioned that the program is inspired by the vision of the Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs,

His Highness Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, who highlighted the priority of youth empowerment at the Youth Summit 2020.

The chamber launched the program in response to His Highness's vision, aiming to provide youth with the opportunity to prove themselves in the job market and enhance their role in national development.

Nass praised the significant role

of participating companies and the positive outcomes achieved this year through collaborative efforts between the chamber and its partners, highlighting that the provision of practical training opportunities by 15 private sector entities reflects a strong commitment to corporate social responsibility and belief in investing in youth as the true wealth and future cornerstone of the nation.

Avenue 38 opens in Qalali

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Avenue 38 has opened in Qalali, tying into Rayya Highway.

Engineer Saleh Buhazza, Vice-Chairman of the Muharraq Municipal Council and Fifth Constituency representative, said the Qalali side upgrade of Rayya Highway is complete and will ease traffic and serve residents better.

Buhazza said the next step is to provide car parks for worshippers at Al Khair Mosque and the adjacent cemetery and to mark pedestrian crossings to keep people safe.

He called for phases two and three of the Rayya Highway works on the Al Dair and Samaheej side to be completed to strengthen the road network and meet the scheme's aims.

Buhazza also urged the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs to consider redrawing Qalali's boundary to include Qalali Cemetery and Al Khaleej Complex.

Regional military pipeline; 18th intake cements Bahrain's hub role

- Officers from allied countries
- Masters degree in focus
- Training for leadership roles

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

From battlefield doctrine to classroom rigour, Bahrain's 18th Joint Command and Staff Course opened yesterday as a regional military pipeline where officers from allied countries

will train together and graduate with a Master's degree in Military Sciences.

Regional intake

The course was inaugurated at the Royal Command, Staff, and National Defence College under the patronage of His Excellency Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force. His Excellency Lieutenant General Theyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, Chief of Staff, said the participation of officers from neighbouring states reinforced cooperation and broadened the exchange of expertise.

The programme equips participants to take on leadership, op-



Senior BDF officials with course participants

erational and administrative responsibilities with competence and proficiency. It also awards a Master's degree in Military Sciences, described as a qualification of advanced scientific value and a source of knowledge

for developing armed forces in the region.

Training ethos

Addressing the intake, the Chief of Staff called on officers to expand their knowledge,

adopt advanced military thinking and sharpen their leadership capabilities. "The army advances only through action and is victorious only through sound planning, because military training is the weapon in the field," he said.

Staff colleges worldwide use the abbreviation 'psc' (passed staff college) to identify graduates - a mark that often fast-tracks officers into higher command roles.

The ceremony also featured Quran recitation and a speech by Major General Abdullah Saeed Al Mansouri, Commander of the College. The Chief of Staff conveyed the Commander-in-Chief's best wishes to the participants and concluded with prayers for the protection and prosperity of all nations.

BENEFIT concludes 4th Edition of MASAR programme



Muneera AlJaber,
Manager,
Learning &
Development
at BENEFIT

Manama

BENEFIT, the Kingdom's innovator and leading company in FinTech and electronic financial transactions service, has successfully concluded of the fourth edition of its FinTech Summer Training Programme "MASAR."

The initiative is dedicated to empowering Bahraini youth by equipping them with the hands-on experience and essential skills required to succeed and excel in the field of FinTech.

During the program, 40 young Bahrainis engaged in a rigorous training journey that strengthened their competencies in financial technology. They gained exposure to the professional environment of the sector, acquired hands-on experience, enhanced their creative thinking, and expanded their capacity to contribute to the growth of Bahrain's digital economy. The journey included intensive courses, interactive workshops, field trips and applied training, complemented by insights into the latest

international practices in this fast-evolving field.

The programme offered trainees the opportunity to engage directly in real projects within the company and to work alongside leading experts and specialists in the digital payments and FinTech solutions industry. This approach ensured that Bahraini youth were trained at the highest levels, fully equipped to meet the evolving demands of the FinTech labor market.

This year's edition of MASAR was concluded successfully in a final ceremony held at the company's headquarters, in which the participants were recognised and graduated by management.

Ms. Muneera AlJaber, Manager, Learning & Development at BENEFIT, stated: "We are proud to have successfully concluded the fourth edition of MASAR, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants while congratulating them on their remarkable performance throughout the program. The success of MASAR stands as a testament to our firm commitment to social responsibility towards Bahraini youth and to our ongoing efforts to act as a vital link between ambitious talent and the labor market. It also reaffirms our conviction that investing in Bahraini youth is a fundamental pillar for sustaining progress and driving innovation within the FinTech

sector."

Ms. AlJaber further affirmed: "This year's edition showcased exceptional enthusiasm and a strong willingness to learn among the participants, qualities that motivate us at BENEFIT to continue advancing such training initiatives. We are committed to equipping Bahraini youth with the knowledge and practical experience that sharpen their skills, strengthen their leadership potential, and enable them to contribute meaningfully to the Kingdom's digital economy. We will continue to develop and broaden the program to attract more talent and reinforce Bahrain's position as a regional hub for digital innovation."



Zain Bahrain has concluded its "Zain Career Connect" summer internship program, reaffirming the company's ongoing commitment to the development of Bahraini youth. Held across July and August, the program welcomed university students from different backgrounds and offered them valuable opportunities to gain industry exposure, benefit from guided mentorship, develop practical skills, and build professional connections. Through Zain Career Connect, Zain Bahrain continues to support young talent by bridging the gap between academic learning and the workplace, empowering students with the tools and experience they need to succeed in their future careers.

Bede Bahrain Organizes Financial Literacy Session at Al Hekma Retired Society

Manama

Bede Bahrain, the innovative microfinance solutions app, recently visited Al Hekma Retired Society to host a dedicated session on financial literacy. The initiative comes as part of Bede's commitment to giving back to the community and raising financial awareness across different segments of society.

During the session, the Bede team introduced its financial services to the retired community, engaged in open dialogue, answered live questions, and collected valuable feedback.



They also discussed practical strategies for smart spending and managing resources wisely, highlighting how financial awareness supports confident financial planning.

Yusuf AlBanna, Head of Finance at Bede Bahrain, said:

"Bede Bahrain is honored to meet with the members of Al Hekma Retired Society, who served their country with unwavering commitment and hold a session dedicated to financial literacy. The session aimed to support individuals to manage

their resources wisely and enjoy greater security in their daily lives. Beyond offering financial services, Bede also strive to support the community by sharing knowledge and empowering people to make confident financial decisions. This session allowed us to listen, learn, and exchange experiences."

This initiative reflects Bede Bahrain's ongoing commitment to financial literacy and social responsibility, ensuring that all segments of society are empowered with the knowledge and tools they need to plan their financial journeys with confidence.

CBB supports Fintech Forward 2025

For the third consecutive year

Manama

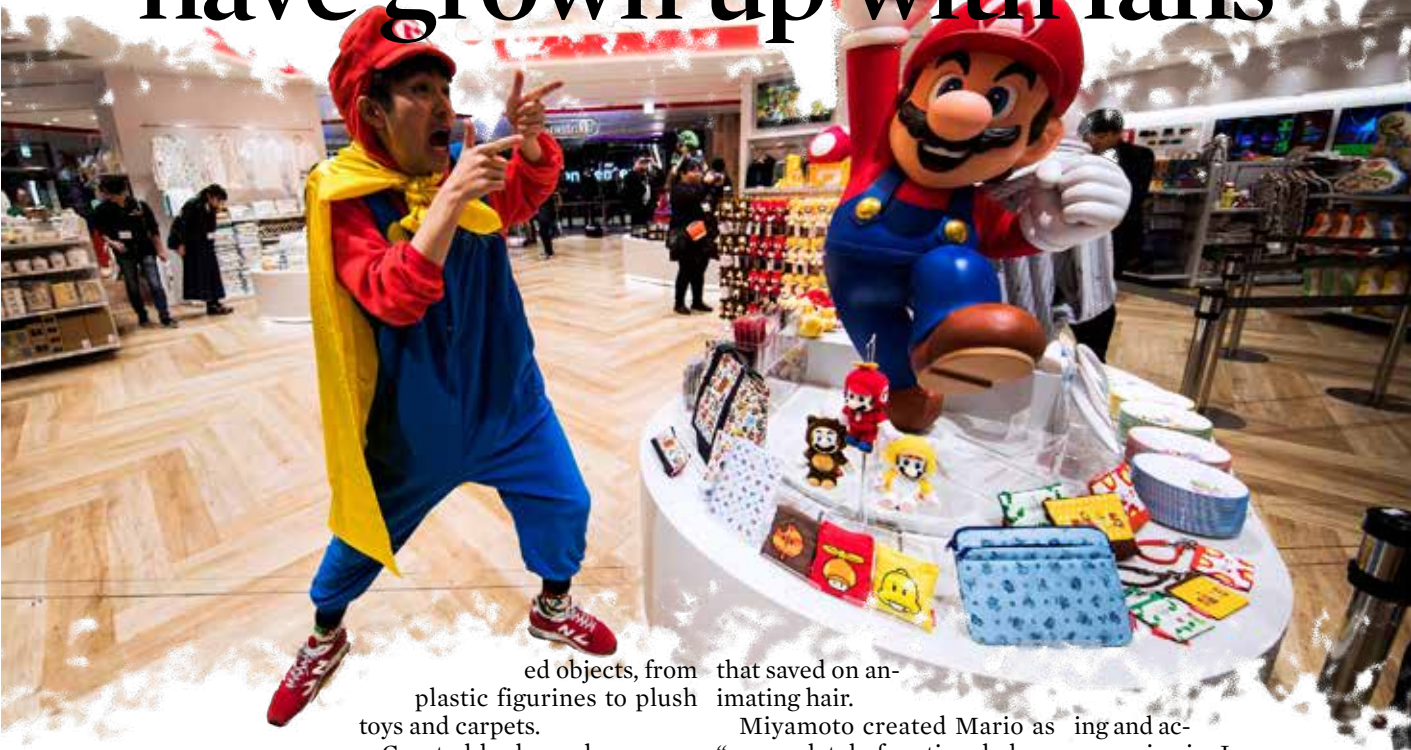
For the third consecutive year, the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) supports Fintech Forward 2025 (FF25), reinforcing its role in shaping the future of finance. The region's leading Fintech forum will be held on the 8th and 9th of October 2025 at Exhibition World Bahrain (EWB). FF25 brings together key industry leaders to address the most critical topics in fintech. The forum's dialogues are designed to deepen understanding of the sector's rapid evolution and reinforce Bahrain's position as a regional financial service innovator. H.E. Khalid Humaidan, Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain, said, "We are pleased to continue our support of



Fintech Forward in 2025. Previous editions of the event cemented Bahrain's reputation as a top hub for Fintech and financial innovation. As Bahrain's financial services sector continues to evolve, collaboration between regulators and innovators is more crucial than ever. The CBB is committed to nurturing a dynamic and inclusive financial landscape, where new technologies can be developed and adopted to serve the future needs of our economy." Driving Bahrain's economic diversification, the financial services sector contributed a leading 17.2% to the country's GDP in 2024. This diversified sector boasts 369 local and international financial institutions, comprising leading conventional and Islamic banking institutions alongside new financial players, including crypto assets, fintech companies, digital payment providers, liquidity providers, and firms specialised in cybersecurity, reg-tech, and insure-tech. Hosted by the Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB) and programmed by Economist Impact, FF25 is supported by the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), and Bahrain FinTech Bay. Year after year, Fintech Forward continues to convene global experts, financial institutions, regulators, and technology leaders from around the world.

Khalid Humaidan, Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain

40 years of 'Mario' games that have grown up with fans



AFP | Paris, France

Surrounded by thousands of objects bearing the likeness of Nintendo's mustachioed plumber, 40-year-old Kikai reflects that his "life would be totally different without Mario" who also marks four decades this week. The colourful "Super Mario Bros.", released for Nintendo's home consoles in Japan on September 13, 1985, was a landmark of early video gaming. Players controlled the eponymous character as he ran and hopped his way from left to right through a colourful world of platforms, pipes and scowling enemies -- all set to the jaunty eight-bit music that has stuck in minds for decades. "My father bought me the game, and I've been playing for as long as I can remember," Kikai told AFP in his office lined with somewhere between 20 and 30 thousand Mario-relat-

ed objects, from plastic figurines to plush toys and carpets. Created by legendary game designer Shigeru Miyamoto, Mario has obsessed several generations of fans like Kikai. The character's first appearance came in 1981 arcade game "Donkey Kong", when he was known simply as "Jumpman". Mario's christening came in 1983 with the "Mario Bros." arcade cabinet, but his true rise to fame was with "Super Mario Bros." on Nintendo's Famicom console (known as the NES in Europe), which has sold more than 40 million copies. "It was a lucky accident, because at the start there was no plan for this character to become a video gaming icon," said Alexis Bross, the French co-author of the book "Mario Generations". The plumber's look was initially chosen to conserve scarce computing resources and make him stand out on screen, with bright blue overalls and a cap

that saved on animating hair. Miyamoto created Mario as "a completely functional character under very strict technical constraints" governing the few pixels making up his image, Bross noted. But as the games endured through the years, their star became a "generation-spanning" and even "reassuring" presence, he added. "He's a regular man, not unlike us, who has no special powers at the outset and stays a bit frozen in time." actor. **Changing with the times** Many of today's children and teens have turned towards more recent heavyweight gaming titles such as Fortnite and Roblox. But Mario still enjoys a high "parental nostalgia" quotient, with those now heading into middle age still buying the games and playing together with their offspring, said Rhys Elliott of analytics firm Alinea. Nintendo has looked to evolve along with its audience, recently launching a range of baby cloth-

ing and accessories in Japan. Mario also graces goods from luxury watches to Lego, as well as being the star of theme parks in both Japan and the US. And in 2023, the plucky plumber made a successful leap to the big screen after a 1993 flop that was one of the first ever game-to-movie adaptations. The more recent film brought in over \$1.3 billion, with a sequel in the works for next year. With gender relations in a different light today than 40 years ago, Mario's objective in-game is no longer securing a kiss from a grateful rescued princess. Nintendo's princesses are more likely these days to star in their own titles, as the company "adapts to new audiences, following little by little developments in society," author Bross said. Even now, fans are eagerly awaiting a new Mario-led 3D adventure following the blockbuster release of the Nintendo Switch 2 console this June.

Radio Suno 87.6 FM

The New Story Begins with the Malayalam-Speaking Community

● Bahrain gets its First-Ever 24x7 Malayalam Radio Channel - The New Frequency of Happiness for Bahrain



Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes its first-ever 24x7 dedicated Malayalam radio channel, Radio Suno 87.6 FM, officially beginning full-fledged operations today. The station positions itself as the "new frequency of happiness for Bahrain", marking a historic milestone for the Malayalam-speaking community in the country. As part of the leading Asian Radio Network in the GCC, this launch shows our commitment to reaching more people, celebrating the expat community's culture and social life, and supporting local businesses in the Kingdom. Phase One introduces Malayalam programming to serve the vibrant Malayali community, Phase Two will bring dedicated channels for different languages, making the platform more inclusive and engaging for everyone. In Qatar, the brand thrives under the Olive Suno Radio Network, a pioneer known for trendsetting, hyper-local engagement, and innovative storytelling. The network has established itself not just as radio, but as an experi-

ence-encompassing podcasts, cultural storytelling, and community-driven content. In Bahrain, it operates under Media the Mantra, while in Saudi Arabia, it expands through the ABC Network. Speaking on the launch, the management of Olive Suno Network said: "We are delighted to bring Olive Suno to Bahrain. Radio is more than just entertainment -- it is a companion, a cultural lifeline, and a platform that unites people. With Radio Suno 87.6 FM, we aim to give the Malayalam-speaking community in Bahrain a home on air, while providing brands and partners with unmatched opportunities to reach and engage their audiences. This launch marks a new chapter of connection and creativity for us in Bahrain. In addition to the above, the Management also emphasized the fact that such expansion and investment in the country will contribute and add more value to the growing economy of the entertainment industry in Bahrain."

Stellantis boss Elkann agrees to community service in tax settlement



John Elkann and his wife Lavinia Borromeo Milan, Italy

The Italian chairman of Jeep owner Stellantis, John Elkann, has agreed to a year's community service as part of an inheritance tax dispute, his lawyer said Tuesday, a day after he agreed to pay 183 million euros to close the matter. The deal settles a dispute between Italian tax authorities and Elkann, his brother Lapo and sister Ginevra, Turin prosecutors said Monday. At issue is the inheritance of their grandmother, Marella Caracciolo, widow of the for-

mer Fiat boss Gianni Agnelli and a legendary figure in Italy, that is estimated at around 1 billion euros (\$1.2 billion). Prosecutors had accused the family of falsely claiming Swiss tax residence for their grandmother to avoid Italian inheritance tax. Along with the payment, Elkann, who is chief executive of the family holding company Exor and also chairman of luxury automaker Ferrari, requested probation to avoid criminal prosecution, as is possible under an Italian law that provides for community service.

Stocks climb eyeing US rate cut, political turbulence

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Stock markets mostly rose while gold reached new highs yesterday, with expectations of US rate cuts to bolster the world's biggest economy offsetting political turbulence in Japan and France.

A steep downward revision to US job creation cemented expectations that the Federal Reserve would begin lowering its benchmark rate next week in a bid to boost growth.

US employment growth is likely to be revised down by 911,000 for the 12 months ending in March, official data showed.

After last month's big miss on US jobs creation, "these revisions suggest that jobs momentum is being lost from an even weaker position than originally thought," said analysts at ING.

Investors are now looking to consumer inflation data coming Thursday, since a hot reading could keep the Fed from cutting further as it looks to curb price increases.

US stock indices were little changed but remained near record highs reached in recent weeks, with the tech-heavy Nasdaq closing at a record on Monday.

In Asia, Tokyo's Nikkei briefly spiked to a new record before

Key figures at around 1550 GMT

New York - Dow:	▲ 0.2% at 45,586.51 points
New York - S&P 500:	■ at 6,495.58
New York - Nasdaq:	■ at 21,795.77
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.2% at 9,242.53 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 0.2% at 7,749.39 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 0.4% at 23,718.45 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 0.4% at 43,459.29 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▲ 1.2% at 25,938.13 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.5% at 3,807.29 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.1725 from \$1.1760 on Monday
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3534 from \$1.3549
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 147.23 from 147.43 yen
Euro/pound:	▼ at 86.63 pence from 86.80 pence
Brent North Sea Crude:	▲ 1.1% at \$66.75 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 1.2% at \$62.99 per barrel

Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)



ending lower amid hopes that whoever replaces Shigeru Ishiba as prime minister will unveil a fresh round of economic stimulus.

Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party will pick its new leader on October 4 to replace Ishiba, who resigned at the weekend after huge election setbacks.

In Paris, the CAC 40 index moved higher after French Prime Minister Francois Bayrou submitted his resignation

to President Emmanuel Macron in the wake of his government's ousting.

Bayrou on Monday suffered a crushing loss in a confidence vote he called in parliament, seeking support for more than 40 billion euros (\$47 billion) in budget cuts to rein in France's debt.

France's borrowing costs briefly exceeded those of traditional European debt-laggard Italy on Tuesday, ahead of an update on the country's credit

rating from Fitch on Friday.

However, "for now, the market impact seems limited", said Ipek Ozkardeskaya, a senior analyst at Swissquote Bank.

Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg Bank, agreed that "a genuine financial crisis with a self-reinforcing doom loop (higher yields = bigger deficits = even higher yields...) remains quite unlikely for the time being".

Gold, an investment haven in uncertain times, extended its

record run, hitting an all-time high of over \$3,680 an ounce.

Mining merger

On the corporate front, British mining group Anglo American and its Canadian peer Teck Resources announced plans for a multi-billion-dollar merger, creating a behemoth of copper production and of other critical minerals.

Anglo American shares ended nine percent higher in London, while Teck's stock was up 14

percent on the New York Stock Exchange. Shares in rival miners jumped on their coattails.

Indonesian stocks and the rupiah tumbled after President Prabowo Subianto removed Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati in a cabinet reshuffle following fatal anti-government protests across the country.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

During the Great Depression in the 1930s, the New York Stock Exchange had to introduce a special service: stock price runners. These were young men who would sprint across the trading floor carrying slips of paper with the latest prices, because the ticker tape machines were too slow to keep up with the frantic trading activity.

Apple welcomes iPhone 17 Pro, Pro Max, Air

● Introduces AirPods Pro 3 with live translation feature

● Launches blood pressure monitor in its latest Apple Watch

● iPhone 17 with new A19 chip

San Francisco, United States



Apple yesterday showed off a new, slimmer iPhone "Air" model with a "high density battery" and a brand new processor, as well as an iPhone 17, the latest upgrade to its flagship smartphone.

The iPhone Air model is the star of the annual product launch event, and Apple said the model is its most durable iPhone yet.

Apple said the base model iPhone 17 will have a brighter, more scratch-resistant screen. It also said the device will feature a new

A19 processor chip, which will be made with 3-nanometer technology

and have improved capabilities for on-device artificial intelligence features.

Apple said the iPhone 17 will also have a better front-facing camera with a differently shaped sensor to make horizontal selfies look better.

The company also introduced a new version of its AirPods Pro wireless headphones and a blood pressure monitor in its latest Apple Watch.

The new AirPods Pro 3 will feature live translation of languages. Apple also said that if both people in a conversation are wearing the new AirPods Pro 3, the earbuds will translate conversations in near real time. Apple said the new AirPods will be priced at \$249, the same as the previous generation, and become available on September 19.

The blood pressure monitor feature

is pending regulatory approval, Apple said. The watch will not detect every case of high blood pressure but the company said it expects the feature to notify 1 million people and will make it available in 150 countries.

Apple did not raise the price on watch models either. New versions of the SE will cost \$249, the Series 11 will cost \$399 and the larger Ultra model will start at \$799, as all their predecessors did.

The iPhone Air will go head-to-head against Samsung Electronics' Galaxy S25 Edge, and analysts told Reuters it could be a stepping stone toward competing with Samsung's folding phones, which are in their seventh generation.

A foldable phone is important for Apple to appeal to customers in China, where consumers like foldables and the company has been losing market share.



thinnest iPhone yet

News in brief

◆ **A magnitude 5.4** earthquake struck off the Greek island of Evia early on Tuesday and was felt in Athens, authorities said. The quake hit around half past midnight local time (2130 GMT) 45 kilometres (28 miles) northeast of the Greek capital, said the National Observatory of Athens. The epicentre was four kilometres off the resort of Nea Styra in the southwest of Greece's second-biggest island Evia, also known as Euboea, the institute said. There were no reports of casualties or damage. The observatory had initially reported the magnitude at 5.3 but later revised its reading. The mayor of the nearby city of Marathon, Stergios Tsirkas, described the quake as "very intense", in comments on ERT television.



Greece rattled by 5.4-magnitude offshore earthquake

◆ **Thailand's Supreme Court** ordered on Tuesday the country's most powerful and polarising politician Thaksin Shinawatra to be jailed for one year, ruling that he improperly served a 2023 prison term in hospital. Shinawatra's political clan has for two decades been the key foe of Thailand's pro-military, pro-royalty elite who view their populist brand as a threat to traditional social order. The dynasty's momentum is flagging after a litany of legal and political setbacks, culminating in his daughter Paetongtarn Shinawatra being ousted last month from the prime minister's office. But Tuesday's Supreme Court ruling deals one of the most painful blows yet to Thailand's biggest political heavyweight, as judges ordered the 76-year-old's transfer to Bangkok Remand Prison.

Thai top court orders ex-PM Thaksin jailed for one year

◆ **Google said yesterday** that it would comply with the South Korean government's demand to blur sensitive satellite images on its mapping services, paving the way for the US tech giant to compete better with local navigation platforms. South Korea is one of the few places in the world, like Russia and China, where Google Maps does not fully function. That is because South Korean laws require that companies store core geospatial data locally, something Google has long refused to do. As a result, domestic technology firms like Naver and Kakao have cornered the market for mapping services, making navigation harder for foreign visitors unfamiliar with their platforms. Google confirmed for the first time on Tuesday that it would abide by Seoul's demand. "We have already confirmed our commitment with the government to blur satellite images as required and we'll be exploring acquiring imagery from approved Korean third parties where appropriate," Google Vice President Cris Turner told reporters. The announcement suggests the conclusion of a nearly two-decade dispute in which Google has argued for access to detailed South Korean maps to offer full walking and driving directions, only for Seoul to refuse to export that data for national security reasons.

Google to obey South Korean order to blur satellite images on maps



SPOTLIGHT

Gaza aid flotilla says hit by drone, Tunisia says none detected



Members of the Committee of Solidarity with Palestine sail boats during an action in support of "The Global Sumud Flotilla" -delegations from 39 countries heading to Gaza
AFP | Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia

Organisers of a Gaza-bound flotilla carrying aid and pro-Palestinian activists said late Monday that one of their boats was hit by a suspected UAV off the coast of Tunisia, but authorities there said "no drones" had been detected. The flotilla, which aims to break Israel's blockade of Gaza, arrived in Tunisia over the weekend and was anchored off the coast of Sidi Bou Said when it reported the incident. "The Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) confirms that one of the main boats... was struck by what is suspected to be a drone," the organisers said on social media, adding no one was hurt. They shared security camera footage from the boat in which a humming sound can be heard, before a flash of light illuminates the frame. The vessel was in Tunisian waters when a fire broke out on board and was quickly extinguished, according to an AFP journalist who arrived shortly after the flames had been doused. But the cause of the blaze remained in dispute, with Tunisian national guard spokesman Houcem Eddine Jebabli saying "no drones have been detected". "According to preliminary findings, a fire broke out in the life jackets on board," he told AFP, adding the investigation was ongoing. Reports of a drone are "completely unfounded", the national guard said in a statement on its official Facebook page, suggesting that the fire may have been caused by a cigarette.

Saudi calls attack on Hamas in Qatar 'criminal act'

Doha condemned the attack -- the first of its kind on Qatari territory

AFP | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Tuesday slammed Israel's attack on Hamas in Qatar, calling the strike a "criminal act" in a call with Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. "His Royal Highness the Crown Prince affirmed the Kingdom's full solidarity with... Qatar and its condemnation of the blatant Israeli attack on the State of Qatar, which constitutes a criminal act and a flagrant violation of international laws and norms," read a statement published by the Saudi Press Agency.

Israel confirms attack

Meanwhile, Israel's military said it conducted air strikes targeting senior Hamas leaders in the Qatari capital yesterday, as Doha condemned the attack -- the first of its kind on Qatari territory. Qatar, which has been a key mediator in efforts to broker a truce in Gaza, said Israeli strikes targeted the homes of several members of Hamas's political bureau residing in the Gulf country, where the militant group's senior leadership is based. The strikes were carried out jointly by the military and the Shin Bet security agency, the two bodies said in a statement. Neither Israeli officials nor domestic media have confirmed whether the strikes hit their intended targets. Hamas has also not commented on the fate of its leaders. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he ordered the strikes in response to a Monday shooting in Jerusalem that killed six people and was later claimed by Hamas. "Yesterday, following the deadly attacks in Jerusalem and Gaza, Prime Minister Netanyahu instructed all security agencies to prepare for the possibility of

UN chief condemns Israel's 'flagrant violation' of Qatari sovereignty

United Nations, United States

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned Israel's strikes on Qatar yesterday, calling them a "flagrant violation" of Doha's sovereignty.

"We are just learning about the Israeli attacks in Qatar, a country that has been playing a very positive role to achieve a ceasefire and release of all hostages. I condemn this flagrant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Qatar," Guterres told a media briefing.

Israel informed US about Qatar strike: White House official

Washington, United States

Israel notified the United States before it carried out air strikes on senior Hamas leaders in the Qatari capital Doha, a White House official said yesterday.

"We were informed in advance," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity about the strike on Qatar, a key US ally that's home to a large US military base.

US embassy in Qatar asks citizens to 'shelter-in-place'

The US embassy in Qatar told citizens to shelter in place, after Doha said Israeli strikes targeted Hamas officials in the capital Doha. "We have seen reports of missile strikes occurring in Doha. The U.S. Embassy has instituted a shelter-in-place order for their facilities. US citizens are advised to shelter-in-place," the embassy said in a post on X.

Palestinian leader says Israel Doha strikes threaten regional stability

Ramallah, Palestinian Territories

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas condemned Israeli air strikes on Doha targeting leaders of Hamas yesterday, warning they threatened regional security and stability.

"His excellency stated that the brutal Israeli attack on Qatar constitutes a blatant violation of international law and an escalation that threatens regional security and stability," Abbas's office said in a statement reported by the official Palestinian news agency, Wafa.

targeting Hamas leaders," said a joint statement from Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz. "Today at noon (0900 GMT), in light of an operational opportunity... the prime minister and the defence minister decided

to implement the directive given last night." A Hamas official in Gaza told AFP the group's negotiators had been "targeted", though it was not immediately clear whether the attack had caused any casualties.

'Flagrant violation'

Qatar condemned the attack, saying it had targeted residential buildings housing Hamas political bureau members. "The State of Qatar strongly condemns the cowardly Israeli attack that targeted residential buildings housing several members of the political bureau of Hamas in the Qatari capital, Doha," foreign ministry spokesman Maged al-Ansari said in a post on X. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel's targeting of Hamas leaders was a "wholly independent" operation. "Today's action against the top terrorist chieftains of Hamas was a wholly independent Israeli operation," a statement from Netanyahu's office said, adding that: "Israel initiated it, Israel conducted it and Israel takes full responsibility."

'Sledgehammer' to diplomacy

The strikes have drawn condemnation, including from UN chief Antonio Guterres, who condemned Israel's "flagrant violation" of Qatari sovereignty. Iran, a key backer of Hamas, condemned the attack as a "gross violation of all international rules and regulations, a violation of Qatar's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and an attack on Palestinian negotiators". Western allies Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates also condemned the attack, among others. "Israel knows exactly what it just did. It just killed the negotiations and any chance of getting its hostages back," said Muhammad Shehada, a political analyst at the European Council on Foreign Relations. "The office in Doha was central to mediation and de-escalation efforts with Hamas... So basically Netanyahu just took a sledgehammer to this, those decades of diplomacy," he added.



Smoke billowing after explosions in Doha's capital Qatar

George Washington asks for a spy, and Nathan Hale volunteers

American naval commander Oliver Hazard Perry defeats the British in the Battle of Lake Erie



Elias Howe takes out a US patent for a lock-stitch sewing machine

The Large Hadron Collider at CERN, described as the biggest scientific experiment in the history of mankind, is powered up in Geneva, Switzerland



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Conducted an aerial review of the floods in Punjab. Authorities are working round the clock, assisting those impacted. Our thoughts are with the people in this challenging time.

@narendramodi

02



As violence against children in armed conflict continues to rise to unprecedented levels, education is once again caught in the crossfire. No child should risk death to learn. Let's protect the fundamental right of every child to learn in safety & peace.

@antonioguterres

03



This week, WHO Pakistan is dispatching medical supplies to the areas most affected by the ongoing climate-driven floods, enough to provide treatment for over 20,000 people. Since June, WHO has sent medical supplies nationwide for 400,000 flood-affected and displaced persons.

@DrTedros

04



Cyber scam centers in Southeast Asia stole over \$10 billion from Americans last year. In response, today @US-Treasury sanctioned individuals and entities linked to cyber scam centers in Burma and forced labor operations in Cambodia. Our actions will disrupt their cruel victimization of Americans online.

@SecRubio

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



A demonstrator shouts slogans during a protest outside the Parliament in Kathmandu



A protester wields a firearm



A protester carries a firearm



An aerial view shows demonstrators gathered outside Nepal's Parliament during a protest in Kathmandu

Nepal PM resigns after protests sparked by social media ban

Protestors demand government lift social media ban and tackle corruption

● Protests continue despite apps going back online

● Kathmandu's airport remains open, but some flights were cancelled

● Several social media sites -- including Facebook, YouTube and X -- were blocked on Friday

AFP | Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepali youth protesters set fire to parliament yesterday as the veteran prime minister obeyed furious crowds to quit, a day after one of the deadliest crackdowns in years in which at least 19 people were killed.

The protests, which began on Monday with demands that the government lift a ban on social media and tackle corruption, reignited despite the apps going back online.

Demonstrators yesterday attacked and set fire to KP Sharma Oli's house, the 73-year-old, four-time prime minister and leader of the Communist Party.

Shortly after, chanting protesters -- some wielding assault rifles, according to an AFP re-



Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli

porter at the site -- gathered outside main government buildings.

Plumes of smoke also covered Nepal's parliament as demonstrators set the building ablaze.

"Hundreds have breached the parliament area and torched the main building," Ekram Giri, spokesman for the Parliament Secretariat, told AFP.

Protesters, mostly young men, were seen waving the country's national flag as they dodged water cannons deployed by the security forces.

Other demonstrators targeted the properties of politicians and government buildings.

Kathmandu's airport remains open, but some flights were cancelled after smoke from fires affected visibility, airport spokesman Rinji Sherpa said.

"I have resigned from the post

of prime minister with effect from today... in order to take further steps towards a political solution and resolution of the problems," Oli said Tuesday in a statement.

His political career stretched nearly six decades, a period that saw a decade-long civil war, with Nepal abolishing its absolute monarchy in 2008 to become a republic.

First elected as prime minister in 2015, he was re-elected in 2021, and then took power in 2024 after his Communist Party forged a coalition government with the centre-left Nepali Congress in the often-volatile parliament.

His resignation followed that of three other ministers, and came despite the government

repealing the ban.

Bringing social media back online "was among the Gen Z's demands", Minister for Communication Prithvi Subba Gurung told AFP, referring to young people aged largely in their 20s.

The ban fed into existing anger at the government in a country with a youth bulge.

People aged 15-40 make up nearly 43 percent of the population, according to government statistics -- while unemployment hovers around 10 percent and GDP per capita is just \$1,447, according to the World Bank.

Live ammunition

Slogans demanding accountability from the authorities have been a feature at the protests.

"Nearly 20 people were murdered by the state -- that shows the scale of police brutality," said 23-year-old student Yujan Rajbhandari.

Several social media sites -- including Facebook, YouTube and X -- were blocked on Friday in the Himalayan nation of 30 million people, after the government cut access to 26 unregistered platforms.

Amnesty International said live ammunition had been used against protesters on Monday, and the United Nations demanded a swift and transparent probe.

Since Friday, videos contrasting the struggles of ordinary Nepalis with the children of politicians flaunting luxury goods and

expensive vacations have gone viral on TikTok, which was not blocked.

Popular platforms such as Instagram have millions of users in Nepal who rely on them for entertainment, news and business. Others rely on the apps for messaging.

"This isn't just about social media -- it's about trust, corruption, and a generation that refuses to stay silent," The Kathmandu Post newspaper wrote.

"Gen Z grew up with smartphones, global trends, and promises of a federal, prosperous Nepal," it added.

"For them, digital freedom is personal freedom. Cutting off access feels like silencing an entire generation."



Nepal has restricted access to popular online platforms in the past, including to Telegram in July, citing a rise in online fraud. It lifted a nine-month ban on TikTok last year after the platform agreed to comply with Nepali regulations.

Ethiopia inaugurates Africa's biggest dam

● Dam reached 170 metres (550 feet) high and stretched nearly two kilometres (1.2 miles) across the Blue Nile

● The \$4-billion megastructure is designed to hold 74 billion cubic metres of water and generate 5,150 megawatts of electricity

● Some 45 percent of Ethiopia's 130 million people lack electricity

AFP | Guba, Ethiopia

Ethiopia inaugurated the continent's largest hydroelectric project on Tuesday, with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed calling it a "great achievement for all black people" despite years of diplomatic rancour over the dam with downstream neighbour Egypt.

For Ethiopia, the Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD), straddling a tributary of the River Nile, is a national project of historic scale and a rare unifying symbol in a country torn apart by ongoing internal conflicts.

The latest figures from its Italian construction firm Webuild said the dam reached 170 metres (550 feet) high and stretched nearly two kilometres (1.2 miles) across the Blue Nile near the Sudanese border.

The \$4-billion megastructure is designed to hold 74 billion cubic metres of water and generate 5,150 megawatts of electricity -- more than double Ethiopia's current capacity, it said.

That makes it the largest dam by power capacity in Africa, though still outside the top 10 globally.

"GERD will be remembered as a great achievement not only for Ethiopia, but for all black people," Abiy said at the opening ceremony, attended by regional leaders including Kenyan Pres-



An aerial view Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile River in Guba, northwest Ethiopia.



Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed delivers his remarks during the official inauguration ceremony

ident William Ruto and Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

"I invite all black people to visit the dam. It demonstrates that we, as black people, can achieve anything we plan," said Abiy, who has made the project a cornerstone of his rule.

But neighbouring Egypt, dependent on the Nile for 97 percent of its water, has long decried the project, with President

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi calling it an "existential threat" and vowing to take all measures under international law to defend its water security.

"For downstream countries, Ethiopia has accomplished GERD as a shining example for black people. It will not affect your development at all," Abiy said at the ceremony.

'No longer a dream'

The festivities began the night before with a dazzling display of lanterns, lasers and drones writing slogans like "geopolitical rise" and "a leap into the future".

Analysts argue the GERD, under construction since 2011, could transform Ethiopia's economy, boosting industrial production, enabling a shift towards electric vehicles and supplying power-hungry neighbours through regional inter-connectors that stretch as far as Tanzania.

Some 45 percent of Ethiopia's 130 million people lack electricity, according to World Bank data, and frequent blackouts in Addis Ababa force businesses and households to rely on generators.

"It is no longer a dream but a fact," Pietro Salini, CEO of Webuild, who built the dam, told AFP from the inauguration.

He said they faced many challenges in training workers, mobilising finance and coping with the brutal civil war of 2020-2022 between the government and rebels from the Tigray region.



An interesting fact about the Three Gorges Dam in China -- the world's biggest dam -- is that its reservoir actually slowed down the Earth's rotation slightly when it filled up.

Because the dam holds about 39.3 billion cubic metres of water, the mass redistribution increased the Earth's moment of inertia, lengthening the planet's day by about 0.06 microseconds.

But now, "this country that was dark in the evening when I first arrived here... is selling energy to neighbouring countries," said Salini.

He denied there was any reason for neighbouring countries like Egypt and Sudan to be concerned.

"The hydroelectric project releases water to produce energy. They are not irrigation schemes that consume water. There's no change in the flow," said Salini.

Attempts to mediate between Ethiopia and its neighbours by the United States, World Bank, Russia, the UAE and the African Union have all faltered over the past decade.

"For the Egyptian leadership, GERD is not just about water, it is about national security. A major drop in water supply threatens Egypt's internal stability. The stakes are economic, political and deeply social," said Mohamed Mohey el-Deen, formerly part of Egypt's team assessing GERD's impact.

Cambodia opens \$2bn Chinese-built airport



Cambodia

A \$2 billion Chinese-built airport in Cambodia opened its runways to the first planes on Tuesday, bringing hopes for a tourism revival but beset by accusations of land evictions.

Officials hope the facility -- which replaces Phnom Penh's old airport as the capital's main aviation transport hub -- will boost Cambodia's struggling tourism industry.

Built by a major state-owned Chinese construction firm, the Techo International Airport is a 2,600-hectare (10 square mile) behemoth jointly funded by the Cambodian government and the privately-owned Overseas Cambodian Investment Corporation (OCIC).

A water cannon display greeted the first jet -- an Air Cambodia plane travelling from China -- to land at the airport on Tuesday, and traditional Khmer dancers welcomed its 160 passengers as they disembarked.

North Korea's Kim oversees ICBM engine test: state media

Seoul, South Korea

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw a test of a solid-fuel engine used for long range nuclear missiles, state media reported on Tuesday, marking another key step in a weapons programme Western powers have failed to stop.

State media said it was the ninth and final test of the engine, indicating that a full test-fire of a new intercontinental ballistic missile could be conducted in coming months.

Kim oversaw the "important test" the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported Tuesday, with images showing the leader looking at the flame from the engine test with binoculars.



Hundreds of pro-Palestinian demonstrators rally outside London arms show

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Pro-Palestinian protesters gathered Tuesday outside a major arms fair in London as it opened without the presence of Israeli government officials because of tension between Britain and Israel over the Gaza conflict.

Police watched as around 300 protesters waved Palestinian flags and held up placards including one reading "UK: Stop arming Israel. Stop the Gaza Genocide."

Three protesters were arrested for assaults on police officers, London's Metropolitan Police said. The British government



Demonstrators wave Palestinian flags as they protest outside the entrance to the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) fair at the ExCeL centre, in east London

excluded the officials from the four-day event, but 51 Israeli

defence companies were set to attend, including major arms

manufacturer Elbit. Rafael and Israel Aero-

space Industries, both government-owned, were also scheduled to have stands, making Israel the fifth-largest national contingent at the fair at the Excel London exhibition centre. The Israeli companies "should be investigated for crimes against humanity, not invited to profit from the unspeakable devastation they have caused in Gaza", Campaign Against Arms Trade spokesperson Emily Apple said in a statement.

Neither company was immediately available for comment when contacted by AFP.

autobuzz

Oliver Blume, CEO of the Volkswagen Group phones as he looks on at a Ducati motorcycle, on view at company's booth during the opening day of the International Motor Show IAA in Munich, southern Germany.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz (R) and CEO of German car manufacturer BMW Oliver Zipse pose next to a BMW iX3 car at the company's booth on the opening day of the International Motor Show IAA

Germany's VW, China's BYD face off @ Munich auto show



The new Clio car with full-hybrid e-tech of French car maker Renault

AFP | Munich, Germany



The concept car AMG GT XX from Mercedes-AMG GmbH



Stella Li, vice-President of the Chinese multinational manufacturing company and EV manufacturer BYD

Europe's top car manufacturer Volkswagen presented a series of more affordable electric vehicles Monday as Chinese EV titan BYD said it would start producing a cut-price model on the continent.

The duelling announcements at the closely-watched Munich auto show highlight the fierce battle shaping up between Europe's traditional automakers and fast-growing Chinese rivals.

VW -- along with peers BMW and Mercedes-Benz from the long troubled German auto sector -- are seeking to make up lost ground in the race for electric dominance.

Volkswagen unveiled four small EV models from its namesake VW brand, as well as its Cupra and Skoda marques.

With starting prices of around 25,000 euros (\$29,000), lower than many current EVs made by European manufacturers, their commercial launch is set for



A MINI T53 Deus ex Machina car

next year.

But at a press event at the IAA Mobility show, which runs the whole of this week, CEO Oliver Blume conceded that VW faced a tough fight.

"The automotive industry, and especially the Volkswagen group, has never faced so many headwinds at the same time," he said.

And he conceded that the situation in China, where VW has lost market share to local rivals, was highly competitive.

BYD "without a doubt is doing a great job there," he said.

Resistance to EU ban

BYD meanwhile announced that its Dolphin Surf electric compact car, already on sale in Europe since May for around



A PIX Beastie mini electric vehicle with a 3D printed unibody chassis

20,000 euros, will be produced from the end of 2025 in its new Hungarian factory.

"We are almost ready to build our cars in Europe, for Europe," said the manufacturer's executive vice president Stella Li.

Building its cars in Hungary, an European Union country, should help the Chinese manufacturer avoid hefty EU

tariffs the bloc has slapped on Chinese-made EVs over what Brussels says are unfair state subsidies.

Germany's top automakers have all suffered in recent times due to weak demand and fierce competition in key market China, where BYD and others have eroded their sales.

They have struggled with

the shift to EVs as demand has proven weaker in Europe than many had anticipated and prices remain too high for many motorists.

Calls have meanwhile been growing for the EU to review a plan to end sales of new combustion engine vehicles by 2035 as part of efforts to tackle climate change.

Stellantis, whose brands include Jeep and Fiat, as well as BMW and Mercedes have all expressed scepticism or outright opposition to the plan.

Volkswagen's Blume added his voice to the criticism on Monday, saying that it was "unrealistic" to aim for "100% electric mobility" in a decade.

"We need reality checks every year," he said.



An Opel Corsa Vision GSE concept car



A XPENG P7 electric vehicle by Chinese EV manufacturer XPENG



German Minister of Economics and Climate Protection Robert Habeck visits BMW

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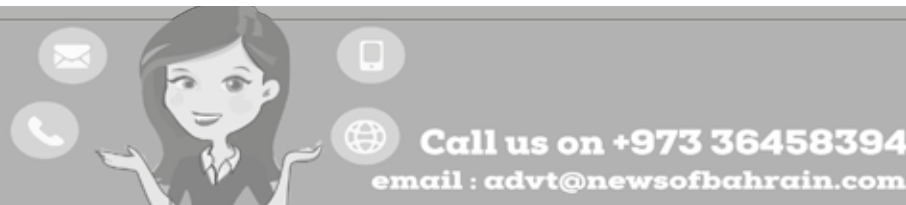
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Suriname stun El Salvador

Allege racist chants in WC qualifying

AFP | Miami, United States

Dhoraso Klas scored in the 81st minute as Suriname stunned El Salvador 2-1 away on Monday in a 2026 World Cup qualifying match marred by alleged racist chanting.

Suriname, who have never qualified for the World Cup, toppled El Salvador from the Group A lead in the final round of CONCACAF (North American) qualifying.

It was Suriname's first victory over the Salvadorans since 1968.

Afterwards head coach Stanley Menzo and captain Shaquille Pinas hit out at some home fans over racist chanting while his team celebrated their victory.

"You have to ask why your fans are shouting to my players, 'negro'," Menzo said to reporters.

Pinas suggested that the same thing happened in a previous World Cup qualifier, again in San Salvador, in June, but said that the team had chosen not to speak out then.

"If you say negro, monkey, this kind of things, I think that's not fun," said Pinas.



El Salvador's forward #09 Brayan Gil, Suriname's midfielder #14 Jean-Paul Boetius and midfielder #08 Justin Lonwijk fight for the ball during the 2026 FIFA World Cup Concacaf qualifier football match between El Salvador and Suriname at the Cuscatlan Stadium in San Salvador

Suriname, who opened with a goalless home draw against Panama, snapped an eight-match winless streak against El Salvador and moved to four points with the hosts on three.

In the night's other Group A match, hosts Panama and Guatemala played out a 1-1 draw, leaving both winless after two out of six group matches.

Suriname's only prior victory over El Salvador came in

December 1968 in a qualifying match for the 1970 Mexico World Cup.

Suriname grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 12th minute on Monday with a header by Radinio Balkar, a Dutch-born defender playing for England's Huddersfield Town.

Brayan Gil looked to have netted an equalizer for El Salvador in the 29th minute but that was overturned after a video review.

The Salvadorans finally made it 1-1 through Suriname defender Anfernee Dijksteel's own goal.

But Klas fired in a right-footed shot from the right side to win the game.

CONCACAF final round qualifying was changed this year because regional powers Mexico, Canada and the United States will serve as next year's World Cup co-hosts.

The last 12 teams were drawn into three groups of four with group winners from round-robin matches through to November advancing to the World Cup and two second-place teams advancing to playoffs with nations from other confederations.

At Panama City, Guatemala grabbed the lead in the 35th minute on a right-footed blast by Oscar Santis from the heart of the box.

Carlos Harvey, however, netted the equalizer for Panama in the 37th minute with a header off an Eric Davis assist.

Panama stretched an unbeaten streak against Guatemala to 15 matches in all competitions since 2005, with a fourth draw to go alongside 11 triumphs.

Bahrain Futsal Eye Bounce Back After Iraq Defeat

Final friendly set before AFC Asian Cup qualifiers in Thailand



TDT | Manama

Bahrain's national futsal team will look to finish their preparations on a stronger note when they meet Iraq again on Wednesday night at 7:30pm at the Bahrain Football Association Arena.

The fixture follows Monday's 3-1 defeat to the same opponents in Manama. Abdulla Hantoush scored Bahrain's only goal, but Iraq proved too strong on the night.

Attention now shifts to Thailand, where the squad departs on September 15, for Group B of the AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2026 qualifiers. Bahrain have been drawn alongside hosts Thailand, South Korea, and Brunei Darussalam.

The qualifiers run from 20 to 24 September. Bahrain open against South Korea on the 20th, face Thailand two days later, and conclude against Brunei on the 24th.

Quiet Tebogo's legs to 'do the talking' in Lyles 200m worlds battle

Tokyo, Japan

Olympic 200m champion Letsile Tebogo said Tuesday he would let his "legs do the talking" in his battle with brash American Noah Lyles at the world championships in Tokyo.

The softly spoken Botswanan won his country's first Olympic gold medal in any sport in Paris last year, where Lyles finished third.

Tebogo labelled his flamboyant American rival "arrogant" after the race, and Lyles's out-sized character is likely to command the global spotlight again when the world championships



Olympic 200m champion and a global ambassador for the Kids Athletics development programme, Letsile Tebogo of Botswana (L), plays a drum during a visit to a primary school gymnasium ahead of the start of the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo

begin on Saturday.

Tebogo said he was comfortable with having "different personalities" in the sport, as he took part in an event with children at a primary school in Tokyo.

"I'm one person who always shies away from the media, but the sport forces me to step up, up my game into becoming a sports personality," said the 22-year-old.

"At the end of the day, it's all about what do you want to see: to be on the spotlight or off the

spotlight.

"For me, I choose off the spotlight and then just my legs do the talking."

Lyles got the better of Tebogo in the 200m in the Diamond League finals in Zurich two weeks ago, edging the Botswanan by two-hundredths of a second.

The pair are also set to square off in the 100m in Tokyo.

Tebogo is looking to win his first world title after picking up silver in the 100m and bronze in the 200m in Budapest two

years ago.

He said he felt like "a hero" to Botswanans after his historic Olympic success but vowed not to change his approach in Tokyo.

"Once you invite pressure inside yourself, then it means you are not doing it for yourself, you are doing it for the people," he said.

"Yes, you should do it for the people but it's you first and then the people later.

"Once you put pressure inside yourself, it means you have done something wrong."

Tebogo has said that athletics saved him from a life of crime and he is a global ambassador for the Kids Athletics development programme.

He was all smiles during his school visit, banging a traditional Japanese drum to start a race that saw about 100 children scramble under nets and tip-toe over balance beams.

He said he felt a responsibility to "inspire kids all over the world".

"I'm so excited to see how the Japanese relay culture works and I really can't wait to work with these kids because we had a fun time in Botswana," said Tebogo.

"I believe we're also going to have fun here."

Barca's Camp Nou not ready to host Valencia game



Barcelona, Spain

Barcelona will use the tiny Johan Cruyff stadium at their training ground to host Valencia in La Liga on Sunday, with the Spotify Camp Nou not yet licensed to reopen amid a rebuild.

The Spanish champions had hoped to play before a reduced crowd at their Camp Nou home, as construction continues, but have not acquired the correct permits to do so.

"The club is working intensively to obtain the necessary administrative permits to open Spotify Camp Nou in the coming weeks," said the club in a statement.

"Barcelona thanks its members, fans, and supporters for their understanding and support during such a complex and exciting process as the return to the new Spotify Camp

Nou."

The Johan Cruyff stadium, where Barca's women's team regularly plays, holds around 6,000 spectators.

Barcelona closed the Camp Nou for building work at the end of the 2022/23 season, aiming to partially reopen the stadium in November 2024.

They played their home matches at the Olympic stadium on the city's Montjuic hill until the end of last season, as the return date was repeatedly pushed back because of delays in construction and problems obtaining licenses.

A concert from American Rapper Post Malone on Friday at the Olympic stadium means Barcelona cannot return there this weekend.

Barcelona are estimated to be paying 1.5 billion euros (\$1.75 billion) for the Camp Nou rebuild, which is due to be completed in 2026.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Tebogo became Botswana's very first Olympic gold medalist when he clinched the men's 200 m title at the 2024 Paris Games, setting a new African record of 19.46 seconds and becoming the first African ever to win that event. This historic win not only secured the top spot on the podium, but also marked Botswana's inaugural gold medal in any sport.

McIlroy takes Federer advice to avoid golf boredom



AFP | London, United Kingdom

Rory McIlroy has revealed advice from tennis legend Roger Federer is providing the inspiration for his battle to avoid becoming bored of golf. McIlroy became the newest member of golf's career Grand Slam club after his victory in the Masters earlier this year. The Northern Ireland star's fulfilment of his bid to win each of golf's major prizes has left him pondering what can motivate the rest of his career. After speaking to 20-time Grand Slam winner Federer towards the end of his career, McIlroy believes the answer is to play only the tournaments that he has a special feeling for, regardless of their size and status. With that in mind, the 36-year-old will play in India for the first time this year, and also plans to feature in Australia. The world number two was criticised last month for skipping the first FedEx Cup event on the PGA Tour.

But McIlroy wanted to take a break before a busy September that began with him winning last week's Irish Open and has now taken him to Went-



Switzerland's Roger Federer and his spouse Mirka Federer

worth for the BMW PGA Championship before the Ryder Cup in New York. "I want to go and play in different places in the world and experience things that I haven't

experienced before, to be able to do things for the first time 18 years into a career," he told reporters on Tuesday. "I had a chat with Roger Federer, I don't know, a few

years ago sort of at the end of his career and he was saying he wanted to go and play a lot of the places he could never play in his career, some of the smaller events, just because a lot of

people had never seen him play tennis before. "I think as time goes on and I get to this stage of my career, I get excited about doing that sort of thing. "I don't want to name a tournament but you're going back to the same place, the same thing 15, 20 years in a row, it can get a little bit monotonous and a little bit tedious. "I want to play in the locations that I love to go to, and I want to play the majors and the Ryder Cup. That's it." McIlroy is not thinking about the end of his competitive career, but the five-time major winner acknowledges his priorities have shifted and he is no longer beholden to the weekly trudge around the golf circuit. "I don't want to be grinding out here at 50 years of age. I'll turn up and play the majors and have a nice time but whenever I'm done, I'm done, whenever that is," he said. "That's certainly not right now, but I'm certainly closer to that point now than I was in 2007 when I turned pro. "I'll obviously do my bit to make sure I keep my membership on certain tours but I'm going to play where I want to play."

Bahrain U23 exit Asian Cup qualifiers

Last-gasp Qatar turnaround breaks Abdulmajeed's side

- Bahrain needed four-goal win
- Qatar tops Group H with nine points
- India second, thrashing Brunei not enough
- Brunei concede 29 goals in group

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TDT|Manama

Bahrain's U23 side needed a four-goal win over Qatar to top Group H of the AFC U23 Asian Cup 2026 qualifiers and reach the finals. Instead, they lost 2-1 at the Abdullah bin Khalifa Stadium in Doha, conceding twice in stoppage time. Abdulrahman Sami Al Khayyat had given Bahrain the lead in the 71st minute with a header after some fine build-up from Mahmood AlBannai. Bahrain's fortunes then took a turn as Qatar mounted a late comeback. Substitute Ayoub Mohamed was sent off for Qatar, but they still went on to win a penalty and Jassem Al Sharshani made no mistake from the spot. The result confirmed Bahrain's elimination from the qualifiers. Bahrain coach Ali Abdulma-



Last-gasp Qatar turnaround breaks Abdulmajeed's side

jeed fielded Abdullah Ali Fried in goal, with Mahmood AlBannai, Sayed Mahmood AlMoosawi, Bader Al Asam, Isa Abdulla, Khalid Khalaf, Salman Yunes, Hashim Khulaifat, Mohammed AlShaikhani, Saud Mohsin, and Abdulla Obaidali completing the starting XI. Qatar, led by Portuguese coach Llidio Vale, lined up with Amir Hassan in goal, supported by Saifelddeen Hassan, Alhashimi Alhussain, Hassan Al Gharreb, Abdulaziz Mohammed, Mubarak Shanan, Mohammed Khaled, Jassem Al Sharshani,

Nabil Irfan, Marwan Brimil, and Anas Abdulsalam. **Group H recap** Bahrain opened the qualifiers with a 2-0 defeat to India, before bouncing back with a 10-0 win over Brunei. Their hopes of topping the group were dashed in the 2-1 loss to Qatar. Qatar finished first with a perfect record, thrashing Brunei 13-0, India 2-1, and Bahrain 2-1. India ended second with six points after beating Bahrain 2-0, losing 2-1 to Qatar, and beating Brunei 6-0 – though it could have been

even more. While the four best second-placed teams (from 11 groups) also qualified, India finished the campaign at number five among the group runner-ups, meaning their emphatic win over Brunei was not enough. Brunei lost all three matches, conceding 29 goals across the group stage. The AFC U23 Asian Cup 2026 finals will feature 16 teams: 11 group winners, the four best second-placed teams from the qualifiers, plus host Saudi Arabia.

Nottingham Forest sack boss Nuno Espirito Santo

London, United Kingdom

Head coach Nuno Espirito Santo was sacked by Nottingham Forest early yesterday after 21 months in charge at the Premier League club. "The club thanks Nuno for his contribution during a very successful era," said a club statement released just after midnight. Nuno becomes the first Premier League manager to lose his job this season, two weeks after admitting his relationship with club owner Evangelos Marinakis had deteriorated. "Nottingham Forest Football Club confirms that, following recent circumstances, Nuno Espirito Santo has today been relieved of his duties as head coach," said the club. The 51-year-old took charge in December 2023 after Steve Cooper was sacked and went on to save them from relegation. Last season the club finished seventh in the Premier League, their highest since 1994/95. That secured their first European berth in 30 years, with a Europa League place handed to Forest instead of their initial Conference League

spot, after Crystal Palace's demotion for breaching UEFA's multi-club ownership rules. "The club thanks Nuno for his contribution during a very successful era at the City Ground, in particular his role in the 2024/25 season, which will forever be remembered fondly in the history of the club," said the statement. "As someone who played a pivotal role in our success last season, he will always hold a special place in our journey." Forest sit 10th in the Premier League after three games this season and were beaten 3-0 by West Ham in Nuno's last game in charge. British media reported that talks had begun to appoint a successor quickly, with former Tottenham Hotspur manager Ange Postecoglou said to be among the candidates. The former Tottenham manager Nuno had been critical of Forest's transfer activity since the end of last season, with a new sporting director reportedly taking a more hands-on role in signings.



Tonali saves Italy from World Cup **disaster** against Israel

Italy trail leaders Norway by three points and still have a chance of taking first place



Italy's players celebrate their goal against Israel during the 2026 World Cup qualifiers Europe zone group I football match between Israel and I

AFP | Debrecen, Hungary

Sandro Tonali earned Italy a thrilling 5-4 win against Israel on Monday with the decisive late strike in the 2026 World Cup qualifier just as it looked like the Azzurri were plunging into another crisis. Newcastle United midfielder Tonali wheeled off in celebration in stoppage time when his speculative effort went through a sea of legs and into the net to win a rollercoaster of a match in Debrecen, Hungary, which Italy looked to have thrown away. The Azzurri, who have missed the last two World Cups, were leading 4-2 in the 81st minute when substitute Giacomo Raspadori rolled home almost immediately after replacing the impressive Moise Kean, who netted Italy's first two goals. However, a clumsy Alessandro Bastoni own-goal and Dor Peretz's header drew Israel level before Tonali's fortunate effort moved Italy up to second in Group I -- level on nine points with Israel who have played a

game more -- and in the play-off spot. "We'll take the win which was crucial for us, but we're completely nuts, nuts because we conceded some absurd goals," said Gennaro Gattuso. "We need to work on that because we're too fragile, we concede goals too easily. The boys know that, but this is my problem to fix. "You have to give credit to the boys because every time they took a slap they had the courage to react and fight back." Italy trail leaders Norway by three points and still have a chance of taking first place and the group's sole direct qualifying spot. But new coach Gattuso has a lot to think about ahead of October's return fixtures with Estonia and Israel, whose players donned black armbands in honour of the victims of Monday morning's deadly shooting at a bus stop in east Jerusalem carried out by Palestinian gunmen. Nominal home team Israel would have been good value

for the draw, as Kean had previously twice pulled Italy out of the mire following Manuel Locatelli's early own-goal and a fabulous Dor Peretz strike in the 52nd minute in a largely empty Nagyerdei Stadium. **Italy rocked** Monday's match had cast a political cloud over Gattuso's first fixtures in charge of Italy due to Israel's offensive in the Gaza Strip. The small group of Italian fans present turned their backs to the pitch during the Israeli national anthem, while boos also rang out from sections of the stadium, before then holding up banners which read "stop". And the Italians on the pitch looked equally uninterested in the match come kick-off, with Israel snappier and more aggressive than the four-time world champions. The nominal home had already had a goal disallowed by the time Locatelli bundled Dan Biton's cross into his own net. Locatelli almost made up for



Italy's forward #10 Giacomo Raspadori (3rd R) celebrates with team mates after scoring the 2-4 goal during the 2026 World Cup qualifiers Europe zone group I football match between Israel and Italy

his own-goal when he struck the bar with an acrobatic volley in the 31st minute, seconds before Kean wasted a great opportunity from a Gianluca Mancini cut-back. But 10 minutes later Kean thumped a low drive past Daniel Peretz after collecting a knockdown from strike partner Mateo Retegui. And Kean came to the rescue again nine minutes after the break, levelling with another powerful low shot just seconds after Peretz put Israel ahead for the second time with a brilliant first-time effort. Politano finally put Italy ahead with a great volley after more fine work from Retegui, and when Raspadori rolled home the fourth it seemed the away team looked out of the woods. But it took Tonali's unusual winner to finally secure the three points after un-

characteristically bad defending nearly left Italy's hopes of qualification hanging by a thread. Israel's defender #05 Idan Nachmias (R) and Italy's forward #20 Daniel Maldini vie for the ball



Captains vow controlled aggression in **India-Pakistan showdown**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Rival captains Salman Agha and Suryakumar Yadav vowed to keep controlled aggression when Pakistan and India clash in the Asia Cup in Dubai on Sunday, the countries' first match since their conflict in May. The encounter in the eight-team Twenty20 international tournament comes after India and Pakistan exchanged deadly cross-border military action

earlier this year. The two countries stepped back from all-out war but bitterness remains on both sides. The neighbours only play each other in cricket in international tournaments on neutral ground as part of a compromise deal. Agha said his Pakistan team will channel any aggression in the right way. "If someone wants to be aggressive on the field, they are more than welcome to do that,"

Agha said in Dubai on Tuesday. "You can't stop fast bowlers because that's what keeps them going. So whoever wants to be aggressive, they are more than welcome. India and Pakistan last met in cricket, again in Dubai, in February in the 50-over Champions Trophy, with India winning and going on to lift the title. Skipper Suryakumar agreed with his Pakistan counterpart. "Aggression is always there on the field and without aggression

you cannot play the game," he said. India are eight-time Asia Cup champions and the reigning holders. They and Pakistan, champions twice, are placed in Group A alongside hosts United Arab Emirates and Oman. Afghanistan kick off the competition in a Group B clash against Hong Kong in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday. The other teams in that group are six-time champions Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.



on Friday, both in Dubai.

India open their campaign against the UAE on Wednesday while Pakistan play Oman