

Bahrain to host next year's F1 fourth round race

TDT | Manama



Bahrain will be the host of next year's fourth round of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship, which will feature 24 races.

This was confirmed by the Formula 1 and the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) as they announced the official 2026 season calendar.

The Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix will take place from 10 to 12 April 2026 at the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC).

The 2026 season will begin in Australia from March 6 to 8, followed by China (March 13-15), Japan (March 27-29), and then Bahrain.

BIC will offer priority ticket access for fans registering their interest early via Bahraingp.com, ahead of the official ticket launch.

Kingdom extends condolences to Austria over school shooting

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The Kingdom of Bahrain expressed strong condemnation and deep denunciation of the shooting incident that occurred at a school in the city of Graz, in southeastern Austria, which resulted in the death and injury of a number of innocent individuals.

A statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Kingdom of Bahrain extended its sincere condolences to the government of Austria, and to the families and relatives of the victims, wishing a speedy recovery for all the injured.

The ministry affirmed Bahrain's solidarity with Austria and its firm rejection of all forms of violence, intimidation, and acts that threaten the safety and security of innocent people, regardless of their motives or justifications.

HM King checks on Bahraini pilgrims' wellbeing

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa held a telephone call with Shaikh Adnan bin Abdullah Al Qattan, Head of Bahrain's Hajj Mission.

HM the King inquired about the wellbeing of Bahraini pilgrims following the completion of their Hajj rituals and commended the efforts of the Bah-

raini Hajj Mission in providing seamless services and support to ensure the pilgrims could perform their rites with ease and reassurance.

He also expressed his sincere appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, for the extensive efforts and facilities



HM the King

made available to serve the pil-

grims in the holy sites. He lauded His Majesty's ongoing support for the mission's work in serving pilgrims from the Kingdom.

grims in the holy sites.

Shaikh Al Qattan thanked HM King Hamad for his guidance and for his continued support for the comfort and welfare of

Bahraini pilgrims.

He lauded His Majesty's ongoing support for the mission's work in serving pilgrims from the Kingdom.

Bahrain Matches Gulf Heat Rules

First extension for Bahrain

● **Three-month ban starts June 15th**

● **Matches UAE and Saudi rules**

● **First extension since 2013**

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama



H.E. Yousef bin Abdul Hussain Khalaf

Bahrain has extended its annual midday summer work ban to three full months for the first time, with this year's restriction running from June 15th to September 15th. The change aligns the Kingdom with other Gulf countries already enforcing similar protections for outdoor labourers.

The announcement was made by His Excellency Yousef bin Abdul Hussain Khalaf, Minister of Legal Affairs and Acting Min-

ister of Labor, who confirmed that Ministerial Resolution No. (3) of 2013, amended by Resolution No. (11) of 2025, will now apply for an expanded three-month period.

The rule bars outdoor work from 12 noon to 4 pm during this time.

This is Bahrain's first such extension since the ban's formal introduction in 2013.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia already enforce three-month bans



covering the same period - June 15th to September 15th - under national labour laws.

Officials in Bahrain say the move reflects growing climate challenges and renewed attention to occupational safety.

The goal is to minimise risks such as heat exhaustion, sun-

stroke, and heat-related workplace injuries during the hottest part of the year.

Employers who violate the midday ban will be subject to penalties under Article 192 of the Labour Law in the Private Sector.

These include imprisonment

for up to three months or fines ranging from BD500 to BD1,000.

The Ministry has called on companies to adapt work hours and ensure compliance.

More information is available at www.mol.gov.bh or via the Ministry's official social media channels.

Amid Russian threat, US uncertainty

Europe warns of 'perfect storm'

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

Europe is facing a "perfect storm" on defence as it presses to rearm in the face of Russian aggression and doubts over US engagement, the EU's defence commissioner said yesterday.

"Our readiness for defence is not sufficient. It demands an urgent ramp-up and a longer term strategy how to replace

American capabilities in Europe," commissioner Andrius Kubilius said.

"The forthcoming American withdrawal from Europe is a new reality."

Kubilius said Europe needs to avoid an "angry divorce" with Washington as US President Donald Trump's administration weighs shifting forces from the continent.

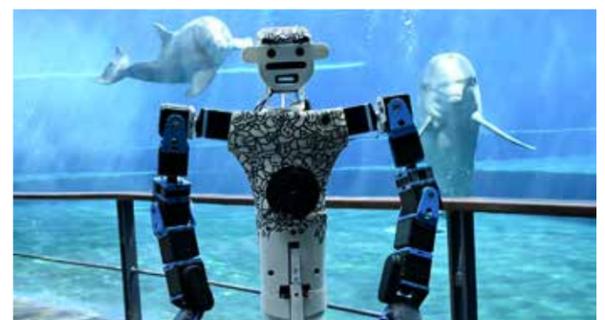
NATO countries look set to

agree at a summit in the Hague later in the month to massively ramp up defence spending in a bid to keep Trump on side.

The EU for its part has launched a raft of initiatives worth some 800 billion euros aimed at helping countries bolster their defences.

Next week, Brussels will unveil proposals to slash red tape to allow Europe's defence industry to bolster production.

Tech meets tails



Alter-Ego, a humanoid robot developed by the Italian Institute of Technology (IIT), stands in front of dolphins during a test event at the Aquarium of Genoa, northern Italy. The robot interacted with visitors by providing information on the characteristics of cetaceans and their conservation, with particular attention to the bottlenose dolphin. (AFP)



Portuguese National Day Reception



Capt. Ameen and Mrs. Benedita Budagher host the Portuguese National Day Reception 2025 at Slice Restaurant, Royal Golf Club, Riffa. The evening brought together diplomats, senior officials, businessmen, and members of the Portuguese community for a night of cultural pride, highlighted by a cake-cutting ceremony and dinner. Pics credit: Ashen Tharaka

Proud and free

Philippines to mark 127th Independence Anniversary tomorrow with message of unity and global solidarity

● **Ambassador Louis highlights Filipino resilience, bilateral ties with Bahrain**

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The Philippines celebrates the 127th Anniversary of the Proclamation of its Independence tomorrow, with a powerful message from Her Excellency Anne Jalando-on Louis, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the Kingdom of Bahrain, emphasising unity, resilience, and the strengthening of international partnerships.

This year's celebration carries the theme "Kalayaan (Independence), Kinabukasan (Future), Kasaysayan (History)," a tribute to the enduring legacy of Filipino heroes and the continued commitment to shaping a just and inclusive future for all citizens.

Equitable future

"All Filipinos, including those living abroad, have a role to play in the task of building a prosperous and peaceful Philippines that ensures an equitable future for every Filipino," said Ambassador Louis in her official message.

"May we all draw inspiration and strength from our ancestors who exemplify the Filipino spirit of courage, resilience, compassion, and a deep love of country."

As the Philippines marks more than a century of independence, Ambassador Louis



“May we all draw inspiration and strength from our ancestors who exemplify the Filipino spirit of courage, resilience, compassion, and a deep love of country.”

- H.E. AMBASSADOR ANNE JALANDO-ON LOUIS, AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

underscored the nation's pride in standing alongside the global community, particularly in maintaining strong bilateral relations with the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Diplomatic ties between the two nations were formally established in 1978 and have grown steadily across sectors such as trade and investment, arts and culture, people-to-people exchanges, skills development, and labor cooperation.

Heartfelt gratitude

Ambassador Louis extended heartfelt gratitude to the leadership and people of Bahrain for their continued support and

collaboration. "I take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and the government and people of the Kingdom for their support and contributions that further enhance our bilateral ties," she said.

In her address to the Filipino community in Bahrain, Ambassador Louis called on Filipinos to take pride in their nation's sovereignty and to remain steadfast in upholding democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law.

She reminded them of their integral role in contributing to the Philippines' progress, both at home and abroad.

Patriotic call to action

The message concluded with a patriotic call to action: "Let us champion and continue to uphold democratic ideals and principles, universal human rights, justice, the rule of law, and the values of freedom and sovereignty. Maligayang Arawang Kasarinlan! Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! Mabuhay ang Pilipino! (Happy Independence Day! Long live the Philippines! Long live the Filipino people!)"

As the Philippine flag is proudly raised in various parts of the world tomorrow, Filipinos in Bahrain and around the globe commemorate more than a century of independence with renewed hope, shared purpose, and an unwavering commitment to national pride and progress.

Bahrain enhances rights of persons with disabilities



H.E. Osama bin Saleh Al Alawi at the event

New York

The Kingdom of Bahrain is committed to enhancing the rights of persons with disabilities.

This was emphasised by His Excellency Osama bin Saleh Al Alawi, Minister of Social Development and Chairman of the 44th session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, as he chaired a meeting of Arab ministers and heads of delegations held on the sidelines of the 18th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP18) at the United Nations headquarters.

Al Alawi said this commitment is reflected in policies and legislation that ensure dignity

“These initiatives reflect a shared Arab commitment to advocating for these rights and coordinating related positions in international forums.”

- H.E. OSAMA BIN SALEH AL ALAWI

and full integration into society, alongside ongoing support for collective Arab efforts in this domain.

He highlighted the vital role played by the United Nations in advancing disability and social

development issues.

The minister commended the fruitful partnership between the organisation and Arab states.

Regional cooperation

Al Alawi emphasised the importance of regional cooperation and the exchange of successful experiences, calling for intensified joint Arab efforts to support the rights of persons with disabilities and develop comprehensive and sustainable responses, while ensuring adherence to relevant international commitments.

He expressed appreciation to the General Secretariat of the Arab League, represented by its mission to the United Nations, for organising this meeting.

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- ▶ Nasal Endosocopy
- ▶ ENT Consultation

BD 15

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- ▶ Ear Cleaning
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Court annuls car deal over altered chassis

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Tampering with a car's chassis number has cost a Bahraini seller BD14,625 after a court annulled the deal, ruling the buyer could not register the vehicle in his Gulf country due to the altered markings.

The High Civil Court found that the vehicle's identification had been interfered with, preventing its registration abroad and rendering it useless for road use.

The judge ordered the seller to return the full amount paid and to cover the cost of an expert's report, along with legal fees.

Bank transfer

The buyer had paid BD14,625 by bank transfer after agreeing the price with the seller. The vehicle was then shipped overseas. There, it failed inspection.

The anti-counterfeiting division examined the chassis and spotted signs that the number had been tampered with.

The traffic directorate refused to process registration.

Knowledge

The buyer, who had no knowledge of any tampering, hired a technical expert.

On inspecting the car, the expert noted welding, sanding, and fresh paint around the area where the chassis number had been stamped.

He concluded that the car carried a concealed fault: a forged number that made the



vehicle unfit for legal use.

Lawyer Sara Ali, acting for the buyer, told the court that her client was misled and that the car's condition amounted to a breach of contract.

Contract

She relied on Article 141(a) of the Civil Code, which allows one side to cancel a contract if the other fails to do their part.

She also cited Article 415, which makes a seller liable for faults that reduce an item's use or worth, even if they were unaware of the defect, and Article 425, which gives the buyer the right to cancel the sale or demand payment if the item doesn't match what was promised.

The court said the buyer could no longer make use of the car as intended and that the tampering destroyed the purpose of the sale.

Inspection report

The inspection report from the Gulf state's crime unit and the expert's findings were enough to show the vehicle had been altered.

The judge ordered the buyer to return the car. The seller must repay the BD14,625 and cover BD250 in expert costs.

Both sides were told to pay their share of court fees.

Doomed by drugs

Life sentence upheld for father who tied up and killed son with knife

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Life in prison for an Asian father who tied up and slit his son's throat at their home in Bahrain, claiming drug abuse had driven him to it.

The Higher Criminal Court of Appeal upheld the life sentence handed down by the First High Criminal Court.

The knife used in the killing was confiscated, and the defendant will be deported after serving his time.

The 63-year-old was found guilty of killing his 34-year-old son on 14 October 2024.

Knife

Prosecutors said the man bound his son's hands and feet using two pieces of cloth, then cut his throat with a knife.

The wound was deep enough to reach the spine.

A forensic doctor also found marks on the wrists and lower arms, suggesting restraint.

Questioning

The father admitted the killing during questioning. He said he had lost control after repeated arguments and blamed his son's behaviour on drug use.

He later re-enacted the crime for investigators.

Three men who lived in the same building gave consistent accounts.



Image used for illustrative purposes only

One said the father had told him his son had a drug problem and had been placed in hospital for treatment in their home country.

Condition

Once his condition improved, the father brought him to Bahrain to live and work with him.

But the son began to argue, shout abuse and, at times, hit him.

On the day of the incident, the witness said he heard a loud row and left the house to have breakfast.

When he returned, he found the father seated on the stairs with blood on his clothes.

Statements

When asked what had hap-

pened, the father said he had killed his son. Two others gave similar statements.

A cold store worker told the court he had seen the father and son about two weeks before the killing.

The son had been shouting without cause and grabbing at his father's clothing.

On the morning of the crime, the father phoned him twice.

First he asked for the police contact number.

Then he called again to ask that the address be passed on.

Home

He later came to the shop and provided the police with directions to his home. When asked why, he said he had hit his son.

When police arrived, they

found the son dead.

A police major who attended the scene said the father was waiting outside the house in traditional Asian clothing stained with blood.

Inside, his son was lying on the floor with a knife nearby and a deep gash to the neck.

The father confessed to the killing and said he had grown tired of the problems caused by his son.

Journey

Investigators found that the father had attempted to send him back to their home country but the journey was cancelled after the son caused a scene at the airport.

On the day of the murder, another argument broke out.

The father tied him up, cut his throat and remained at the house until officers arrived.

A post-mortem report confirmed the neck wound had been caused by a sharp blade used more than once.

Spinal column

The cut reached the spinal column.

Injuries on the wrists matched the knife and were consistent with being bound with soft restraints.

The father later walked investigators through how he carried out the act.

Bahrain Aligns Planning With Ocean Goals

Urban planning tied to oceans

Climate focus beyond coastline

Agriculture policy in spotlight

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Bahrain is looking to embed global ocean sustainability goals into its city planning and agricultural strategies, following high-level meetings held during the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, France.

His Excellency Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture, said the Kingdom's domestic planning priorities are increasingly aligned with international environmental goals, particularly on climate resilience, marine ecosystem protection, and sustainable urban growth.

He was speaking after meeting Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, on the sidelines of the global summit.

The meeting also included Hamad Yaqoob Al Mahmeed, Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, and Bahrain's Ambassador to France, Essam Abdulaziz Al Jassim.

H.E. Minister Al Mubarak



H.E. Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak with Audrey Azoulay, along with Hamad Yaqoob Al Mahmeed and H.E. Ambassador Essam Abdulaziz Al Jassim

praised the growing cooperation between Bahrain and UNESCO, calling the partnership essential to Bahrain's efforts to meet the UN's Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs).

H.E. highlighted initiatives spanning both environmental conservation and infrastructure development, noting that nat-

ural resource protection now plays a key role in local policy-making.

H.E. also commended UNESCO's Intergovernmental

Oceanographic Commission for enabling international knowledge-sharing on ocean protection.

H.E. the minister said the Third UN Ocean Conference offered new momentum to rethink planning frameworks - from coastal management to inland water efficiency - ensuring long-term sustainability for future generations.

Bahrain's presence at the forum, H.E. noted, reflects a strategic shift: integrating marine protection with everyday governance.

More details on Bahrain's commitments and future UNESCO collaborations are expected to be announced in follow-up meetings later this year.

Court to rule on phone call scam

TDT | Manama

A man lost BD365 after entering his bank details into a fake link and handing over a one-time code to a caller posing as a BENEFIT employee.

The High Criminal Court will give its ruling on 17 June in the case of a 24-year-old Asian defendant accused of helping to carry out the fraud in May 2021.

The Public Prosecution said the man, along with an unknown accomplice, used a forged link and a phone call to gain access to the victim's card

details and verification code.

The money was withdrawn from an ATM shortly after.

According to the victim's account, he received a message claiming to be from BENEFIT, asking him to update his app details.

He clicked the link and entered his bank card number and mobile number.

A short while later, he got a call from a man who said he worked for the company and asked for the one-time password to complete the update. He gave it to him.

Soon after, BD365 vanished

from his account. He reported the matter to the police.

An officer told the court that the defendant was identified as the one who withdrew the money.

Further checks showed he was part of a group that opened bank accounts in Bahrain and moved the stolen funds abroad.

He had been sentenced in a similar case before and deported.

Prosecutors accused him of unlawfully gaining access to the man's banking platform using the stolen code and helping to carry out the transfer.

Survivors of tragic Saar accident show signs of recovery

TDT | Manama

The family of the victims in the recent fatal traffic accident in Saar has shared an update on the condition of the surviving children, as Bahrain continues to mourn the devastating tragedy.

Aya, one of the children severely injured in the collision that claimed the lives of her parents, has been discharged from hospital after undergoing intensive treatment.

According to the family, doctors successfully inserted metal supports in her legs to address critical injuries sustained in the



Siblings Aya, Youssef, and Abdulaziz

accident.

Her gradual recovery marks a

hopeful milestone after a painful medical journey.

Emergency response

Civil Defence handles nearly 6,000 incidents in just five months this year

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

More than 5,900 fires, road accidents, leaks and rescues were handled by Bahrain's Civil Defence between January and mid-May, according to newly released figures.

The reports totalled 5,957. Of these, 879 were fire-related, 245 were calls for help, 145 involved leaks, and 53 were traffic crashes.

In April alone, the service dealt with 1,375 incidents, including 210 fires and 695 requests for assistance.

Accidents

There were also 121 accidents on the roads and 17 cases involving fallen trees, poles or signage.

Ambulance crews fielded 5,226 calls that same month.

The majority involved people who were unwell, with 3,841 such reports, while 409 calls

came after traffic crashes.

Patient transfers

A further 503 involved patient transfers between private hospitals and emergency departments.

There were also 35 fire-linked calls and 438 for other matters.

Meanwhile, 2,565 drug cases were recorded over a 15-month period by the Anti-Narcotics Directorate.

In 2024 alone, 1,849 cases were logged. Most of these, 1,371, were inside Bahrain.

The rest were picked up at the King Fahad Causeway with 201 cases, the airport with 276, and one case at sea.

Inland

In the first three months of this year, a further 626 drug cases were recorded. Again, most took place inland.

The drugs hotline received 1,237 reports last year. In the first quarter of 2025, there were 283.



Image used for illustrative purposes only

Cross-border police operations with neighbouring countries and allies included 132 joint efforts last year, mainly with GCC

states and the US.

In the first third of this year, 88 more were carried out involving Australia, Pakistan, Jordan

and the US Consulate General.

Enforcement

A series of talks and campaigns ran alongside enforcement.

There were 300 lectures in 2024, said to have reached about 16,000 people.

Another 25 lectures were held in the first months of 2025, along with eight exhibitions.

Six campaigns were held last year, reaching 1,855 participants.

Rehabilitation scheme

The 'Taafi' rehabilitation scheme reported 100 former addicts finishing the programme last year.

Fifty-one others did so in the first quarter of 2025.

Partners helped launch 122 projects linked to anti-drug work.

April data from the Interior Ministry also shows police patrols responded to 2,701 cases.

Around 30 per cent were traffic-related, 6 per cent involved

law breaches, and 64 per cent were general response calls.

The Economic Crimes Directorate handled 9,184 cases in 2024 and a further 972 by April this year.

The Cybercrime Directorate recorded 1,633 reports in 2024 and 657 so far this year.

The Anti-Corruption and Economic Security Directorate dealt with 126 cases in 2024 and 50 in the first four months of 2025.

Asian suspects

A large share of online scams and credit card fraud is still traced to Asian suspects, particularly from East Asia.

Certain African groups remain linked to forged currency and black-market trading.

Coast Guard records show 81 cases in April, 34 of them tied to search and rescue or stranded vessels.

Six marine accidents were recorded. Forty-one sea-based assists were provided.

Woman detained for driving against traffic

TDT | Manama

The Attorney General, who also serves as Head of the Traffic Prosecution, announced that the Public Prosecution has ordered the pretrial detention of a woman pending investigations for driving against the flow of traffic.

The incident came to light after the General Directorate of Traffic monitored a video clip widely circulated on social media, showing a vehicle traveling in the wrong direction on King Faisal Street.

A search directive was immediately issued, leading to the arrest of the driver. Authorities promptly notified the Public Prosecution.

Following the notification, the Public Prosecution initiated a formal investigation.

The accused was interrogated and admitted to the charges brought against her.

Consequently, she was placed in pretrial detention and her case was referred to an urgent criminal trial.

The Head of the Traffic Prosecution emphasised the importance of abiding by traffic laws,



Image used for illustrative purposes only



“Road safety is a shared responsibility, and respecting the law is essential to safeguarding the well-being and security of the entire community.”

- HEAD OF THE TRAFFIC PROSECUTION

saying: “The Public Prosecution urges all citizens and residents to adhere strictly to traffic rules and regulations and to refrain from any behaviour that endangers lives and property.

“Road safety is a shared responsibility, and respecting the

law is essential to safeguarding the well-being and security of the entire community.”

Authorities reiterated their commitment to taking swift legal action against any violations that threaten public safety on the roads.

Al-Daylami Lauds Royal Encouragement Gesture

● Responds to royal message

TDT | Manama

Bahraini theatre producer Ali Al-Daylami has expressed deep gratitude for the congratulatory message he received earlier from His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, calling it a source of personal inspiration and national pride.

Speaking from his New York base, Al-Daylami said the royal gesture served as a “badge of pride” that fuels his drive to continue representing Bahrain on the world stage.

“This congratulation reflects the great support that Bahraini innovators enjoy and embodies the leadership’s vision to empower national talent,” he told Al-Ayam in a new statement.

Beyond the Award

Al-Daylami said the Tony Award win for his Broadway musical ‘Maybe a Happy Ending’ was not just a personal achievement but a reflection of what Bahrainis can achieve when backed by community and leadership.

“I consider this honour an achievement for every Bahraini. It reminds us of our capacity to reach global heights through creativity and determination,” he said. He added that the support from Team Bahrain has been a continuous source of strength throughout his career.

Lakbai Guitar Duo to take center stage

Part of embassy’s Philippine Independence Day celebrations tomorrow



The Lakbai Guitar Duo of Jeffrey Malazo and Jennifer de Vera

TDT | Manama

The Philippine Embassy in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, in collaboration with the Philippine National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and in partnership with Gulf Air, is bringing the Lakbai Guitar Duo to the Kingdom of Bahrain for several performances.

It is part of the Embassy’s activities to commemorate the 127th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence on 12 June 2025.

The cultural group, Lakbai Guitar Duo, is composed of Mr. Jeffrey Malazo and Ms. Jennifer de Vera.

The couple are both under the Philippine Madrigal Singers Company of Artists.

The Lakbai Guitar Duo has performed across the Philippines and in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, US, Netherlands, Japan, Korea, Sweden and Kenya.

Their biggest adventure was their Camino de Santiago pilgrimage in 2019, when they walked 800 km from France to Spain carrying their guitars

The Lakbai Guitar Duo has performed across the Philippines and in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, US, Netherlands, Japan, Korea, Sweden and Kenya.

and performing for their fellow pilgrims for 30 days.

The Lakbai Guitar Duo won Guitar Ensemble Competitions in Malaysia and Japan in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

They received the Philippines’ Ani ng Dangkal for Music Award in 2016, and were finalists in the Pilipinas Got Talent Season 6 in 2018.

Musical styles

In addition to playing classical guitar music, the duo aims to revolutionize classical guitar music by exploring other musical styles.

The Lakbai Guitar Duo will hold a concert on 20 June 2025 at 4-6PM at the Cultural Hall.

Multi-vehicle accident

A multi-vehicle accident caused traffic congestion on Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Bridge towards Hidd yesterday. The General Directorate of Traffic promptly implemented measures to ease the flow of vehicles.



World Bank cuts **growth forecast** on trade tumult, warns of 'deep' harm

Trade tensions and resulting policy uncertainty

● **Weakest performance in 17 years**

● **Commodity prices are expected to remain suppressed**

● **Inflation rates have been revised up**

AFP | Washington, United States

The World Bank slashed its 2025 global growth forecast yesterday, citing trade tensions and resulting policy uncertainty, as US President Donald Trump's wide-ranging tariffs strained ties and weighed on economic outlooks.

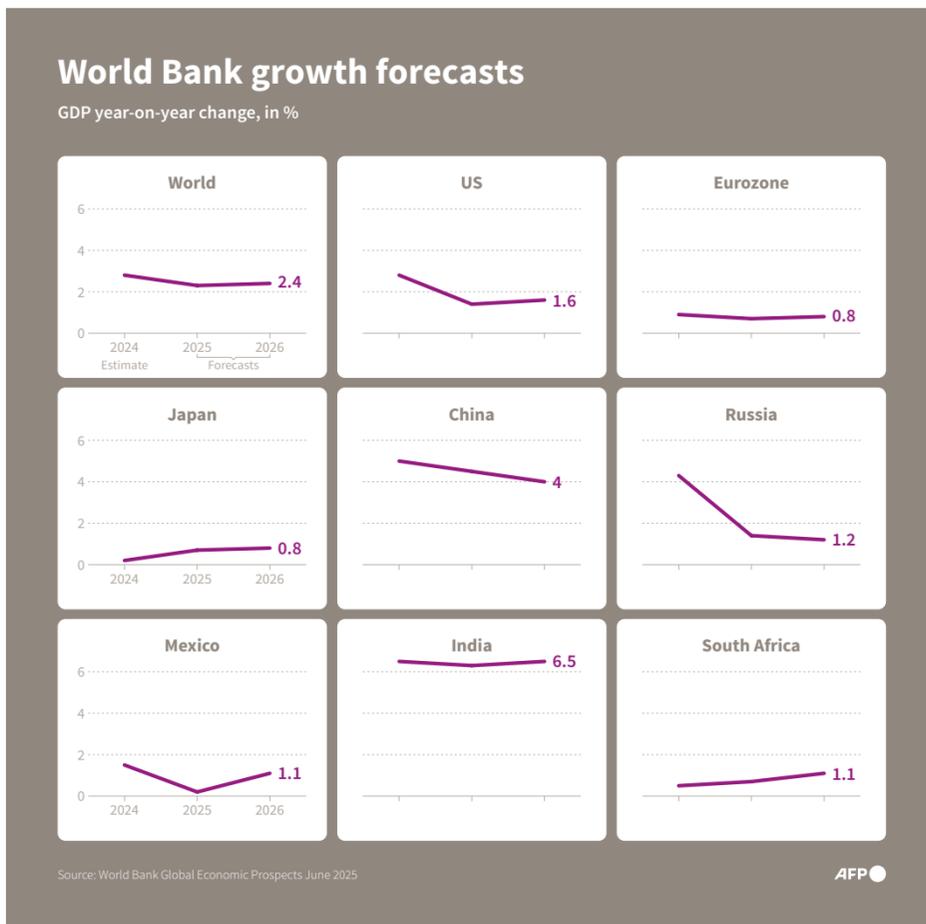
The bank lowered its projection for global GDP growth to 2.3% in its latest economic prospects report, down from 2.7% expected in January, the latest in a series of downgrades by international organizations.

"That's the weakest performance in 17 years, outside of outright global recessions," said World Bank Group chief economist Indermit Gill.

Global growth and inflation prospects for this year and next have worsened because of "high levels of policy uncertainty and this growing fragmentation of trade relations," he added.

"Without a swift course correction, the harm to living standards could be deep," Gill warned.

By 2027, the World Bank expects global GDP growth to average 2.5% in the 2020s, which would be the slowest rate in any



decade since the 1960s. The gloomier projections come as Trump imposed a 10% tariff on imports from almost all US trading partners in April -- and higher rates on dozens of these economies, which he has since suspended until early July.

He also engaged in tit-for-tat escalation with China, although

both countries have hit pause on their trade war and temporarily lowered these staggering duties as well. But a lasting truce remains uncertain.

'Limited' harm?

While the World Bank's growth downgrade was proportionately larger for advanced

economies, the bank cautioned that less wealthy countries have tricky conditions to contend with.

Commodity prices are expected to remain suppressed in 2025 and 2026, Gill said.

This means that some 60% of emerging markets and developing economies -- which are

commodity exporters -- have to deal with a "very nasty combination of lower commodity prices and more volatile commodity markets."

By 2027, while the per capita GDP of high-income economies will be approximately where it was in pre-pandemic forecasts, corresponding levels for developing economies would be six percent lower.

"Except for China, it could take these economies about two decades to recoup the economic losses of the 2020s," Gill cautioned. Overall, although GDP growth expectations have been revised downwards, inflation rates have been revised up, he said, urging policymakers to contain inflation risks.

Despite trade policy challenges, however, Gill argued that "if the right policy actions are taken, this problem can be made to go away with limited long-term damage." He urged for the "differential in tariff and non-tariff measures with respect to the US" to be quickly reduced by other countries, starting with the Group of 20 which brings together the world's biggest economies.

"Every country should extend the same treatment to other countries," he added. "It's not enough to just liberalize with respect to the US. It's also important to liberalize with respect to the others."

The World Bank said developing economies could lower tariffs on all trading partners and convert preferential trade deals into pacts spanning the "full range of cross-border regulatory policies" to boost GDP growth.

Generally, wealthier countries have lower tariffs than developing countries, which could be seeking to protect budding industries or have fewer sources of government revenue.

This month, the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development also slashed its 2025 global growth forecast from 3.1% to 2.9%, warning that Trump's tariffs would stifle the world economy. This came after the International Monetary Fund in April cut its world growth expectations for this year too on the effects of Trump's levies, from 3.3% to 2.8%.

The bank lowered its projection for global GDP growth to 2.3% in its latest economic prospects report, down from 2.7% expected in January, the latest in a series of downgrades by international organizations.



The World Bank isn't a single bank -- it's actually a group of five institutions working together to provide financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to developing countries.

The two best-known arms are: IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) - lends to middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries. IDA (International Development Association) - provides interest-free loans and grants to the world's poorest countries.

Together, they aim to reduce poverty and build sustainable development -- and fun fact: the World Bank was originally created to help Europe rebuild after World War II!



The World Bank was founded at the same conference as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) -- the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944. This historic meeting, held in New Hampshire, USA, brought together 44 Allied nations during World War II to design a new global financial system.

EU removes UAE from 'high-risk' money-laundering list, adds Monaco

Added Algeria, Angola, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Laos, Lebanon, Namibia, Nepal and Venezuela, along with Monaco

● **In addition to the UAE, it removed Barbados, Gibraltar, Jamaica, Panama, the Philippines, Senegal and Uganda**

● **The EU list will now be scrutinised by the European Parliament and member states**

AFP | Brussels, Belgium



EU Commissioner for Financial Services and the Savings and Investments Union Maria Luis Albuquerque

The EU yesterday announced the removal of the United Arab Emirates from its money-laundering "high-risk" list but added Monaco alongside nine other jurisdictions.

The European Commission said it added Algeria, Angola, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Laos, Lebanon, Namibia, Nepal and Venezuela, along with Monaco, to the list of countries subject to

extra monitoring of their money laundering controls.

In addition to the UAE, it removed Barbados, Gibraltar, Jamaica, Panama, the Philippines, Senegal and Uganda.

The moves come after a money-laundering watchdog said in February it had removed the Philippines from its list of countries that face increased monitoring, while adding Laos and Nepal.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a Paris-based organisation that reviews efforts by more than 200 countries and jurisdictions to prevent money laundering and terrorism financing, compiles a "grey list" of nations that are subject to increased monitoring of financial transactions.

Monaco has been included on the FATF list since mid-2024, along with EU member states Bulgaria and Croatia.

"The commission has now presented an update to the EU list which reiterates our strong

commitment to aligning with international standards, particularly those set by the FATF," the EU's commissioner for financial services, Maria Luis Albuquerque, said.

The EU list will now be scrutinised by the European Parliament and member states and will enter into force within one month if there are no objections, the commission said.

In a statement, Monaco's government said it had "taken note of this expected update, which would lead to Monaco being placed on the EU's list, unless the European Parliament or the Council of the EU decides otherwise".

It also stressed its commitment to take the necessary steps to be removed from the FATF's grey list "in the short term".



Money laundering involves disguising the source of illegally obtained funds to make them appear legitimate. This process typically involves three stages: placement, layering, and integration. Criminals use various techniques to introduce illicit funds into the financial system, move them through complex transactions, and then re-integrate them into the legitimate economy, making them appear clean.

Stocks muted as investors track US-China trade talks

Talks to be dominated by Chinese exports of rare earth minerals

● Beijing wants to ease controls on sensitive electronic component

● Oil prices jumped, partly from continued uncertainty

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Global stock markets diverged yesterday as investors waited for the outcome of US-China talks aimed at cementing a fragile trade war truce between the world's two biggest economies.

US indices were muted, while European ones closed in mixed territory, and Asia mostly closed down, with analysts saying much was riding on the talks in London, which were in their second day. US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told

Key figures at around 1545 GMT

New York - Dow:	▲ at 42,767.94 points
New York - S&P 500:	▲ 0.1% at 6,012.15
Nasdaq Composite:	▲ at 19,584.50
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.2% at 8,853.08 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 0.2% at 7,804.33 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 0.8% at 23,987.56 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 0.3% at 38,211.51 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▼ 0.1% at 24,162.87 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.4% at 3,384.82 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1423 from \$1.1420 on Monday
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.3508 from \$1.3552
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 144.90 yen 144.60 yen
Euro/pound:	▲ 84.57 pence from 84.27 pence
Brent North Sea Crude:	▲ 1.0% at \$67.69 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 1.0% at \$65.94 per barrel

Bloomberg Television that the talks were "going well" and that he expected Tuesday's discussions to last "all day".

With talks dragging on,

"the lack of positive headlines weighed on stocks and the dollar," said Kathleen Brooks, research director at XTB trading platform. Analysts said that any

positive sign of agreement would fuel a rise in equities -- but that it could be restrained.

"We wouldn't bank on a big turnaround thanks to any potential trade breakthroughs," said Thomas Mathews, head analyst of Asia Pacific markets for Capital Economics.

"We doubt that the US will back off completely. That's likely to restrain any relief rally," he said.

The talks were expected to be dominated by Chinese exports of rare earth minerals used in a wide range of things including smartphones, electric vehicle batteries and green technology.

Beijing in return was looking for Washington to ease controls on its exports of sensitive electronic components.

New York shares inched a little higher in midday trade.

In Europe, Paris's CAC 40 closed slightly up but Frankfurt's Dax slipped well down.

London's FTSE 100 index closed higher after weak UK unemployment data raised the chances of the Bank of England cutting interest rates into next year, a move which often propels stock prices. It could reach a new record this week if it continues to gain.

Shares in European Union markets, in contrast, could be weakened by the conspicuous lack of any deal between Washington and Brussels before a July 9 deadline for 50-percent US tariffs to take effect. Britain has already sealed an agreement.

Brooks said the upside for the dollar -- which was weaker on Tuesday -- was limited, depending on the scope of any US-China agreement.

"For the dollar to meaningfully retrace some recent losses, we do not think that positive headlines will be enough," she said.

"A trade agreement with an actionable plan to get trade be-

tween the US and China flowing freely for the long term is the only way to stop the slide in the buck, in our view."

Investors are also awaiting key US inflation data this week, which could impact the Federal Reserve's monetary policy.

Analysts warn Trump's tariffs will refuel inflation, strengthening the argument to keep interest rates on hold instead of lowering them when the Fed meets next week.

The Fed faces pressure from the president to cut rates.

Oil prices jumped, partly from continued uncertainty about the direction of US-Iran talks on Tehran's nuclear programme.

Iran said a new round of talks was planned for Sunday, in the Omani capital Muscat -- but Trump had earlier said the meeting was expected on Thursday. Each side has drawn up proposals for the other to consider.

IBM claims 'real world' edge in quantum computing race

San Francisco, United States

Technology veteran IBM on Tuesday laid out a plan to have a "practical" quantum computer tackling big problems before the end of this decade.

Current quantum computers are still experimental and face significant challenges, including high error rates. Companies like IBM, Google, and others are working to build more stable and scalable quantum systems.

Real-world innovations that quantum computing has the potential to tackle include developing better fuels, materials, pharmaceuticals, or even new elements. However, delivering on that promise has always seemed some way off.

IBM insists that it is now closer than ever and can map out the path toward having a quantum system that can fulfill actual use cases.

This breakthrough comes thanks to a system being built in a data center in Poughkeepsie, New York, which IBM billed as a pioneering move toward making quantum an everyday work tool.



Huawei founder says chips still lag 'one generation' behind US

AFP | Beijing, China

Chinese tech giant Huawei's chips still "lag behind the United States by one generation", state media quoted its founder and CEO Ren Zhengfei as saying in a rare interview yesterday.

Washington last month unveiled fresh guidelines warning firms that using Chinese-made high-tech AI semiconductors, specifically Huawei's Ascend chips, would put them at risk of violating US export controls.

The Shenzhen-based company has been at the centre of an intense standoff between the economic supergiants after Washington warned its equipment could be used for espionage by Beijing, an allegation Huawei denies.

Speaking to the People's Daily, the official newspaper of the ruling Communist Party, 80-year-old Ren insisted the United States had "exaggerated" Huawei's achievements.

Tougher controls in recent years have prevented US chip giant Nvidia, one of Huawei's rivals, from selling certain AI semiconductors -- widely regarded as the most advanced in the world -- to Chinese firms.

As a result, it is now facing tougher competition from local players in the crucial market, including Huawei.

Nvidia's chief executive Jensen Huang told reporters last month that Chinese companies "are very, very talented and very determined, and the export control gave them the spirit, the energy and the government support to accelerate their development".

Don't dwell on the difficulties, just get the job done and move forward step by step

CEO REN ZHENGFEI



export restrictions on Beijing -- Ren said he had "never thought about it".

"Don't dwell on the difficulties, just get the job done and move forward step by step," he added.

Sanctions since 2019 have curtailed the firm's access to US-made components and technologies, forcing it to diversify its growth strategy.

China has accused the United States of "bullying" and "abusing export controls to suppress and contain" the country's firms.

But Ren said Huawei was "not that great yet", according to the article published on the newspaper's front page Tuesday.

"Many companies in China are making chips, and quite a few are doing well -- Huawei is just one of them," he added.

When asked about "external blockades and suppression" -- a veiled reference to US

IMF team makes first Syria visit since 2009

AFP | Washington, United States

An IMF team visited Syria for the first time since 2009 to take part in efforts to rebuild the economy after years of civil war and the fall of Bashar al-Assad, the lender said yesterday.

The International Monetary Fund's trip to Damascus took place from June 1 to June 5, and its team sought to discuss authorities' priorities and how to help achieve them.

Syria's economy and the country are a wreck after 14 years of war under Assad, who was ousted in December.

"Syria faces enormous challenges following years of

conflict that caused immense human suffering and reduced its economy to a fraction of its former size," said Ron van Rooden, who led the visit.

Around six million people have fled the country while another seven million have been displaced internally, he noted.

"Output has plummeted, real incomes have fallen sharply, and poverty rates are high," he said, adding that state institutions have also been weakened with much infrastructure destroyed.

"There is great urgency to address these challenges and achieve a sustainable economic recovery," van Rooden said in a statement at the end of the mission.

Pakistan increases defence budget by 20%

Islamabad, Pakistan

Pakistan announced yesterday a 20% hike in defence spending in this year's federal budget, a month after a conflict with India that saw the worst violence in decades.

More than 70 people were killed in the four-day conflict between the nuclear-armed neighbours in May before a ceasefire was announced.

Finance minister Muhammad Aurangzeb presented a \$62 billion budget to parliament on Tuesday evening, allocating 14 percent to the military -- rising from 2.12 trillion Pakistani rupees (\$7.5 billion)

to 2.55 trillion this coming fiscal year.

It comes after Pakistan's government announced Friday on social media that it was in discussions to acquire 40 new Chinese fighter jets and new air defence systems.



Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb

techbuzz

Apple plays it safe on AI despite Wall Street pressure

New operating system will be the first major iOS redesign since 2013

“LIQUID GLASS”

Apple is rolling out a new “Liquid Glass” design language across its software, bringing sleek translucence and a glass-like shine to app interfaces.

Inspired by visionOS on the Vision Pro augmented reality device, the design adapts to light and dark modes and reacts dynamically to movement using real-time rendering.

The new design will be implemented in buttons, sliders, media controls and larger elements such as tab bars and sidebars, along with matching redesigned toolbars and navigation.

Apple is releasing updated Application Programming Interfaces so that developers can begin adapting their apps ahead of the new design rollout later this year.

OPERATING SYSTEMS

This year’s major iOS release would have originally been called iOS 19, following the usual sequence after iOS 18.

However, Apple is now changing its naming convention: future iOS versions will be numbered based on the year following their release—similar to how car manufacturers name new models.

Several parts of the operating systems are getting a major visual overhaul as part of the redesign.

The Phone app now includes call screening, allowing it to answer calls or wait on hold for you. The Messages app is also getting updates that include customizable chat backgrounds.

Apple also said it would add generative AI to its Xcode coding tools that can help developers write code, test it and resolve errors. The company said it would add other coding models such as ChatGPT to Xcode.

APPLE INTELLIGENCE

New additions to the operating system include Live Translation, which uses on-device AI models to translate conversations in real time, in text messages, phone calls or FaceTime.

Apple Pay is also getting Apple Intelligence integration, enabling it to track orders even for purchases made outside Apple Pay.

Meanwhile, Image Playground is getting a boost with a new feature that allows users to generate images with the help of OpenAI’s ChatGPT.

Apple will now allow developers to tap into its on-device foundational model for their own apps. Through the new Foundation Models framework, developers can build intelligent, privacy-focused experiences that work offline too.

VISUAL INTELLIGENCE

Apple will also let users learn more about what’s on their iPhone screens via Visual Intelligence.

Users can search across Google, Etsy and other supported apps to find visually similar images or products. If the tool detects that you’re viewing an event, iOS 26 will suggest adding it to your calendar.

This feature will be accessible using the same button combination used to take a screenshot on an iPhone.



● **Siri’s AI makeover still under development**

● **Renames Apple’s operating systems**

● **Next operating system will be iOS 26**

AFP | Cupertino, United States

Apple on Monday remained on its cautious path to embracing generative AI even as rivals race ahead with the technology and Wall Street expresses doubts over its strategy.

The pressure was on Apple not to disappoint at its annual Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC) a year after the iPhone juggernaut made a promise it failed to keep -- to

YOU KNOW WHAT

An interesting fact about Apple is that their original logo depicted Sir Isaac Newton sitting under an apple tree, a design inspired by the famous incident where Newton was struck by an apple and developed his theory of gravity. The company was named Apple because Steve Jobs liked the fruit and wanted a fun, non-intimidating name for his company.

improve its Siri voice assistant with generative AI.

The annual WWDC is addressed to developers who

build apps and tools to run on the company’s products.

Despite last year’s disappointment, Apple insisted on Monday it was still very much in the AI race, announcing incremental updates to its Apple Intelligence software, including the ability for app makers to directly access a device’s AI capabilities.

This would allow users to engage with apps using generative AI while offline, letting them interact ChatGPT-style with a hiking app, for example, while in remote areas without a connection.

Apple CEO Tim Cook briefly mentioned that Siri’s AI makeover was still under development and “needed more time to meet our high quality bar,” which includes Apple’s standards on privacy and data security.

“We are making progress, and we look forward to getting these features into customers’ hands,” he added.

For Gadjo Sevilla, senior analyst for Emarketer, “the delays to

Apple’s in-house AI efforts will continue to draw scrutiny.”

“Especially since rivals like Google and Samsung are moving ahead by introducing new on-device AI capabilities, or partnering with AI startups like Perplexity (in Samsung’s case) to provide users with AI features,” he added.

The biggest announcement at the event was the renaming of Apple’s operating systems so that releases better match their release year.

The next operating system will be iOS 26 and will be available across all of Apple’s devices -- including the Mac, Watch and Vision Pro headset -- in the fall, in time for the likely release of the next iPhone 17.

Today, Apple’s operating systems have vastly different nomenclatures across devices, including the current iOS 18 for the iPhone or macOS 15 for Mac computers.

Apple also announced that the new operating system will be the

first major iOS redesign since 2013, calling the new look “Liquid Glass.”

Wall Street divided

The relationship between Apple and app-making developers has been strained in recent years, with developers chafing at the iPhone maker’s high fees for getting access to the App Store.

A marathon lawsuit by Fortnite maker Epic Games ended with Apple being ordered to allow outside payment systems to be used in the US App Store.

Adding to doubts about Apple’s direction is the fact that the legendary designer behind the iPhone, Jony Ive, has joined with ChatGPT maker OpenAI to create a potential rival device for engaging with AI.

Apple also has to deal with tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump in his trade war with China, a key market for sales growth and the place where most iPhones are manufactured.

Trump has also threatened to hit Apple with tariffs if iPhone production wasn’t moved to the US, a change which analysts say would be impossible given the costs and capabilities required.

Wall Street analysts remain divided on Apple’s prospects, with the stock down about 17 percent since the start of the year, wiping over \$600 billion from its market value and far outshone by its Big Tech rivals.

While some analysts remain optimistic about Apple’s long-term AI monetization potential, others worry the company’s cautious approach may prove costly in the longer term.

WWDC “was void of any major Apple Intelligence progress as Cupertino is playing it safe and close to the vest after the missteps last year,” said Dan Ives of Wedbush Securities.

“We have a high level of confidence Apple can get this right, but they have a tight window to figure this out,” he added.

News in brief

◆ **The sixth round of Iran-US nuclear talks is planned for Sunday.** Tehran said as the two sides appear locked in a standoff over uranium enrichment nearly two months into the high-stakes negotiations. Iran has said it would present a counter-proposal to the latest draft from Washington, criticised by Tehran for failing to offer sanctions relief in return for curbs on its nuclear programme. "The next round of Iran-US indirect talks is being planned for next Sunday in Muscat," Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said in a statement on Tuesday. There was no immediate comment from mediator Oman, which has hosted some of the previous rounds, while Washington has said the talks could be held as early as Thursday.



Iran says new round of US talks planned for Sunday

Two BTS megastars released from South Korea military



◆ **Two members of K-pop supergroup BTS were released from South Korea's mandatory military service on Tuesday and announced they wanted to start performing again "as soon as possible",** prompting a fan frenzy. BTS, South Korea's most lucrative musical act, has been on a hiatus since 2022 while its seven members complete their military service. Hundreds of fans gathered at a site near the two army bases where band leader RM -- recently named "Favorite K-pop Artist" at the American Music Awards -- and singer V were separately discharged. Cheers broke out as they stepped out of different vehicles and hugged, with RM playing a quick song on the saxophone as V stood

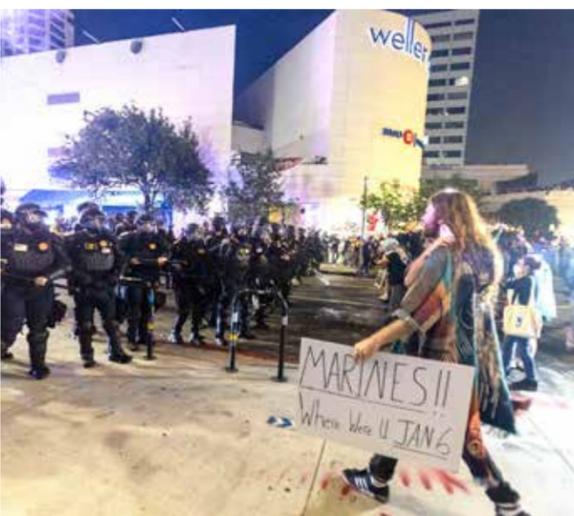
next to him smiling, holding bunches of flowers. "What we want most right now is to perform again," RM, still wearing his army uniform, told reporters and fans after his discharge.

Iran amputates hands of two convicted thieves

◆ **Iranian authorities have amputated the hands of two men who had been repeatedly convicted of theft, the judiciary said yesterday.** The amputations went ahead after the verdicts handed down by a court in the central province of Isfahan were upheld by the supreme court, the judiciary's Mizan Online news website said. "The sentence of hand amputation was carried out against two professional thieves, who were convicted of multiple offences... including theft, as well as vandalism and intentional bodily harm," Isfahan chief justice Asadollah Jafari told Mizan. He said the judiciary would continue to take a firm stance against actions that threaten public safety. Earlier this month, Iran's police chief Ahmad-Reza Radan said tackling purse and mobile phone theft was a "priority that the police will deal with firmly".

SPOTLIGHT

Trump deploys Marines



A demonstrator holding a sign reading "Marines!!! Where Were You Jan. 6" confronts police during a protest following federal immigration operations in Los Angeles

Los Angeles, United States

President Donald Trump ordered active-duty US Marines and 2,000 more National Guard troops into Los Angeles on Monday, vowing those protesting immigration arrests would be "hit harder" than ever.

Trump's extraordinary mobilization of 700 full-time professional military personnel -- and thousands of National Guard troops -- came on the fourth day of street protests triggered by dozens of immigration arrests in a city with

huge foreign-born and Latino populations.

California Governor Gavin Newsom slammed the move, posting on X that US Marines "shouldn't be deployed on American soil facing their own countrymen to fulfill the deranged fantasy of a dictatorial President. This is un-American."

The deployment came after demonstrators took over streets in downtown LA on Sunday, torching cars and looting stores in scenes that saw law enforcement responding with tear gas and rubber bullets.

Thunberg accuses Israel of **kidnap**

"Nothing compared to what the Palestinians are going through"

● She was deported by Israel on a commercial flight bound for Paris

● Israel intercepted the Madleen about 185 kilometres (115 miles) west of Gaza

● Several rights groups including Amnesty International have accused Israel of genocide

AFP | Paris, France



An Israeli police patrol boat moves near the aid sailboat Madleen as it is moored at the southern port of Ashdod

Swedish activist Greta Thunberg yesterday accused Israel of "kidnapping us in international waters and taking us against our will to Israel" after security forces intercepted a boat carrying humanitarian aid bound for Gaza. "This is yet another intentional violation of rights that is added to the list of countless other violations that Israel is committing," Thunberg, 22, told reporters on arrival at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris after being deported from Israel.

She stressed that her own experience was "nothing compared to what the Palestinians are going through".

Of the 12 people on board the Madleen carrying food and supplies for Gaza, five French activists were taken into custody after they refused to leave Israel voluntarily.



But Thunberg, who rose to fame as a schoolgirl activist against climate change and seeks to avoid flying because of its environmental impact, was deported by Israel on a commercial flight of national airline El Al bound for Paris.

"This is not the real story. The real story is there is a genocide going on in Gaza and systematic starvation," said Thunberg.

Several rights groups including Amnesty International have accused Israel of genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza but Israel vehemently rejects the term.

The vessel carrying French, German, Brazilian, Turkish, Swedish, Spanish and Dutch activists had the stated aim of delivering humanitarian aid and breaking the Israeli blockade on the Palestinian territory.

Israel intercepted the Madleen about 185 kilometres (115 miles) west of the coast of Gaza.

Thunberg said what happened to the vessel was a "continuation and violation of international law and war crimes that are being systematically committed by Israel by not letting aid in" to Gaza.

"This was a mission of attempting to once again bring aid to Gaza and send solidarity. And saw we cannot," she said.

She also denounced what she termed the "silence and passivity" of governments worldwide over what was taking place in Gaza.

"There are no words to describe the betrayal that is happening every day by our own

governments," she said. Admitting she was "desperately in need of a shower", Thunberg vowed to carry on her campaign. "We will not stop. We will try every single day to demand an end to the atrocities Israel is carrying out".

The October 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel that triggered the war resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people on the Israeli side, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of official figures.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza says at least 54,981 people, the majority civilians, have been killed in the territory since the start of the war. The UN considers these figures reliable.

Out of 251 taken hostage during the Hamas attack, 54 are still held in Gaza including 32 the Israeli military says are dead.

Japan says **two Chinese aircraft carriers** seen in Pacific

AFP | Tokyo, Japan

Two Chinese aircraft carriers were operating in the Pacific for the first time, according to Japan, whose defence minister said Tuesday the move revealed the expansion of Beijing's military activities.

Beijing said Tuesday the Shandong and Liaoning carriers -- its only two currently in operation, with a third undergoing sea trials -- were carrying out "routine training".

"We believe the Chinese military's purpose is to improve its operational capability and ability to conduct operations in distant areas," a Japanese defence ministry spokesman told AFP.

Defence Minister Gen Nakatani told reporters the sightings show that the Chinese military's



Picture for representation only

"activity area is expanding".

"Japan has expressed its position that the Chinese activities should not threaten Japan's safety" through diplomatic

routes to Beijing, Nakatani said. The Japanese military would continue to closely monitor and patrol the operations of Chinese naval warships, he added.

China's use of naval and air assets to press its territorial claims has rattled the United States and its allies in the Asia-Pacific region.

A spokesperson for Beijing's navy called the ships' activities "routine training" meant to test troops' defence capabilities, in an online statement.

When asked about the moves at a regular news briefing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian reiterated a statement given the previous day about the Liaoning's trip.

"The activities of Chinese warships in the relevant sea areas are fully in line with international law and international practice," he said, adding that Japan should "take an objective and rational look at this issue".



Trojan War: Troy is sacked and burned, according to calculations by Eratosthenes

US President JFK says segregation is morally wrong and that it is "time to act"

The World Health Organization declares H1N1 swine flu to be a global pandemic, the first such incident in over forty years

Islamic State of Iraq forces seize control of government offices and other important buildings in the northern city of Mosul



TOP
4
TWEETS

01

Former student kills ten at Austrian school

Six of the victims were female and three male



A general view shows a school where several people died in a shooting



Police walk near a school where several people died in a shooting.

Twelve people suffered severe injuries

The suspect acted alone and took his own life in the school toilet

Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker declared three days of national mourning

AFP | Graz, Austria

A former student killed 10 people when he opened fire at a high school in southeastern Austria on Tuesday before taking his own life, authorities said, in an unprecedented case of deadly gun violence that stunned the Alpine

country.

Heavily armed police, a helicopter and paramedics descended on the Dreierschuetzengasse high school in Graz after the 21-year-old lone shooter struck, police said.

Nine victims were immediately confirmed but a woman died from her wounds in hospital later, an official said.

Seven of the victims were female and three male, authorities said without specifying their ages. A 17-year-old French student was among the victims, his father told AFP.

Twelve people suffered severe injuries and police said support was being provided to witnesses and those affected.

The suspect acted alone and took his own life in the school toilet, police said, adding his motive remained unknown.

Austrian Chancellor Christian

Stocker declared three days of national mourning to remember the victims, saying the country had witnessed "an act of unimaginable violence".

According to police, the alleged perpetrator was an Austrian from the Graz region, who used two legally owned weapons.

He was a former student at the high school, but had not finished his studies, Interior Minister Gerhard Karner told reporters.

'Unheard of'

Bouquets of flowers and candles were placed in front of the school, which has around 400 students aged between 14 and 18, as nearby businesses closed.

One resident, originally from the United States, whose children attend a nearby elementary school and kindergarten, told

AFP she was "shocked" and it was "a lot to take in".

"In my home country it happens more often as we know but that it happens here is unheard of," she said, declining to give her name.

"Graz is a safe city," said Roman Klug, 55, who said he lived close to the school that he said was "known for its openness and diversity".

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Attacks in public are rare in Austria, which is home to almost 9.2 million people and ranks among the 10 safest countries in the world, according to the Global Peace Index.

Nations call for 'quieter' ocean to help marine life

AFP | Nice, France

Dozens of countries at the UN oceans summit on Tuesday took a first step toward recognising an invisible but growing threat to marine life -- underwater noise pollution.

The din created by shipping and other human activities is rising at an alarming rate, marine conservation groups say, a major problem for sea life reliant on sound below water to survive.

Whales and dolphins use clicks and whistles to communicate with their young, navigate the oceans and warn of danger and hunt for food.

"Human noise pollution is drowning out these vital sounds," said Carlos Bravo from OceanCare, a marine

conservation group.

In a step toward a quieter ocean, 37 countries led by Canada and Panama have launched a new effort to reduce harmful underwater noise pollution.

At the UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, ministers from these countries committed to advancing quieter shipping design and including noise reduction protocols in their marine protected areas.

"Too often, the issue of ocean noise has been sidelined in global environmental discourse," said Panama's environment minister Juan Carlos Navarro.

"With this coalition, we are committing to act decisively to protect marine biodiversity from this invisible yet powerful threat."

Israel strikes Yemen's Huthi-held Hodeida port

AFP | Sanaa, Yemen

Yemen's rebel-controlled media reported Israeli strikes on the port of Hodeida yesterday, with the Israeli army saying its navy had hit the area following calls on civilians to evacuate three Huthi-held ports.

"Israeli Navy Missile Ships struck terror targets belonging to the Huthi terrorist regime in the port of" Hodeida, the Israeli army said in a statement.

"The strikes were carried out to stop the use of the port for military purposes," it said, adding that the port was being "used to transfer weapons".

Al-Masirah TV channel said "two strikes by the Israeli enemy targeted the docks of the port of Hodeida".

In a post on X, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said "we warned the Huthi terror organisation that if they con-



Destruction at the port in Yemen's city of Hodeida

tinued firing toward Israel, they would face a powerful response and be subjected to a naval and aerial blockade."

Earlier, Colonel Avichay Adraee, an Israeli army spokesman said that "because of the use of maritime ports by the Huthi terrorist regime, we call on all people present" in the ports of

Ras Issa, Hodeida and Salif "to evacuate them immediately for their own security" in an Arabic post on X and Telegram.

Yemen's Huthis have repeatedly launched missiles and drones at Israel since the Gaza war broke out in October 2023 with Palestinian militant group Hamas's attack on Israel.

Met members of the various delegations who represented India in different countries and elaborated on India's commitment to peace and the need to eradicate the menace of terrorism. We are all proud of the manner in which they put forward India's voice.

@narendramodi

02



The ocean is the lifeblood of our planet. Yet, we are treating it as a limitless resource. I'm leaving the @UN Ocean Conference encouraged by the commitments, solutions & investments I've seen from governments, civil society & businesses. This is the global coalition we need.

@antonioguterres

03



Al-Amal Hospital in Khan Younis, #Gaza, is now essentially out of service due to increasing hostilities in its vicinity.

@DrTedros

04



While Los Angeles burns—officers ambushed, city in chaos—Kamala Harris, Gavin Newsom, and Maxine Waters call the riots and insurrection "peaceful." These leftists don't care about your safety. They side with mobs.

@POTUS

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

Smoke billowing from Singapore-flagged container ship MV Wan Hai 503 that caught fire 78 nautical miles off Beypore port in India's Kerala state



Indian coastguard battles blaze on container ship

MV Wan Hai 503 carrying 22 crew members caught fire some 78 nautical miles off Beypore port

● **Ship surrounded by thick plumes of billowing black smoke**

● **"Some injuries" among the crew**

AFP | New Delhi, India

India's coastguard said yesterday it was battling to stop a fierce blaze that has engulfed a Singapore-flagged container ship listing off the southern coast that broke out a day earlier.

The 268-metre (879-foot) container vessel MV Wan Hai 503 carrying 22 crew members

caught fire some 78 nautical miles off India's Beypore port on Monday.

Eighteen crew members were rescued by the Indian coastguard and navy, with four still missing.

Indian Coast Guard said Tuesday that "fires and explosions persist" on the vessel, which was

tilting at around "10-15 degrees".

They issued photographs that showed flames leaping from the stacked containers, with the ship surrounded by thick plumes of billowing black smoke.

Initial images on Monday showed heavy containers that had seemingly been hurled up by a powerful explosion

on board, with the coastguard saying that some were in the water.

Singapore's Maritime and Port Authority had said there were "some injuries" among the crew.

Coastguard vessels alongside the blackened and burning ship poured jets of water onto the flames, according to video foot-

age released.

The MV Wan Hai container ship is the second to run into trouble off India's southern coast within weeks.

A Liberian-flagged container ship with hazardous cargo sank off the coast of Kerala on May 24. The Indian navy rescued all 24 crew members.

Arab, Iranian foreign ministers to meet this week in Norway

● **The meeting will be held behind closed doors in Lorenskog**

AFP | Oslo, Norway

The foreign ministers of Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Oman will meet in Norway this week at an annual peace forum, the Norwegian government announced yesterday.

The ministers, including Iran's foreign minister and chief nuclear negotiator Abbas Araghchi, will take part on Wednesday and Thursday in the Oslo Forum, an annual gathering dedicated to peace issues.

The meeting will be held behind closed doors in Lorenskog some 15 kilometres (nine miles) outside the Norwegian capital.

In addition to the Iranian foreign minister, Syria's Asaad al-Shaibani, Saudi Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Egypt's Badr Abde-



(L to R) Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani, and Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit giving a joint press conference after their meeting in Amman

“The forum is taking place at a time characterised by several large wars and conflicts, increased polarisation, new alliances, and rivalries between big powers”

NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY

latty and Oman's Badr Albusaidi will also be in attendance.

"The forum is taking place at a time characterised by several large wars and conflicts, increased polarisation, new alliances, and rivalries between big powers," the Norwegian foreign ministry said in a statement.

"Participants will, among other things, discuss ceasefires, the use of unofficial channels of

communication, peace efforts and conflict resolution in a world characterised by an ever evolving political dynamic," it said.

A new meeting between Iran and the United States on Tehran's nuclear programme is expected this week, according to the two countries.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Tuesday that a new round of talks was planned for Sunday in the Omani capital Muscat.

The news site Axios meanwhile reported that the talks could also take place on Friday in Oslo, quoting a US official speaking under cover of anonymity.

Norway has yet to comment on that report.

According to the Norwegian foreign ministry, the Oslo Forum will also gather other "high level" participants, representing Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey, amongst others.

celebs

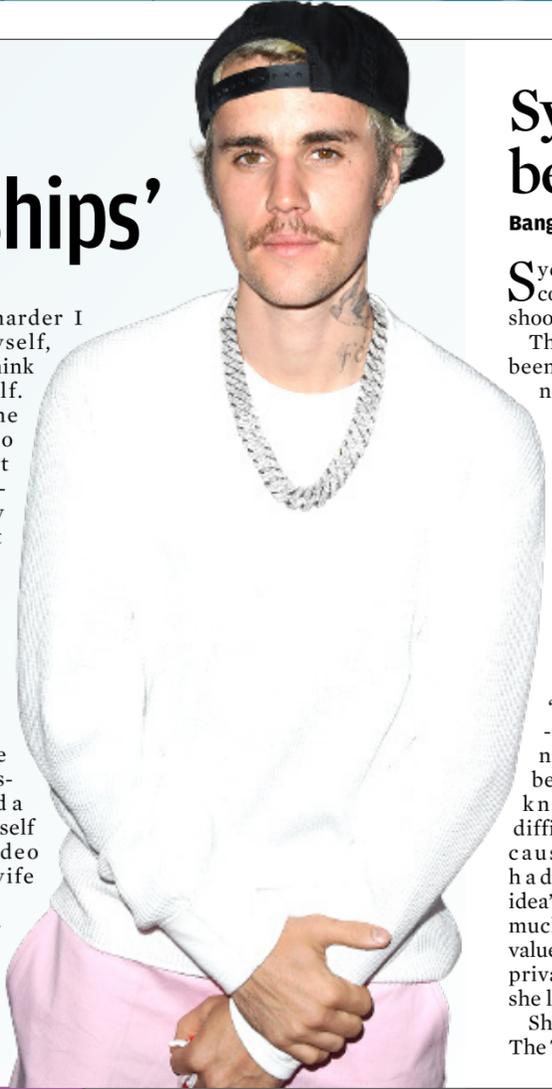
Justin Bieber tired of 'transactional relationships'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Justin Bieber is "tired of transactional relationships". The Believe singer - who has son Jack, nine months, with wife Hailey Bieber - suggested love shouldn't be conditional in his latest cryptic Instagram post on Sunday. Sharing two black-and-white selfies, he wrote: "Tired of transactional relationships. If I have to do something to be loved. That's not love." The post came a day after the 31-year-old star had hit out at expectations of those who kept pushing him to "work harder". Alongside a photo of himself with a hand over his head, Justin had written on his Instagram Story: "This is how I feel after people keep telling me there's more work to do after I've given everything I have to give. I don't think any of us can handle hearing, 'You just gotta try a little harder and you will be like me.' It's not true. I listened to those fools who

told me to work harder. And there's no end to trying to earn ur spot in this life because I tried. U have everything u need right now.(sic)" And Justin stressed the importance of making faith a priority when people seem to "wanna make our life about work so bad." He wrote in a separate Instagram Story post: "But this life is about God. Loving us so we can love each other. Quit making ur life about work [shaking my head]. God will always inspire you to want to work harder. U think if you don't tell people to work hard that they won't. Stop playing God please. Conditioning will make u feel like u don't know what the f*** u knew.(sic)" The Love Yourself singer believes "working hard" on himself only leads to further difficulties. He wrote: "Jesus was always the answer to pain we are all facing... People still keep making me think if I work hard on myself I'll be better like them.

"But the harder I work on myself, the more I think about myself. I thought the point was to think about one another? The only thing that helps me think about others to let go, not try harder. Join me in letting go of not trying harder." Over the weekend, Justin also shared a photo of himself having a video chat with wife Hailey. He captioned the image: "that's a man who LOVES his wife.(sic) Justin Bieber



Sydney Sweeney has become more 'guarded'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Sydney Sweeney has become more "guarded" since shooting to fame. The 27-year-old actress has been working in show business since she was a teenager but her fame has increased over the last few years after she landed a high profile role in TV series 'Euphoria' and went on to star in 'The White Lotus', rom-com 'Anyone but You' and Marvel movie 'Madame Web' - and Sydney admits being well-known is difficult because she had "no idea" how much she valued her privacy until she lost it. She told The Times

newspaper: "I've always been guarded. Definitely more so now. You let a few people in who you trust... A lot is gone, like privacy. Which is huge. You don't realise how much that means until you lose it. I see all the time: 'Oh, they sold themselves, they knew what they were signing up for.' But 18-year-old me had no idea what she was signing up for." Sydney went on to admit it is women who give her "the hardest time", insisting she has to work hard to be taken seriously in her work. She explained: "I have to be like, I want to be in the room, I want to sit in every single meeting and want to be involved in every decision, I want to be taken seriously as a producer. Sydney Sweeney



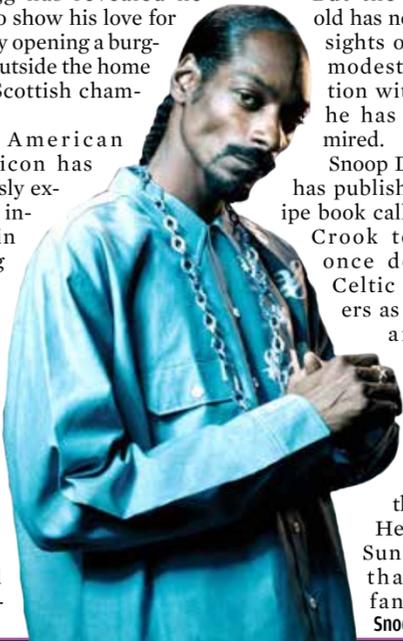
Snoop Dogg wants to open burger van at Celtic

AFP | Los Angeles

Legendary rapper Snoop Dogg has revealed he wants to show his love for Celtic by opening a burger van outside the home of the Scottish champions. The American music icon has previously expressed interest in buying a stake in the Glasgow club after being inspired by the success of Hollywood celebri-

ties Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney at English second-tier side Wrexham. But the 53-year-old has now set his sights on a more modest connection with a team he has long admired. Snoop Dogg, who has published a recipe book called 'From Crook to Cook', once described Celtic supporters as "special" and said he identified with the club's mascot Hoopy the Hound. He told the Sunday Mail that Celtic fans would

flock to the burger van and that it would become a foodie "Paradise", the nickname give to the club's Parkhead stadium. "I would love to bring a pop-up burger van to a sports stadium to show fans that food at stadiums can be good," he said. "It's got to be Celtic Park, man. The secret to a good burger is the love in the preparation. The ground beef has got to be mixed with some secret spices, then add a good quality cheese and some maple-cured bacon. "The Celtic fans are gonna love it, and to make sure they are just right, Snoop is going to be serving them himself." Snoop Dogg worked as a correspondent for NBC at the Paris Olympics last year, has launched two youth football leagues, and has been a vocal advocate for pay equality for female athletes.



George Clooney says his kids 'don't care' about his fame: 'They just want to see Taylor Swift..'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

George Clooney's kids "don't care" about his fame. The 64-year-old actor - who has eight-year-old twins Ella and Alexander with his wife Amal Clooney - has been one of the biggest names in Hollywood for decades but admitted that his children are not fazed by the circles he moves in. They want to see Taylor Swift. The funniest part is that they have no idea of references. Robert De Niro will be at the house and they're like 'Who's that?' They don't care!" The former ER star made his Broadway

debut in the new play Good Night, and Good Luck and while he lost out the Tony Award for Best Actor to Oh, Mary! actor Cole Escala, he insisted that he is just

as "lucky" to have the support of his wife in the first place. He said: "I have this incredible partner who I couldn't be more proud of. "She's the bravest human being I've ever met in my life. I am deeply proud of her and the fact that she's in any way proud of me, if just, I can't believe how lucky I am." George had to shave his famed salt-and-pepper locks for his role as Edward R. Murrow in the play, and joked that he had to use a "weed whacker" to achieve the look. He said: "I had to cut it all out with a weed whacker to get it all. "That black hair dye, I had to cut it out. You can't color that." However, George was keen to revert to his usual looks in time for the awards. Speaking on Late Night with Seth Myers, he said: "We do a matinee, and then by the time we go to the Tonys that night, it'll be gone. "I may have a shaved head!"



SUDOKU

			7	1			4	3
			5				6	
2		9		4				
	6			9		7		
	2	1				3	9	
		3		8			6	
				5		1		6
		4				8		
9	5			6	7			

Yesterday's solution

5	8	2	3	7	4	1	9	6
4	7	9	2	1	6	3	8	5
3	6	1	9	5	8	7	4	2
1	5	8	6	3	7	4	2	9
9	3	6	1	4	2	5	7	8
2	4	7	8	9	5	6	1	3
8	2	3	7	6	1	9	5	4
6	1	4	5	2	9	8	3	7
7	9	5	4	8	3	2	6	1

How to play
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD

Across

- Diary of _____
- Housewife
- 7th Greek letter
- 160 square rods
- Hard to find
- For _____ (cheap)
- Seasonal song
- Against
- "Wheel of Fortune" buy
- An organization
- Buck's mate
- Hi-_____ monitor
- Challenge
- Ice cream topped with syrup
- Rely
- RR stop
- Refrain in a children's song
- Relaxes
- Funny Fox
- Sketches
- Speed contest
- _____ a time
- Type of sanctum
- Male cat
- Elaborately adorned
- Past prefix
- Singer Vikki
- RR stop
- _____ easter
- Consisting of dust
- Sleep like _____
- Bobby of the Black Panthers
- Switch ending
- Ump's call
- In shape
- Pro or con
- Pay to play
- Society-page word
- Supplements, with "out"

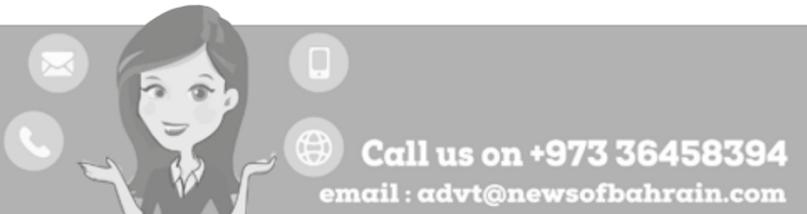
Down

- La Scala highlight
- Wrestling surfaces
- Circle segments
- Remove the antlers
- This in Tijuana
- Precisely
- Against
- "Wheel of Fortune" buy
- Product of condensation
- Overhaul
- Or _____
- To reiterate...
- Crystal-lined rock
- Give up
- Scruff
- The back end of something
- Shorthand pro
- Vault under the ground
- Uncanny
- Fluffy
- Furnishings
- B'way hit sign
- Fleming who created Bond
- Religious sch.
- Comic Carvey
- Goes ballistic
- Diamond protection
- Queue after Q
- Confidence
- "Unto the Sons" author
- American space agency
- Pearl Buck heroine
- Boxer Spinks
- Windmill part
- Gen. Robt. _____
- Actor Estrada
- Lymph _____
- Some digits
- Golly!

Yesterday's solution

S	T	A	E	L	S	E	C	T	A	U	N	T						
S	A	L	S	A	A	L	A	P	N	E	A							
S	U	P	P	O	R	T	E	R	R	A	D	A						
S	T	S	H	A	V	E	R	G	R	E	T	A						
		E	B	O	N			R	E	T	R	O						
H	E	R	A	L	D		S	E	A	T								
S	I	E	S	T	A		T	R	E	S	S	E						
T	N	U	T			N	E	E		O	W	E						
E	P	S	I	L	O	N				E	N	D	E	A	R			
		S	E	N	S	E		B	I	O	S							
A	L	L	O	T		A	T	O	N		S	A	N					
E	A	G	L	E						F	R	A	G	R	A	N	C	E
R	I	A	T	A		A	E	S		A	N	I	T	A				
I	N	R	E	D		R	E	T		G	E	T	I	T				

Classifieds



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Man City add Ait-Nouri to squad rebuild in time for Club World Cup

AFP | Manchester

Manchester City completed the signing of left-back Rayan Ait-Nouri from Wolves on Monday for a reported £31 million (\$42 million).

The 24-year-old Algeria international has signed a five-year contract and will be available for the Club World Cup, which begins later this week.

Ait-Nouri is expected to be just one of a trio of new City faces for that tournament with deals close to completion for AC Milan midfielder Tijjani Reijnders and Lyon playmaker Rayan Cherki.

After missing out on a major trophy in the recently completed season for the first time since 2016/17, City are hoping to bounce back quickly with a major overhaul of Pep Guardiola's squad.

They also spent more than £172 million in January on Omar Marmoush, Abdoukodie Khusanov, Vitor Reis and Nico Gonzalez.

City will face Moroccan side Wydad AC and Emirati club Al



Manchester City's Bernardo Silva vies with Wolverhampton Wanderers' Rayan Ait-Nouri

“City are one of the biggest clubs in the world and the chance to play for the club is a dream come true. I am also so excited about working with and learning from Pep (Guardiola) and his coaching team and getting to train and play alongside such a world class group of players

RAYAN AIT-NOURI

Ain before a clash of European heavyweights with Juventus in the group stage, which kicks off on June 14.

“City are one of the biggest clubs in the world and the chance to play for the club is a dream come true,” Ait-Nouri said in a club statement.

“I am also so excited about working with and learning from Pep (Guardiola) and his coaching team and getting to train and play alongside such a world class group of players.”

Ait-Nouri spent five years at Wolves, initially arriving on loan from Angers before signing permanently for £14.9m in 2021.

He is City's first left-back specialist since Benjamin Mendy, who played his final game for the club almost four years ago.

Oleksandr Zinchenko, Joao Cancelo, Nathan Ake, Josko Gvardiol and Nico O'Reilly have been among the players to fill a problem position for Guardiola since.

French media report Cherki is on the verge of signing a five-year deal with Guardiola hoping to wrap up the forecast 40 million euro five-year signing by yesterday evening in order to field the 21-year-old at the Club World Cup.

Tudor confirmed as Juve coach, Kolo Muani to stay for Club World Cup



Juventus' coach Igor Tudor (C) celebrates with Dusan Vlahovic (L) and Renato Veiga

AFP | Milan

Igor Tudor will be Juventus coach next season, the Serie A club's new general manager Damien Comolli confirmed yesterday, after failing to snatch Antonio Conte from Serie A champions Napoli.

“Igor Tudor will be our coach for the 2025/26 season. We're working together, and I want to reiterate that he will be our coach next season,” Comolli told reporters during a press conference.

Juve had pushed to bring back club icon Conte, who won three straight league titles as coach of the Turin giants be-

“Igor Tudor will be our coach for the 2025/26 season. We're working together, and I want to reiterate that he will be our coach next season

DAMIEN COMOLLI

son's Champions League.

Tudor will lead Juve at the upcoming Club World Cup in the USA where the Italians face Al Ain, Wydad AC and Manchester City in the group stage.

Also taking part in the Club World Cup with Juve will be Comolli's fellow Frenchman Randal Kolo Muani, whose loan from Paris Saint-Germain has been extended for the length of the tournament.

Comolli added that Juve were hoping to extend Kolo Muani's stay for next season after a promising spell in Italy since arriving in January from PSG where he was frozen out by Luis Enrique.

tween 2011 and 2014.

But Conte decided to stay at Napoli and defend the Scudetto, leading to Juve to decide to stick with Tudor who replaced sacked Thiago Motta in March and guided the club to next sea-

Belgium battle past Wales in thriller, Italy win in World Cup qualifying

Italy bounce back as Belgium escape, while Haaland and Modric star in qualifiers

● Italy beat Moldova 2-0 after Norway loss

● Spalletti exits Italy post with win

● De Bruyne nets as Belgium edge Wales 4-3 after late drama

● Haaland scores in Norway's win vs Estonia

● Modric scores in Croatia's 5-1 thrashing

AFP | Paris

Belgium held off a battling Wales and Italy gave sacked coach Luciano Spalletti a winning send-off in World Cup qualifying on Monday.

Elsewhere Manchester City star Erling Haaland's goal lifted Norway past Estonia, Luka Modric was among the scorers in Croatia's 5-1 rout of the Czech Republic, and the Faroes Islands left it late to down Gibraltar 2-1.

Giacomo Raspadori and Andrea Cambiaso scored in each half as Italy beat Moldova 2-0 to inject a smidgeon of pride back in the Azzurri camp after last week's 3-0 thrashing by Norway which cost Spalletti his job.



Italy's head coach Luciano Spalletti shakes hands with Italy's forward #20 Andrea Cambiaso (2L)

The Italians trail Norway by nine points in European qualifying group I by nine points and are at risk of missing out on a third straight World Cup.

Even though they have played two games less their ticket to the United States, Canada and Mexico next year is far from certain.

Only top spot in each group guarantees automatic qualification with Italy's best hopes appearing to rest on finishing second and reaching the play-offs.

"When you're the national

team coach you have no excuses, it's you who selects the squad," said Spalletti to public broadcaster Rai.

"It's the coach who has to make the difference and unfortunately I wasn't able to do that." Over in Brussels Belgium raced to a three-goal lead over Wales courtesy of Romelu Lukaku, Youri Tielemans and Jeremy Doku inside half an hour.

Wales, though, rallied through a Harry Wilson penalty, Sorba Thomas and Brennan Johnson to stun the side ranked eighth

in the world.

But De Bruyne rode to his nation's rescue, as he has so often in a stellar career, by steering in Tielemans' perfect cross in the 88th minute.

It left Wales sitting second in Group J, one point behind North Macedonia, 1-0 winners over Kazakhstan, and three in front of Belgium, who have two games in hand.

This was Wales manager Craig Bellamy's first defeat in his first 10 matches in charge.

Wales captain Ben Davies told



Belgium's midfielder #07 Kevin De Bruyne celebrates after scoring



Kevin De Bruyne has now been directly involved in 15 goals in his last 12 Belgium appearances (8 goals, 7 assists), proving crucial again with his late winner against Wales

the BBC: "Getting back as close as we did is probably why it's as painful as it is."

"We knew we could do a lot better. You could see in the second half, we managed to nick a goal before half-time and it gave us something to hang on to and we pushed them close."

"We have plenty more games we just have to focus on ourselves and hopefully results go our way."

Yesterday Netherlands were set to host Malta in Groningen hoping to make it two wins from two and close the gap on Poland, who have a stiff test in Finland, in Group G.

Raducanu stars as women's tennis makes historic return to Queen's



A view during a match at Queen's Club

AFP | London

Former US Open champion Emma Raducanu stole the spotlight as women's tennis made a historic return to Queen's Club for the first time in 52 years on Monday.

With the dust barely settled from the thrilling French Open titles won by Carlos Alcaraz and Coco Gauff last weekend, Queen's marks the transition to grass courts and this year's event is a milestone moment in the tennis calendar.

Since 1973, Queen's has been solely an ATP event.

But a ground-breaking deal was struck last year to play a WTA 500 tournament in Bar-

ons Court before the men compete from June 16.

Reigning Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejickova, Australian Open holder Madison Keys, 2022 Wimbledon winner Elena Rybakina and world number five Zheng Qinwen are among the female stars set to feature at Queen's this week.

But Raducanu, who famously won the US Open as an 18-year-old qualifier in 2021, was the headline act on opening day.

Fans queued for an hour to see the British star partnered with Katie Boulter in their 6-4, 6-2 first round doubles win over Jiang Xinyu and Wu Feng-Hsien.

World Cup 2026 host cities say fans 'welcome'

AFP | Miami

American World Cup host city officials assured Monday that overseas fans would be welcome at next year's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico despite "uncertainty" amid ongoing concerns over visas, border controls and social unrest.

In a briefing in New York that came just over a year from the opening game of the tournament on June 11, 2026, officials said President Donald Trump's administration remained "extremely supportive" of the World Cup.

Since returning to power, Trump has started a global trade war, threatened to annex Canada and launched a border crackdown that has led to harsh treatment of foreign visitors attempting to enter the United States.

Trump's immigration offensive has in turn led to civil unrest, with clashes in Los Angeles over the weekend triggered by large-scale raids last week.

Eleven American cities will host the bulk of the games at next year's World Cup, which is being co-hosted by three nations for the first time and has been expanded to include 48 teams.

Executives from the local organising committees for the 11 US World Cup venues gathered in New York on Monday to brief



General view of the MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey

on logistical aspects of the tournament, including transportation, stadium access, fan zones as well as general access to the United States.

"For each of our cities, we want to be prepared to make any person that is coming and makes the decision to come to the United States or come to this World Cup feel that they are welcome," said Meg Kane, head of the Philadelphia organising committee.

'Extremely supportive'

Kane said while officials were planning "within uncertainty" due to matters taking place at national and international level, the Trump administration was firmly behind the tournament.

"We do not play a role neces-

sarily in what is happening in terms of the decisions that are made," Kane said. "What we can say is that the current administration -- while there are certain situations that we are monitoring closely -- has been extremely supportive of FIFA World Cup."

Alex Lasry, the chief executive of the New York/New Jersey World Cup committee said officials were bracing for "millions" of fans inside and outside the stadiums irrespective of the political climate.

"I think sports transcends geopolitics," Lasry told AFP. "I think we've seen that for Olympics. We've seen it for other World Cups, in Qatar or Russia. "People want to come to these mega sporting events, and



Despite ongoing concerns over visas, border controls, and social unrest following recent large-scale raids, US World Cup officials stated the Trump administration remains "extremely supportive" of the tournament

they're going to travel to ensure that they're able to cheer on and see their team play.

"Our job as a host committee is to make sure that we are putting on an event and making sure that our city and our region is ready to welcome everyone who's able to come to the World Cup," added Lasry, who was previously an assistant secretary for tourism in President Joe Biden's government.

Los Angeles World Cup committee vice-president Jason Krutzsch said organisers were working to ensure fans "understand that they are welcome in Los Angeles and will have an amazing World Cup experience."

China snatch late Bahrain victory

A stoppage-time penalty secured China 1-0 win over Bahrain



Action from the match

● **Yudong's penalty seals China's win**

● **Bahrain finish bottom of the group**

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

With no bearing on World Cup qualification, China and Bahrain met at Chongqing Longxing Stadium yesterday, aiming to end their lacklustre Group C campaigns on a positive note. Both teams, already eliminated, occupied the bottom two spots in the standings. China's 1-0 loss to Indonesia last Thursday, courtesy of a penalty from Oxford United's Ole Lennard Ter Haar Romenij, sealed their fate, while Bahrain's 2-0 defeat to Saudi Arabia, with goals from Musab Al Juwayr and Abdulrahman Alobud, confirmed their elimination. The stage was set for a battle of pride in this final Matchday 10 clash.

Late Penalty Drama

The game seemed headed for a goalless draw until the dying moments when Bahrain's substitute Hussain Al Eker, moments after coming on, handled the ball in the penalty area. China's



Bahraini players huddle before the match

Wang Yudong stepped up, firing a right-footed shot into the top right corner to put China PR 1-0 up. Yudong's excessive celebrations led to a caution, yet the goal secured China's fifth-place finish in Group C with nine points, as Bahrain finished at the bottom with six points. The result takes Bahrain's tally to only one win out of their ten matches, along with six losses and three draws. This mirrored China's earlier 1-0 win over Bahrain in November 2024, decided

by Yuning Zhang's 91st-minute strike.

Tactical Set-ups

China, under Branko Ivankovic, lined up with Dalei Wang in goal, shielded by Zexiang Yang, Tyias Browning, Zhen Wei, and Lei Li. The midfield trio of Wenneng Xie, Zhengyu Huang, and Liangming Lin supported Serginho in the number 10 role, with Yuning Zhang and Yudong Wang up top.

Bahrain's Dragan Talajic



Bahrain's starting 11 at Chongqing Longxing Stadium



Team captain, Dalei Wang (L) and Komail Al Aswad (R), before kick off



Bahrain have not beaten China since September 1981, a run of nine matches without a win

fielded Ebrahim Lutfalla in goal, with a backline of Hamad Al Shamsan, Amine Benaddi, Waleed Al Hayam, and Abdul-el Khalassy. Midfielders Ali

Madan, Komail Al Aswad, Sayed Saeed, and Mahdi Humaidan supported forwards Mohamed Marhoon and Mahdi Abduljabbar.

Struggles Define Disappointing Campaigns

China's campaign saw seven losses in nine games, with only two wins, including this latest result. Their recent form included four straight defeats, conceding seven goals and scoring once. Bahrain fared little better, winless in eight matches since a 1-0 win over 10-man Australia in September 2024. Their attack, the weakest in the qualifiers with just five goals,

struggled again, with Marhoon offering rare highlights. Bahrain's historical woes against China continued, with no win in nine meetings since September 1981.

A Small Step Forward

China's late win provided a glimmer of hope for Ivankovic's side, with Yudong's composure from the spot highlighting emerging talent. For Bahrain, the defeat encapsulated a campaign of missed opportunities. As both teams shift focus to future challenges, this result underlined the fine margins in international football, even in matches with little at stake.

Japan, South Korea celebrate World Cup qualification with big wins

● **Japan beat Indonesia 6-0**

● **South Korea beat Kuwait 4-0**

AFP | Osaka

Crystal Palace forward Daichi Kamada scored twice for Japan and Paris Saint Germain's Lee Kang-in netted for South Korea as the Asian giants rounded off successful World Cup qualifying campaigns in style yesterday.

Japan romped to a 6-0 thrashing of Patrick Kluivert's Indonesia in Osaka, while South Korea cruised to a 4-0 win over Kuwait

in Seoul where fans were treated to a late appearance by their idol Son Heung-min.

FA Cup winner Kamada struck twice in the first half for already qualified Japan, who finished as Group C winners.

Takefusa Kubo, Ryoya Morishita, Shuto Machino and substitute Mao Hosoya were also on target against Indonesia, who came fourth in the group and moved on to a further qualifying round.

Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu has set the ambitious target of winning next year's World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

His side will play friendlies against teams from outside Asia over the next 12 months and Kamada is looking to learn from



Japan's midfielder Daichi Kamada shoots against Indonesia in Osaka

the experience.

"Playing against Asian teams and against the kind of European teams who will be at the World

Cup is totally different," said the 28-year-old.

"As we play these games, we will start to see a lot of areas



Kamada's brace means he has now scored in three consecutive matches for Japan, emerging as a key threat ahead of their ambitious World Cup campaign

Moriyasu said his players need to keep improving "in all departments" and praised their attitude against Indonesia.

"The challenge for the players is to break past their limits and grow," he said.

Iran and Uzbekistan are already through to next year's finals from Group A and Jordan will finish second in Group B to South Korea, who secured qualification last week with a game to spare. Jeon Jin-woo, who plays in the K-League for Jeonbuk, gave South Korea a 1-0 half-time lead against Kuwait in Seoul.

The Koreans took control after the break with strikes from European-based trio Lee Kang-in of PSG, Oh Hyeon-gyu of Belgium's Genk and Lee Jae-sung of German Club Mainz 05.

where we need to improve. We need to come together as a team and overcome these problems when they crop up."

Bahrain keeps prime F1 calendar slot

Priority ticket access begins

- April 10th to 12th race
- Same slot as 2025
- Fans urged to register

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Bahrain has retained its early-season slot on the 2026 Formula 1 calendar, cementing its place as a key fixture in the sport's global schedule. The Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix will be the fourth race of the year, taking place from April 10th to 12th at the Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir.

Calendar continuity

Formula 1 and the FIA released the 2026 season lineup yesterday, confirming that the Kingdom will again host the fourth round of the championship, identical to its 2025 calendar position. The season will begin in Australia on March 6th, followed by China and Japan, before heading to Bahrain.



A general view during the Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix (file photo)

With 24 races scheduled for the season, Bahrain remains the anchor of the sport's Middle East presence, leading into Jeddah's race the following week-end and culminating in Abu Dhabi in December.

High demand expected

Coming off another full-house event in 2025, BIC has opened a registration portal for fans eager to get early access to 2026 tickets. A new priority window will

give early registrants the first opportunity to secure the best seats before official ticket sales are launched.

Fans are being urged to register their interest through bahraingp.com as demand is expected to remain high.

Formula One 2026 calendar:

March 6-8: Melbourne, Australia	July 24-26: Budapest, Hungary
March 13-15: Shanghai, China	August 21-23: Zandvoort, Netherlands
March 27-29: Suzuka, Japan	Sept 4-6: Monza, Italy
April 10-12: Sakhir, Bahrain	Sept 11-13: Madrid, Spain
April 17-19: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia	Sept 25-27: Baku, Azerbaijan
May 1-3: Miami, United States	Oct 9-11: Singapore
May 22-24: Montreal, Canada	Oct 23-25: Austin, United States
June 5-7: Monaco	Oct 30-Nov 1: Mexico City, Mexico
June 12-14: Barcelona, Spain	Nov 6-8: Sao Paulo, Brazil
June 26-28: Spielberg, Austria	Nov 19-21: Las Vegas, United States
July 3-5: Silverstone, Great Britain	Nov 27-29: Lusail, Qatar
July 17-19: Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium	Dec 4-6: Abu Dhabi, UAE



Bahrain first hosted a Formula 1 Grand Prix in 2004, becoming the first Middle Eastern country to join the F1 calendar

Madrid joins calendar

The only major change in next year's calendar is the addition of Madrid, which will host its first race from September 11th to 13th. Bahrain, meanwhile, continues to strengthen its reputation as 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East' by offering a consistent and high-profile platform for Formula 1.

For more details and ticket updates, fans can visit bahraingp.com or contact the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

Romeo wins Dauphine third stage to take yellow



Movistar Team's Spanish rider Ivan Romeo Abad celebrates as he crosses the finish line

AFP | Charantonnay

Spain's Ivan Romeo won the third stage of the Criterium du Dauphine yesterday when he streaked clear at the end of a 207km run from Brioude to Charantonnay to cross the line first and claim the overall lead. Romeo surprised his breakaway companions, including Dutch world champion Mathieu van der Poel, to drop them in the final kilometres and lead the dash into the town of Charantonnay.

"I've been thinking about this stage for a month now. I can hardly believe it. It was one of the hardest days of my life, I wasn't feeling well," said time-trial specialist Romeo.

"But I followed my instincts in the final. It's the best day of the year for me. Hard work pays off."

It was the second win of the 21-year-old Movistar rider's career, and earned him the yellow leader's jersey on the eve

of the first time-trial in this edition of the Dauphine.

Romeo completed the hilly run across the southeast of France in 4hr 34min 10sec.

Colombian Astana rider Harold Tejada came in second at 14sec, with Frenchman Louis Barre of Inter-marche completing the podium.

The peloton, containing many of the race favourites, rolled in just over a minute later at the end of a day without any major incidents.

One of those contenders for the general classification is Red Bull leader Florian Lipowitz -- in the absence of last year's winner Primoz Roglic -- who did well to slip into the breakaway and come in just outside the podium.

The German sits fourth overall, with a 42sec advantage over ninth-placed Slovenian Tadej Pogacar.

The breakaway formed quickly after the start, and was composed of 13 riders.

Dhoni, Amla and Graeme Smith added to ICC Hall of Fame

- Seven cricket greats, including Dhoni, Amla, and Smith, inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

AFP | London

India's Mahendra Singh Dhoni and South Africa's Hashim Amla and Graeme Smith were among seven new inductees into the International Cricket Council Hall of Fame announced.

Also included were Australia's Matthew Hayden and New Zealand's Daniel Vettori, with former Pakistan captain Sana Mir and England's Sarah Taylor recognised for their contributions to the women's game.

The induction ceremony took place at London's Abbey Road Studios, where the Beatles recorded many of their hit songs.

Abbey Road is just a short walk from Lord's, where the World Test Championship final starts on Wednesday and both captains were among the audience - Australia's Pat Cummins and South Africa's Temba Bavuma.

Former India captain Dhoni led his country to 2011 one-day international World Cup glory on home soil, the wicketkeeper-batsman hitting the winning runs on a memorable night in Mumbai.

He is also the only captain to have won all three ICC white-

ball trophies, after skipping India to the inaugural 2007 T20 World Cup title as well as the 2013 Champions Trophy.

Dhoni finished his ODI career with an average above 50, having played 350 matches and scored over 10,000 runs -- often expertly helming a run-chase.

"It is an honour to be named in the ICC Hall of Fame, which recognises the contributions of cricketers across generations and from all over the world," said Dhoni, who featured in this year's Indian Premier League aged 43.

'Proud moment'

The stylish Amla was the first South Africa batsman to score a Test-match triple century, making 311 not out against England at the Oval in 2012.

He often found himself playing alongside Smith.

Thrust into the captaincy aged just 22, Smith led South Africa in a world-record 109 Tests, with the former opening batsman the only player to captain a Test team for over 100 matches.

"It is an honour to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, especially alongside Graeme," Amla said.

Smith added: "This

is also a proud moment for South Africa, as two of us have got recognition this year."

Hayden was a mainstay of Australia's dominant



The induction at Abbey Road Studios marked a unique crossover between cricket and music history - the venue where The Beatles recorded most of their albums, just minutes from cricket's Lord's ground

sides of the early 2000s, with the powerful opener scoring 30 Test centuries and averaging above 50.

Former left-arm spinner Vettori, now an assistant coach with Australia, is one of only three players to score 4,000 runs and take 300 wickets in Tests.

Wicket-keeping great Taylor helped England win several global titles, including a 2017 ODI World Cup on home soil, while Mir is the first woman from Pakistan to be included in the Hall of Fame.

Off-spinner Mir took 151 ODI wickets and led Pakistan to two Asian Games gold medals, in 2010 and 2014.



Mahendra Singh