

1204

The Fourth Crusade occupies and plunders Constantinople

1811

First US colonists on the Pacific coast arrive at Cape Disappointment, Washington

1861

Fort Sumter in South Carolina is attacked by the Confederacy, beginning the American Civil War



1961

Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first human to travel into space and orbit Earth, aboard the Vostok 1 spacecraft



NASA's Orion spacecraft with Artemis II crew members as it lands in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California

'A perfect mission': Artemis II crew returns to Earth

NASA recovers astronauts after record-breaking lunar voyage

● NASA crew splashes down safely

● Heat shield passes key test

● Record distance reached from Earth

● Mission lasted around ten days

AFP | Washington

The NASA spacecraft carrying four astronauts splashed down as planned off the California coast, capping the US space agency's successful crewed test mission around the Moon, the first such flyby in more than 50 years.

Mission commander Reid Wiseman reported that the crewmembers -- himself along with Christina Koch, Victor Glover and Jeremy Hansen -- were "stable" and "green."

252,756

miles from Earth marked the farthest distance ever traveled by humans during the mission

Trump congratulates returned Artemis astronauts, says 'next step, Mars!'

AFP | Washington

Donald Trump praised the Artemis astronauts just after they splashed down, as the US president looked ahead to the eventual goal of sending missions to Mars.

"Congratulations to the Great and Very Talented Crew of Artemis II. The entire trip was spectacular, the landing was perfect and, as President of the United States, I could not be more proud!" Trump said on Truth Social.

"I look forward to seeing you all at the White House soon. We'll be doing it again and then, next step, Mars!"

"They're in great condition, that's what that means," said Rob Navias, the NASA public affairs official who narrated their return on the agency's livestream.

Following a brief but nerve-wracking communications blackout during their high-stakes re-entry, Wiseman's voice triggered relief that the astronauts were well on their way back home.

"We have you loud and clear," he said following a voice check from mission control in Houston.

NASA personnel and the US military helped extract the astronauts from the bobbing capsule -- to the applause of those watching from mission control. They will then be flown to a recovery ship off the Pacific coast near San Diego.

As the astronauts returned to Earth their spacecraft reached maximum speeds more than 30 times the speed of sound, and faced searing temperatures around half as hot as the surface of the Sun. It was a key test of their heat shield, which in an

earlier trial uncrewed mission had faced complications.

But the Artemis II re-entry went off without a hitch.

NASA administrator Jared Isaacman called the voyage "a perfect mission."

"We're back in the business of sending astronauts to the Moon," he said, and "this is just the beginning."



Astronauts witnessed a solar eclipse and meteorite impacts on the Moon, capturing thousands of images that fascinated scientists and the public alike



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



They circled the Moon while the rest of us stayed glued to screens full of war and outrage. Humanity can reach farther than ever before, yet still can't reach across a border to shake hands. We're smart enough to survive space. When will we be wise enough to survive each other?

@DrTedros

02



We're about to welcome our 191 members for our Spring Meetings. We will come together, at a highly uncertain and complex time for the global economy, to discuss the issues we face and seek solutions together.

@KGeorgieva

03



Hundreds of women & girls were reportedly killed since the recent M.E. escalation. @UN_Women is scaling up protection & support to ensure women are at the heart of response & recovery. We continue to call for lasting ceasefire & peace.

@unwomenchief

04



The Artemis II crew has returned to Earth. Congratulations to Colonel Hansen and the team on an historic feat. Welcome home.

@MarkJCarney

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

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

The Citizen: The Backbone of Soft Warfare



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

A few days ago, I was a guest on Bahrain Television to discuss the challenges facing the Kingdom of Bahrain—challenges that are no longer confined to conventional military threats, but have expanded into more complex and dangerous arenas, most notably the battlefield of "cognitive warfare" waged across digital platforms and social media.

This reality has become increasingly evident through the content being circulated and promoted online, revealing a systematic campaign aimed at undermining the unique social fabric of Bahraini society. It is no secret that this cohesion represents a primary target, particularly amid ongoing Iranian aggressions against national sovereignty and persistent attempts to influence and manipulate public perception.

Bahrain has been subjected to dozens of misleading media campaigns designed to create divisions within its unified society. Yet, the Bahraini people—thankfully—have demonstrated remarkable resilience and unity in overcoming these challenges. However, the current phase requires a shift from reactive responses to the development of a sustainable strategy built upon what can be described as "societal immunity."

This immunity begins with reinforcing the national narrative and reviving a rich historical legacy filled with unifying milestones—from the founding era during the time of Isa Al-Kabeer, through independence, the aspirations of Arab unity, and culminating in the National Action Charter and the establishment of the modern constitutional state. Across all these stages, the unity of the Bahraini people stands as an undeniable and enduring truth.

On the technological front, smartphones—now inseparable from our daily lives—have evolved into some of the most powerful tools of influence. They have effectively become platforms for launching "digital bullets" targeting minds remotely. Recent crises have exposed the scale and danger of disinformation, leaving no doubt that this weapon must be contained and strategically redirected—not ignored.

Combating such warfare requires the production of credible content and the establishment of trusted sources capable of earning public confidence. Unfortunately, false narratives often spread faster than verified facts, creating a dangerous gap in public awareness. This is where national media must step forward—not merely as a respondent, but as the primary narrator and authoritative source of truth.

Neutralizing "toxic platforms" can no longer rely on traditional approaches. It demands modern tools and a participatory model that positions the citizen as an active partner rather than a passive consumer. By encouraging organized reporting of misleading content, society itself can transform into a first line of defense, where the citizen becomes the true backbone of this soft war.

In this context, empowering citizens—and even children—with the skills to analyze digital content is essential. This includes understanding technologies such as deepfakes and consistently asking the critical question: Who benefits from the dissemination of this message?

This question alone can shift individuals from passive reception to critical awareness.

The adversary in information warfare is always searching for a "spark," while we must cultivate in every Bahraini citizen the role of a "first responder," capable of extinguishing that spark before it escalates into a crisis.

Our national leadership has presented a compelling model of inclusivity under the reform project of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. This model strengthens citizens' trust in their state and grants them the moral courage to reject hate speech, knowing their nation safeguards their rights and unity.

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)