

Bahrain add five more medals in Konya

Kingdom's national athletics team wrap up competition on the track and in the field by winning two more gold, two silver and one bronze at fifth Islamic Solidarity Games in Turkey | P12

WORLD 6 Ukraine, Russia trade blame for risk of nuclear disaster at frontline plant

THE DAILY **tribune**

Brad Pitt has a black book of actors 'he won't work with again' 10 CELEBS

BUSINESS 5 Oil slides 2% on expectations that US Gulf supply disruption will ease

Iran may accept EU proposal to revive nuclear deal if demands met, IRNA reports



Reuters | Dubai

A European Union proposal to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal "can be acceptable if it provides assurances" on Tehran's key demands, the state news agency IRNA said yesterday, quoting a senior Iranian diplomat.

The EU said on Monday it had put forward a "final" text following four days of indirect talks between US and Iranian officials in Vienna.

A senior EU official said no more changes could be made to the text, which has been under negotiation for 15 months. He said he expected a final decision from the parties within a "very, very few weeks."

IRNA quoted the unidentified Iranian diplomat as saying Tehran was reviewing the proposal. "Proposals by the EU can be acceptable if they provide Iran with assurance on the issues of safeguards, sanctions and guarantees," the diplomat said.

The Islamic Republic has sought to obtain guarantees that no future US president would renege on the deal if it were revived, as then-President Donald Trump did in 2018 and restored harsh US sanctions on Iran.

Rushdie stabbed in the neck in western New York

Reuters

Salman Rushdie, the Indian-born novelist who spent years in hiding after Iran urged Muslims to kill him because of his writing, was stabbed in the neck onstage at a lecture in New York state on Friday and airlifted to a hospital, police said.

He was alive and in surgery, according to his literary agent, Andrew Wylie.

A man rushed to the stage at the Chautauqua Institution and attacked Rushdie, 75, as he was being introduced to give a talk on artistic freedom to an audience of hundreds, eyewitnesses said. A New York State Police



Author Salman Rushdie is treated by emergency personnel after he was stabbed on stage before his scheduled speech at the Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, New York

trooper present at the event took the attacker into custody, police said.

"A man jumped up on the

stage from I don't know where and started what looked like beating him on the chest, repeated fist strokes into his chest and

neck," said Bradley Fisher, who was in the audience. "People were screaming and crying out and gasping."

Rushdie, author of "The Satanic Verses," fell to the floor when the man attacked him, and was then surrounded by a small group of people who held up his legs, seemingly to send more blood to his upper body, as the attacker was restrained, according to another witness attending the lecture.

(Continues on page 2)



Wanted terrorist blows himself up in Jeddah

The suicide blast injures four including three state security force members

● SPA identifies the man as Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Bakri Al-Shehri

● Al-Shehri detonated the explosive belt on Wednesday night in Jeddah's Al Samer neighbourhood

● Al-Shehri was wanted for the 2015 bombing that killed 11

TDI | Manama



Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Shehri

A man wanted by Saudi Arabian state security in connection with a deadly 2015 bombing blew himself up, killing himself and injuring four others in Jeddah.

The man detonated an explosive belt in the Al Samer neighbourhood in Jeddah when secu-

city forces attempted to arrest him, Saudi News Agency in a report yesterday said.

SPA also identified the bomber killed in the blast Wednesday night as Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Shehri.

Al-Shehri had been sought by authorities for seven years, according to state TV.

"The wanted terrorist Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Bakri Al-Shehri killed himself by detonating an explosive belt, said a spokesman of the Presidency of

Bahrain affirms solidarity with Saudi Arabia in fight against terrorism

TDI | Manama

Bahrain yesterday expressed full solidarity with Saudi Arabia in facing threats against its security and stability. Foreign Ministry said the Kingdom backs

all measures it takes to ensure the safety and security of the citizens and residents of Saudi Arabia. The ministry wished a speedy recovery for all those injured in the suicide blast carried out by the wanted terrorist.

State Security.

The Presidency of State Security said the operation confirms the Kingdom's determination to crack down on terrorists and ensure the safety of all citizens and residents.

The three people injured in the blast were members of the security forces and a Pakistani national.

SPA said police rushed the injured to hospitals without giving details of their injuries.

Saudi forces suspect Al-Shehri as a member of a domestic terrorism cell that coordinated the 2015 suicide bombing of a mosque in Abha, targeting security force members.

That blast killed eleven members of the security forces and four Bangladeshi nationals and injured 33 people.

The Saudi government named Al-Shehri in early 2016 as one of six Saudi nationals wanted in connection with the bombing. He is the brother of another wanted man Majed al-Shehri.

Reports say Saudi Police had killed five of the nine-member cell and arrested another in a security operation in Bisha. Security officials have said the arrest of Uqab Al-Otaibi had dealt a severe blow to ISIS operation in the region.

Taya Salem al-Sai'ari, one of the most dangerous in the cell, and their leader Saeed al-Shahrani was also declared 'eliminated' by Saudi forces.



Presidency of State Security is a Saudi Arabian security body created in 2017 by combining the counterterrorism and domestic intelligence services under one roof. The new body is concerned with all matters related to state security, and is overseen by the king.

Unknown toxic substance

Mass fish die-off in German-Polish river

Reuters | Berlin/Warsaw

An unidentified highly toxic substance in the Oder river, which runs through Poland and Germany, appears to be the cause of a mass die-off of fish in the waterway, officials from both counties said.

An analysis of river water tak-



Dead fish float on the surface of the Oder river

en this week showed evidence of "synthetic chemical substances, very probably also with toxic effects for vertebrates," the German state of Brandenburg's environment ministry said on Thursday, adding that it remained unclear how the substance entered the water.

According to local German broadcaster rbb, the state laboratory found high levels of mercury in the water samples.

However, Wladyslaw Dajczak, the head of Poland's Lubusz province, quoted by PAP news agency said that tests run on Aug. 10 and 11 showed mer-

cury was found only in "trace amounts", well within allowed levels.

The head of Poland's national water management authority said the situation was serious and that by Thursday evening Poland had collected over 11 tonnes of dead fish.

BAHRAIN COVID-19

TOTAL TESTED 10216837

ACTIVE CASES 4321

DEATHS 1512

DISCHARGED 659959

NEW CASES 700

CRITICAL 2

220 fils (includes VAT)



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Works Minister, Ibrahim bin Hassan Al-Hawaj, yesterday received the Media Affairs Advisor of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Infrastructure Minister, Waleed Khalid Al-Shaikh, who presented him a copy of the thesis of the master's degree from UoB on "Government Communication and Its Role in Highlighting Development Projects Included in the Government Action Plan 2019-2022". The minister said the study proved the success of the Works Ministry in taking advantage of government communication to highlight the development projects it is implementing.



The Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS) First Deputy Chairman, General Sports Authority Chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee President His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, on Thursday directed to step up awareness programmes during a meeting with Health Minister Dr Jaleela bint Al Sayyed Jawad at Al Wadi Palace. He gave directives to coordinate the campaign in partnership between the General Sports Authority and the Ministry of Health, in order to build a healthier society. The meeting was attended by GSA Deputy Chairman HH Shaikh Salman bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, GSA Chief Executive Officer Dr Abdulrahman Sadiq Askar and Bahrain Committee for Sports Medical and Sport Science Chairman Dr Jamal Saleh.

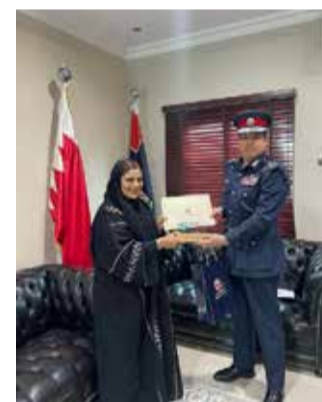


Assistance Undersecretary for Legal Affairs, Brigadier Hamood Saad Hamood, has inaugurated a workshop on implementing the National Human Rights Plan 2022-2026. The workshop was part of the directives of the Interior Minister, General Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, and under the follow-up of the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary. Approved by the cabinet, the Foreign Ministry drafted the plan in coordination with concerned authorities. The Head of the Human Rights Team, Major Ali Najjem, highlighted the human rights projects and programmes.

Social Development Minister Osama bin Ahmed Khalaf Al Asfoor received on Thursday Iraqi Embassy Charge d'Affaires Moayyed Omar Abdulrahman and hailed strong bilateral relations and expanding cooperation. He outlined Bahrain's social development achievements in line with the national goals which were set out by the Government. The Iraqi Charge d'Affaires stressed his country's keenness on expanding joint social development cooperation towards achieving joint interests and aspirations.



The Civil Personnel Affairs Department of Human Resources organised a training course on "Plan for recovery and rebuilding oneself after the pandemic." The event held at the training hall of the customs building had the participation of 30 employees from various departments of the Ministry of Interior. The course was presented by Dr Khaled Al-Baker.



Brigadier Adel Abdullah Ameen, the Assistant Undersecretary for Human Resources, yesterday received Rehab Hamad Al-Maraj, one of the members of the team that won first place for the "Blue Point" initiative, and Amal Abdel Karim Hajji, one of the members of the third-place winning team for the "Dumna Initiative". The initiatives were part of a "Climate Innovation programme" held under the patronage of Dr Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment, and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, from March to July 2022.

Rushdie faced death threats for his novel "The Satanic Verses"

(Continues from page 1)

Rushdie, who was born into a Muslim Kashmiri family in Bombay, now known as Mumbai, before moving to the United Kingdom, has faced death threats for his fourth novel, "The Satanic Verses," which some said contained blasphemous passages. The novel was banned in many countries upon its 1988 publication.

A year later, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, then Iran's supreme leader, pronounced a fatwa, or religious



Author Salman Rushdie is transported to a helicopter after he was stabbed on stage before his scheduled speech at the Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, New York, U.S

edict, calling upon Muslims to kill the novelist and anyone involved in its publication for blasphemy.

Rushdie, who called his novel "pretty mild," went into hiding for many years.

Hitoshi Igarashi, the Japanese translator of the novel, was murdered in 1991.

The Iranian government said in 1998 that it would no longer back the fatwa, and Rushdie has lived relatively openly in recent years.

Iranian organisations, some affiliated with

the government, have raised a bounty worth millions of dollars for Rushdie's murder. And Khomeini's successor as supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said in 2017 that the fatwa was still.

Iran's semi-official Fars News Agency and other news outlets donated money that year to increase the bounty by more than \$600,000.

Fars called Rushdie an apostate who "insulted the prophet" in its report on Friday's attack.

Rushdie published a memoir in 2012 about his life under the fatwa called "Joseph Anton," the pseudonym he used while under British police protection. His second novel, "Midnight's

Children," won the Booker Prize. His new novel "Victory City" is due to be published in February.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he was appalled that Rushdie was "stabbed while exercising a right we should never cease to defend."

Rushdie was at the event to take part in a discussion about the United States serving as an asylum for writers and artists in exile and "as a home for freedom of creative expression," according to the institution's website.

There were no obvious security checks at the Chautauqua Institution, a landmark founded in the 19th century in the small lakeside town of the

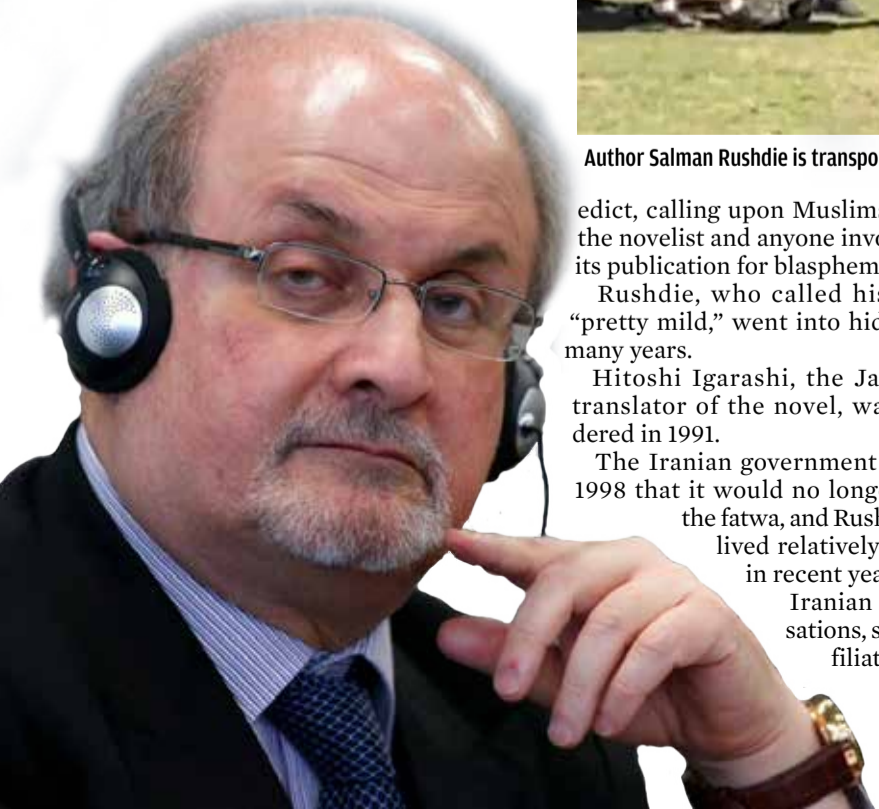
same name, with staff simply checking people's tickets for admission, the eyewitness who was in the audience said.

"I felt like we needed to have more protection there because Salman Rushdie is not a usual writer," said Anour Rahmani, an Algerian writer and human rights activist who was also in the audience. "He's a writer with a fatwa against him."

The institution declined to comment when asked about security measures.

Rushdie became an American citizen in 2016 and lives in New York City.

Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York did not respond to a request for comment.



High Civil Court comes to aid of woman injured in accident

Bahraini woman awarded BD5,000 insurance compensation

TDI | Manama

An insurance company has been ordered by the High Civil Court to pay BD5,000 in claim money to a Bahraini woman who suffered a 12% disability in an accident.

The verdict came in a case filed seeking BD8,000 in compensation from the insurance company and the vehicle's driver, who got implicated in the accident.

Court files say the woman was walking with her daughter when



the speeding vehicle came in a negligent manner and hit them.

The medical report says both the woman and her daughter sustained injuries due to the impact.

In a filing before the court, the injured woman's lawyer accused the driver of the car of reckless driving, citing a Bahrain's court judgement implicating the car's driver in the accident.

"The authorities had pressed criminal charges against the woman in the accident," the woman's lawyer told the court.

A medical report filed before the court showed that the woman suffered a 12% disability in the accident.

"This makes the injured woman eligible to receive a suitable compensation, considering the nature of her injuries," the lawyer argued.

A medical report filed before

the court showed that the woman suffered a 12% disability in the accident.

Issuing the verdict, judges viewed that the accident occurred due to negligent driving and that the insurance company is liable to cover the compensation as per law.

The woman filed the case seeking BD8,000 as compensation. However, after studying an expert report assessing the woman's injuries, the court ordered the insurance company to pay BD5,000.

10-year-old illegal construction: Court revokes demolition order & fine, citing forfeiture law

● Villa owner served with demolition order in 2020

● He contested that order, wins

● Authority serves new notice again for demolition

● New court battle begins

TDI | Manama

A Bahraini man who fought criminal charges and demolition threats over a 10-year-old construction can now heave a sigh of relief for the High Appeals Court told the authorities they had exhausted their right to litigate against the illegal construction after three years of inaction.

"If three years have passed since the date of the incident without filing a lawsuit, the right to file a lawsuit has forfeited," the court said, overruling an order to remove the rooms built ten years ago.

Ruling in favour of the accused, the court described the



Representative picture

crime as 'instantaneous' and not 'continuous'.

An 'instantaneous' crime is a crime which is fully consummated or completed in and by a single act. Arson, murder and the like are examples of such crimes. It is different from crimes which involve a series or repetition of actions.

"The villa owner had expanded the first floor without obtain-

ing a licence from the competent authority. However, he had completed that act with the end of construction and never repeated it," the court said.

"Therefore, it's an 'instantaneous' crime.

"Besides, if three years have passed without filing a lawsuit, the competent authority also forfeits its right to file a lawsuit. "Therefore, the court rules

in favour of the appellant," the verdict said.

The court also overruled the criminal charges, citing the expiry of the criminal case by lapse of time.

How did it all start?

Incidents leading to the protracted court battle started with the appellant building a room, with an attached bathroom, over

his garage, without obtaining a building permit 10 years back.

However, the man said he received the shock of his life on the 6th of December 2020 on that account.

On that day, he said the authorities served him with a notice describing the 10-year-old construction as illegal.

The notice said the construction is illegal as the owner did it without obtaining the necessary licence from the competent authority.

Lawyer Riyadh Al Sindi, representing the appellant, told the court that it's illogical for the authority to ask the appellant to remove the construction now.

The notice said the man should remove the violating construction within two months at his expense.

The Public Prosecution had also slapped him with a fine of BD1,000.

However, the man approached the Court of First Instance against the notice and got a ruling in his favour.

The court also dropped the criminal charges pressed against him.

However, that doesn't prevent the authorities from moving against the man.

Despite the court ruling, the man said authorities pressed

criminal charges on him again and slapped him again with a BD1,000 fine.

This time, the man told the court that the order was to remove the violations within three months, forcing him to file an appeal again.

The man's lawyer also filed a memorandum requesting to assign an expert to examine the rooms in question.

The expert confirmed to the court that construction - a room and a bathroom on the first floor-- was built ten years ago.



An 'instantaneous' crime is a crime which is fully consummated or completed in and by a single act. Arson, murder and the like are examples of such crimes. It is different from crimes which involve a series or repetition of actions.

Dr Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, the Minister of Oil and Environment, and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, yesterday stressed the role of the Prime Minister's Fellowship Programme in developing Governmental work streams. This came during his meeting with the fellows of the seventh batch of the Prime Minister's Fellowship Programme. Dr Dina reviewed the responsibilities of the Ministry of Oil and Environment to develop sustainable policies for the oil and environment sector and the role of the executive body of the Supreme Council for Environment, headed by His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the personal representative of His Majesty the King, Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Environment. The discussion also focused on the modernisation of the Bahrain Refinery - one of the largest and most important strategic projects in the Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco).



Bapco opens tender to buy sofa sets



Representative picture
TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco) has on offer a three-year agreement to supply sofa sets for Awali Houses.

Awali was the first modern self-contained township in Bahrain, when it was constructed in 1934. Since then, it has remained an integral part of the Bapco community providing employees with the comfort and convenience of a gated residence and work environment comprising offices, living quarters, leisure amenities, playgrounds, restaurant, supermarket and a community garden.

The tender says Bapco will receive Technical & Commercial offers only through its iSupplier portal.

Bidders must have at least three years of experience and submit evidence supporting their claims.

Make bids before the 4th of September 2022, with a BD500 bond and BD15 tender fees.

Medical insurance of Bahrain Polytechnic staff: tender

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Polytechnic has launched a tender for its staff and their family members.

Interested companies should provide coverage from 1.1.2023 to 31.12.2023.

The coverage is for employees above 60 years of age.

Bidders should submit proposals for corporate coverage, not for individual coverage.

Staff may pay an excess (quote should show with and without the excess).

Bidding companies should also keep the paperwork for claiming against any scheme(s) to a minimum.

The Technical Evaluation Criteria will focus on three things. The number of hospitals and clinics covered, maximum limit cover per person per year and duration of the claim process.

Companies should also provide standard coverage without Maternity & Dental and special coverage with maternity & dental.

Interested companies should make bids before the 24th of this month, with a BD1,000 bond and BD50 tender fees.



Tender board suspends bids of Future Generation Reserve Tower Project

TDT | Manama

The bids received by the Ministry of Finance & National Economy for an Integrated Property and Facility Management Service Future

Generation Reserve Tower Project now stand cancelled, says a Tender board document.

The bids by CBRE Bahrain (BHD 14,850,000) and Savills Middle East (BHD 148,500,000) are suspended.

The tender was for hiring a top-tier international Property Management Service Provider for the supply service of "Property and Facility Management" in accordance with recognized professional current practices

and standards.

The contract was offered for three years and renewable up to one time at the discretion of the FGR Council.



Future Generation Reserve Tower is the first investment tower as an approved LEED-certified building in the Kingdom. The tower is located overlooking the two major developments Bahrain Financial Harbor and Bahrain Bay and is set to become the new financial icon of Bahrain. The 38-floor tower has built up area of 12,000sqm and an overall site area of 63,000sqm.



Diesel for generators at Bilaj Al Jazayer



Representative picture
TDT | Manama

Bilaj Al Jazayer Real Estate Development has launched a tender for supplying diesel for electricity generators.

The tender, which calls for making bids before the 21st of this month, is for supplying diesel for generators at Al-Jazayer Public Beach.

Bids should come with a BD500 bond and BD15 tender fees.

Maintenance works at EWA: Tender

TDT | Manama

The Electricity and Water Authority has launched a tender for maintenance works.

The works, the tender says, are for the roof of its System Control Centre.

Those interested make bids before the 6th of September 2022, with a BD500 bond and BD15 tender fees.

MoE gets 14 bids for AC maintenance and repairs

TDT | Manama

A tender by the Ministry of Education inviting bidders for maintenance and repairs



of central AC units

attracted 14 companies.

The bids received range between BHD 6,238,100 and BHD 1,075,547,000.

Bidders include Hybrid Electro-Mechanical Co, Dasman Airconditioning Company, Arabian Houses Contracting, Almoayed Air Conditioning and ten others.

The tender was for conducting the emergency repair of faults on a daily basis, supplying spare parts and

Singapore currently has the highest installed rate of ACs per capita, and at least 24% of electricity consumption is for ACs in a typical home. More and more people have access to cooling as previously, air conditioners have always been considered a luxury item.

conducting preventive maintenance of AC units at schools and directorates of MoE.

"The total cost of the tender is 1,000,000 Bahraini dinars, excluding the value added tax for spare parts," the tender document said.

NBR gets five bids for Data Analytics Platform

TDT | Manama

The National Bureau for Revenue has announced plans to automate its data analytics platform, for which it has also launched a tender.

The tender attracted technical bids from five players: Clariba Solutions, Beyond Solutions, Beinex Solutions, iWorld Connect, and Invent Business Solutions.

NBR plans to streamline and enhance analysis exercises on an integrated data analytics platform.

The move aims at integrating workflows containing data query, analysis performance, output display, result approvals, and data communication

Bidders who score at least



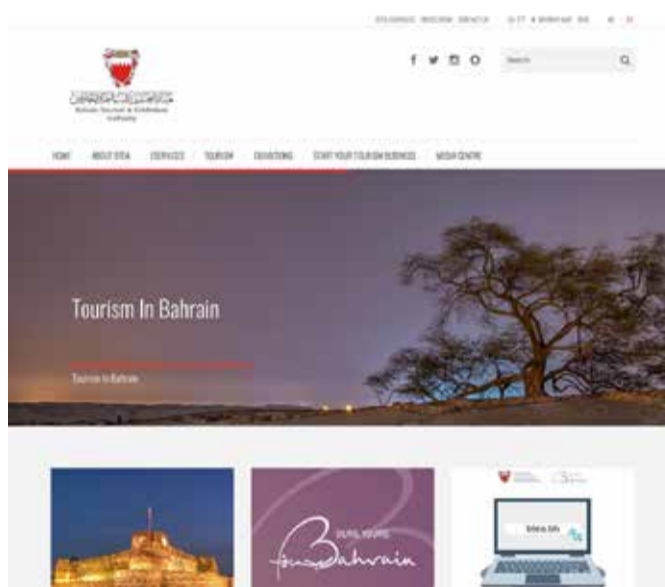
70% marks will be considered for Commercial evaluation.

The National Bureau of Revenue is the government entity responsible for implementing and collecting VAT in Bahrain. Value Added Tax was first introduced in the Kingdom on 1st January 2019. A standard rate of 10% Value Added Tax (VAT) has been applied in the Kingdom of Bahrain with effect from 1st January 2022.



The global big data analytics market size was valued at USD 240.56 billion in 2021. The market is projected to grow from USD 271.83 bn in 2022 to USD 655.53 bn by 2029, exhibiting a CAGR of 13.4% during the forecast period.

BTEA tender attracts eight bids



TDT | Manama

Bahrain Tourism & Exhibition Authority received huge interest for its tender for purchasing furniture for VIP Majlis and lobby for Exhibition World Bahrain.

The bids received range between BHD 36,831,300 and BHD 163,995,700.

Yousif Ben Yousif Fakhro Co, Designers Gallery Company,

Universal Enterprises, Awal stationery, Murano Design & Build, Salam Enterprises, Alshaya international trading company and Jassim Almuttawia showroom triad are the bidders. However, according to the tender board, the lowest bidder may not necessarily receive the contract, as price becomes a principal concern only after fulfilling technical and other criteria.

UoB opens tender for establishing currency, security trading faculty

TDT | Manama

The University of Bahrain is establishing a simulation lab for currency and security trading faculty to bridge the gap between theory and practical experience.

The move aims at equipping business graduates with soft skills needed to derive innovation and sustainable growth in Bahrain, a tender document launched by UoB says.

The project includes setting up a simulation room to provide students with an educational



challenge based on relevant fundamental investment knowledge in the real world. UoB says the trading room

will allow college students to be in direct contact with financial markets to learn how to implement investment and speculative portfolio management strategies.

Those interested in setting up the lab should submit bids before the 28th of this month, with a BD500 bond and BD15 tender fees. Bids, signed and stamped by the Participant, should be delivered to Tender Section, Purchasing Dept, University of Bahrain, Sakhir Area, before 1:30 pm.

SIO offers preventive maintenance contract



TDT | Manama

The Social Insurance Organisation has opened a tender for hiring a contractor for preventive maintenance for its offices and branches.

SIO is offering a one-year contract, the tender says.

The contract should start from the 1st of February 2023 to the 31st of January 2024 and cover electrical, air condition, plumbing, and emergency generator works.

Make bids before the 31st of August 2022, with a BD500 bond and BD15 tender fees.

Oil slides 2% on expectations that US Gulf supply disruption will ease

● **Repair to pipe that shut US offshore output due by end of day**

● **For the week, Brent is set to rise 3%, WTI up 3.7%**

● **Contradicting IEA and OPEC demand outlooks**

● **US oil rig count rises three to 601 this week -Baker Hughes**

Reuters | New York



A pump is seen at a gas station in Manhattan, New York City

Oil prices plunged around 2% yesterday, on expectations that supply disruptions in the US Gulf of Mexico would be short-term, while recession fears clouded the demand outlook.

Futures, however, were still on

track for a weekly gain.

Brent crude futures fell \$1.47, or 1.5%, to \$98.13 a barrel by 11:10 a.m. EDT (1510 GMT), while US West Texas Intermediate

(WTI) crude fell \$2.08, or 2.2%, to \$92.26 a barrel. Both contracts gained more than 2% on Thursday.

"We are pulling back a little bit

after the big run-up yesterday," said Phil Flynn, an analyst at Price Futures Group.

Brent was on track for a 3.5% gain this week after last week's 14% tumble on fears that rising inflation and interest rates will hit economic growth and demand for fuel. WTI was on course for a 3.7% gain.

Crews were expected to replace a damaged oil pipeline piece by the end of the day on Friday, a Louisiana port official said, allowing for the resumption of production at seven offshore US Gulf of Mexico oil platforms.

On Thursday, top US Gulf of Mexico oil producer Shell (SHEL.L) said it halted production at three deepwater plat-

forms in the region. The three platforms are designed to produce up to 410,000 barrels of oil per day combined.

The market also absorbed contrasting demand views from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

"We are seeing an economic slowdown, but it's unclear if it's as big a slowdown as some of the recent outlooks have been predicting," said Ole Hansen, head of commodity strategy at Saxo Bank. "The demand will ebb and flow, but supply is still the main concern."

European sanctions on Russian oil are due to tighten later this year while a six-month co-

ordinated energy release agreed by the United States and other developed economies is due to run its course by the end of the year.

In the United States, import prices fell for the first time in seven months in July, helped by a strong dollar and lower fuel and nonfuel costs, while consumers' one-year inflation outlook ebbed in August, the latest signs that price pressures may have peaked.

US oil rigs rose three to 601 this week, energy services firm Baker Hughes Co (BKR.O) said. The rig count, an indicator of future output, has been slow to grow with oil production only seen recovering to pre-pandemic levels next year.

On Thursday OPEC cut its forecast for growth in world oil demand in 2022 by 260,000 barrels per day (bpd). It now expects demand to rise by 3.1 million bpd this year. The IEA, meanwhile, raised its demand growth forecast to 2.1 million bpd, citing gas-to-oil switching in power generation. The IEA also raised its outlook for Russian oil supply by 500,000 bpd for the second half of 2022 but said OPEC would struggle to boost production.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Europe eyes Musk's SpaceX to replace Russian rockets

Reuters | Paris

The European Space Agency (ESA) has begun preliminary technical discussions with Elon Musk's SpaceX that could lead to the temporary use of its launchers after the Ukraine conflict blocked Western access to Russia's Soyuz rockets.

The private American competitor to Europe's Arianespace has emerged as a key contender to plug a temporary gap alongside Japan and India, but final decisions depend on the still unresolved timetable for Europe's delayed Ariane 6 rocket.

"I would say there are two and a half options that we're discussing. One is SpaceX that is clear. Another one is possibly

Japan," ESA Director General Josef Aschbacher told Reuters.

"Japan is waiting for the inaugural flight of its next generation rocket. Another option could be India," he added in an interview.

"SpaceX I would say is the more operational of those and certainly one of the back-up launches we are looking at."

Aschbacher said talks remained at an exploratory phase and any back-up solution would be temporary.

"We of course need to make sure that they are suitable. It's not like jumping on a bus," he said. For example, the interface between satellite and launcher must be suitable and the payload must not be compromised

by unfamiliar types of launch vibration.

"We are looking into this technical compatibility but we have not asked for a commercial offer yet. We just want to make sure that it would be an option in order to make a decision on asking for a firm commercial offer," Aschbacher said.

SpaceX did not reply to a request for comment.

The political fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine has already been a boon for SpaceX's Falcon 9, which has swept up

other customers severing ties with Moscow's increasingly isolated space sector.

Satellite internet firm OneWeb, a competitor to SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet venture, booked at least one Falcon 9 launch in March. It has also booked an Indian launch.

On Monday, Northrop Grumman booked three Falcon 9 missions to ferry NASA cargo to the International Space Station while it designs a new version of its

Antares rocket, whose Russian-made engines were withdrawn by Moscow in response to sanctions.



India sticks to 'one-China' policy stance but seeks restraint on Taiwan

Reuters | New Delhi

India said yesterday it opposed any unilateral change to the status quo over Taiwan but that its stance on the 'one-China' policy remained consistent, days after Beijing said it hoped New Delhi would continue to recognise its claim to self-governing Taiwan.

China launched ballistic missiles and deployed multiple aircraft and warships around Taiwan in recent days, angered by last week's visit to the island by US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The Chinese Embassy in New Delhi said last week that India was one of the first coun-

tries to recognise Beijing's 'one-China principle' - that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China - and that it hoped India would not change its position.

Asked by a reporter about India's position on the one-China policy, Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said: "India's relevant policies are well known and consistent. They do not require reiteration."

"We urge the exercise of restraint, avoidance of unilateral actions to change the status quo, de-escalation of tensions and efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region," he said.

Nass Supervisor & Foreman Development Programme



Nass Construction Platform Divisions, committed to achieving world-class standards for services, has embarked on an in-house Supervisor & Foreman Development Programme to further enhance the skills of supervision. This programme, developed by champions within the business, will run for six months. Above, Nigel Hector, Nass Construction Platform General Manager, and Ahmed Al Jabri, Human Resources & Administration Manager with the first batch of Supervisors in the programme.

India's LIC June-quarter premium income jumps as policy sales rebound

Reuters | Bengaluru

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) (LIFINS) reported a 20.4% rise in

June-quarter premium income yesterday, as easing COVID-19 restrictions boosted sales of policies for the insurer that largely depends on its agents.

The company, which drives its business mostly through an army of 1.3 million sales agents, was hit by pandemic-led lockdowns last year that disrupted the work of its agents who focus on in-person engagement.

"As the COVID situation normalises, we are seeing a larger activity on the ground, therefore bringing us back closer to our model of having 'feet on street'," Chairperson M R Kumar said.

LIC, India's biggest insurer, said net premium income rose

to 983.52 billion rupees (\$12.34 bn) from 817.21 bn rupees a year earlier, with nearly a 60% jump in the number of policies

sold. The company's gross value of new business (VNB), which measures expected profit from new premiums and is a key gauge for future growth, stood at 18.61 bn rupees, while VNB margins came in at 13.6%.

"We don't see much market volatility going forward that could impact results, Kumar said in a press briefing, adding that the insurer sees VNB margin at over 15% by the end of the year. The company, synonymous with buying protection policies in India, listed in May following a record \$2.7 billion initial public offering. It commands a market share of over 60% in terms of overall premiums.

News in brief

UN's Guterres expresses 'clear commitment' to North Korea denuclearisation



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres yesterday expressed his "clear commitment" to North Korea's denuclearisation during his visit to Seoul, weeks after Pyongyang said it was "ready to mobilise" its nuclear deterrent. Guterres arrived in Seoul on Thursday following a trip to Japan, where he gave a speech to mark the 77th anniversary of the world's first nuclear bomb attack in Hiroshima. He has also been to Mongolia. "I would like to reaffirm our clear commitment to the full, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, of the DPRK," he said at his meeting with South Korean president Yoon Suk-yeol, using North Korea's official name.

Ethiopia said yesterday it has completed the third filling of its mega-dam on the Blue Nile, a development that could raise further tensions with downstream neighbours Egypt and Sudan.

Ethiopia says completes third filling of Nile mega-dam



The announcement comes a day after Ethiopia said it had launched electricity production from the second turbine at the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) which lies in the west of the country. "Today as you see behind me, the third filling is complete," Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said in images shown on state television from the dam site. "The Nile is a gift of God given to us for Ethiopians to make use of it."

Germany suspends part of Mali military mission over flight spat

Germany suspended its military reconnaissance mission in Mali after local authorities again withheld a flight clearance, a spokesperson for the defence ministry in Berlin said yesterday.



"We will, at least for the time being, suspend the reconnaissance part of mission," the spokesperson said, adding that Malian authorities had not issued the clearance for a flight to rotate some staff. At the start of August, Mali had already withdrawn clearances for German flights over the country, but later reversed that decision.

Protests broke out in Syria's rebel-held north yesterday over a call from Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu for reconciliation between the Syrian government and opposition.

Syria rebels call for protests over Turkey's 'reconciliation' call



"We have to somehow get the opposition and the regime to reconcile in Syria. Otherwise, there will be no lasting peace, we always say this," Cavusoglu said Thursday, in remarks to diplomats. The comments have sparked calls for protests after Friday weekly prayers in key cities that fall under the control of Turkish forces and their supporters, including in Al-Bab, Afrin and Jarablus.

Justice Department seeks to unseal search warrants of Trump's home

Reuters | Washington

US federal agents were looking for documents relating to nuclear weapons when they raided former President Donald Trump's home in Florida this week, the Washington Post reported.

It was not clear if such documents were recovered at the former president's Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, the Post said. Reuters could not immediately confirm the report.

The US Justice Department asked a judge on Thursday to make public the warrant that authorized the FBI search of Mar-a-Lago, after Trump, a Republican, portrayed it as political retribution.

The request means the public could soon learn more about what investigators were looking for during the unprecedented search of a former president's home.

The search was part of an investigation into whether Trump illegally removed records from the White House as he left office in January 2021, some of which the Justice Department believes are classified.

Attorney General Merrick Garland, the top law enforcement officer and an appointee of Democratic President Joe Biden, told a news conference that he had personally approved the search. The Justice Department also seeks to make public a redacted receipt of the items seized.

"The department does not take such a decision lightly. Where possible, it is standard practice to seek less intrusive means as an alternative to a search, and to narrowly scope any search that is undertaken," Garland said.



Former President Donald Trump gestures as he departs Trump Tower

YOU KNOW WHAT

Should the warrant be released it could disclose unflattering information about the former president and about FBI scrutiny of his handling of sensitive government documents right as he prepares for another run for the White House

His decision to publicly confirm the search was highly unusual. US law enforcement officials typically do not discuss ongoing investigations in order to protect people's rights. In this case, Trump himself announced the search in a Monday night statement.

QUOTE

Not only will I not oppose the release of documents ... I am going a step further by ENCOURAGING the immediate release of those documents

DONALD TRUMP

Garland said the Justice Department made the request to make public the warrant "in light of the former president's public confirmation of the search, the surrounding circumstances and the substantial public interest in this matter."

A source familiar with the matter said the FBI retrieved about 10 boxes from Trump's property during the search.

Trump was not in Florida at the time of the search.

Late on Thursday, Trump called for the immediate release of documents related to the search.

Ukraine of nuc

Russia and Ukraine ha

UN calls for demilitarised zone

Zelenskiy demands Russia return plant to Ukraine

Reuters | Kyiv

Ukraine and Russia accused each other yesterday of risking nuclear disaster by shelling Europe's largest nuclear power plant, occupied by Russian forces in a region expected to become one of the next big front lines of the war.

Western countries have called for Moscow to withdraw its troops from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, and the United Nations called on Thursday for it to be declared a demilitarised zone. But there has been no sign so far of Russia agreeing to move its troops out of the facility they seized in March.

The plant dominates the south bank of a vast reservoir on the Dnipro river that cuts across southern Ukraine. Ukrainian forces controlling the towns and cities on the opposite bank have come under intense bombardment from the Russian-held side.

Three civilians, including a boy, were wounded in overnight shelling of one of those towns, Marhanets, Valentyn Reznichenko, governor of the Dnipropetrovsk region, said in the latest in a string

COVID-19: Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths
1 USA	94,479,779	1,061,346
2 India	44,223,557	526,928
3 France	34,169,281	152,990
4 Brazil	34,124,579	681,025
5 Germany	31,489,484	145,561
6 UK	23,420,826	186,087
7 Italy	21,455,291	173,853
8 S. Korea	21,111,840	25,499
9 Russia	18,824,282	383,011
10 Turkey	16,295,817	99,678
11 Japan	15,086,304	34,537
12 Spain	13,280,557	111,339
13 Vietnam	11,362,540	43,096
14 Australia	9,760,161	12,739

Global tally
593,578,576
Deaths
6,449,603
Recovered:
565,625,282
New cases
+558,934
New deaths
+1,013

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	515,645		24,613		442,182	48,850
Saudi Arabia	811,748	+106	9,266	+1	798,564	3,918
UAE	1,003,129	+823	2,339		981,884	18,906
Kuwait	655,854		2,562		652,250	1,042
Oman	397,231		4,260		384,669	8,302
Qatar	418,039	+649	681		411,418	5,940

Suspected Rome bank robber foiled by tunnel collapse

Reuters | Rome

An Italian man had to be rescued after becoming trapped in a collapsed tunnel near the Vatican, suspected of being part of a gang burrowing its way to a nearby bank, police said yesterday.

Firefighters spent eight hours digging him out from under a road in the west of Rome, before he was finally freed on Thursday evening and taken to hospital.

"Two people from Naples



First responders during a rescuing operation for a suspected thief who was buried under rubble for about eight hours, as he was allegedly digging a tunnel with his accomplices

were arrested for resisting a public official and two, from Rome, for damage" to public property, a police spokesman told AFP.

The rescued man, one of the two Romans, remains in hospital, he said without giving an update on his condition.

"We are still investigating, we do not exclude that they are thieves, it is one of the theories," he said.

For Italian newspapers, however, the motive was clear, noting the tunnel was found near a bank ahead of the August 15 long weekend, when residents

traditionally head out of town and much of Rome becomes empty.

"The hole gang," headlined the Corriere della Sera daily, while La Stampa said: "They dig a tunnel to rob a bank, and one of them is buried underground."

The man was brought out alive on a stretcher, after a day-long operation involving dozens of emergency service workers using mechanical diggers.

The tunnel began underneath an empty shop that had recently been rented.

YOU KNOW WHAT

For Italian newspapers, however, the motive was clear, noting the tunnel was found near a bank ahead of the August 15 long weekend, when residents traditionally head out of town and much of Rome becomes empty

Over 150 endangered vultures poisoned to

AFP | Johannesburg

At least 150 critically-endangered vultures were poisoned to death in separate incidents in Botswana and South Africa, conservationists said yesterday, warning the killings pushed the birds closer to extinction.

Vulture poisoning is not uncommon in wildlife-rich southern Africa, where they are targeted by poachers because they draw unwanted attention to their illegal activities.

Their heads are also used in traditional medicine, according to wildlife groups.

In the latest incidents, more than 50 white-backed vultures were found dead in Botswana's northern Chobe district yesterday, while about 100 more were discovered in South Africa's Kruger National Park Thursday, according to vulture conservation group Vulpro.

In both cases, the birds died after feeding from the carcass of a buffalo, which appeared to have been laced with poison, said Vulpro's founder Kerri Wolter.

"What makes this even more catastrophic is that it's breeding

1521

Spanish conquistadors under Hernán Cortés capture Aztec Emperor Cuauhtémoc in Tenochtitlan marking the end of the Aztec Empire

1642

Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens discovers Mars' southern polar cap



1788

Prussia joins Anglo-Dutch alliance to form Triple Alliance to prevent spread of Russo-Swedish War of 1788-90

1942

The 'Manhattan Project' commences, under the direction of General Leslie Groves: its aim - to deliver an atomic bomb

Ukraine, Russia trade blame for risk of nuclear disaster at frontline plant

Ukraine and Russia have traded blame over fresh shelling at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear complex as fears of a potential disaster rise



A view shows the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in the course of Ukraine-Russia conflict outside the Russian-controlled city of Enerhodar in the Zaporizhzhia region

of similar reports. Kyiv has said for weeks it is planning a counteroffensive to recapture Zaporizhzhia and neighbouring Kherson provinces, the largest part of the territory Russia seized after its Feb. 24 invasion still in Russian hands. Moscow has installed regional officials who say they intend to stage votes to join Russia.

Ukraine's Energoatom agency, whose workers still operate the plant under Russian occupation, said the power station was struck five times on Thursday, including near where radioactive materials are stored. Both sides blamed each other for the blasts and Reuters could not verify either account.

Russia says Ukraine is recklessly firing at the plant. Kyiv says Russian troops struck it them-

selves, and are also using the plant as a shield to provide cover while they bombard nearby Ukrainian-held towns and cities.

"The Ukrainian Armed Forces do not damage the infrastructure (of the plant), do not strike where there may be a danger on a global scale. We understand that the invaders are hiding behind such a shield because it is not possible to strike there," Natalia Humeniuk, spokesperson for Ukraine's southern military command, told Ukrainian national television.

The UN Security Council, where Russia wields a veto, met on Thursday to discuss the situation. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on both sides to stop all fighting near the plant.

"The facility must not be used as part of any military operation. Instead, urgent agreement is

“
The facility must not be used as part of any military operation. Instead, urgent agreement is needed at a technical level on a safe perimeter of demilitarisation to ensure the safety of the area

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTONIO GUTERRES

needed at a technical level on a safe perimeter of demilitarisation to ensure the safety of the area," Guterres said in a statement.

At the Security Council meeting, the United States backed the call for a demilitarised zone and urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to visit the site.

Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said the world was being pushed "to the brink of nuclear catastrophe", comparable in scale with the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in then-Soviet Ukraine. He said IAEA officials could visit the site as soon as this month.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy demanded Russia return the plant to Ukraine's control.

"Only a full withdrawal of the Russians ... and the restoration of full Ukrainian control of the situation around the station can guarantee a resumption of nucle-

BETTER YOU KNOW

Russia says Ukraine is recklessly firing at the plant. Kyiv says Russian troops struck it themselves, and are also using the plant as a shield to provide cover while they bombard nearby Ukrainian-held towns and cities

ar security for all of Europe," he said in a video address.

France echoed Zelenskiy's demand and said Russia's occupation of the site endangered the world.

"The presence and actions of the Russian armed forces near the plant significantly increase the risk of an accident with potentially devastating consequences," the French foreign ministry said in a statement.

Devastation at Russian base

The main Ukrainian front lines have been comparatively static in recent weeks, but fighting has been intensifying lately in anticipation of what Ukraine says is a planned counter-offensive in the south.

Ukraine's General Staff yesterday reported widespread shelling and air attacks by Russian forces on scores of towns and military bases, especially in the east where Russia is trying to expand territory held on behalf of separatist proxies.

Pavlo Kyrylenko, governor of the eastern Donetsk region, said on Telegram seven civilians had been killed and 14 wounded in the past 24 hours.

Kyiv hopes that by acquiring new missiles capable of striking Russian logistics deep behind the front lines, it can turn the tide of the conflict in coming weeks.

Satellite pictures released on Thursday showed devastation at an air base deep in Russian-annexed Crimea, struck on Tuesday in what appeared to be some form of attack, although Kyiv has not claimed responsibility or explained how it was carried out.

Images from independent satellite firm Planet Labs showed three nearly identical craters in buildings at Russia's Saki air base. The base, on the southwest coast of Crimea, suffered extensive fire damage with at least eight destroyed warplanes visible.

Russia has denied aircraft were damaged and said explosions at the base were accidental. Kyiv neither confirmed nor denied any role in the blasts, but noted that the initial explosions took place simultaneously hundreds of metres apart, which would appear to rule out an accident.

Endangered vultures die in southern Africa



The carcass of a vulture is seen at a farm in Southern Africa (file photo)

season now," Wolter told AFP, explaining chicks will not survive without their parents.

Park officials in South Africa said they were investigating the incident, adding some of the carcasses appeared to have been harvested for their body parts.

"Given the critical status of vultures globally, poisonings at this scale place the species at increasing risk of extinction," Yolán Friedmann, the head of the Endangered Wildlife Trust conservation group, said in a statement on the Kruger incident.



The white-backed vulture is listed on the IUCN's 'red list' of critically-endangered bird species

Mexican officials say close to accessing trapped miners

Reuters | Mexico City

Mexican authorities said yesterday they are in a position to enter the flooded coal mine where 10 workers have been trapped for more than a week.

"We have all the conditions to go down there today... to search for and rescue" the miners, said Laura Velazquez, the civil defense national coordinator, during President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's morning press conference.

Velazquez said the rescue operation will become possible once "97 percent of the water" has been extracted from the 50-meter deep mine in the town of Agujita in the northern Coahuila state.

"The necessary resources for the search and rescue have been prepared," she added.

The water level in one of the three wells in which rescuers will try to enter has been brought down to just 70 centimeters (27 inches), from a high of 30 meters (98 feet) the day after the accident that flooded the mine, Defense Minister Luis Cresencio Sandoval said.

The other two wells still have 3.9 and 4.7 meters of water.

Authorities consider 1.5 me-



Volunteers drain water from a flooded and collapsed coal mine

BETTER YOU KNOW

Five miners managed to escape following the initial accident, in which workers carrying out excavation activities hit an adjoining area full of water

ters to be an acceptable water level to gain access to the crudely constructed El Pinabete mine.

"In any case, we're going to continue pumping.... The process is slow but we don't want to take any risks," added Velazquez.

Since the August 3 accident, there have been no signs of life from the 10 miners trapped inside.

Five miners managed to escape following the initial accident, in which workers carrying out excavation activities hit an adjoining area full of water.

Several hundred rescuers, including soldiers and military scuba divers, are taking part in efforts to save the miners, whose relatives held a vigil Thursday night for those trapped underground.

TOP 4 TWEETS

01

I thank President Yoon Suk Yeol for his kind invitation and the rich discussions on non-proliferation, the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula & climate action. The Republic of Korea's strong commitments are a solid contribution to peace among nations & peace with nature.
@antonioguterres

02

Happy International #YouthDay! Let's celebrate and recommit to empowering younger generations to help us create a brighter future for everyone, everywhere. @WHO is highlighting the top health issues we need to address to improve the health of young people
@DrTedros

03

Thousands of heroic firefighters are working tirelessly against wildfires raging across our continent. EU has mobilised help for Portugal, Slovenia, Czechia, Albania & France via #rescueEU.
@vonderleyen

04

No American should have to make a decision between putting food on the table and going to the doctor. The Inflation Reduction Act will lower health insurance costs for 13 million Americans covered under the Affordable Care Act.
@POTUS

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

Drought in England, fires rage in France as heatwave persists

UK declares drought in parts of England amid heatwave as Firefighters from across Europe help France with monster fire

● Europe hit by successive heatwaves

Reuters | Paris

Firefighters from across Europe came to France's rescue yesterday to battle a massive wildfire, while fire also raged in Portugal and parts of England faced a severe drought, as successive heatwaves renewed the focus on climate change risks.

Much of Europe has faced weeks of baking temperatures that have also depleted water levels of the Rhine River in Germany and seen the source of Britain's River Thames dry up further downstream than in previous years.

High temperatures and a worsening drought brought a high risk of new fires breaking out in Gironde, in southwestern France, local officials said, even after an overnight reprieve held in check the wildfire that has been burning for days, scorched thousands of hectares and displaced 10,000 people.

Firefighters from Germany, Romania, Greece and beyond were on the ground to help



An aerial view shows a wildfire burning as firefighters work to extinguish it

France battle the fire in the region - home to Bordeaux wine - as well as on other fronts, including in Brittany in the northwest.

"It doesn't matter the country, we are firefighters and we are there to help," said chief Romanian firefighter Cristian Buhaiuanu, in Gironde.

French commandant Stephanie Martin welcomed their support in an area that already battled a massive fire for weeks last month. "Our firefighters are tired after one month of fighting. It is really good support for us, so

we can also focus on the other operation," she said.

But while an expected end of France's third heatwave on Sunday could bring some relief, the fire has already left much destruction in its wake, including over 7,400 hectares (18,286 acres) of forest burnt to the ground - equivalent to the size of a major French city such as Nice.

What firefighters called a "monster fire" also destroyed houses, including the ancestral home of the family of 19-year old student Juliette Pilain, from



The day is likely to be complicated since temperatures continue to increase and humidity continues to drop, so obviously we remain vigilant and mobilised

SENIOR LOCAL OFFICIAL RONAN LEAUSTIC

Belin-Beliet, in the heart of Gironde.

"It is complicated to process this news. It's a house that's been in the family for years, it's especially painful for my grandparents," Pilain told Reuters.

"We had all the furniture of my great-grandparents there, books and encyclopaedia belonging to my great grandmother ... we cried a lot but then thought it is just material damage and we are all still here."

Portugal fires, UK drought

In central Portugal, a huge wildfire raged into its seventh day, with 1,600 firefighters backed by 13 waterbombing aircraft, including one sent from Spain, combating the blaze that has destroyed about 15% of the



Ongoing wildfires in France have unleashed nearly 1 million metric tonnes of carbon from June to August. That is roughly equal to the yearly carbon dioxide emissions from 790,000 cars

Serra da Estrela national park.

After starting in the Covilha area on Saturday, the fire has spread to several neighbouring councils, burning around 15,000 hectares overall.

Meanwhile, water levels on the river Rhine in Germany have fallen again, with some vessels no longer able to sail, shipping operators and brokers said.

Further north, in Britain, the heatwave was also hitting hard, with the government formally declaring parts of southern, central and eastern England in

drought after a prolonged period of hot and dry weather.

England suffered its driest July since 1935, with only 35% of the average rainfall for the month, and parts of England and Wales were now in the middle of a four-day "extreme heat" alert.

"All water companies have reassured us that essential supplies are still safe, and we have made it clear it is their duty to maintain those supplies," Water Minister Steve Double said, following a meeting of the National Drought Group.

The companies will now begin enacting pre-agreed drought plans to help protect supplies, and the government said members of the public and businesses in drought-affected areas were urged to use water wisely.

Earlier yesterday, Yorkshire water announced a hosepipe ban would begin on Aug. 26, forbidding customers from using hoses to water gardens, wash cars or fill up paddling pools.

Across France as well, there are restrictions on water use, and water police has been handing out fines. Local media have reported that outdoor jacuzzis were vandalised in the tourist Vosges area, as some tensions over water rose.

Kenya election commission says vote tally moving too slowly



Various political parties delegates are seen at the IEBC National Tallying centre at the Bomas of Kenya, in Nairobi

Reuters | Nairobi

Without providing any proof, the secretary-general of Kenya's governing party has said there was election rigging, fuelling public anxiety yesterday as media outlets significantly slowed down their unofficial tallies from Tuesday's tight vote.

Only the electoral commission is authorised to declare a winner, but the tallies done by media were seen as a bulwark against the kind of rigging allegations that have previously sparked violence.

While Kenya is East Africa's richest and most stable nation it also has a history of violent elections disputes. More than 1,200 people were killed after the 2007 elections and more than 100 after the 2017 elections.

The race is to succeed President Uhuru Kenyatta, who

The agents in this exercise cannot proceed in the manner in which we are proceeding as if we are doing a forensic audit

ELECTION COMMISSION CHAIRMAN WAFULA CHEBUKATI

must step down after serving the maximum two five-year terms. Leading contenders are former political prisoner and veteran opposition leader Raila Odinga and Deputy President William Ruto. Kenyatta has fallen out with Ruto and endorsed Odinga.

Media tallies, which had nearly stopped by yesterday morning, showed Odinga and Ruto neck and neck, just under the 50% mark they needed to win. Less than a percent was divided between two other marginal candidates.

Gang violence leaves 11 dead in Mexican border city

AP | Mexico City

A gang riot inside a border prison that left two inmates dead quickly spread to the streets of Ciudad Juarez where alleged gang members killed nine more people, including four employees of a radio station, security officials said yesterday.

The surge in violence recalled a far more deadly period in Juarez more than a decade earlier. Mexico's powerful drug cartels commonly use local gangs to defend their territory and carry out their vendettas.

The federal government's security un-



Bullet holes are seen in the windows of a pizzeria

dersecretary, Ricardo Mejía Berdeja, said the violence started inside the state prison

after 1 p.m. Thursday, when member of the Mexicles gang attacked members of the rival Chapos.

Two inmates were killed and 20 injured. Then suspected gang members outside the prison began burning businesses and shooting up Ciudad Juarez.

"They attacked the civilian, innocent population like a sort of revenge," President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said. "It wasn't just the clash between two groups, but it got to the point in which they began to shoot civilians, innocent people. That is the most unfortunate thing in this affair."

US, Indonesia, Australia hold drills amid China concerns

AFP | Baturaja

Soldiers from the US, Indonesia and Australia joined a live-fire drill yesterday, part of annual joint combat exercises on Sumatra island amid growing Chinese maritime activity in the Indo-Pacific region.

A total of more than 5,000 personnel from the US, Indonesia, Australia, Japan and Singapore are participating in this year's Super Garuda Shield exercises, making them the largest since they began in 2009.

The expanded drills are seen by China as a threat. Chinese state media have accused the US of building an Indo-Pacific alliance similar to NATO to limit China's growing military and diplomatic influence in the region.

The United Kingdom, Canada, France, India, Malaysia, South Korea, New Zealand,



US and Indonesian during the joint military exercises in Baturaja, Indonesia

Papua New Guinea and East Timor also sent observers to the exercises, which began early this month.

The US Indo-Pacific commander, Adm. John C. Aquilino, said the 14 nations involved in the training are signaling their

stronger ties as China grows increasingly assertive in claiming virtually the entire South China Sea and holds exercises threatening self-ruled Taiwan.

"The destabilizing actions by the People's Republic of China as it applied to the threatening

The destabilizing actions by the People's Republic of China as it applied to the threatening activities and actions against Taiwan is exactly what we are trying to avoid

US INDO-PACIFIC COMMANDER, ADM. JOHN C. AQUILINO

activities and actions against Taiwan is exactly what we are trying to avoid," he said at a joint news conference with Indonesian military chief Gen. Andika Perkasa in Baturaja, a coastal town in South Sumatra province.

"We'll continue to help deliver a free and open Indo-Pacific and be ready when we need to respond to any contingency," Aquilino said.

MI Emirates sign Pollard and Boulton for UAE T20 league

Reuters | Dubai



Kieron Pollard

West Indian Kieron Pollard and New Zealand's Trent Boult will represent MI Emirates in the inaugural International League T20 tournament in the United Arab Emirates, the Abu Dhabi-based franchise owned by Reliance Industries said yesterday.

The Indian conglomerate also owns Pollard's Indian Premier League (IPL) team Mumbai Indians and the Cape Town-based franchise in an upcoming Twenty20 league in South Africa.

Pollard is one of the four West Indies players, including white-ball captain Nicholas Pooran and veteran Dwayne Bravo, to join MI Emirates for the six-team tournament beginning in January next year.

Bravo and Pooran have played for Mumbai Indians in the past.

Former Mumbai Indians player Boulton is among the 14 overseas players directly signed by the franchise.

The left-arm seamer gave up his central contract with New Zealand Cricket on Wednesday to spend more time with his family and focus on playing Twenty20 leagues.

Bahrain punch semi-finals tickets in Asian volleyball

Kingdom's senior men's national team oust Pakistan in straight sets to take second place in Pool F and earn berth in final four of 2022 AVC Cup for Men in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

● **Mohamed Abdulla top scores for Bahrain against Pakistan with 14 points, all in attack**

● **Bahrainis next set to take on Pool E winners Japan in final four, South Korea to face China**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain barged through to the semi-finals of the 2022 Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) Cup for Men yesterday after sweeping past Pakistan 3-0 (25-18, 27-25, 25-20) in their concluding game of the main round at Nakhon Pathom Provincial Gymnasium in Thailand.

The result put them in second place to end their campaign in Pool F and earn their spot in the final four along with fellow group members China.

There, the Bahrainis are set to take on Pool E winners Japan, while the Chinese will be facing off with Pool E runners-up South Korea.

The nationals, who are making their debut in the competi-



Bahrain players celebrate after securing their win against Pakistan

tion, showed their class against their Pakistani counterparts yesterday in their straight-sets victory.

Fresh from stunning Asian giants Iran in their previous fixture on Thursday, the Bahrainis continued to show their impressive form and went right to work against Pakistan.

Naser Anan and Mohamed Abdulla came up with hard attacks from both wings to help lift the team's 25-18 victory in the first set. In a see-saw second, both teams matched each other point for point until 25-all, but then the Bahrainis managed to claim the next two points to take

the 2-0 match advantage. They then sealed the win in a dominant third set, going five points clear midway through and holding on to that gap until the end. Abdulla top scored for Bah-



It was a difficult match for us as some players in my team are tired. Regarding our teamworks, I think we can do better than this in sideouts and attacks

ISSANAYE RAMIRES



Bahrain's Abbas Al Khabbaz attacks the net during their game against Pakistan

rain with 14 points, all from his powerful attacks. Fahad Raza led Pakistan with 12 points.

"It was a difficult match for us as some players in my team are tired," said Bahrain head coach Issanaye Ramires from Brazil. "Regarding our teamworks, I think we can do better than this in sideouts and attacks."

Bahrain head into their semi-final clash against Japan as the underdogs, but will give their maximum effort. The game is scheduled for an 11am start, Bahrain time.

The South Koreans and Chinese clash in the next final four contest at 2pm, Bahrain time.

Bahrain are playing for the first time in the AVC Cup for Men, which is in its seventh edition.

Along with Abdulla, who has been one of their best players in the tournament, and Naser Anan, the rest of the team competing in Nakhon Pathom includes setters Mahmood Hasan and Mahmood Alafyah; wing spikers Mahmood Ahmed and Yusuf Ali; opposites Mohamed Anan and Ali Khamis; middle blockers Abbas Al Khabbaz, Husain Aljeshi, Mohamed Al-dawiri and Mohamed Abdulla; and liberos Ayman Haroona and Husain Sultan.

Swiatek ambushed by Brazil's Haddad Maia in Toronto

AFP | Toronto

Brazilian outsider Beatriz Haddad Maia toppled world number one Iga Swiatek 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 on Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the WTA Toronto Masters.

The South American ranked 24th in the world beat her third top-10 opponent this season, but notched her first career win over a world number one as she clawed out the victory in three hours.

Haddad Maia, who won titles at Nottingham and Birmingham in June, became the first Brazilian to reach the quarters at a WTA 1000 tournament.

She was the first from her country to face a number one since Telian Pereira lost to Serena Williams at Roland Garros in 2016.

Swiatek, whose six titles this season include the French Open, missed her chance at a 50th match win this year.

Her run of 23 straight wins at the Masters 1000 level was snapped in difficult playing conditions.

"At the beginning I struggled to find my rhythm, probably because she's lefty and I had a hard time adjusting to her serve," Swiatek said.

"Without the wind I would manage. But it was pretty crazy out there.

"In the third set I knew (the mistakes) I'd made. So I know what I want to work on and what I want to improve before



Iga Swiatek reacts during her loss to Beatriz Haddad Maia

At the beginning I struggled to find my rhythm, probably because she's lefty and I had a hard time adjusting to her serve. Without the wind I would manage. But it was pretty crazy out there

IGA SWIATEK

the next tournament, for sure." Swiatek added: "She just used the conditions better than me. When she was playing with the wind she was playing really strong balls.

"I made more mistakes than her. She was a little bit more solid."

Haddad Maia put Swiatek on the defensive, forcing her to save 15 of 19 break points while committing nine double-faults.

She limited her own unforced errors to a dozen, backed up by 23 winners while Swiatek ended with 33 winners and 28 unforced errors.

"I'm happy and proud of myself and my team, it's a special moment," she said. "It's not always easy to beat the number one on a huge stage and against all the crowd.

"I think I passed through very tough moments in my career to live this moment. I just want to enjoy a little bit.

"I don't want to think about my next match. But, yeah, I feel happy. I believe in myself.

Gauff perseveres

In other third-round action, Coco Gauff survived 15 dou-

YOU KNOW WHAT

Swiatek, whose six titles this season include the French Open, missed her chance at a 50th match win this year

ble-faults to squeeze out a 7-5, 4-6, 7-6 (7/4) win over Aryna Sabalenka.

The American teenager contributed just under half of the miscues in the error-strewn affair, with her opponent accounting for 18 additional doubles.

Tenth seed Gauff, who fell to Swiatek at Roland Garros in her first Grand Slam final this year, battled for three and a quarter hours against sixth-seeded Sabalenka.

Gauff finished with nine aces and saved 10 of 14 break points that she faced.

"The conditions weren't easy today, a lot of wind," Gauff said. "I think I hung in there mentally and that's what I'm most proud of."

Victory for the 18-year-old came a day after she beat Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina in the third round in a match that took two and three-quarter hours.

Kyrgios schools de Minaur to reach Montreal quarters

AFP | Montreal

Nick Kyrgios crushed fellow Australian Alex de Minaur 6-2, 6-3 on Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the ATP Montreal Masters.

Kyrgios carried on constant backchat with his player box, giving almost a running commentary of his state of mind on court in a display that seems second nature to him.

Nevertheless, the Wimbledon runner-up dominated in the all-Aussie match, winning the opening set at a clip of three minutes per game in a contest which took just 64



Nick Kyrgios in action

minutes.

The second-set pace was just as torrid, with Kyrgios breaking in the opening game.

He failed to serve out the win leading 5-2, missing on a drop shot and sending a forehand into the net.

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Bahrain add five more medals in Konya

Kingdom's national athletics team wrap up competition on the track and in the field by winning two more gold, two silver and one bronze at fifth Islamic Solidarity Games in Turkey

● **Winfred Yavi claims women's 1,500m gold to add to her women's 3,000m steeplechase title on last day of athletics competition**

● **Aminat Jamal, Muna Mubarak, Awatif Imoleayo, Zenab Moussa Ali and Edidiong Odiong take women's 4x400m relay gold**

● **Men's and women's 4x100m relay teams win silver medals while men's 4x400m relay squad clinch bronze**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain picked up five more medals, including two gold, yesterday on the final day of the athletics competition at the fifth Islamic Solidarity Games being held in Konya, Turkey.

Winfred Yavi bagged the gold medal in the women's 1,500 metres while the women's 4x400m relay team comprising Aminat Jamal, Muna Mubarak, Awatif Imoleayo, Zenab Moussa Ali and Edidiong Odiong won gold in their event at Konya Athletic Field.

The national team's athletes also won two silver medals



Bahrain's athletes and officials pose for a photograph at the end of last night's events

through the men's 4x100m relay team and the women's 4x100m relay squad; while also coming away with one bronze from the men's 4x400m relay team.

The five-medal haul brought Bahrain's medal tally to date at the Games to 20, including nine gold medals, seven silver and four bronze medals.

All but

one of Bahrain's total medal haul has been won in athletics. The other was claimed by Ahmed Madan in road cycling, with the history-making Team Bahrain

Victorious rider claiming the men's individual time trial gold medal.

In yesterday's athletics events, Winfred won the women's 1,500m gold medal in a time of four minutes 14.35 seconds. It was the second title for Winfred at the Games, having also clinched the women's 3,000m steeplechase gold medal.

Meanwhile, the women's 4x400m relay team clinched their gold medal after winning in 3:35.24.

In the men's 4x100m relay, Yaqoob Salem, Abduraoof Rashid, Ebrahim Simon and Saeed Alkhalidi won their silver medal after completing their race in 39.01 seconds.

The women's 4x100m relay team included Aminat Jamal, Fatima Mubarak, Hajar Alkhalidi and Edidiong Odiong. They took their

silver medal in 44.11s.

The men's 4x400m re-

lay team added a bronze medal to yesterday's win-

nings in Konya. The Kingdom's quartet included

Musa Isah, Abbas Ali, Ali Khamis and Husain Aldoseri.

With yesterday's events, Bahrain's men and women athletes wrapped up their participation on the track and in the field.

Bahrain's five-medal haul yesterday brought their medal tally at the Games to 20, including nine gold, seven silver and four bronze medals—all but one having been won in the sport of athletics. The other was claimed by Ahmed Madan in road cycling

Attending the final day of the athletics competition was Bahrain Olympic Committee secretary general Faris Al Kooheji, who presented some of the winners with their respective medals.

The BOC secretary general also met with his Uzbek counterpart Oybek Kasimov on the sidelines of events.

The pair discussed ways of further cooperation between the two Olympic committees, including developing joint-programmes in wrestling, boxing and judo.

Elsewhere yesterday, Bahrain Cycling Association president Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa expressed his sincere congratulations to the Kingdom's wise leadership on the success of Madan in the individual time trial.

In shooting yesterday at the Games, Bahrain was taking part but were not able to ascend onto the podium.

Bahrain youth football team continue Turkey camp



Bahrain's youth national team's players and officials at their camp

● **Nationals gearing up for future competitions, including qualifiers for 2023 AFC U-17 Asian Cup this October**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's youth national football team continued their overseas training camp yesterday in Turkey where they are preparing for their upcoming competitions.

The under-17s are set to play their final friendly of their camp today against a local club team. They have already played two warm-ups, the first of which they won and then followed it up with a draw.

Among the tournaments the

nationals are gearing up for are the qualifiers for the 2023 AFC U-17 Asian Cup.

The Bahrainis are in Group C of the qualification process, the matches of which will be played this October in Muscat. The other teams in their division are the Omanis, Iraq, Qatar and Lebanon.

There are 44 nations in this stage of the qualifiers. They have been divided into 10 groups—four with five teams and six with four teams.

In each group, teams will play each other once at a centralised venue. The ten group winners and the five best runners-up will qualify for the final tournament.

Group A features Japan, hosts Jordan, Syria, the Philippines and Turkmenistan; Group B

includes hosts Indonesia, Malaysia, Palestine, Guam and the UAE; Group D is composed of India, hosts Saudi Arabia, Myanmar, Maldives and Kuwait; Group E consists of Yemen, hosts Bangladesh, Singapore and Bhutan; Group F features Thailand, hosts Vietnam, Chinese-Taipei and Nepal; Group G consists of hosts Australia, China, Cambodia and Northern Mariana Islands; Group H is composed of hosts Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Mongolia; Group I consists of Iran, Hong Kong, hosts Kyrgyzstan and Laos; and Group J features South Korea, Brunei, hosts Uzbekistan and Sri Lanka.

There are 28 players in the Bahrain squad in their Turkey camp, coached by Bahraini tactician Bader Khalil.

Surprise date-change overshadows World Cup 100-day countdown

AFP | Geneva

FIFA and Qatar organisers yesterday counted the cost of bringing forward the start of the World Cup by a day as they launched the 100-day countdown to the event.

Football's ruling body and the wealthy Gulf state both promised action to help fans, sponsors and broadcasters hit by the change, announced late Thursday, but did not give details.

The sudden move to bring forward Qatar's match against Ecuador by 24 hours -- to make it the gala opening match -- has only added to the public relations concerns as the conservative host country counters criticism of its rights record and fan worries about what to expect when they arrive.

"It is less than three months from the start. This has come out of the blue. It is not critical but it is a headache," said an executive for one World Cup broadcaster, speaking on condition of anonymity.

FIFA said its president Gianni Infantino and the six heads of the continental confederations had unanimously agreed to make Qatar's game and the official opening ceremony a



The FIFA World Cup trophy is displayed during a panel discussion at the World Economic Forum 2022 (WEF) in the Alpine resort of Davos, Switzerland

"stand-alone" event.

"The change ensures the continuity of a long-standing tradition of marking the start of the World Cup with an opening ceremony on the occasion of the first match featuring either the hosts or the defending champions," FIFA said in a statement.

Under the old schedule, Qatar against Ecuador was to be the official inauguration match on the evening of November 21 but Senegal against Neth-

BETTER YOU KNOW

The change stretches the World Cup to 29 days until the Dec. 18 final and comes after several rounds of ticket sales, with organisers having sold 1.8 million tickets so far

erlands would have been the first match of the day, followed England against Iran.

Under the new plan, the Group A game between Senegal and the Netherlands has been shifted from 1:00pm (1000 GMT) on November 21 to 7:00pm start.

FIFA said tickets for the affected matches "will remain valid irrespective of the new date/time."

It added: "In addition, FIFA will seek to address any issues arising from this change in a case-by-case basis."