

Liverpool boss  
Slot to hold  
talks with  
unhappy Salah

Conversation to  
determine if Salah  
plays after his  
explosive public  
criticism | P12

6 Ukraine's EU bid gains US backing: official

THE DAILY tribune

Taylor Swift is not a 'chill person'

8 CELEBS

EU agrees three-euro small parcel tax to tackle China flood

Iran arrests Nobel-prize winning activist Narges Mohammadi: supporters

AFP | Paris, France

Iranian security forces yesterday "violently" arrested the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi at a memorial ceremony for a lawyer who died earlier this month, her supporters said.

Mohammadi, who was granted temporary leave from prison in December 2024, was detained along with several other activists at the ceremony for lawyer Khosrow Alikordi, who was found dead in his office last week, her foundation wrote on X. Also writing on X, Mohammadi's Paris-based husband, Taghi Rahmani, said she had been arrested at the ceremony in the eastern city of Mashhad along with fellow prominent activist Sepideh Gholian.

Former Iraqi president Salih appointed new UNHCR chief

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Former Iraqi president Barham Salih will become the next United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a UN source told yesterday, taking over an agency tackling swingeing budget cuts.

Salih was president of Iraq from 2018 to 2022. He will take over as UN refugees chief next month from Filippo Grandi, who is leaving at the end of December after 10 years in the post.

Germany blames Russia for cyberattack

AFP | Berlin, Germany

Germany yesterday accused Russia of a cyberattack targeting its air traffic control and spreading disinformation ahead of February's general election, charges dismissed by Russia as "absurd" and "baseless".

A German foreign ministry spokesman said security services had proof that hacker groups run by Russia's military intelligence service GRU were responsible for the attack and influence operations.

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HM King returns after visit to Egypt

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa returned to Bahrain following a private visit to Egypt. HM the King was welcomed by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.



P2

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday attended the Al Raffah Media Festival, held at the Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club (REHC), in Al Raffah. The Festival featured three races: the Al Raffah Media Cup, the Celebrate Bahrain Cup, and the NAD Holding Cup. Winners of the cups were announced, and Mrs. Sarah Ahmed Buheji, CEO of Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), presented the Celebrate Bahrain Cup to Abdullah Fawzi Nass, while His Highness Shaikh Nader bin Mohammed bin Salman Al Khalifa received the NAD Holding Cup and Al Raffah Media Cup from Mr. Mohammed Haji, Deputy CEO of NAD Holding.



Al Raffah Media Festival

# Rehabilitation not employment

## Government amendment replaces term 'employment'

● New amendment would make rehabilitation and training compulsor

● Draft covers civil liability for injuries or illnesses

● Cabinet approved the draft on 17 November 2025

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

Rehabilitation and training programmes could soon become compulsory for prisoners in Bahrain, under a new government-drafted amendment now before Parliament.

The proposed change replaces the previous term "employment" with "rehabilitation and training", signalling a shift in focus from prison labour to structured, skills-based programmes



Representative image



Under the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules), rehabilitation is considered a core purpose of imprisonment. The UN emphasises that prisons should not simply detain people but must actively prepare inmates for reintegration through education, vocational training and personal development programmes.

aimed at reintegration.

The Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee has been assigned as the main panel to review the amendment, while the Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee will also provide input.

Under the new text, all inmates would be required to take part in rehabilitation and training programmes, except for remand detainees and those

whose medical conditions prevent participation. Where possible, the programmes should match an inmate's existing craft or professional background.

Executive regulations would define the types of programmes offered, their duration, maximum working hours, allowances and eligibility criteria. They would also outline the conditions for training conducted outside correctional centres,

in coordination with relevant authorities.

The draft further addresses civil liability, stating that inmates would be protected in cases of occupational injuries or professional illnesses arising during participation in rehabilitation and training activities.

A memorandum from the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission links the amendment to remarks from the International Labour Organization's expert committee, which had raised concerns about provisions that could amount to compulsory labour when imposed alongside imprisonment. The memo notes that Bahrain, which joined the convention on the abolition of forced labour in 1998, is responding to those concerns through the proposed changes.

The Cabinet approved the draft for referral to the legislative authority on 17 November 2025. If passed by both chambers and ratified, the amendments would take effect the day after their publication in the Official Gazette.

Israel bans mobile phones in primary schools

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel will ban children from using mobile phones in primary schools from February, the education ministry's website said Friday, emphasising the devices' "negative effects" on students.

In implementing the ban, Israel will join a growing number of countries moving to prevent children from accessing their phones while in educational establishments.

"From February 2, a new policy will be implemented in primary schools: children will be prohibited from using mobile phones on school premises," the education ministry said in a statement.

Messi to unveil 21-metre statue of himself on India 'GOAT' tour

AFP | Kolkata, India

Lionel Messi will unveil a 21-metre (70-foot) statue of himself in India today as he embarks on a three-day tour of the country that has sparked a fan frenzy.

The iron sculpture in Kolkata, which shows Messi holding aloft the World Cup, is part of a so-called GOAT Tour that will take in four Indian cities and a possible meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The 38-year-old Argentina and Inter Miami superstar will unveil the monument virtually rather than in person for security reasons.



P11