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## HM King hails Bahraini-Moroccan ties and cooperation



TDT | Manama



“HM King Mohammed VI strengthens the distinguished bilateral relations with Bahrain and serves the causes of the Arab and Islamic nations.”

— HIS MAJESTY KING HAMAD BIN ISA AL KHALIFA

**H**is Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa highlighted the strong and historic relations between the Kingdoms of Bahrain and Morocco.

He noted the high level of Bahraini-Moroccan cooperation and the importance of such visits for exchanging expertise and enhancing joint efforts in Islamic affairs and endowments.

HM the King was speaking as he received yesterday at Al Safriya Palace His Excellency Ahmed Toufiq, Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs of Morocco.

H.E. Toufiq conveyed the greetings of His Majesty King

Mohammed VI of Morocco and his best wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of Bahrain under His Majesty's leadership. HM King Hamad relayed his greetings and best wishes to HM King Mo-

hammed VI.

HM the King also commended the Minister's distinguished efforts in the fields of endowments and Islamic affairs.

His Majesty also commended HM King Mohammed VI for his

role in strengthening the distinguished bilateral relations with Bahrain and for his efforts in serving the causes of the Arab and Islamic nations.

H.E. Toufiq expressed gratitude for the generous hospi-

tality, commending HM King Hamad's continued efforts to strengthen ties and enhance joint cooperation between the two Kingdoms, wishing Bahrain and its people ongoing progress and prosperity.

## New directors for ministry



HRH Prince Salman  
TDT | Manama

**H**is Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday issued Edict (1) of 2026, regarding the transfer and appointment of directors at the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture, based on a proposal submitted by the Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture.

Abbas Abdullah Hussain Arafat, Director of Vegetation Development at the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture, shall be transferred to serve as the Director of the Afforestation and Parks at the same ministry, succeeding Ahmed Abdulaziz Ahmed Buasali.

## Zardari to arrive in Bahrain today

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**T**he Royal Court has announced that Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari will arrive in the Kingdom today on an official visit.

He will hold meetings with His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to discuss relations between the two countries.

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# Digital checks

Instant electronic system links across government to verify social assistance claims

### Cost-of-living payments to increase by BD20 per eligible category this month

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

**D**atabases are being linked across government to spot ineligible social assistance claims, the Social Development Minister, His Excellency Osama Al Alawi, said.

Cost-of-living payments are due to rise this month after a BD20 increase for each eligible category.

Answering a parliamentary question on the ministry's services, he said the expanded electronic links allow instant checks of the rules for social assistance.

“We have developed the electronic linkage system with the relevant entities, enabling instant verification of eligibility conditions for social assistance,” he said.

The aim, he added, is to “limit any duplication or undue disbursement” and improve the accuracy of records and the use

of public funds.

The minister said royal directives issued in December 2025 ordered the extra BD20 for all eligible categories, and that the revised sums will be paid during the current month.

Payments will rise to BD130, BD97 and BD75, he said.

He said the last rise before that came in January 2022, when a 10 per cent increase was applied to cash support under the social security and cost-of-living schemes.

That move lifted payments from 100 to 110 dinars, from BD70 to BD77, and from BD50 to BD55.

### Allowance

All recipients of the social security programme, across nine categories under the Social Security Law issued in 2006, now also receive the cost-of-living allowance, the minister said.

He added that most recipients sit in the top payment band after the latest rise, alongside what they already receive under social security.

He said the ministry has also been reworking parts of its internal process to cut waiting times and widen online access.



“The electronic linkage system with the relevant entities aims to limit any duplication or undue disbursement and improve the accuracy of records and the use of public funds.”

— H.E. OSAMA AL ALAWI, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

“We have started re-engineering a number of procedures, simplifying work pathways, and updating service level agreements,” he said, adding that more online services will be announced soon.

He said the ministry also carries out regular follow-up, backed by electronic links with other government bodies, to keep records up to date and support the long-term running of the scheme.

He said a committee chaired by him was formed about a year

ago to deal with urgent humanitarian cases, meant to handle emergencies that cannot wait and to take decisions within the legal framework.

“Parliament plays a vital role in conveying these cases and cooperating directly in addressing them,” he said, describing this as showing “a spirit of partnership and integration” between the legislative and executive branches.

Some recipients also receive support through other schemes, the minister said, including disability allowances, either the general allowance of BD100 or payments linked to special cases, under the approved conditions.

### Allocations

On funding, he said the ministry works with the Ministry of Finance and National Economy to secure the allocations needed to keep support programmes funded as beneficiary numbers rise.

By December 2025, he said, about 137,000 people were receiving the cost-of-living allowance, while the most recent social security payment covered about 17,740 recipients, alongside about 15,440 disability allowance recipients.

# Maritime talks

Cyprus and Bahrain advance negotiations on water security cooperation

● Cyprus President to visit Kingdom

● Cypriot firms ready to expand opportunities

Ashen Tharaka  
TDT | Manama

**C**yprus is seeking to expand cooperation in maritime security, including water security, in alignment with Bahrain's vision to strengthen collaboration with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Cyprus' Ambassador to Bahrain, His Excellency Dr. Andreas Eliades, said discussions between the two countries are progressing, with both sides exploring new opportunities following recent high-level meetings between counterparts.

Highlighting the role of H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, the ambassador noted that Cypriot companies are ready to offer more opportunities in Bahrain, viewing the Kingdom as a key partner along Gulf trade routes.

These remarks were made during a press conference held at the Cyprus Embassy in Bahrain, where the ambassador outlined Cyprus' plans as it assumes the Presidency of the



Council of the European Union at a critical time.

**Priorities**

The ambassador said that artificial intelligence, climate change, and education will be top priorities in the region, with Cyprus seeking expert collaboration through shared initiatives.

He stressed that GCC representation at the discussion table is essential to advancing short-term regional plans.

He also revealed that the upcoming official visit of the Cyprus President to Bahrain will focus on strengthening cooperation in trade, investment, and fintech.

**Gateway**

"Bahrain is the gateway to the Gulf, and Cyprus is the gateway to Europe," the ambassador said.

Advancing discussions on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is also on the agenda, particularly as the UAE and Saudi Arabia have already entered Strategic Partnership Agreements with the EU, with further talks continuing at the ministerial level.

Although Cyprus' EU Presidency is for a limited period, the country aims to maximise its impact by strengthening cooperation with GCC states and beyond.

Interfaith dialogue with Bahrain is also part of the agenda, with preparations for a Cyprus-GCC summit seen as a regional priority.

**EU presidency**

Cyprus has outlined key priorities as it takes over the EU Presidency, with a strong focus on security, migration, economic reform, and enlargement.

Under its security pillar, Cy-

**"Bahrain is the gateway to the Gulf, and Cyprus is the gateway to Europe."**  
— H.E. DR. ANDREAS ELIADES, CYPRUS' AMBASSADOR TO BAHRAIN

prus aims to redirect EU attention southwards through the Pact for the Mediterranean, emphasising maritime security, protection of critical sub-sea infrastructure, and energy projects in the Eastern Mediterranean as part of Europe's strategic autonomy.

**Pact**

Migration will remain high on the agenda, with Cyprus pushing for the practical implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, enhanced cooperation with North Africa and the Middle East, and expanded voluntary return programmes.

The Presidency will also lead complex negotiations on the EU's next long-term budget, seeking to balance competitiveness, defence spending, and social cohesion amid differing positions between major contributors and cohesion-fund beneficiaries.

On enlargement, Cyprus will continue facilitating discussions with Ukraine, Moldova, and Western Balkan candidates, positioning itself as a mediator in sensitive regional matters.

## Bahrain promotes dialogue for peace, stability worldwide

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**H**is Excellency Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted Bahrain's growing diplomatic influence on the global stage as the Kingdom marked Bahrain Diplomatic Day yesterday.

He praised the Kingdom's balanced and dialogue-driven approach, underpinned by strong international partnerships aimed at advancing peace, stability, and prosperity worldwide.

"Bahraini diplomacy has led a balanced and dialogue-driven approach, guided by the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the direction of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister," H.E. Dr. Al Zayani said, emphasising the Kingdom's commitment to principled foreign policy.

**Congratulations**

The Foreign Minister congratulated His Majesty the King and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, on the occasion.

He noted that the day reflects pride in Bahrain's diplo-

H.E. Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani

matic achievements, which are rooted in a rich civilisational heritage, noble human values, and principled political positions in support of human rights, regional security, and Arab and Islamic causes.

"This day reflects the Kingdom's dedication to promoting peace, security, and sustainable development for the benefit of humanity," he added.

**Cooperation**

H.E. Dr. Al Zayani underscored Bahrain's active role in international cooperation, citing its contributions to humanitarian work, environmental protection, climate change initiatives, and multilateral dialogue across religions and cultures.

## ISB set to celebrate landmark 75th anniversary with grand cultural fair

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**T**he Indian School Bahrain (ISB) is preparing to host its highly anticipated Platinum Jubilee Annual Cultural Fair at the Isa Town Campus on January 15 and 16, 2026.

This flagship event marks a historic milestone in the school's journey, celebrating seventy-five years of academic excellence, cultural enrichment, and dedicated community service within the Kingdom of Bahrain.

ISB Chairman Adv. Binu Mannil Varughese has extended a warm invitation to the public, parents, and alumni to participate in this momentous occasion.

**Pride**

He emphasized that the Platinum Jubilee year is a period of deep pride and reflection, honoring the school's growth from its modest beginnings into a premier institution that continues to nurture responsible global citizens rooted in Indian values.

The two-day festivities are scheduled to run from 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. each evening.

The fair will officially commence on January 15 with an inaugural function, followed by a headline musical performance by the world-renowned



Adv. Binu Mannil Varughese, ISB Chairman

South Indian keyboardist and composer Dr. Stephen Devassy and his team.

**Concert**

The celebration will continue on January 16 with a captivating concert by popular Indian singer Ms. Rupali Jagga, leading into the formal valedictory ceremony.

Organizers have ensured that meticulous arrangements are in place to provide a vibrant and seamless experience for all visitors.

Admission to the event is through entry tickets, and the school has implemented comprehensive safety measures, including full CCTV surveillance across the campus, to maintain a secure and pleasant environment for families and guests.

## Official emblem for Year of Isa Al Kabeer launched

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**F**ollowing the royal order issued by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa designating 2026 as the "Year of Isa Al Kabeer" in honour of Bahrain's founder of the modern state and key figure in its institutional development, the official emblem for the Year of Isa Al Kabeer was launched.

The emblem honours the late ruler's national contributions, including his role in consolidating stability, establishing legal and civil institutions, and promoting the nation's prosperity across all domains.

The emblem features an image of His Highness Isa Al Kabeer, who ruled Bahrain and its dependencies from 1869 to 1932, symbolising his enduring legacy, his pioneering role in establishing the modern Bahraini state, strengthening institutional governance, preserving stability, and safeguarding

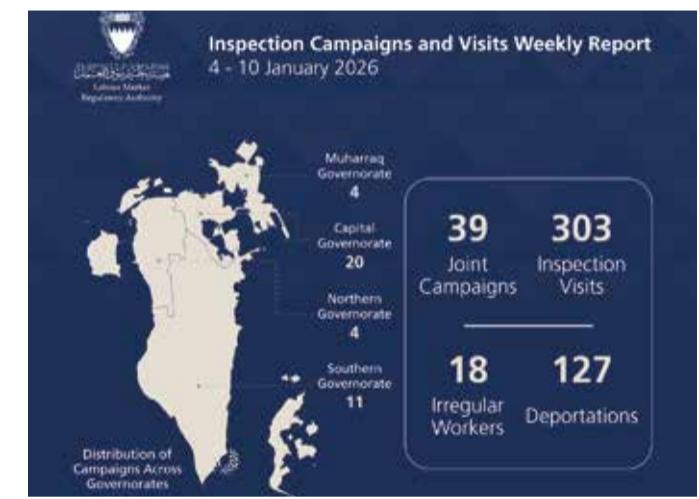
national identity, connecting Bahrain's historic heritage with its ongoing path of development and progress.

**Loyalty**

His Excellency Dr. Ramzan bin Abdulla Al Noaimi, Minister of Information and Chairman of the Board of the National Communication Centre, affirmed that the launch of the "Year of Isa Al Kabeer" emblem reflects the royal order and embodies loyalty to Bahrain's history and leaders.

He noted that the occasion represents a national milestone to highlight the values established by Isa Al Kabeer, which continue to underpin the nation's development and civilisational approach under the leadership of His Majesty the King and the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

## 18 illegal workers detained, 127 other violators deported



TDT | Manama

**T**he Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) announced the implementation of 342 inspection campaigns and visits, during the period of January 4-10, which resulted in the detention of 18 violating and irregular workers, while 127 violators were deported.

The inspection campaigns and visits also resulted in monitoring several violations related to the provisions of a number of regulating laws, especially the Labour Market Regulatory Authority and the Residency Laws in the Kingdom of Bahrain, noting that legal measures were taken regarding the observed violations.

The LMRA noted that 303 inspection visits were carried out on various shops in all governorates, in addition to 39 joint inspection campaigns, 20 campaigns in the Capital Governorate, 4 campaigns in the Muharraq Governorate, 4 campaigns in the Northern Governorate, and 11 campaigns in the Southern Governorate.

The government entities that participated in the campaigns are the Ministry of

Interior, represented by the Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs (NPRA), the Governorate's respective Police Directorate, and the General Directorate of Crime Detection and Forensic Science, and the General Directorate of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing, as well as the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, and the Social Insurance Organisation.

**Coordination**

The Authority affirmed the continuation of joint coordination with government agencies to intensify inspection campaigns in all governorates of the Kingdom, and to address any violations or practices that negatively affect the stability and competitiveness of the labour market or harm economic and social security of the Kingdom.

The LMRA called on the public to support the efforts to report labour violations via the electronic form on its website [www.lmra.gov.bh](http://www.lmra.gov.bh) or by calling the authority's call centre on 17506055 or via the government's Suggestions and Complaints System (Tawasul).

**Legal action to be taken against illegal gathering**

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The Deputy Chief of Police, Lt-General Dr Shaikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, said that legal action will be taken against any illegal gathering, particularly in light of clear government directives to intensify efforts to employ citizens.

He noted that the Ministry of Labour has announced precise mechanisms and digital platforms that allow job seekers to submit and follow up on employment applications with full transparency and ease through the National Employment Platform.

He also noted that applicants wishing to attend in person must book an appointment in advance, starting Sunday, 11 January 2026, to access employment and unemployment insurance services.

In light of these government initiatives and measures to address employment, the Deputy Chief of Police stressed that all necessary legal actions will be taken against gatherings that violate the law.

He further emphasised the importance of upholding the supreme national interest, preserving the country's accomplishments.

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**Tougher sanctions**

Parliament passes urgent government-drafted bill tightening rules for external auditors

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

An urgent government-drafted bill tightening Bahrain's external audit rules was passed by Parliament yesterday, bringing tougher entry terms for auditors and a wider set of penalties for breaches.

The law amends Decree-Law No. 15 of 2021 and was pushed through on the fast track alongside Royal Decree No. 76 of 2025.

It also swaps the old disciplinary council for a new 'Account Auditors Accountability Council', expands quality checks on audit work and adds fresh duties on transparency for auditors who sign off accounts for listed firms and key public bodies.

**Oversight**

Minister of Industry and Commerce, His Excellency Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, told MPs the law sits at the heart of the ministry's corporate oversight,

saying, "This law is one of the most important laws the ministry relies on for financial oversight of companies."



**"This law is one of the most important laws the ministry relies on for financial oversight of companies."**

— H.E. ABDULLA BIN ADEL FAKHRO, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

He said the changes were meant to lift governance, open up clearer disclosure, and raise the standard of audit work in Bahrain.

Fakhro said the draft put before the chamber was not rushed together overnight.

"It came after many rounds that took more than three years of negotiation and consultation



**"We need a clearer, more consistent yardstick across laws on when a profession is reserved for Bahrainis."**

— MP ALI AL NUAIMI

with all relevant bodies," he said, adding that the talks covered the Central Bank of Bahrain, professional groups and both public and private bodies.

He said the government had put Bahrainisation front and centre, arguing that the profession should be led locally.

"This law gives the highest priority to Bahrainisation and

protecting the auditing profession," he told MPS.

During the debate, MP Dr Ali Al Nuaimi backed the bill in principle but questioned the route used to send it to the chamber under the Constitution's urgency article, saying, "Article 87 is meant to avoid harm that can follow when deciding some laws is delayed."

He also urged a clearer, more consistent yardstick across laws on when a profession is reserved for Bahrainis, and warned against giving too much of the detail over to later ministerial decisions.

**Certificate**

At the entry gate, the new text makes a valid professional accounting certificate a condition for registration as a practising external auditor, alongside conduct and experience tests.

It also adds extra terms for non-Bahrainis, including proof they remain fit to practise in the country where they last worked, and gives the minister wider scope to set rules on what counts as accepted experience, including work gained abroad.

**Deportation order lifted by appeals court**

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

An appeals court has scrapped a three-year deportation order against a defendant convicted of unlawful residence after the court was shown papers confirming his status in the Kingdom had been put in order, while keeping a 10-dinar fine that it suspended for three years.

According to lawyer Jasim Al Issa, the court upheld the first-instance finding that the defendant stayed in Bahrain after his residence permit had expired and was not renewed, based on the case file.

It changed only the penalty once it had been given proof that his position had been corrected.

Prosecutors said the defendant remained in the country unlawfully up to 9 November 2022, after his visa ended without renewal.

The charge was brought under provisions of the Penal Code and the Foreigners Law.

At first instance, the court ruled on 6 August 2024 to accept an objection on procedural grounds, cancel a penal order and treat it as if it had never been issued, then convict the defendant and fine him BD10.

# Livelihood concern

## MP Kadhem criticises permit rule pushing Bahrainis into informal trade

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

**A** rule that bars Bahrainis from holding a public or private job while running a mobile food truck or working as a street vendor was criticised in Parliament yesterday, with MP Jalal Kadhem saying it has led some citizens to sell without permits for fear of losing allowances and services.

Kadhem spoke as MPs discussed the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture's reply on rules for street vendors, the use of roads and properties, and food sales from mobile vehicles.

He questioned why a citizen must leave employment to open a commercial registration or operate a truck, while expats on regular visas are, in his words, allowed to do "several jobs in a single day".

Pressure on household budgets, he said, has led more Bahrainis, including electricity and suitable

rainis, including students and young men and women, to sell in residential areas.

### Makeshift

"Some villages have turned into makeshift selling spots on pavements and tables," he said, urging organised options for vendors across the governorates.

He said mobile trucks, once seasonal, have become a main income source for many citizens, but unclear organisation and weak planning have contributed to disorder in different areas.

Kadhem called for existing rules and standards to be applied, alongside dedicated sites that meet vendors' needs, protect consumers and maintain the look of public spaces.

He urged Bahrain to learn from other Gulf states in creating dedicated markets for mobile trucks, pointing to models such as farmers' markets and the Qaisariya market, with services including electricity and suitable



**"Regulating mobile trucks is meant to open opportunities for Bahraini youth."**

— H.E. WAEL AL MUBARAK, MUNICIPALITIES AFFAIRS AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER

spaces.

Kadhem welcomed the ministry's intention to launch an electronic system to manage licences and locations

**"Pressure on household budgets, he said, has led more Bahrainis, including students and young men and women, to sell in residential areas."**

— MP JALAL KADHEM

He also praised support for mobile trucks and street vendors

through Tamkeen programmes, and moves to allow social insurance subscriptions, saying this could help young people who are outside the social insurance system.

The lawmaker also referred to fish markets and selling facilities provided by the state, saying some citizens avoid working there because they fear allowances and support will be cancelled, raising what he described as problems in how social support is tied to income.

Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture Minister, His Excellency Wael Al Mubarak, said regulating mobile trucks is meant to open opportunities for Bahraini youth, adding that the "human element" remains central to development.

### Locations

He said proposals to identify sites and provide infrastructure were reasonable and would be considered, confirming that 12

**1,100**

Locations available to Bahrainis in popular markets, stalls and similar venues.

locations will be allocated for mobile trucks with basic services.

Al Mubarak said a new electronic system aimed at reinforcing transparency and fairness will be launched in the first quarter of the year.

He added that more than 1,100 locations are available to Bahrainis in popular markets, stalls and similar venues, alongside initiatives aimed at helping young Bahrainis expand their work in these activities.

## Minister push for specific audit mechanism to verify figures supplied by CSB

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

**A** debate over official hiring figures surfaced in Parliament yesterday after Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, His Excellency Ghanim Al Buainain, urged MP Dr Hisham Al Ashiri to agree a clear way to verify data supplied by the Civil Service Bureau.

"I hope we can agree on a specific mechanism to verify the figures," Al Buainain said, arguing that his reply was drawn from "the competent body (the Civil Service Bureau)".

He said there were other ways to cross-check the figures, naming the Social Insurance Organisation as one route.

"There are multiple ways to verify, including the Social Insurance Organisation, for example," he told MPs, while warning that any check must respect privacy.

"It is not possible to disclose people's data without their wish or consent," he said.

The minister said 3,884 employees were hired through the Civil Service Bureau from 2023 up to the date of the question, 24 December 2025, across a range of specialisations.

Of that total, 2,329 were tak-



H.E. GHANIM AL BUAINAIN

## Six confiscated vehicles for sale: Public Prosecution

### ● Following serious traffic offences

**Rehab Mohammad**  
TDT | Manama

**B**ahrain's Public Prosecution has announced the start of procedures to sell six vehicles confiscated under final court rulings issued in connection with serious traffic offences, in implementation of the amended Traffic Law.

The Deputy Head of the Criminal Enforcement Prosecution said all legal and financial procedures required to transfer ownership and register the vehicles as fixed assets had been completed, in coordination with the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments.

A specialised company, Mazad, has been appointed to conduct technical valuation in preparation for offering the vehicles at public auction.

He explained that the con-



**The confiscation orders were issued alongside prison sentences and fines for serious traffic crimes reflecting gross disregard for human life.**

fiscation orders were issued alongside prison sentences and fines for serious traffic crimes reflecting gross disregard for human life.

### Accidents

These included causing fatal accidents while driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, deliberately driving against

the flow of traffic resulting in accidents and damage, and operating vehicles with licence plates that had been legally withdrawn, including their use in unsafe stunt driving.

The Deputy Head of the Prosecution stressed that the confiscation measures form part of the Public Prosecution's commitment to enforcing court rulings and achieving the general deterrence intended by criminal penalties.

### Measures

He noted that the measures are in line with recent legislative amendments under Decree-Law No. (30) of 2025 amending certain provisions of the Traffic Law, which expanded judicial powers to order the confiscation of vehicles involved in or used to commit serious traffic violations.

He called on motorists to strictly adhere to traffic regulations to avoid the tougher penalties stipulated by law, which aim to establish a safe and sustainable traffic system.

## Online justice enforcement and remote hearings in the works

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

**E**nforcement of judgments is now handled end-to-end online, the Ministry of Justice said, as it works on a service that would let parties attend court hearings by video link after a question in the Shura Council.

In a written reply to Dr Ali Al Haddad, the ministry said the enforcement process can now be run without personal attendance.

Judgment debtors can be notified electronically, enforcement steps can be started online, and requests and follow-up measures can be filed through digital channels.

Users can also check the status and outcome of enforcement applications electronically, including those tied to commercial disputes.

A range of litigation services has already shifted to Bahrain's eGovernment Portal.

## MPs back fuel subsidy plan for fishermen's boats

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

**A**n urgent proposal to subsidise petrol used by fishermen and seafarers who run boats (locally known as Tararid) was approved by MPs on Tuesday.

The measure was put forward by MP Bader Al Tameemi and co-signed by four other MPs, and argues that rising petrol prices have fed straight through into higher running costs at sea, leaving boat owners under growing financial strain and affecting their ability to keep



MP BADER AL TAMEEMI

It describes marine fishing as a main income source for many citizens and an important part of local food supply.



**Marine fishing is a main income source for many citizens and an important part of local food supply.**

of local food supply, warning that higher costs could lead some fishermen to cut back on trips or stop, reducing fish available in the local market.

The text says boats operators rely almost entirely on fuel to run their boats and do not have workable alternatives, making them especially exposed to price rises.

As options, the proposal suggests either a supported fuel price or a fuel-card scheme limited to officially registered fishermen, aimed at ensuring fair access and directing support to those eligible.

### TENDER NOTICE

The Embassy of Pakistan, Manama requires services of a professional company for cleaning its premises. Interested parties may collect the details of services required and tender documents on any working day from 14-01-2026 to 28-01-2026 between 0900-1400 hours.

#### Embassy of Pakistan

Villa No. 35 Road No. 1901 Block 319 Hoora / Manama

Phone No. 17244113

## Parliament backs hiring of 24 unemployed family doctors



MP Hasan Ebrahim  
Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

Unemployed despite years of training, 24 Bahraini family medicine specialists were backed by Parliament yesterday through an urgent recommendation calling for their immediate hiring.

MP Hasan Ebrahim, who submitted the recommendation, said the doctors had finished all study, training and professional requirements, yet remained without posts.

"Twenty-four doctors and female doctors face the spectre of unemployment, despite successfully completing all requirements of study, training and professional qualification," he said.

He added that the group had expected to be taken on in the same way as earlier cohorts, but instead found themselves without work or cover.

"After more than eleven years of study, training and continuous qualification, they expected that the natural end of this path would be employment, like all previous batches, but they found themselves unemployed, without jobs and without health insurance," he said.

The recommendation calls for the doctors to be hired in primary healthcare centres and at Salmaniya Medical Complex.

## Bahrain post

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain secured a seat on the Executive Office of the Council of Arab Youth and Sports Ministers during the election session at the conclusion of the Council's meeting, reflecting Bahrain's leading position and active role in supporting joint Arab efforts in youth and sports.

# Prioritising dignity

MPs approve amendments strengthening protections for persons with disabilities

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

Parliament unanimously approved yesterday a decree-law amending Bahrain's 2006 law on the care, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, with changes that recast the committee responsible for disability affairs and tidy up terms used across the statute.

Decree-Law No. 34 of 2025 amends Law No. 74 of 2006.

The text says the aim is to update the legal framework, support the dignity and rights of persons with disabilities, and help secure their full and effective part in different areas of life on the same footing as others.

### Support

MP Basema Mubarak told MPs that families were still searching for basic support.

"Behind every person with a disability is a father or mother fighting every day for the right school, a rehabilitation centre, and a job that protects their son or daughter's dignity," she said.

She urged MPs to focus on work. "We are talking about 325 people only out of about 13,000, a very small number, but they have skills, real desire to work,



**"This group is not asking for pity or special favours; it is asking for its right to rehabilitation, its right to work, and a decent life."**

— MP BASEMA MUBARAK

and the ability to produce if they get the chance," she said.

She added: "This group is not asking for pity or special favours; it is asking for its right to rehabilitation, its right to work, and a decent life."

### Lawmaking

Dr Maryam Al Dhaen framed the debate as a duty of lawmak-



**"Talking about persons with disabilities is talking about the heart of social justice, and our lawmaking duty towards a core group of citizens."**

— MP DR MARYAM AL DHAEN

"Talking about persons with disabilities is talking about the heart of social justice, and our lawmaking duty towards a core group of citizens," she said.

She added that barriers often sit outside the person.

"The challenge is not the disability itself, but the legal, organisational and environmen-

tal barriers that narrow their chances in education, training and work," she said.

### Provisions

The decree-law rewrites the provisions governing the committee concerned with disability affairs.

Under the amended articles, the committee is created by a

decision of the Prime Minister and follows the ministry, with that decision fixing the committee's name, its make-up and how long members serve.

It is chaired by the Minister of Social Development and includes government representatives at director level or above, alongside representatives from the private sector.

# Bahraini architects earn recognition

**Ghadeer Alkumaish**  
TDT | Manama

"When dreams are paired with dedication, they have a way of arriving earlier than expected."

This became a reality for Bahraini architect Ameen Adel Radhi and architect Maysam Hassan Al Nasser, founder of 1:1 Architectural Studio, after both

were recognised by Niche Magazine as among the top architects in the Middle East during an international ceremony held in Riyadh.

During the interview, both

architects shared insights into their professional journeys, creative philosophies, and the defining moments that shaped their paths.

### Conversations

Radhi reflected on how entering the world of social media

became a turning point in his career, allowing him to translate complex architectural concepts into accessible conversations.

According to him, creating content encouraged continuous learning and research, while opening doors to meaningful dialogue with experienced architects across Bahrain.

"When you focus on the process rather than the result, growth happens naturally," Radhi explained. "Sharing ideas publicly pushed me to learn more, question more, and constantly develop myself as an architect."

### Creativity

Discussing the architectural landscape in Bahrain, Radhi emphasized the importance of creativity within constraints.

He believes that successful design must balance financial



Ameen Adel Radhi



Maysam Hassan Al Nasser

realities with cultural expression, calling for buildings that combine modernity with traditional elements to shape a skyline that reflects local identity.

For Al Nasser, growth came through defining moments, including receiving the Bahrain Entrepreneur Honor Seal from Her Royal Highness Princess

Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa shortly after completing one of her early projects a recognition she describes as both validating and inspiring.

Both architects also shared advice for young professionals aspiring to make an impact regionally or internationally, stressing the importance of pas-

sion, patience, and staying true to one's process.

### Growth

Radhi said, "Do what you love and focus on the process, because growth comes naturally when you invest effort and keep learning."

Al Nasser added, "Always keep researching and stay connected to your roots; understanding your context is what allows young architects to make a real impact."

Despite following different paths, both architects delivered a shared message to emerging professionals: passion, research, and authenticity are essential.

Rather than chasing recognition, they advocate for building meaningful processes that allow creativity and knowledge to evolve naturally turning ambition into lasting impact.



### Faith and devotion

The Filipino community solemnly celebrated on January 10, 2026 the Feast of Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by His Excellency Bishop Aldo Berardi, O.S.S.T., Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia, and concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Anthony Almazan, OFM Cap; Rev. Fr. Jusfer John Albert, OFM Cap; Rev. Fr. John Nuñez; and Rev. Fr. Marcus Fernandes, OFM Cap.

# DOO and Zain Bahrain sign MoU

To Explore AI Collaboration in Customer Experience



Manama

DOO and Zain Bahrain have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formally explore potential areas of collaboration in the field of AI Powered customer experience. The MoU establish-

es a structured framework through which Zain Bahrain can assess and evaluate DOO's AI capabilities for potential alignment with its customer experience operations. This includes the exploration of advanced automation, multilingual support, intelligent engagement tools, and opportunities to enhance internal CX processes.

This MoU marks the beginning of a collaborative exploration phase aimed at understanding how AI powered innovation could contribute to Zain Bahrain's CX objectives, while ensuring any future steps are guided by clear evaluation,

mutual benefit, and strategic alignment.

DOO and Zain Bahrain look forward to working together throughout this assessment period to identify meaningful opportunities that enhance customer experience in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

## BisB launches 'Save Plus' - A Sharia'a-Compliant Digital Savings Scheme

For Long-Term Financial Security

Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), the leading provider of innovative Islamic financial solutions for simplifying money matters in the Kingdom of Bahrain, has launched Save Plus, a new long-term savings scheme designed to help customers plan for their financial future through monthly saving, regular profits and life takafa

l protection by Takaful International Co., all within a fully Sharia'a compliant structure. This is made possible through flexible tenures ranging from three to twenty years, and affordable monthly contributions starting from BD 50, customers can choose a plan that fits their goals, with monthly profit credited directly to the customer's account providing ongoing transparency, predictability, and consistency throughout their savings journey.

The scheme also includes life takafu coverage of up to BD 75,000, provided by Takaful International Co., subject to policy terms, conditions and underwriting guidelines & requirements.

Offering essential financial protection and long-term security, Save Plus was designed with specific customer segments in mind, whether it's young professionals beginning their savings journey, parents planning for their children's future, or entrepreneurs seeking greater financial stability with built-in protection. Save Plus



Mr. Faisal Al Abdulla, Chief Retail Banking Officer at BisB



promotes long-term financial security through a rewarding approach that combines saving, earning, and protection. By offering a seamless digital experience through our mobile app, we aim to make long-term financial planning more accessible, intuitive, and convenient for everyone in Bahrain, from busy individuals to families looking for smarter, automated ways to save." As an added benefit, every Save Plus account will be automatically entered into scheduled cash prize draws throughout 2026, with each draw awarding USD 5,000 to a winning customer. Additional details of the draw schedule will be announced soon.

## Trump announces tariffs on countries doing business with Iran

Washington, United States

### Russia

Russian imports from Iran were \$690 million in 2022, according to World Bank data, while exports were \$1.5 billion.

Russia exchanged grain, gold and timber for Iranian agricultural products.

### Iraq

Iran's exports to Iraq, a major trade partner, were \$7.35 billion in 2022, with imports amounting to \$456 million, according to the World Bank.

### Germany

Germany's exports to Iran totalled 870.5 million euros (\$1 billion) from January to November 2025, according to the country's official statistics office Destatis.

Imports were 217 million euros in that period.

### India

Bilateral trade fell from \$17 billion in 2018-19 to \$1.7 billion in 2024-25, according to India's commerce department.

Key exports from India include basmati rice, sugar, fresh fruits and pharmaceuticals, while major imports include pistachios, apples, kiwi and dates.

### Thailand

Thailand-Iran trade stood at \$199.8 million in 2022, with Thai exports at \$156 million and imports at \$43.8 million, according to Thailand's foreign ministry.

Its main exports to Iran include rubber, motorcycle parts, canned fruit, rice, computers, and vegetables.

Key imports comprise metals, fresh and processed seafood, fuels, vegetables, and chemical products.

### Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka exported \$68 million to Iran in 2024, up from \$43 million the previous year, according to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

Official imports have been zero since US sanctions on Iranian oil.

### Japan

Japan's exports to Iran rose 38 percent in 2024 to \$89 million, while imports dropped 6.4 percent to \$29 million, according to the Japan External Trade Organization.

Exports included pharmaceuticals, automobiles and electrical machinery. Imports included fabric products, as well as foodstuffs, fruit and vegetables.

### Philippines

The Philippines exported \$66 million in goods to Iran in 2024, up from \$38 million the year prior.

Imports were under \$190,000, according to the country's statistics authority.

### Turkey

Turkey is a major partner for Iran.

Ankara's imports were a little over \$6 billion in 2022, while exports reached \$5.8 billion, according to World Bank data.

# Batelco by Beyon and Qareeb Data Centers announce strategic partnership

To Launch Bahrain's First Edge Data Center



## ● First of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain

## ● Located within Beyon's Data Oasis in Southern Bahrain

## ● Offers 6000 sqm of scalable space for enterprises and hyperscalers

Manama

Batelco by Beyon has signed a strategic partnership agreement with

Qareeb Data Centers, the Middle East's first edge data center provider, during a meeting held at Beyon's headquarters in Bahrain. The agreement was signed by Batelco Chief Global Business Officer Hani Askar and Qareeb Data Centers Chief Revenue Officer Annemarie Van Zadelhoff in the presence of Batelco CEO Maitham Abdulla, Qareeb Chairman Bruce Jennings, and senior officials from both companies.

Under the strategic partnership agreement, Qareeb will manage and operate its first edge data center through a long-term lease of Batelco's recently announced new facility. This enables Qareeb to deliver sover-

ign, low-latency and AI-ready co-location services for enterprises, cloud providers and digital platforms across the GCC. The partnership reflects Batelco's commitment to further extending its high performing data infrastructure through collaboration with leading industry players enabling delivery of scalable, energy-efficient data infrastructure that meets the region's evolving digital needs. The agreement marks the transition of the project from completion to operational readiness.

Located within Beyon's Data Oasis in Southern Bahrain, the data center is a first of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain and serves as a cornerstone in Batelco's ongoing investment in next-generation digital infrastructure. The data center offers 6000 sqm of scalable space for enterprises and hyperscalers seeking advanced hosting and connectivity solutions.

Commenting on the partnership, Hani Askar, Chief Global Business Officer of Batelco, said: "This agreement represents an important step forward in translating our data center strategy into operational excellence, enabling us to extend our reach across key market segments. We are pleased to welcome Qareeb Data Centers as a trusted partner in the new facility, which stands as a symbol of Bahrain's progress in digital transformation. Together, we aim to provide secure, reliable, and future-ready data infrastructure that supports enterprise and government customers alike."

Annemarie Van Zadelhoff, Qareeb Data Centers Chief Revenue Officer, commented: "We are proud to partner with Batelco by Beyon on this strategic initiative. This facility represents Qareeb Data Centers' first operational data center and a significant milestone in delivering high-performance, scalable and sovereign edge colocation for cloud providers, AI innovators and enterprise organisations across the Middle East.

Together, we are strengthening Bahrain's digital infrastructure while enabling customers to scale next-generation cloud and artificial intelligence workloads with confidence."

## Regional hub

The partnership between Batelco by Beyon and Qareeb Data Centers strengthens Bahrain's position as a regional hub for digital infrastructure and reflects the Kingdom's vision of becoming a centre for innovation, connectivity, and sustainable growth with the new data center providing in-demand services to major customers across the Kingdom, the Middle East and beyond.



# Bahrain Chamber Secures ISO 27001 Certification

## ● Certification for Information Security Management Systems

Manama

The Bahrain Chamber has obtained the international ISO 27001 certification for Information Security Management Systems, marking a new institutional milestone that adds to its record of continuous achievements across various fields. This accomplishment reflects the Chamber's strong commitment to adopting global best practices in digital governance, data protection, and cybersecurity, in line with the Kingdom of Bahrain's vision for secure and sustainable digital transformation.

## Digital governance

This achievement is the result of integrated and dedicated efforts by the Chamber's executive team, which successfully fulfilled all requirements of this internationally recognized standard through the implementation of a comprehensive Information Security Management System (ISMS).

In this regard, Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Sameer



Nass, stated that obtaining ISO 27001 represents a significant institutional achievement that underscores the Chamber's commitment to strengthening digital governance and cybersecurity frameworks. He noted that the certification constitutes a key step in the Chamber's secure digital transformation journey, contributing to enhanced transparency, improved service efficiency, and increased institutional reliability.

Nass explained that the Chamber adopts an integrated institutional approach that aligns organizational, operational, and digital dimensions under a unified strategic vision that places customers at the center

of service delivery. He further highlighted that compliance with ISO 27001 requirements reinforces stakeholder confidence, strengthens cybersecurity culture across all departments, reduces operational and information security risks, and enhances Bahrain's competitiveness at both regional and international levels.

Nass noted that this certification builds on the Chamber's record of internationally recognized standards, including ISO 9001 (2015) for quality management, ISO 22301 (2019) for business continuity, and ISO/IEC 27001 (2022), reflecting its sustained commitment to quality, resilience, and information



The system ensures the protection of data, information, and technical systems, enhances the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information, and supports the effective management of information security risks associated with information technology systems. It also governs the Chamber's IT operations in accordance with the Statement of Applicability (SoA), ensuring structured compliance with international standards.

security.

For his part, Chief Executive Officer of the Bahrain Chamber, Atef Al Khaja, stated that obtaining ISO 27001 represents an important step in strengthening the Chamber's institutional framework for information protection. He emphasized that the certification ensures the secure handling of data exchanged with

local and international partners in accordance with internationally recognized standards, while reinforcing the Chamber's commitment to protecting members' data and embedding a culture of institutional excellence.

Al Khaja clarified that the certification is not an end, but rather part of a broader strategic

developing the Chamber's services and accelerating digital transformation through a secure, resilient, and future-ready technological infrastructure.

He noted that ISO 27001 enhances organizational readiness, supports innovation, and contributes to improving member experience and overall institutional performance.

## News in brief

◆ A drone crashed into a Kazakh-chartered oil tanker en route to a Russian Black Sea port earlier Tuesday, causing an explosion but no serious damage, Kazakhstan's state energy firm Kazmunaigas said. Kazmunaigas did not say who was behind the attack. Ukraine, which has waged a years-long campaign of strikes against Russia's energy sector in retaliation for Moscow's invasion, did not immediately comment. The ship, named "MATILDA", was en route to load Kazakh oil at the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) terminal on Russia's southern Black Sea coast when the attack took place, Kazmunaigas said. "There were no injuries among the crew. According to preliminary assessments, the vessel remains seaworthy, and there are no signs of serious structural damage," it added. Russian state media reported Ukraine attacked at least one other ship in the Black Sea earlier Tuesday, but that it also remained seaworthy.



Drone hits  
tanker scheduled to  
load Kazakh oil at  
Russian port

◆ South Korean  
prosecutors demand  
death penalty for  
ex-leader Yoon

Tuesday for the death penalty to be handed down to former president Yoon Suk Yeol for his December 2024 declaration of martial law, which plunged the country into chaos. Yoon triggered a political crisis when he announced an end to civilian rule in December 2024 and sent troops to parliament to enforce it. But his attempt failed and he became the country's first sitting president to be taken into custody when he was detained last January. Yoon's criminal trial for insurrection, abuse of power and other offences linked to the declaration drew to a close on Tuesday after 11 hours of proceedings. In closing remarks, prosecutors accused him of being the ringleader of an "insurrection" motivated by a "lust for power aimed at dictatorship and long-term rule".

◆ India's army chief accused Pakistan on Tuesday of flying drones into Indian-administered territory in Kashmir. They have been told that this is unacceptable to us, and please put a stop to it," General Upendra Dwivedi told reporters in New Delhi in an annual briefing to the media. Heads of military operations of both countries spoke to each other earlier on Tuesday, he said. "These drones, I believe, were defensive drones, which want to come over (our territory) to see if any action is being planned against them," Dwivedi said. There was no immediate response from Pakistan's army. "We are fully alert along the Line of Control," Dwivedi added, referring to the heavily fortified de facto border. Dwivedi said several low-flying drones entered Indian-controlled airspace with their lights switched on -- as many as seven on Saturday, and another two or three on Sunday. "It's possible they wanted to see if there were any gaps, laxity in our defence, any gaps through which they could send terrorists," he added.

India accuses  
Pakistan of cross-  
border drone  
incursions



## SPOTLIGHT

### Apple chooses Google's Gemini AI to power Siri



San Francisco, United States

Tech giants Apple and Google announced Monday a multi-year partnership that will see Apple's next-generation artificial intelligence features, including its Siri assistant, be powered by Google's Gemini technology.

The collaboration marks a significant shift for Apple, which has traditionally developed its core technologies in-house.

A joint statement said Apple had selected Google's AI technology after a "careful evaluation" determined that it provided "the most capable foundation" for the iPhone-maker's AI ambitions.

The announcement represents a rare alliance between two companies that have long competed in the smartphone market, where Apple's iOS and Google's Android operating

systems dominate globally.

However, the two rivals have maintained a lucrative partnership for years, with Google paying Apple billions of dollars annually to remain the default search engine on iPhones and other Apple devices.

That arrangement has faced scrutiny from regulators, with the US Department of Justice arguing in an antitrust case that the deal helps Google maintain its search monopoly, though a judge said the arrangement could continue.

Tesla boss Elon Musk, who owns his own AI company xAI, slammed the latest arrangement as anti-competitive. He called it "an unreasonable concentration of power for Google, given that they also have Android and Chrome."

Apple reportedly had also considered partnerships with OpenAI, Anthropic, and Perplexity.

# Trump urges Iranians to oust rulers, says 'help' on its way

Trump has repeatedly threatened Iran with military intervention

● The president did not specify what form the promised "help" would take

● Press Secretary said that a channel for diplomacy with Tehran remained open

● Iranian authorities insist they have regained control

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump yesterday said Iranians should continue nationwide protests and take over the country's institutions as authorities there cracked down on mass demonstrations.

"Iranian Patriots, KEEP PROTESTING - TAKE OVER YOUR INSTITUTIONS!!!" Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

"Save the names of the killers and abusers. They will pay a big price.

"I have cancelled all meetings with Iranian Officials until the senseless killing of protesters STOPS. HELP IS ON ITS WAY."

Trump, who has repeatedly threatened Iran with military intervention, signed off with "MIGA" -- "Make Iran Great Again."

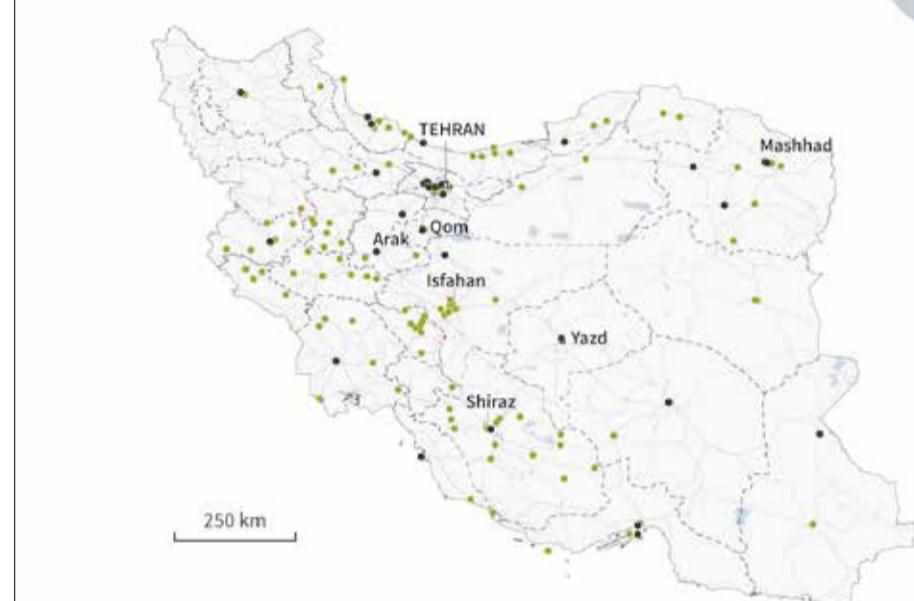
The president did not specify what form the promised "help" would take, in a message that appeared to back toppling the government in the Islamic Republic -- marking a change in the US stance from one day ago.

On Monday, his Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that a channel for diplomacy with Tehran remained open, saying that Iran was taking a "far different tone" in private discussions with Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff.

Trump on Monday also announced a 25% tariff on any country doing business with Iran, ramping up pressure as a rights

## Protests in Iran

Cities where demonstrations have been reported:  
● from December 29 to January 8 \* from January 9 to 11



Source: Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

AFP



This video grab taken on January 13, 2026 from UGC images posted on social media on January 12, 2026 shows dozens of bodies lying inside the Tehran Province Forensic Diagnostic and Laboratory Centre in Kahrizak, with what appears to be grieving relatives searching for loved ones. Other videos showing the same scenes first appeared online. (AFP)

group estimated the crackdown that have posed one of the biggest challenges to the clerical

government of using live fire against protesters and masking the scale of the crackdown with an internet blackout that has now lasted more than four days.

Iranian authorities insist they have regained control after successive nights of mass protests

But rights groups accuse the

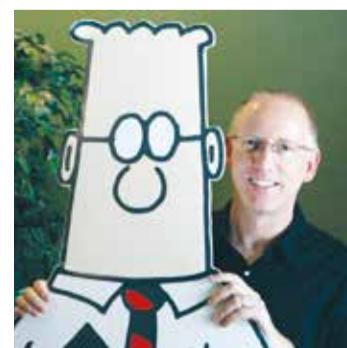
## Scott Adams, US creator of 'Dilbert' cartoon, dies at 68

AFP | New York, United States

Scott Adams, the US cartoonist famous for his "Dilbert" comic strip whose career was later soured by a racism row, has died at age 68, his ex-wife said yesterday.

Adams, who rose to fame in the 1990s with his satirical take on white-collar office life, had been receiving hospice care at his home in northern California after he was diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Ex-wife Shelly Miles announced his passing in an emotional, live-streamed message on Adams's YouTube channel, "Real



Coffee with Scott Adams."

US President Donald Trump paid tribute to Adams as a "great influencer" in a post on his Truth Social platform.

"He was a fantastic guy, who

liked and respected me when it wasn't fashionable to do so," Trump wrote. Adams endorsed Trump before his 2016 election win. "Dilbert" was first published in 1989 and followed its title character working as an engineer in a micromanaged office. It was syndicated to some 2,000 newspapers internationally at its peak.

But many publications including the Washington Post dropped the comic after Adams posted a video in 2023 calling Black people a "hate group."

His rant was prompted by a poll by conservative-leaning Rasmussen Reports, whose results

he said showed a slim majority of Black respondents agreed with the statement, "It's okay to be white." "That's a hate group and I don't want anything to do with them," Adams said in the video.

"Based on the current way things are going, the best advice I would give to white people is to get the hell away from Black people."

Adams later defended his comments and said that he had been using hyperbole.

He won support from right-wing billionaire Elon Musk, who called US media "racist" for their decision to stop publishing the cartoon.

Charles V and Francis I sign the Treaty of Madrid, forcing Francis to renounce his claims to Burgundy, Italy, and Flanders

Dutch East India Company conquers the city of Malacca, killing about 7,000 people



Third Battle of Panipat: In one of the largest battles of the 18th century, the mostly Muslim Afghan Durrani Empire defeats the mostly Hindu Maratha Empire in northern India. An estimated 60,000 to 70,000 people are killed in the fighting, and about 40,000 Maratha prisoners are massacred afterward.

X

TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



The clean energy transition is unstoppable and irreversible. But while technology races ahead, infrastructure lags far behind. We must act now to build energy systems fit for the 21st century & unlock the full power & promise of renewables..

@antoniofuterres

02



The number of people requiring interventions against trachoma, the world's leading infectious cause of blindness, has decreased by 94% between 2002 and 2025. 27 countries across Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Oceania have eliminated trachoma as a public health problem to date.

@DrTedros

03



The rising number of casualties in Iran is horrifying. I unequivocally condemn the excessive use of force and continued restriction of freedom. The European Union has already listed the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in its entirety under its human rights sanctions regime.

@vonderleyen

04



Delighted to meet Emmanuel Bonne, Diplomatic Advisor to President Macron. Reaffirmed the strong and trusted India-France Strategic Partnership, marked by close co-operation across multiple domains. Encouraging to see our collaboration expanding into innovation, technology and education, especially as we mark the India-France Year of Innovation. Also exchanged perspectives on key regional and global issues. Look forward to welcoming President Macron to India soon.

@narendramodi

## US designates Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan as terrorists

AFP | Washington, United States

The United States yesterday designated the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt as well as Lebanon and Jordan as terrorist organizations, fulfilling a long demand of Arab allies and US conservatives.

"These designations reflect the opening actions of an ongoing, sustained effort to thwart Muslim Brotherhood chapters' violence and destabilization wherever it occurs," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement.

"The United States will use all available tools to deprive these Muslim Brotherhood chapters of the resources to engage in or support terrorism."

President Donald Trump in November set in motion the process to take action

against the pan-Islamist movement, which was founded in Egypt in 1928 and has since spread across the Arab world.

The Trump administration designated the Egyptian as well as Jordanian chapters of the Muslim Brotherhood on the basis of their support for Hamas, the Palestinian armed group.

The Muslim Brotherhood rose to power in Egypt democratically through the election of Mohamed Morsi. He was deposed in 2013 in a military coup by then military chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who has since pursued a sweeping crackdown against the Muslim Brotherhood.

Egypt as well as fellow US allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have long sought to suppress the Muslim Brotherhood.



## N. Korean leader's sister says Seoul's hopes for better ties a 'pipe dream'

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's powerful sister yesterday dismissed hopes for improved relations with Seoul as a "pipe dream", and demanded an apology over an alleged drone incursion from the South.

"As far as Seoul's various hope-filled wild dreams called 'repair of DPRK-ROK relations' are concerned, they all can never come true," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by the state-run Korean Central News Agency, using the acronyms for the official names of both countries.

Pyongyang said over the weekend that it shot down a drone near the North Korean



Kim Yo Jong, sister of North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un

city of Kaesong in early January after it crossed from the South Korean border county of Ganghwa.

Seoul denied the claim, saying the drone shown in photos released by Pyongyang was not

a model its military operates.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung has ordered a joint military-police probe into the drone case, saying any civilian involvement would be "a serious crime that threatens peace on the Korean Peninsula".

Kim Yo Jong said the North sees the incident as a grave provocation.

"The Seoul authorities should admit and apologize for having violated the sovereignty of the DPRK and take a measure for preventing reoccurrence," she said, warning that repeated infringements would force them to "pay the price they cannot deal with".

"This is not a mere rhetorical threat," she added.

## India hunts rampaging elephant that killed 20 people

AFP | Patna, India

Indian wildlife officers are hunting a rampaging wild elephant blamed for killing at least 20 people and injuring 15 others in the forests of Jharkhand, villagers and officials said yesterday.

The elephant, a lone bull, is reported to have gone on the rampage for nine days beginning in early January, creating panic in the rural West Singhbhum district.

"We are trying to trace and rescue this violent wild elephant that killed so many people," government forest officer



Representative picture

Aditya Narayan told AFP, confirming the toll of 20 dead.

Children and the elderly are among the dead, as well as a professional elephant handler, known as a mahout.

But after wreaking a trail of destruction, it had not been spotted since Friday, despite multiple patrols in the area.

Officials said search teams, aided by drones, are combing dense forest tracts, including a national reserve in neighbouring Odisha state.

Fear has driven residents of more than 20 villages to

abandon their farms or barricade themselves indoors at night, elected village head Pratap Chachar told AFP.

"A police team, or forest official vehicle, visits in the night to provide essential help to villagers," Chachar said.

Asian elephants are now restricted to just 15 percent of their original habitat.

A former forest official said the elephant was likely in musth, and may now have calmed down and rejoined its herd.

## WHO says sugary drinks, alcohol getting cheaper, should be taxed more



evidence on tobacco taxation reducing consumption was clear -- and sugary drinks should be seen in the same light.

"This is also about using taxation as a move to shift behaviour," he said, adding it could also bolster prevention in countries struggling to deal with the rise in non-communicable diseases, and allow countries to invest in healthcare.

Tedros warned that health taxes were not simple to implement.

"They can be politically unpopular, and they attract opposition from powerful industries with deep pockets and a lot to lose," he told reporters.

"But many countries have shown that when they are done right, they are a powerful tool for health," he said, citing measures in the Philippines, Britain and Lithuania.

The WHO is urging states to raise and redesign their taxes as part of its "3 by 35" initiative, aimed at increasing the prices of tobacco, alcohol and sugary drinks by 2035.

### Slipping through the net

The WHO issued twin global reports on taxes on alcohol and on sugar-sweetened beverages.

They said at least 116 countries tax sugary drinks like sodas.

"But many other high-sugar products, such as 100 percent fruit juices, sweetened milk drinks and ready-to-drink coffees and teas, escape taxation," said the WHO.

The alcohol report found beer had become more affordable in 56 countries from 2022 to 2024, and less affordable in 37.

It said wine was exempted from excise taxes in at least 25 countries, particularly in Europe.

"Excise taxes should apply to all alcoholic beverages," it said.

"There is significant room for better design and higher excise taxes on alcoholic beverages to decrease affordability and thereby reduce alcohol consumption and its related harms."

More affordable alcohol "drives violence, injuries and disease", said Etienne Krug, head of the WHO's health determinants, promotion and prevention department.

"While industry profits, the public often carries the health consequences and society the economic costs."

YOU  
KNOW WHAT  
India is home to the majority of the world's remaining wild Asian elephants, a species listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and increasingly threatened by shrinking habitat.

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

# Nuuk, Copenhagen mull Greenland independence in Trump's shadow

AFP | Copenhagen, Denmark

Greenland hopes to cut all ties with Copenhagen, but leaders are proceeding cautiously with independence plans for the Danish self-governing territory despite US President Donald Trump's threats to take over the Arctic island.

Trump has repeatedly claimed that the United States needs Greenland for its national security, while Denmark and Greenland have stressed the island is not for sale and that Greenlanders themselves must decide their own future.

"We have an agreement with our Greenland fellow citizens that they decide their future in freedom, based on their own assessments and their own will," Danish historian and former diplomat Bo Lidegaard told AFP.

"For us, it's a violation of everything we stand for, and everything we have agreed with the Greenlanders, if that decision is not taken in freedom and without coercion."

It is therefore out of the question to succumb to US

pressure and sell a territory that has repeatedly said it does not want to be bought.

But for Denmark, it is also out of the question to hold onto the vast Arctic island at any cost.

Greenland was a Danish colony until 1953, gaining home rule 26 years later.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has called Greenland's independence drive "both legitimate and understandable", but stressed that she herself wants to develop the Danish kingdom, which in addition to Greenland also includes the Faroe Islands.

"This is not the time for internal debates. This is the time for unity and for continuing to build the community we know," echoed Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen on Tuesday.

Ole Waever, a political science professor at the University of Copenhagen, told AFP that "in modern times in the Nordic countries, if a territory wants to secede and become independent, it must be authorised to do so".

"Whether it was Norway in 1905 (which broke free of a union with Sweden) or Iceland in 1944 (which declared independence from Denmark), there has never been a civil war."

## 'Very difficult'

In the streets of Copenhagen, Danes are fine with Greenland separating from Denmark as soon as it feels ready.

"It's okay for them to be independent," said Charlotte Moltke, a 68-year-old pensioner.

"But I think it will be very difficult for such a small country for the time being ... on their own, when they know a big country like the US wants them," she added.

On the eve of high-stakes Greenland talks at the White House, the territory's prime minister said that if Greenland had to make a choice right now between remaining part of Denmark or becoming part of the United States, "we choose Denmark".

A roadmap for Greenland's independence

was laid out in a 2009 Self-Government Act adopted by the Danish parliament.

"We are smarter than the Brits. We don't do a Brexit and then afterwards try to find out what it means. The arrangement is clear," smiled Waever, referring to the UK's acrimonious pull-out from the European Union.

Article 21 of the act stipulates that if the Greenlandic people decide to seek independence, negotiations must begin between the governments in Nuuk and Copenhagen.

At the heart of the thorny talks would be the question of the subsidies that Denmark gives Greenland each year -- currently some 4.5 billion kroner (\$703 million), equivalent to around a fifth of Greenland's GDP.

Any independence agreement reached between Copenhagen and Nuuk has to be approved by both parliaments and endorsed by a referendum in Greenland, according to the act.

## Fragile economy

A sovereign Greenland would have to solve the major question of its economy.

The island is almost entirely dependent on fisheries and will have to contend with the consequences of an ageing population, according to a recent report from Denmark's central bank.

"I don't think they're in a place where they can be economically independent. But if they want to try, sure, go for it. It's not up to us to decide," said Joachim Ziegler, a 24-year-old student.

While a large majority of Greenlanders are in favour of independence, most do not support the idea of a swift secession.

This is even though the sole opposition party, Naleraq, campaigned on such a platform in the 2025 legislative elections and won 24.5 percent of the vote.

Naleraq has lunched at the opportunity to push for a speedy breakaway.

"I find it distasteful. What is happening is awful right now and they're using the situation to get independence," Inger Olsvig Brandt, an entrepreneur in Nuuk, told AFP.

At the political level, the current coalition government, backed by 75 percent of votes in the 2025 election, has been working on a more gradual plan for independence, based on a draft constitution from 2024.

"No self-respecting Greenlandic politicians up until a year ago would state that he would rather stay within the Kingdom of Denmark and it's very difficult to go back," said Mikaela Engell, a Greenland specialist and former Danish representative on the island.

"But it's first an internal discussion in Greenland," she said.



## How AI 'deepfakes' became Elon Musk's latest scandal

AFP | Paris, France

Elon Musk's company XAI has faced global backlash in recent days over sexualised "deepfake" images of women and children created by its Grok chatbot.

Here are the essential facts about the scandal, how governments have responded and the company's attempts to cool the controversy.

'Put her in a bikini'

Grok -- Musk's version of the chatbots also offered by OpenAI and other generative AI companies -- has its own account on the X social network allowing users to interact with it.

Until last week, users could tag the bot in posts to request image generation and editing, receiving the image in a reply from Grok.

Many took advantage of the service by sending Grok photos of women or tagging the bot in replies to women's photo posts.

They would ask it to "put her in a bikini" or "take her clothes off" -- receiving photorealistic altered images in response.

Such AI-powered nonconsensual "nudifying" services had previously been available on niche websites, but Grok became the first to take it mainstream with social media integration and offer it for free.

Outrage grew as some users were discovered generating sexualised images of children and minors.



A poster featuring an image of US billionaire and businessman Elon Musk, calling for users of his X social media platform to delete their accounts due to the AI chatbot Grok's image-creation feature, is pictured installed in a bus stop by activists from UK collective 'Everyone Hates Elon', in London

Still others used the tool to generate bikini images of women killed in the deadly New Year fire at Swiss ski resort Crans-Montana, as well as the woman shot and killed by an immigration officer in Minneapolis.

Last week, an analysis of more than 20,000 Grok-generated images by Paris non-profit AI Forensics found that more than half depicted "individuals in minimal attire" -- most of them

women, and two percent appearing to be under-18s.

## How have countries reacted?

Indonesia on Saturday became the first country to block access to Grok entirely, with neighbouring Malaysia following on Sunday.

India said Sunday that X had removed thousands of posts and hundreds of user accounts in response to its complaints.

Speaking on condition of an-

onymity, a government source told AFP 3,500 posts and 600 accounts had been removed.

Britain's Ofcom media regulator -- which can fine companies up to 10 percent of global revenue -- said Monday it was opening a probe into whether X failed to comply with UK law over the sexual images.

"If X cannot control Grok, we will -- and we'll do it fast," British Prime Minister Keir Starmer told MPs from his Labour Party.

France's commissioner for children Sarah El Hairy said Tuesday she had referred Grok's generated images to French prosecutors, the Arcom media regulator and the European Union.

Digital affairs minister Anne Le Henanff had earlier called the restriction of image creation to paying users "insufficient and hypocritical".

And the European Commission, which acts as the EU's digital watchdog, has ordered X to retain all internal documents and data related to Grok until the end of 2026 in response to the uproar.

The bloc has already been investigating X over potential breaches of its digital content rules since 2023.

"We will not be outsourcing child protection and consent to Silicon Valley," Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said Monday.

"If they don't act, we will."

## How did the company respond?

"We take action against illegal content... including Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) by removing it, permanently suspending accounts, and working with local governments and law enforcement," X's safety team posted on January 4.

Musk himself said last week that anyone using Grok to "make illegal content will suffer the same consequences as if they

upload illegal content". But he made light of the controversy in a separate post, adding laughing emojis as he reshared to his 232 million followers on X a post featuring a toaster wrapped in a bikini.

By January 9, Grok began responding to all requests for image generation or editing by saying the service was restricted to paying subscribers.

Musk has also fired back at politicians demanding action.

Critics of X and Grok "just want to suppress free speech" Musk posted on January 10.



Grok is named after a term from a 1961 science-fiction novel (*Stranger in a Strange Land*), where "to grok" means to understand something so deeply that you almost become one with it -- a fitting name for an artificial intelligence designed to deeply grasp context, not just facts.

**Bahrain and Egypt Enhance Bilateral Ties**

Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, received the Egyptian Ambassador to Bahrain, H.E. Reham Abdel Hamid Mahmoud Khalil, to discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation. During the meeting, the Minister highlighted the deep-rooted historical and fraternal relations between the two nations. He praised the steady growth of their partnership, specifically noting significant progress within the transportation and telecommunications sectors. Both officials emphasized a shared commitment to expanding these ties to serve mutual interests. Ambassador Reham Khalil expressed her pride in the flourishing Bahraini-Egyptian relations.

**Bahrain and Morocco Strengthen Parliamentary Cooperation**

Shura Council Chairman, H.E. Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh, received the Chairman of the Moroccan House of Councillors, H.E. Mohamed Ould Rachid, on Monday evening. The official visit aims to bolster the historical and fraternal ties between the two kingdoms. Al Saleh welcomed the delegation, noting that the strong bilateral relationship continues to flourish under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Majesty King Mohammed VI. He emphasized that such visits reflect the solidity of the bonds uniting the two nations. In response, Mohamed Ould Rachid expressed his appreciation for the invitation and his commitment to advancing parliamentary relations. He highlighted the importance of exploring new avenues for legislative cooperation to serve mutual interests. The reception included senior Shura Council officials and the Moroccan Ambassador to Bahrain.

**Indian Embassy in Bahrain Celebrates World Hindi Day**

The Embassy of India in Bahrain celebrated World Hindi Day with a vibrant event chaired by Acting Ambassador Mr. Rajiv Kumar Mishra. The function was attended by teachers, embassy officials, and members of the Indian community. In his keynote address delivered in Hindi, Mr. Mishra emphasized the language's global importance and its role in preserving cultural identity among the diaspora. The event also featured the prize distribution for the Inter-School Hindi Competition, recognizing the linguistic talents of young students. Highlighting the celebration, students from various Indian schools delivered impressive presentations, including poetry recitations, storytelling, role-plays, and musical performances.

**Al Noor Charity Hosts Desert Trip for Orphans**

Al Noor Charity Association organized a recreational desert camp excursion for its sponsored orphans, aimed at enhancing their psychological and social well-being. The program was carefully designed to balance entertainment with guidance, featuring interactive workshops, artistic activities, and educational competitions. The day began with a warm reception and breakfast, followed by organized games and religious segments that encouraged values of cooperation and belonging. Hanan Saif, Head of the Media and Public Relations Committee, stated that the initiative fulfills the association's vision of prioritizing orphans' emotional growth. She credited the event's success to the collaborative efforts of the Orphans Committee, led by Rehab Hamza, and the direct support of Sheikha Lamia bint Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, President of the Association.

**Chiranjeevi's Film Premiere Sparks "Mega Frenzy" in Bahrain**

The global release of Megastar Chiranjeevi's latest family entertainer, Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu, triggered massive celebrations across Bahrain. Organized by Team JanaSena GulfSena, the grand premieres turned the Sankranthi season release into a vibrant cultural festival for the Indian expatriate community. Coordinated by prominent members including Srinivasa Rao Doddipati, Hemanth, and Nageswara Rao Gedala, the screenings drew a significant turnout of film enthusiasts and supporters. The enthusiastic response reaffirmed Chiranjeevi's enduring influence in Indian cinema. Beyond the silver screen, the gathering served as a vital platform for JanaSena supporters abroad to celebrate their shared heritage and camaraderie.

**Bahrain Celebrates P. Bhaskaran's Birth Centenary**

The expatriate community in Bahrain honored the legendary Malayalam poet, lyricist, and filmmaker P. Bhaskaran Master with a grand birth centenary celebration. The musical evening titled 'Orkkuka Vallappozhum', was organized by the cultural forum 'Bhoomika' in association with the Bahrain Kerala Samajam. Renowned playback singer and author V.T. Murali was the chief guest. Under the theme 'A Century Scented with Flowers,' Murali and local artists performed Bhaskaran Master's immortal classics, reviving the golden era of Malayalam film music. The program also highlighted Master's collaborations with various iconic music directors. Presided over by P.V. Radhakrishna Pillai, the event saw a special appearance by world-renowned magician Gopinath Muthukad. V.T. Murali was formally honored during the ceremony. Hundreds of families attended the Diamond Jubilee Hall to witness the tribute. E.A. Salim welcomed the gathering, while S.V. Basheer and Varghese Karakkal offered felicitations. Rajitha T.K. delivered the vote of thanks.

# Classifieds

## VACANCIES AVAILABLE

KOOKITO DECOR W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DECORATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33154444 or KOOKITO-CLOUD@GMAIL.COM

TRIPLE STAR SALOON W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37268985 or

AAMIR NISAR GRIFFIN COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66665177 or NISARAMIR878@GMAIL.COM

BEN EID TOWERS CLEANING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCE), GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250078 or KEHF-2011@HOTMAIL.COM

BULBUL NEST RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39631567 or BO3AZIZ@HOTMAIL.COM

ALNOOR SERVICES FOR SHIPING CO. - Simple Commandite has a vacancy for the occupation of SCAFFOLDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33328784 or ALNOOR.02@hotmail.com

AREENA CONTRACTOR GROUP CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17245222 or HR@AREENAGROUP.COM

AREENA CONTRACTOR GROUP CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17245222 or HR@AREENAGROUP.COM

MANGUARD SECURITY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17404949 or SECURITY@MANGUARD.COM.BH

BAHRAIN SERVICES & MAINTENANCE COMPANY B.S.C. (CLOSED) has a vacancy for the occupation of SERVICEMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17727676 or aqel@basma.com.bh

KRONOS CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON ASST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39441273 or MRK1313@GMAIL.COM

NESTO SUPERMARKET & DEPARTMENT STORE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39151200 or WESTERNBAHRAIN2021@GMAIL.COM

SHAHANA FACILITIES SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66334309 or mdbari2005@gmail.com

ASB SECURITY SOLUTIONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35070603 or MAGICSHINE775@YAHOO.COM

EVER GOOD ACCESSORIES has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36008131 or AHMEDJAFFARADAM@GMAIL.COM

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Golden Steel Contracting W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CAR MECHANICAL WORKSHOP), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33919012 or goldensteelcontracting@gmail.com

THE NEW HOUSE CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38024984 or KHAIBER-CARGO@YAHOO.COM

AL-AHLIA CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17737000 or h.s.m1111@gmail.com

Al Helli Supermarket B.S.C Closed has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33303975 or mastana-li330@gmail.com

LAGOONA BEACH RESORT&SPA has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17660383 or INTERMILAN\_1984@HOTMAIL.COM

SHINE PROXIMA CARGO HANDLING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877209 or HANAN@ALHELLI.COM

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AL ANJOM AL ZAHERA BUILDING MAINTENANCE has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33795726 or SAMINAYASMEEN.BH@GMAIL.COM

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STUDY ZONE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVE, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33696243 or ZEINAB-HAMED88@HOTMAIL.COM

AL MEHAR CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35141212 or AVENTENSTAR.BH@GMAIL.COM

WALEED 256 CARGO HANDLING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34562700 or IMRANSIRAJ768@GMAIL.COM

MASHMOON CLENING has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17595645 or alkahaf293@gmail.com

MUBASHIR KHAN COMBINE SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17710271 or habib@alghalia.com

ALAMEED AUTO SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of AUTOMOBILE PAINTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17785099 or ALAMEED\_CAR@HOTMAIL.COM

AL HAIBA ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING has a vacancy for the occupation of WIREMAN (BUILDINGS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33116174 or ALHAIBAELECTRICAL2@GMAIL.COM

ALMANNAI INTERNATIONAL TRADE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39608806 or accounts@brandysbh.com

SPARKLE SHINE CLEANING SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33878815 or sparkleshineservices.bh@gmail.com

A - KARIM ALJAHROMI CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING), GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17831000 or aljcon@gmail.com

BLACK NANKANA COMBINED FACILITIES ACTIVITIES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCE), GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37617271 or HAMMID777MP@GMAIL.COM

JASMI'S CORPORATION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17588787 or lmra@jasmis.com

SOUTH GATE CONSTRUCTION AND CLEANING has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77061717 or YKHALFAN@GMAIL.COM

B O G REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36483972 or INFO.BOGREALESTATE@GMAIL.COM

AL HELLI SUPERMARKET B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877209 or hanan@ALHELLI.COM

MOSIN INTERIOR DECORATION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WIREMAN(ELECTRICAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729935 or AHMED@PANORAMABH.COM

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TROPICAL IMPORT AND EXPORT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39685060 or ARE-F28ALALAWI@GMAIL.COM

SALEH TAHER CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCE), GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33303975 or mastana-li330@gmail.com

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FREHA VEGETBLE AND FRUITS has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17584235 or JAMAL.ALSAEED166@GMAIL.COM

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33452803 or MAILKASIF541254@GMAIL.COM Secure Me W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17749697 or secure.me@live.com

RAMZAN HAMZA FOR SALE & TRADE IN WASTE SCRAP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of REPAIRMAN (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37394429 or HAMZACHAUDARY575@GMAIL.COM

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SEAM MASTERS TAILORING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILORING FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 3299543 or GHULAMHUSSAIN2916@GMAIL.COM

SANAMINA VISITOR ASSISTANCE SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34690477 or FATIMASAYED0327@GMAIL.COM

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Almoayed Air Conditioning W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 174040407 or proffice@almoayededcg.com

ALI ABDULLA ALI MALALLA CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of POLISHER(METAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36777578 or AAAMALALLA@GMAIL.COM

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KEETA BAHRAIN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17783886 or hr@batsco.net

clean and green services has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39922434 or cleangreen-bh@gmail.com

SOHAIB PUBLICITY & ADVERTISING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of PRINTING COMPOSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36552658 or GOBINDSINGH45@GMAIL.COM

BFS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MARKETING EXECUTIVE, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77998860 or accounts@bfservices.com

KEETA BAHRAIN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38877337 or QIAO@HOTMAIL.COM

OSKAR FURNISHING has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER(FURNITURE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17442629 or CMSDOC@GMAIL.COM

ALKHABBAT KITCHEN has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17596061 or alkhabbatkitchen@gmail.com

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BADER TRADING COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES EXECUTIVE, suitably qualified applicants can contact 1753121 or acs@btcwll.com

CELESTIAL MANAGEMENT CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DIRECTOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38800182 or OPS@CELESTIALMNT.BH

PANORAMA CONTRACTING & ENGINEERING SERVI has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877209 or hanan@ALHELLI.COM

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DESI SHERAZ MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37034219 or SHERAZSALEM613@GMAIL.COM

WYNDHAM Grand Manama has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17826260 or ANaser@wyndhamgrandbh.com

ELITE GLOBAL CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ACCOUNTANTS, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35119080 or info@agulfdynamics.com

ELITE GLOBAL CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35119080 or info@agulfdynamics.com

ROOFI PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35948795 or BHATTIAHMED0001@GMAIL.COM

PESCON W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORK SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 32298877 or TAHER\_BAHRAIN@HOTMAIL.COM

NEW PINK SADAF CONTRACTING has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17346817 or PINKSADAF91@GMAIL.COM

wales Constructions has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37388869 or malmabad@gmail.com

MOHAMED JALAL CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SAFETY OFFICER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17536956 or RASHID\_BUALI@JALAL.COM

ALHAJ HASSAN GROUP B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of PIPEFITTER, suitably

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cancy for the occupation of PLUMBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38801665 or ALDARALHAMRA.CONST@GMAIL.COM

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ALMOAYYED SECURITY has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or profice@almoayyedcg.com

KHAN MAINTENANCE BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33390775 or anarkama3637@gmail.com

PERFECT CAR WASH has a vacancy for the occupation of CAR WASHER/CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39444479 or Almansoori66@live.com

BUHESSE CONSULTANCY AND SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKERS APPLICATIONS CLEARING AGENT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36662891 or HUSEINTIMIMI@GMAIL.COM

Bahrain Electromechanical Services Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17536275 or BEMCO@BATELCO.COM.BH

ARAD CITY TEA CAFETERIA W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34343495 or ABDULLAH3382112@GMAIL.COM

AL SARAYA BAKERY FOR LOCAL BREAD has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35564562 or EIDM868@HOTMAIL.COM

NEW FISH LOUNGE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39667588 or OSOOLALKHALEEJ@GMAIL.COM

MUBASHIR KHAN CARGO HANDLING CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34501443 or IAMFLYINGJATT@GMAIL.COM

SAMRAT SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35518081 or SAJIDPAKISTANI111@GMAIL.COM

ROOFI PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35948795 or BHATTI-AHMED0001@GMAIL.COM

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GULF DIGITAL SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33056512 or MOMINSHK5@GMAIL.COM

HELSINKI CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37143431 or usamaasifqa-z@gmail.com

ABU AZAM COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT REPAIR W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36596343 or RANAAZAM332@GMAIL.COM

CYPRUS CYBARCO TABET JV W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TILES FIXER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17224545 or cct@cct-bh.com

CITY GLASSES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MACHINE OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17874492 or acityglass@yahoo.com

BAROLA INTERIOR DECORATION W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 3918768 or KHAN19.MUJAHID@GMAIL.COM

Almoawdah Const has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400386 or KHALEDHASAN@ALMAWAHD.COM

Golden Diyar construction has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION). GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17530670 or HWAIRBRAIN@GMAIL.COM

CASA BILLA BUILDING CONSTRUCTION W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 32073500 or CASABILLA@GMAIL.COM

JAHAN ZAIB ALUMINIUM AND GLASS CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(METAL CASTING), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34056406 or RANAJAHANZAIB5859@GMAIL.COM

FALAFEL ALNAJJAR has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(JUICE & SANDWICH-

ES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39433844 or ALNAJJAR.69@HOTMAIL.COM

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Muharraq players in discussion during their qualification-clinching performance

# Muharraq meet Qatar SC tonight

Arab Volleyball Championship reaches knockout stage

**Hussain Almaskati**  
TDT | Manama

Bahraini volleyball champions Muharraq Club are back in action tonight in the knockout stage of the 44th Arab Clubs Volleyball Championship after a rest day yesterday. The Red Wolves take on Qatar SC, one of two Qatari teams in the tournament, at 7 PM in El Menzah Sports Palace, with a place in the next round at stake.

Yaseen Al Meel's men booked their spot with a balanced group-stage campaign in Group B, finishing third in the group. They began with a

3-0 win over Oman's Majees SC, then endured 3-1 losses to Libya's Al Ittihad and hosts Tunisia's Etoile Sportive du Sahel. The team recovered strongly, securing 3-0 victories against Qatar's Police Club and the Palestinian Forces Club, enough to advance to the knockout stage.

Qatar SC, meanwhile, emerged from Group A in a solid form of their own. Their preliminaries included a 3-2 win over Oman's Al Seeb, a 3-0 victory against Libya's Al So-waihili, a 3-2 loss to Tunisia's Esperance Sportive de Tunis, and a 3-0 win over Algeria's Tadjenonet. Their tournament

run makes them a stern challenge for the local champions tonight.

Adding to Muharraq's optimism is the return of Nasser Anan, who has recovered from injury and is expected to start. Captain Mahmoud Al Afia will lead the squad, aiming to turn the team's group-stage resilience into success in this high-stakes encounter.

The Red Wolves will be hoping to surpass the ninth-place finish achieved by fellow Bahraini side Dar Kulalib in last year's edition in Doha, as they aim to cement their status at the pinnacle of Arab club volleyball.

## Asian Handball stage awaits Bahrain's warriors

**Hussain Almaskati**  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's national handball team is set to begin its campaign in the 22nd Asian Men's Handball Championship in Kuwait City this weekend, with head coach Robert Hedin and assistant coach Amin Al Qallaf confirming the team's readiness both technically and physically. The continental tournament also serves as the Asian qualifier for the 2027 IHF Men's World Championship in Germany, adding extra significance to every match.

Reflecting on the team's preparations, Al Qallaf highlighted the challenges faced in the lead-up to the tournament: "The biggest challenges were managing player rotation, keeping everyone injury-free, and reaching the championship in peak physical condition. Thankfully, we believe we've succeeded in this regard." He added that the squad blends experienced players with promising young talent, even if some of the younger players have limited exposure at the Asian level.

Earlier this week, as part of their preparations, the team played two tough friendly matches against Portugal, ranked fourth in the world. They then competed in the 52nd Yellow Cup in Switzerland, finishing fourth overall and gaining valuable international experience ahead of the Asian Championship.

Drawing on years of Asian success, the "Warriors" enter the tournament with a proud history in Asian handball.



Warriors on the court during Yellow Cup training earlier this week

The Kingdom's team has finished as runners-up five times (2010, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022) and recently claimed gold at the sixth Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh last November. Al Qallaf emphasized the team's cautious optimism heading into the championship: "We enter the championship with cautious optimism, focusing on taking each step carefully, relying on solid preparation, and trusting in God to achieve positive results."

Bahrain will face a challenging group stage in Group B, competing against Jordan, China, and Iraq. Their campaign opens against Jordan on Friday, January 16, followed by a match with China on Sunday, January 18, and concludes the preliminary round against Iraq on Tuesday, January 20. Every match will be crucial as the team aims to secure a strong position for the next stage.

The squad is led by captain Hussain Al Sayyad and also includes the likes of: Hassan Al Samaheji, Mohammed Abdulkhaliq, Mohammed Habib Ahmed, Mohammed Habib Nasser, Hussain Mahfoodh, Jaffar Abdulshaheed, Mohammed Hameed, Hesham Ahmed, Salman Al Showaikh, Qassim Qamber, Ahmed Redha, Sayed Ali Bassem, Hassan Madan, Ahmed Almaqabi, Ali Mahmood, Jassim Khamis, Ali Redha, and Ali Alsheeri.

These players will be looking to carry Bahrain's proud Asian pedigree into the tournament as they depart for Kuwait today, ready to take on the continent's best.

## Try to be Mourinho and I'll fail: new Real Madrid coach Arbeloa

AFP | Madrid

New Real Madrid coach Alvaro Arbeloa insisted Tuesday he would be himself at the helm of the Spanish giants rather than trying to imitate Jose Mourinho.

Arbeloa, who in his playing days at Madrid was an ally of his then coach Mourinho, has drawn comparisons to the Portuguese veteran for his approach to management.

The 42-year-old former defender was appointed to replace Xabi Alonso on Monday after Real Madrid lost the Spanish Super Cup final against rivals Barcelona on Sunday.

"I have not spoken to Jose yet. For me it was a privilege and an honour to be coached by Jose Mourinho," Arbeloa told a news conference.

"I have a great relationship with him... and obviously he was



Real Madrid's new coach Alvaro Arbeloa (C) leads a training session

someone who influenced me a lot, I carry him within me. (However) I am going to be Alvaro Arbeloa, because while it's true I am not afraid of failing,

tween 2010 and 2013, winning one La Liga title.

During that era he battled against Pep Guardiola's dominant Barcelona when the fierce rivalry between the Catalans and Real Madrid was at its most bitter.

Barca currently lead Madrid by four points at the top of La Liga and Arbeloa's job is to revert the situation, although his first match in charge is at Albaete in the Copa del Rey last 16 on Wednesday.

Arbeloa, who was coaching Madrid's reserve side and previously working with the club's youth teams before he was promoted, said success is the most important thing for the record 15-time European champions.

"This club is winning, winning, and winning again. That demand on ourselves, showing

the DNA of what brought us here, that has filled our trophy cabinets (is what I want)," continued Arbeloa.

"When I was a player I received those values from the players in the dressing room, and for me that is the most important thing... to be able to excite the fans we have all over the world and try to leave those cabinets even more full."

"That is my work, that is my obsession and what I will be living every day."

Madrid did not announce how long Arbeloa's contract as first-team coach would be.

"What I can tell you is that I've been here for 20 years, at home, and I will be at Real Madrid as long as they want me here," added Arbeloa.

"This is my home, that's how I feel and that's how it will always be."

# BIC welcomes darts' biggest stars ahead of 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters

● Opening event of 2026 World Series of Darts takes place this Thursday and Friday at Terminal 4 by Beyon at Exhibition World Bahrain

● Darts' international icons, led by double World Champion Luke Littler, to meet fans in official draw and autograph session, open to all ticket-holders today from 6.30pm at Bahrain Rugby Club

● BIC opens additional section in all-new Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand following high demand for tickets

Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East', has welcomed darts' biggest superstars to the Kingdom ahead of the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters, which takes place Thursday and Friday at Terminal 4 by Beyon in Exhibition World Bahrain (EWB).

Eight of the Professional Darts Corporation's (PDC) most celebrated players, headlined by reigning back-to-back World Champion Luke Littler, have



already arrived on the island for the two-day spectacle.

They are also all set for the Bahrain Darts Masters' official draw and autograph session, taking place today evening at Bahrain Rugby Club in Saar.

The fan-engagement evening, which is open to all ticket-holders, is scheduled for a 6.30pm start. It will determine the match-ups for the first round of play in the year's opening event of the 2026 World Series of Darts.

Fans attending tonight at Bahrain Rugby Club will have the chance to meet Littler and the rest of the Bahrain Darts Masters' star-studded cast, including defending champion in the Kingdom Stephen Bunting,

2023/2024 World Champion Luke Humphries, the World Series of Darts' most successful player in history Michael van Gerwen, 2020/2021 World Champion Gerwyn Price, former World Matchplay champion Nathan Aspinall, World Championship runner-up Gian van Veen, and Dutch star Danny Noppert.

The PDC superstars will be taking on eight Asian representatives in round one. These continental standouts include six players from the PDC Asian Tour, namely Filipino stars Alexis Toyolo and Lourence Ilagan, Japanese duo Motomu Sakai and Ryusei Azemoto, Singapore's Paul Lim, Hong Kong's World Cup quarter-finalist Man Lok Leung, and the Bahrain duo of Abdulla

Saeed and Basem Mahmood.

Those who have yet to purchase their tickets for this weekend may still do so but must act quickly due to tremendous demand. Only tickets to the all-new Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand at Terminal 4 by Beyon are available, so fans must purchase theirs at the earliest to avoid missing out on one of the most highly sought-after occasions of the new year.

Due to the interest, BIC has opened a new section for the grandstand, offering additional seats to accommodate the many darts enthusiasts expected to attend.

All tables, including Premium and VIP areas for the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters, have already



Luke Littler

completely sold out, but fans can still experience the magic of the game at the grandstand, which offers an incredible view of the stage, as well as close access to food and beverage areas at the venue.

Tickets to the Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand are BD25 apiece for the two days. All available ticket options can be found online at bahrainp.com or by calling the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

This Thursday and Friday at the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters, at Terminal 4 by Beyon at EWB are scheduled to open at 6pm, with action starting from 7pm each night. The opening round on day one will set the stage for the knockouts on day two, including the quarter-finals, semi-finals, and final.

The Bahrain Darts Masters is organised by BIC, the PDC and sports promoter CBX, and is supported by Bahrain Tourism and

Exhibitions Authority.

The game of darts has become an international phenomenon in recent years, and in the Kingdom, the Bahrain Darts Masters has grown tremendously over the past three seasons it has been held. The event has been moved to Terminal 4 by Beyon at EWB to be able to accommodate the massive crowd expected, and the venue will be transformed into Bahrain's answer to the iconic Alexandra Palace.

Fans can expect an incredible atmosphere, with fancy dress, themed activations, and a wide range of food and beverage options as 'Sport's Biggest Party' brings its unique flavour to Bahrain.

For more information on the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters or other events and activities at BIC, visit bahrainp.com, call the BIC Hotline, or follow the circuit's official social media channels.

## Ex-France, Liverpool defender Sakho announces retirement

AFP | Paris

35.

Centre-back Sakho had been without a club since leaving Georgian outfit Torpedo Kutaisi last January.

The 29-time international

came through PSG's academy and went on to captain the Parisians. He was in the side that won the 2012-13 Ligue 1 title.

"I wanted to thank everyone," he said on the pitch before PSG's

French Cup last 32 game against another of his former sides, Paris FC.

"I wanted to officially announce the end of my career," he added.

## Al Kaabi triumphs after superb round as Saleh claims Medal



TD Balbir Singh, overall winner Abdulla Saeed Al Kaabi and Captain Steve Newall

TDT | Manama

Abdulla Saeed Al Kaabi produced a masterclass in consistency to secure an overall victory, while Nasser Yaqoob Saleh claimed the prestigious gross medal in the latest club competition sponsored by the Bahrain International Circuit.

Al Kaabi, playing off a five handicap, delivered a remarkably steady performance by carding 17 pars across his 18 holes. De-



TD Balbir Singh, Medal Winner Nasser Yaqoob Saleh and Captain Steve Newall

His only blemish came on the par-four seventh, widely regarded as the course's most difficult hole, where he recorded a bogey. This disciplined approach resulted in a net 66, which was just enough to edge out James Williamson on a count-back for the top spot on the leaderboard.

Williamson had appeared on track to comfortably break the 80-stroke barrier before the challenging layout clawed back shots in the closing stages. De-

spite missing out on the overall title, his net 66 earned him the trophy for division two, finishing ahead of runner-up Benedit Schwerm, who continued a recent "hot streak" with a net 70.

The gross medal was decided by a single stroke as Nasser Yaqoob Saleh carded a 70 to narrowly beat Al Kaabi for the day's best raw score. Saleh's clinical round also secured him the victory in division one, finishing ahead of runner-up Adel Ali Al

Fayyadh. In division three, CV Murthy took the win with a net 69, followed by Paul McLean in second place.

The prizes were presented during a post-round ceremony by Club Captain Steve Newall and Tournament Director Balbir Singh. The event, a long-standing fixture on the local golfing calendar, was hosted and sponsored by the club this season as part of its ongoing support for the sport in the Kingdom.

## Doncic scores 42 points but Lakers humbled by Kings



DeMar DeRozan #10 of the Sacramento Kings is guarded by DeAndre Ayton #5 of the Los Angeles Lakers

AFP | Los Angeles

Luka Doncic scored 42 points but could not prevent the Los Angeles Lakers stumbling to a third straight defeat with a 124-112 loss against the lowly Sacramento Kings on Monday.

LeBron James wore a special patch on his uniform to mark his historic 23rd season in the NBA and scored 22 points on a frustrating night for the Lakers, who made just eight three-pointers from 36 attempts.

Doncic and James were among only four Lakers play-

ers to make double figures with DeAndre Ayton finishing with 13 points and Jaxson Hayes adding 12 off the bench.

The Kings, one place off the bottom of the Western Conference with a 10-30 record, were led by 32 points from DeMar DeRozan with Russell Westbrook finishing with 22 points against his former team.

"We literally couldn't make a shot," Lakers coach JJ Redick said.

In other games, the Indiana Pacers bagged their third straight victory with an upset 98-96 win over the Boston Celtics in Indianapolis.

# Almansoori extends perfect BTCC season

Ali Almansoori continues incredible winning run in Bahrain Touring Car Challenge at BIC

● Ahmed Algaidy, Fahad Almulhem, Yzeed Alsuhail, Faris Almutairi, Hamad Albalooshi, Hesham Bediea, and Sulaiman Alsuhail all claim victories in class in Time Attack

Manama

Ali Almansoori continued his incredible undefeated run in the 2025/2026 Bahrain Touring Car Challenge (BTCC), winning both races over the weekend in the season's fourth round, held as part of National Race Day at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

Almansoori powered his Honda Civic contender to victory in both of the meeting's 15-lap sprints, earning him his seventh and eighth victories in as many events so far this campaign.

His latest double highlighted an action-packed occasion at 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East', where action was also held in Time Attack.

Taking victories in the series' various categories were Ahmed Algaidy in the SU class, Fahad Almulhem in MA, Yzeed Alsuhail in SA, Faris Almutairi in MB, Hamad Albalooshi in SB, Hesham Bediea in ULB, and Sulaiman Alsuhail in ULA.

National Race Day was organised by BIC in cooperation with the Bahrain Motor Federation, the Circuit Racing Commission, and the Bahrain Auto X and Drift Commission. Action was held



along BIC's 2.554-kilometre Inner Track.

In the BTCC, Almansoori was the pace-setter from the opening session. He then won race one from pole position in a time of 25 minutes 10.556 seconds after 15 laps, finishing 1.104 seconds

ahead of runner-up Isa Ebrahim. Algaidy, who was also competing in the BTCC, joined them on the podium after going 1.913s from the victor. Both Ebrahim and Algaidy were also behind the wheel of their own Civics.

Completing the top six were Ahmed Bajnaid in a Civic, James Taylor in an Acura RSX DC5, and Moaaz Elzahrawi in another Civic.

In race two, Almansoori was once again the pole-sitter and

he took the chequered flag in 20:46.596 while enjoying a wider gap of 4.491s from Elzahrawi in second. Ebrahim was classified third 7.023s off the winner's mark, while Bajnaid and Taylor completed the finishers.

In Time Attack, there was plenty of heated competition in each class across the practices and opening heats.

In the decisive second heats, Algaidy took first place amongst the SU competitors with a fastest time of 1:10.096 at 131.17kph. Ebrahim Elshreeda came second and Rakan Alsuhail third.

Almulhem won the MA category with a best mark of 1:14.921 at 122.72kph. Ahmed Mulhim was the runner-up and Mohamed Aljuraiban completed

the top three.

Yzeed Alsuhail triumphed in the SA division with a dominant lap of 1:11.095 at 129.33kph. He was more than 10 seconds quicker than the rest of the field, which had Mohamed Ebrahim in second and Sayed Ali Jawad third.

Almutairi was then victorious in the MB class with a fastest mark of 1:19.910 at 115.06kph. Mazen Dabbous and Amr Elmorsi followed on the classification.

Albalooshi claimed a tight victory amongst the SB runners, winning in 1:24.959 at 108.22kph. Just two-tenths adrift was Ali Alkhdaib as runner-up while Freddie Richard came third.

Bediea then won the ULB divi-



sion with a top mark of 1:18.021 at 117.85kph. Abdulaziz Alramih was second and Mahmood Almaragh third.

Sulaiman Alsuhail completed the round's Time Attack winners in the ULA category, where he topped the timesheet with a best lap of 1:10.175 at 131.02kph. Mohamed Alsheryan was the runner-up while Haitham Maddah ranked third.

Following all of the meeting's action, the winners in the BTCC and Time Attack were presented

their respective awards in the podium ceremonies.

BIC's 2025/2026 racing calendar features seven rounds of National Race Day. Action resumes with round five on 6 February, and then the sixth and penultimate meeting will take place on 13 March. That will set the stage for the grand finale on 24 April.

For more information on National Race Day or other events and activities at BIC, visit [bahraingp.com](http://bahraingp.com) or call the BIC Hotline.

Williams loses golden oldie clash in final Australian Open warm-up



Venus Williams in action

AFP | Hobart

Venus Williams was dumped out of the Hobart International in straight sets by Tatjana Maria yesterday to dent her Australian Open preparations in a historic clash between two players with a combined age of 83.

It was the second consecutive tournament in which the 45-year-old Williams had crashed at the first hurdle after last week's Auckland Classic.

She survived 87 minutes in Hobart against German world number 42 Maria, who is 38, before slumping 6-4, 6-3, hav-

ing gamely saved six of nine break points.

The first meeting between the pair set a new record for the highest combined age for a main draw match since the WTA Tour was founded in 1973. Maria said her daughters Charlotte, 12, and Cecilia, four, were probably cheering for Williams, one of their favourite players.

"Everybody loves Venus. I love her too," said Maria.

"For me, to play her was such an honour because I never played her before. It was not easy with all the wind but it was amazing."

## Riffa Snatch Late Winner as Budaiya Continue Climb

Hussain Almaskati  
TDT | Manama

Matchweek 12 of the Nasir bin Hamad Premier League opened with late drama, as Riffa edged Al Najma 2-1 at Bahrain National Stadium, while Budaiya continued their rise with a 3-1 victory over Al Shabab at Khalifa Sports City.

Riffa opened the scoring in the 29th minute when Wellington Moreira's low free kick was spilled by Al Najma goalkeeper Ammar Mohammed, allowing Vinicius Vargas to react first and tap into an empty net from close range. Al Najma responded immediately after the restart through Achraf Douiri. The Dutchman curled a precise free kick from a tight angle on the left wing around the wall, catching Riffa goalkeeper Dziugas Bartkut at his near post to level the score.

The decisive moment arrived in the 87th minute. Vargas launched a sensational counterattack from inside his own half, skipping past defenders before his close-range effort was



Riffa players celebrate Samuel Toscas' winning goal

saved. Al Najma failed to clear their lines, and when the ball was swung back into the box, Samuel Toscas rose highest to head home despite the goalkeeper charging out.

At Khalifa Sports City, Budaiya produced a strong second-half performance to beat Al Shabab 3-1. A first-half penalty appeal was waved away after VAR review, before Budaiya at 7 PM.

The results move Riffa up to second on 27 points, level with leaders Al Khaldiya, who have a game in hand. Budaiya climb to fifth on 15 points, while Al Najma remain 10th and Al Shabab stay bottom on goal difference. Matchweek 12 continues today, with Al Khaldiya facing A'ali and Al Malkiya taking on Al Hidd