

Bahrain shares grief with Saudi

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, sent cables of condolences to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, following the passing of Her Royal Highness Princess Hind bint Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

HRH Prince Salman sent a similar cable to His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia.

Kingdom calls for end to Russia, Ukraine crisis

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Bahrain has renewed its support for regional and international diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving a political and lasting solution to the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, stressing the importance of dialogue and coordination to end the ongoing conflict.

The statement was delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Nancy Abdullah Jamal, Deputy Permanent Representative of Bahrain to the United Nations in New York, during an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council convened in light of recent developments in Ukraine.

H.E. Ambassador Jamal reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment to resolving the crisis in line with international law, the United Nations Charter, and UN Security Council Resolution 2774, while enhancing regional and global security, stability, and sustainable peace.

The Kingdom expresses deep regret over the war.

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Bilateral strength

Bahrain, Pakistan reaffirm strong relations and shared commitment to development

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa affirmed Bahrain and Pakistan's shared commitment to advancing partnership across political, economic, commercial, and developmental fields.

He emphasised that these efforts are aimed at serving the best interests of both countries and their brotherly peoples.

HM the King made the remarks during an official reception and meeting with His Excellency Asif Ali Zardari, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, at Al Gudaibiya Palace yesterday, marking a significant milestone in the historic relations between the two nations.

“It is a great pleasure to welcome you and your esteemed delegation to the Kingdom of Bahrain,” HM the King said, highlighting the “strong and historic relations that bind Bahrain and Pakistan, founded on mutual respect, Islamic brotherhood, shared history, and common interests.”

Partnership

He emphasised the importance of the visit as a platform to “advance our partnership across various political, economic, commercial, and developmental fields, in a manner that serves the best interests of our two countries and their brotherly peoples.”

HM King Hamad also commended Pakistan's “pivotal role in defending the causes of the Arab and Islamic nations, and



His Majesty awards President Zardari the Order of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa (First Class)

“Strong and historic relations bind Bahrain and Pakistan, founded on mutual respect, Islamic brotherhood, shared history, and common interests.”
- HIS MAJESTY KING HAMAD BIN ISA AL KHALIFA

its efforts to promote security, peace, and stability at regional and international levels.”

He expressed appreciation for the Pakistani community's valuable contributions to Bahrain's development path, underlining the deep social and cultural ties that have strengthened the



HM the King receives Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari

bilateral relationship over generations.

Reception

During the visit, President Zardari was accorded an official reception, including the playing of national anthems, a 21-gun salute, and a ceremonial greeting

by senior Bahraini officials.

Following the reception, HM the King and President Zardari held extensive talks on further enhancing cooperation and mutual interests.

The discussions were attended by senior officials from both countries and focused on

consolidating the longstanding historical ties between the two nations.

In recognition of his contributions to bilateral relations, His Majesty awarded President Zardari the Order of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa (First Class), the Kingdom's highest honour.

Award

HM King Hamad said the award reflects Bahrain's “profound appreciation for your role and contributions, as well as those of your country, in supporting areas of joint cooperation between our two brotherly nations.”

President Zardari, in his remarks, expressed a sense of personal and national kinship with Bahrain, calling HM the King “my brother” and describing Bahrain's people as “one family, bound together by faith as brothers and sisters.”

He stressed the importance of strengthening understanding, cooperation, and mutual support, particularly during times of regional and global challenges, noting that the safety and prosperity of one nation positively affects all.

Luncheon

The visit also included a formal signing of the Guests' Book, a luncheon hosted by His Majesty in honour of the Pakistani President and his delegation, and an honour guard inspection led by Bahrain's Foreign Minister, H.E. Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani.

Over 10,000 arrested

‘3,428 protesters killed in Iran violent crackdown’

AFP | Paris

Iranian security forces have killed at least 3,428 protesters in a crackdown on demonstrations, the Norway-based Iran Human Rights (IHR) NGO said yesterday, adding that more than 10,000 people had also been arrested.

IHR said the jump in its veri-

fied toll was due to new information it received from within the Iranian health and education ministries, with at least 3,379 of the killings coming during the height of the protest movement from January 8 to 12.

The group's director Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam condemned the “mass killing

of protesters on the streets in recent days”, while IHR warned that even the new figure represented an “absolute minimum” for the actual toll.

Rights groups say that under the cover of a more than five-day internet blackout, Iranian authorities are carrying out their most severe repression in years of protests that have openly

challenged the theocratic system that has ruled Iran since the revolution.

Caution

Meanwhile, the US embassy in Saudi Arabia told its personnel yesterday to act with caution and avoid military installations.

President Donald Trump on Tuesday said in a CBS News

interview that the US would act if Iran began hanging protesters.

“We will take very strong action if they do such a thing,” he said.

“When they start killing thousands of people - and now you're telling me about hanging. We'll see how that's going to work out for them,” Trump said.

Hotels honoured for supporting successful tourism season



The Tourism Minister with representatives of hotels

TDT | Manama

Her Excellency Fatima bint Jaafar Al-Sairafi, Minister of Tourism and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority, affirmed that the hotel sector remains a cornerstone in developing and promoting tourism in the Kingdom. She highlighted the active role of participating hotels and the high-quality initiatives and services they provided, which contributed to the success of

the “Bahrain Holidays” season, enhanced the visitor experience, and raised the level of tourism readiness across the Kingdom. The recognition ceremony honoured hotels that played a pivotal role in the season.

Collaboration

H.E. Al-Sairafi explained that the strong collaboration with these hotels allowed for the creation of flexible and diverse accommodation and tourism packages tailored to the needs of different categories of visitors. These packages were integrat-

“Partnerships between the public and private sectors serve as a successful model of integration, supporting national efforts to diversify tourism offerings, enrich seasonal activities, and organise attractive events throughout the year.”

– H.E. FATIMA BINT JAAFAR AL-SAIRAFI, TOURISM MINISTER

ed with events and programs accompanying the “Bahrain Holidays” season, enhancing the Kingdom’s appeal as a comprehensive tourist destination, boosting hotel occupancy rates, and stimulating overall tourism activity. She emphasised that such partnerships between the pub-



attractive events throughout the year.

Gratitude

The Minister expressed her gratitude to all participating hotels for their support and tangible contributions, stressing the importance of continuing to strengthen and expand strategic partnerships. She highlighted that these efforts align with the broader aspirations of Bahrain’s tourism sector and reinforce the Kingdom’s position on the regional and international tourism map.

Agricultural waste burning risks lives, health and crops

● Interior Ministry issues health, safety warning

Ghadeer Alkumaish
TDT | Manama

Personnel were deployed to 864 areas by the General Directorate of Civil Defence to extinguish fires caused by the burning of agricultural waste. Speaking on the Interior Ministry’s Al Aman social media programme, Hidd Police Station Head Colonel Dr. Osama Bahar highlighted the environmental, health and safety risks linked to the practice. Col. Dr. Bahar said many people had previously believed that burning agricultural waste in Bahrain and elsewhere supported agricultural development.

Studies

However, he explained that studies had proven otherwise, noting that the practice reduced soil quality by up to 25 per cent, forcing farmers to spend additional funds on fertilisers and vitamins to restore land fertility and support healthy plant growth. Seven million people worldwide have been affected by severe illnesses and deaths caused by exposure to microscopic particles known as



“Fires caused by agricultural waste burning are not confined to waste alone, but often spread to crops farmers are trying to protect.”

– COLONEL DR. OSAMA BAHAR, HIDD POLICE STATION HEAD

PM2.5, released through the burning of agricultural waste, Col. Dr. Osama Bahar warned, adding that the process emitted black carbon that posed serious health risks. He further stressed that fires caused by agricultural waste burning were not confined to waste alone, but often spread to crops farmers were trying to protect. In some cases, the flames extended to outbuildings and even residential houses located on farms.

Fires

He noted that while farmers may have intended to manage waste responsibly, the fires frequently became uncontrollable, resulting in the loss of crops and essential structures. Col. Dr. Bahar concluded by urging farmers to adopt safer alternatives, emphasising that recycling agricultural waste was a more secure solution than risking the loss of crops or homes. “The use and recycling of agricultural waste is a safer solution, instead of risking the loss of crops or homes,” he said.

Digital theft

Nurse accused of taking BD25,000 from disabled man using phone

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A nurse accused of draining BD25,000.750 from the bank account of a disabled Bahraini man by using his mobile phone has appeared before the High Criminal Court. The court heard she allegedly moved the cash from his account to her own phone, then sent it on to an account in her Asian home country. Prosecutors said BD3,500 was later paid back after the transfers were spotted, leaving the rest unpaid. **Hearing** High Criminal Court adjourned hearing the case to 20 January so the defendant can be brought from custody and her lawyer can present a defence. The Public Prosecution claims the defendant used the



Image used for illustrative purposes only

The defendant used the victim’s electronic signature, a verification code tied to the money transfer service linked to his bank account, to carry out the transfers.

victim’s electronic signature, a verification code tied to the money transfer service linked to his bank account, to carry out the transfers. She is also accused of access-

ther’s bank activity and found large transfers made between September and October 2025, the court was told.

Money

The money, totalling BD25,000.750, went to the account of the worker employed as his father’s nurse. Prosecutors said the defendant admitted taking the man’s phone without his knowledge, sending the money in instalments to her account in Bahrain and then transferring the full amount abroad. A report from the transfer service, submitted to the court, said the transactions were carried out using the victim’s phone, that the device linked to the transfers belonged to the defendant, and that the one-time codes needed to finish the transfers were sent to her own number.

Man jailed after using stolen cards to buy luxury car

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court has sentenced an Arab national to three years in prison and fined him BD3,000 after convicting him of using stolen foreign-issued bank cards. The court also ordered his permanent deportation following the conviction, which stemmed from an attempt to purchase a luxury vehicle from a car dealership in the kingdom. The defendant attempted to complete part of the vehicle’s payment using stolen bank cards through an electronic payment link.

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR DISTRIBUTOR IN RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL SALES IN BAHRAIN

beIN MENA announces for EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) to participate for “Distributor” in Residential / Commercial Sales in Bahrain. beIN is seeking for applicants who can demonstrate their ability to provide:

RESIDENTIAL - B2C DISTRIBUTOR	COMMERCIAL - B2B DISTRIBUTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Franchise Module• Master Distributors• Sub-Distributors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exclusive• Non-Exclusive

WHO SHOULD APPLY:
We are seeking established companies or consortiums with:

- Proven track record in B2B, B2C sales, distribution, or media commercialization.
- Strong understanding of Bahrain market and business landscape.
- Robust sales infrastructure and a dedicated commercial team.
- Financial stability and capacity for significant investment.
- Commitment to upholding beIN’s brand values and service excellence.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI):
Interested parties are invited to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in the exclusive / Non-exclusive distributor selection process. The EOI should include:

- Company Profile and Registration Details
- Overview of relevant experience and market presence in Bahrain.
- Proposed business plan for residential / commercial sales in Bahrain.
- Financial capabilities and investment proposal.

All Clarifications and Submissions must be directed to the beIN Procurement Department via email: procurement@bein.com. The final submission deadline is at 23:59 Doha Time on January 31st 2026.



The practice of burning agricultural waste reduced soil quality by up to 25 per cent.

Spring revival

Plan approved to restore Ain Al Raha natural water sources after years of neglect

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A revival plan for the neglect-hit ancient Ain Al Raha spring on Sitra won approval from the Capital Trustees Board yesterday, with the file sent to the competent bodies to take it forward.

The proposal was put forward by council member Mohammed Al Abbas, who said the spring was among Bahrain's oldest natural water sources and had suffered from neglect and environmental damage.

"Ain Al Raha is one of the oldest and most important natural springs in Bahrain," Al Abbas told the council. "Due to neglect and environmental factors, the spring has become threatened with disappearance."

The scheme centres on restoring the spring itself, starting with clearing the basin and removing built-up sediment, then strengthening its walls using materials meant to preserve its archaeological character.

Study

It also calls for a study into restoring natural water flow, or creating an interim option that mirrors the spring's earlier form.

Around the site, the proposal sets out plans for a heritage park with walking paths, shaded seating and rest areas, and planting to recreate the spring's older setting, when it was surrounded by palm trees.

The plan also calls for low lighting suited to the site's historic character, CCTV cameras to deter vandalism, and a low heritage-style fence to mark the



The Ain Al Raha spring has suffered from neglect and environmental damage spring's boundary and protect it without spoiling the view.

Workshops

An information centre is proposed to display photographs and documents on Ain Al Raha and other old springs in Sitra and across Bahrain, with the option of school workshops on the country's water heritage.

Al Abbas said the project was meant to serve residents and visitors, and could support small local ventures linked to the site, such as heritage crafts, a traditional café and guided tours.

"This project represents an important step to revive Ain Al Raha and protect Bahrain's

natural and historical heritage," he said.

Support facilities in the proposal include public toilets near the site, parking designed not to harm the surrounding environment, and the option of small heritage kiosks selling local goods.

The Board has discussed the site before.

Plot

In December 2017, it approved reclassifying the plot at Ain Al Raha, recorded as Property No. 06019307 in Sitra's Block 603, to recreational zoning in preparation for a public park.

The decision was then referred on an urgent basis to the



"The project is meant to serve residents and visitors, and could support small local ventures linked to the site, such as heritage crafts, a traditional café and guided tours."

— MOHAMMED AL ABBAS, CAPITAL TRUSTEES BOARD MEMBER

Urban Planning and Development Authority.

In a response relayed in July 2018, the authority said the plot fell within "unplanned areas" under the approved maps at the time, while a detailed plan for the wider area was being prepared to adjust land status and create a fuller road network.

Services

It added that the location of Ain Al Raha had been preserved and that services were being provided to support it as a future public park within the plan under study.

Under the current classification maps, the site is listed within an archaeological area.

Three Asians held over 'dead drop' drug case



High Criminal Court hearing set for Sunday

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Three Asian men accused of running a drug 'dead drop' scheme in Bahrain are due before the High Criminal Court next Sunday, with the court ordering they remain in custody.

Prosecutors say the case began during a security sweep aimed at people in breach of residency rules.

An officer stopped the first defendant and asked for his ID.

He replied that it was at his home, so the officer went with him to the address.

Abnormal state

Inside, police found two other men, the second and third defendants, who were said to be in an abnormal state.

An officer also saw a wrap on the floor believed to contain narcotics.

Searches then followed, first of the men, then of the home itself.

Investigators say they seized wraps and capsules containing suspected drugs, along with bags holding other narcotic substances.

They also found A4 sheets soaked with drug material,

a travel bag containing tools used to divide up the substances, and an accounts notebook thought to be used to record drug quantities and sales.

Admission

The first and second defendants admitted during prosecution questioning that they possessed the drugs for both trafficking and personal use, according to the file.

The first defendant told investigators the second and third worked with him to distribute narcotics through a dead drop system.

A forensic extraction of the third defendant's phone is said to show locations marked with signs and symbols, alongside references to bottles containing liquid substances and capsules containing a white powder.

Notebook

A handwriting and document expert concluded the seized notebook was used in the sale and preparation of narcotics, and that it was written by the first defendant.

The Public Prosecution alleges the three were part of an organised network that brings drugs into Bahrain, divides them into smaller quantities, and distributes them using dead drops for Asian nationals living abroad in return for money.

Third District logged 346 complaints up to December 2025

132 raised through 'Tawasul'

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Paperwork piled up in the Capital Governorate's Third District over a two-year span, with 346 complaints and proposals filed from 1 January 2024 until December 2025, a report presented to the Capital Trustees Board said.

Residents lodged the largest

share, at 141 submissions, followed by 132 raised through the National System for Suggestions and Complaints, known as 'Tawasul'.

The Board also covered 24 site visits and 36 requests submitted by board members, along with 10 submissions from civil society bodies and three from MPs representing the Capital area.

The report said the district covers 17 residential blocks across Sanabis, Daih, Jidhafs, Karbabad, Seef District, Al Qal'ah and Nurana.

It also includes five public parks: Sanabis Park, Karbabad



Capital Trustees Board meeting in progress

Park, Daih Park, Seef Park and Jidhafs Park.

Most cases were routed to works-related bodies.

Works Affairs received 56 per cent of submissions, while 37 per cent went to the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and

Agriculture and 1 per cent to the General Directorate of Traffic, according to the report.

A breakdown of requests sent

to the Ministry of Works showed 114 submissions in total.

Road and pavement maintenance led the list with 44 requests, followed by 40 tied to sewerage.

Another 16 involved traffic signs, eight concerned speed humps, four asked for new or planned parking spaces, and two sought the installation of poles and barriers.

On outcomes, the report said 42 per cent of requests had been completed, 38 per cent had received replies, and 20 per cent remained under review.



Support for cancer patients

The Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) carried out a community-based humanitarian initiative titled "My Strength Is Greater Than Every Challenge" under the Youth Support pillar and the Youth Empowerment Program and Community Initiatives. The initiative was implemented by the youth team Future Makers in cooperation with the Oncology Center at King Hamad University Hospital. It aimed to fulfill the wish of the Ambassador of Hope, cancer survivor Ruqayya Ashkanani, by providing psychological and moral support to oncology patients and reinforcing values of hope and strength in facing health challenges, reflecting the spirit of social solidarity and humanitarian work.

Capital Governorate Majlis



The attendees at the Capital Governorate Majlis extended profound gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa for the Royal Decree designating 2026 as the "Year of Isa Al Kabeer". They commended this tribute, which honours the founder of the modern state and architect of its institutional renaissance, the late His Highness Isa Al Kabeer and the enduring national legacy of wisdom, justice, and civic loyalty. During the meeting, chaired by His Excellency Capital Governor Shaikh Khalid bin Hamoud bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the attendees highlighted the designation's significance in commemorating the foundational institutional development of the modern state.

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Seef Properties enhances Asset Management and Operational Development

Through the Cloud-Based "Yardi" Platform

● **As Part of Its Digital Transformation and Operational Efficiency Strategy**

Manama

Seef Properties, a leading integrated real estate development and asset management company in the Kingdom of Bahrain, has announced the continued growth and expansion of its use of the global "Yardi" platform, following the successful implementation of the system more than a year ago. This step forms part of the Company's digital transformation programme aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and advancing real estate asset management, with a positive impact

Mr Mohammed Baqi, Chief Financial Officer at Seef Properties



on the quality of services provided to tenants and visitors across its various projects.

This approach comes within the framework of strengthening operational and financial integration through Yardi's interconnected cloud-based solutions.

The platform has contributed to

standardising operational procedures, improving data integration, and enhancing the efficiency of real estate portfolio management, while also supporting the user experience across the mixed-use assets managed by Seef Properties. In addition, it has helped accelerate responses to tenant requests, enhance operational transparency, and improve the quality of reporting and data accuracy, thereby supporting informed decision-making at various levels.

As part of its development plan, Seef Properties continues to expand the scope of platform usage and to develop additional functions and processes linked to the system. This ensures greater scalability and alignment with the Company's current and future needs, while enhancing its readiness for growth and regional expansion in line with its strategic vision, which is centred on digital transformation to improve efficiency and operational performance.

On this occasion, Mr Mohammed Baqi, Chief Financial Officer at Seef Properties, said "The enhanced use of the 'Yardi' platform comes after the positive results we achieved during the first year of implementation. We have successfully unified operational and financial data within a single system, enabling faster and more accurate decision-making, enhancing the tenant experience, and improving service quality across the Company's various projects. We firmly believe that digital transformation is an ongoing journey, the benefits of which we are already seeing today in improved efficiency and more advanced ways of working."

He added, "We are keen to collaborate with experienced technology partners to support the development of a more structured and efficient operating ecosystem. This approach underpins our medium- and long-term development plans and strengthens our readiness for future expansion, in line with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030, which focuses on accelerating digital trans-

formation, enhancing the efficiency of economic sectors, and supporting sustainable business growth."

For his part, Mr Said Haider, Senior Manager at Yardi, said: "We are pleased to continue our collaboration with Seef Properties in developing and expanding the use of our technology solutions, supporting the transition of its real estate operations towards a more integrated digital environment. We look forward to build-

ing on the progress achieved during the operational phase by further enhancing data integration across departments and improving process efficiency, in line with growth plans and long-term sustainability in the real estate market."

"Yardi" is a leading global provider of integrated software solutions for real estate management, offering advanced platforms for asset management, accounting, operations, tenant services and intelligent analytics. Its solutions are used by companies worldwide to streamline operations and enhance operational efficiency through a unified platform.

Mr Said Haider, Senior Manager at Yardi



EU olive oil import checks rare or 'non-existent': watchdog

Inadequate controls on imports are a recurring grievance of European farmers

● **Tunisia is by far the largest exporter to the bloc, followed by Turkey, Mercosur member Argentina and Morocco**

● **Focusing on leading oil producers Greece, Spain and Italy as well as Belgium, the ECA report found that none did a good job of checking imports.**

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

Olive oil imported into the EU is rarely, if ever, checked for potentially harmful substances, auditors said Wednesday, reinforcing European farmers' concerns as Brussels pushes for new trade deals.

An olive oil superpower, the European Union has "robust" rules to ensure the stuff drizzled on salads, pasta and other foods is of good quality -- but they are not always fully applied, according to an EU watchdog.

A new report by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) found import controls for pesticides and other contaminants were "either non-existent or sporadic" in the countries it analysed. "Improving checks, traceabil-



Employees fill containers with olive oil at the Ben Bazza olive mill in Teboursook, in the Beja region of northern Tunisia

ity, and legal clarity is essential to protect not only consumers but also the reputation of European olive oil," said Joelle Elvinger, the member in charge of the audit. Inadequate controls on agricultural imports are a recurring grievance of European farmers opposing new trade deals like the pact Brussels is to sign with South American bloc Mercosur Saturday.

Farmers complain that such accords expose them to unfair competition from less-regulated overseas competitors who use pesticides and other substances banned in the EU.

"This further confirms the preoccupation of the EU farming in terms of lack of sufficient controls to guarantee reciprocity in standard," pan-European

agriculture lobby group Copacogeca told AFP, commenting on the report's findings.

The 27-nation EU is the world's top producer, exporter, and consumer of olive oil.

As such, it imports the equivalent of just around nine percent of its annual production of the Mediterranean diet staple.

Tunisia is by far the largest exporter to the bloc, followed by Turkey, Mercosur member Argentina and Morocco.

Focusing on leading oil producers Greece, Spain and Italy as well as Belgium -- home to the large port of Antwerp, a key import hub -- the ECA report found that none did a good job of checking imports.

For example, no olive oil consignments were checked at It-

aly's main entry points in 2023 and 2024, and Spain analysed only three samples for pesticide residues between 2018 and 2023. Pesticide checks on oil made in the EU were instead "well established", but controls for other contaminants were "inconsistent", the report said.

The European Commission has promised to step up checks on agricultural imports and to block imports of food treated with several EU-banned pesticides, as it sought to allay farmers' concerns over the Mercosur deal.



Olive oil is one of the few cooking oils that is extracted purely by mechanical pressing of fruit (olives), without the use of chemical solvents, which is why extra virgin olive oil retains natural antioxidants and is a key component of the heart-healthy Mediterranean diet.

Egypt says all parties agree on Gaza technocratic committee members



Makeshift shelters inside a war-damaged building, parts of which collapsed on a windy winter day in Gaza City

Cairo, Egypt

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said Wednesday that all the members of a 15-person Palestinian technocratic committee meant to administer truce-war Gaza had been agreed upon by all parties.

Hamas officials said earlier in the day that the group had opened talks with Egyptian mediators in Cairo on the committee, which forms part of the US-brokered truce plan for the Palestinian territory.

"We hope that following this agreement, the committee will be announced soon... and will then be deployed to the Gaza Strip to manage daily life and essential services," Abdelatty said.

The Cairo meeting aimed to address the formation of the committee and its operational mechanisms, a senior Hamas

official had previously told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Separately, the Hamas delegation was to also hold talks in Cairo with leaders of other Palestinian factions on "political, national and field developments" and the state of the Gaza ceasefire, the official added.

Hamas has repeatedly said it does not seek a role in any future governing authority in the Palestinian territory, and would limit its role to monitoring governance to ensure stability and facilitate reconstruction.

Talks with Egyptian mediators will also focus on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, the reopening of the Rafah crossing, the entry of aid currently stockpiled on the Egyptian side of the border, and preparations for launching the second phase of the ceasefire plan, the official said.

Pars Hotel team celebrates year-end



Al Watani Hospitality Co. W.L.L. organized a year-end get-together for the staff of Pars International Hotel to recognize employee dedication and teamwork throughout the year.

General Manager Uday Mahar presented the Digital Engagement Excellence Award to Meridee Sugga Cudal during the event



Financial Controller Ramesh Muthan presents a token of appreciation to a staff member.

Oil prices extend gains on Iran unrest

London, United Kingdom

Oil prices rose further Wednesday on the political instability in major crude producer Iran, which also helped push safe-haven gold to a new record high while weighing on the dollar.

Wall Street's main stock indices fell at the start of trading despite US retail sales posting a higher-than-expected 0.6% cent increase in November and several major US banks beating earnings expectation.

"Things are looking a little softer at the moment, reflecting a heightened sense of uncertainty in the air," said Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare.

"Some of that uncertainty revolves around the path of monetary policy after this morning's economic data worked against the notion of needing to cut rates again soon," he noted.

Recent data has indicated the US economy continues to hum, the labour market has not seen a major degradation and inflation is holding at a moderate level above the US Federal Reserve's target.

The Fed has tipped it would probably wait to make further cuts in interest rates, and most investors expect it will likely hold off for several months.

O'Hare also pointed to traders waiting for a possible US Supreme Court ruling on Wednesday on the legality of US President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs.

A ruling against the government would prove a temporary setback to its economic and fiscal plans, though officials have said that tariffs can be reimposed by other means.

Meanwhile, China said its trade last year reached a "new historical high", surpassing 45 trillion yuan (\$6.4 trillion) for the first time.

Global demand for Chinese goods has held firm despite a slump in exports to the United States after Trump hiked tariffs.

Other trade partners more than filled the gap, increasing Chinese exports overall by 5.5% in 2025.

"We expect this resilience to continue through 2026," said Zichun Huang, China economist at Capital Economics.

Much attention among traders remained on Iran, where a funeral ceremony began in Tehran on Wednesday for over 100 members of the security forces and other "martyrs" killed in the wave of protests, state television said.

"Traders are closely watching

Key figures at around 1430 GMT

Brent North Sea Crude:	▲ 0.9% at \$66.05 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 0.8% at \$61.39 per barrel
New York - Dow:	▼ less than 0.1% at 49,167.97 points
New York - S&P 500:	▼ 0.4% at 6,935.76
Nasdaq Composite:	▼ 0.7% at 23,554.20
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.3% at 10,167.96
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ less than 0.1% at 8,353.59
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 0.5% at 25,305.19
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 1.5% at 54,341.23 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▲ 0.6% at 26,999.81 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.3% at 4,126.09 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1655 from \$1.1643 on Tuesday
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3456 from \$1.3426
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 158.27 yen from 159.15 yen
Euro/pound:	▼ at 86.63 pence from 86.71 pence

the political unrest in Iran and possible US intervention, which could threaten disruption to the country's... oil production," said Helge Andre Martinssen, senior energy analyst at DNB Carnegie.

European and Asian stock markets mostly gained.

Tokyo shares jumped by 1.5% while the yen slumped to its lowest value since mid-2024 amid media reports that Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi planned to hold an election as soon as February 8.

Takaichi's cabinet -- riding high in opinion polls -- has approved a record 122.3-trillion-yen (\$768 billion) budget for the fiscal year from April 2026.

She has vowed to get parliamentary approval as soon as possible to address inflation and shore up the world's fourth-largest economy.

"We are seeing a shift in sentiment that could see European and Asian equities gain ground on their US counterparts," said Joshua Mahony, chief market analyst at Scope Markets.

On the corporate front, British energy giant BP revealed a write-down of up to \$5 billion linked to its energy transition efforts that will be reflected in the company's upcoming annual results.

Its share price was down 0.9% in London.

Hydrogen planes 'more for the 22nd century': France's Safran



Representative picture

AFP | Paris, France

Hydrogen-powered airplanes, touted by some as a way to slash carbon emissions from flying, are unlikely to prove a viable technology anytime soon, the head of French engine maker Safran said Wednesday.

"Hydrogen in aviation is more for the 22nd century," Olivier Andries told a French parliament committee.

Pan-European planemaker Airbus has been working for years on putting a hydrogen plane into service in the 2040s, but acknowledged last year that progress had been slower than expected.

Burning hydrogen only produces water, which is why the aviation and automobile industries have looked at it as possibility to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from travel.

Safran, a major engine supplier to both Airbus and Boe-

ing, already has engines that can be fuelled with hydrogen, Andries said.

But liquid hydrogen, even at -253 degrees Celsius (-423 F), takes up four times as much space as kerosene, which is what planes use at present.

That makes it impossible to use with current plane designs, while requiring billions of euros of investment in hydrogen storage infrastructure at airports worldwide.

"You cannot only come up with ideas that are incompatible with today's ecosystem," Andries told lawmakers.

He also cast doubt on calls to impose limits on flying to curb emissions, as the air transport sector aims to cut its 2005 pollution emission levels in half by 2050.

More than five billion people travelled by plane last year, he said, and revenue for the global airline industry is already 20 percent higher than pre-Covid levels.

News in brief

◆ **Egypt's public** prosecutors on Wednesday ordered the education minister to stand trial over accusations he failed to follow a court ruling, a lawyer on the case told AFP. The case dates back to 2013, more than a decade before Mohamed Abdellatif was appointed minister, and involves a school in the Upper Egyptian city of Minya that the education ministry had been renting, said Amr Abdel Salam, a lawyer representing the school's owners. He said Egyptian courts had ruled the building must be returned to its owners, but successive governments allegedly kept delaying execution of the order. In December, a formal warning was sent to Abdellatif but he refused to carry it out, the lawyer said. "This forced the school owners to take legal action against him," he added. If found guilty, the minister could be jailed, removed from office and ordered to pay one million Egyptian pounds (\$21,000) in compensation, Abdel Salam said.



Egypt education minister faces trial over ignored court order

Canada's Carney arrives in China for state visit

◆ **Canadian Prime Minister** Mark Carney arrived in Beijing on Wednesday for a state visit, Chinese state broadcaster CCTV said. Carney, who is expected to meet President Xi Jinping for talks on Friday, is the first Canadian leader to visit China in eight years. The two leaders met on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in South Korea in October, which Carney described as a "turning point" in the two nations' strained relationship. Carney's predecessor Justin Trudeau visited China in December 2017. But ties withered in 2018 after the arrest of a senior executive from Chinese tech giant Huawei on a US warrant in Vancouver and China's retaliatory detention of two Canadians on espionage charges.

◆ **President Donald Trump** said Tuesday that the United States would react strongly if authorities in Iran started hanging people in their crackdown on a popular uprising against the government. "We will take very strong action if they do such a thing," he told CBS News in an interview, when asked about hangings potentially beginning on Wednesday. "When they start killing thousands of people -- and now you're telling me about hanging. We'll see how that's going to work out for them," Trump said in a video clip released online. The interview took place as Trump was in the northern US state of Michigan to visit a manufacturing plant and deliver a speech on the economy. In his speech, Trump reiterated a message he had posted earlier on social media, that "help is on its way" for the Iranian protesters. He also said it was unclear what the death toll in Iran actually was.

Trump vows 'very strong action' if Iran hangs protesters



SPOTLIGHT

Visa-free transit announced for Indians travelling to and from UK

TOI | New Delhi



Indians will soon be able to travel to & from the UK via Germany, in a significant development for Lufthansa, Air India and desi globetrotters, Germany has announced visa-free transit for Indians during Chancellor Friedrich Merz's official visit to India. Travel agents and airlines are now awaiting the date from this will be implemented.

Once effective, desi travelers will be able to travel between India and the UK via Germany on Lufthansa. Also, Air India will be able to code share with Lufthansa to & from the UK and increase passenger numbers on its German flights.

"Announcement of visa free transit for Indian passport holders for transiting through Germany," govt said in a statement on the 27 outcomes of the Chancellor's India visit. Once implemented, this move will partially undo the impact on Indian (and many other foreign) travellers caused by Brexit six years ago.

At the time of Brexit to "hurt" each others' airlines, the UK and EU mandated a transit visa will be required for travelling to one via the other. Which means, an Indian going from Delhi to London via Frankfurt will require a transit Schengen visa to get on the connecting flight. Similarly, an Indian travelling from Mumbai to Munich via London will re-

quire a transit UK visa to take the connecting flight. The UK is a huge market for Lufthansa and Air India. Once implemented, this development will again enable Lufthansa to fly travellers (both flying it and code share ones on Air India) from India via its hubs in Germany to the UK. There are also some other visa-free destinations also which Indians can now travel to & from by transiting from Germany, like those in the Caribbean.

Transit visa requirements must be kept in mind while booking tickets. There have been numerous cases when people booked via some unscrupulous agents or online travel agencies (OTAs) by just seeing the lowest price. For instance, travelling from India to Canada on an American carrier (for just transiting via the US) means the passengers must have a US visa.

Similarly, going from India to the US via Canada means a transit visa for the latter is required. Ditto for those travelling from India to the UK via Schengen states and the Schengen States via the UK. Soon Germany will be an exception for the UK.

Trump calls Greenland 'vital' for US as Danish FM braces for Vance talks

Trump says US control of Greenland 'vital' for air defense

● **Greenland's leader** said the island prefers to remain part of Denmark

● **Frederiksen** has warned that an attack on a NATO ally would end the alliance

● **United States** says needs Greenland due to the threat of a takeover by Russia or China

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump insisted yesterday the US needs to take control of Greenland, with NATO's support, just hours before crunch talks about the Arctic island with top Danish, Greenlandic and US officials.

Just hours before the meeting with US Vice President JD Vance was due to start, Trump said that US control of Greenland -- an autonomous territory belonging to NATO ally Denmark -- was "vital" for his planned Golden Dome air and missile defense system.

"NATO becomes far more formidable and effective with Greenland in the hands of the UNITED STATES. Anything less than that is unacceptable," he wrote on social media.

He said NATO "should be leading the way" in building the multi-layer missile defense system.

"IF WE DON'T, RUSSIA OR CHINA WILL, AND THAT IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN!" Trump wrote.

Just prior, Danish Defence Minister Troels Lund Poulsen had sought to ease US concerns about security in Greenland, telling AFP Denmark was boosting its military presence there and was in talks with allies on "an increased NATO presence in the Arctic."

Trump has repeatedly threatened to take over the vast, strategic and sparsely populated Arctic island, and he has sounded emboldened since ordering a deadly January 3 attack in Venezuela that removed its president.

Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen and his Greenlandic counterpart were to hold talks later Wednesday in Washington with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Vice President JD Vance.

Lokke said he was hoping to "clear up certain misunderstandings." But it remains to be seen if the Trump administration also sees a misunderstanding and if it wants to climb down.

Trump, when asked Tuesday about Greenland's leader saying that the island prefers to remain part of Denmark, said: "Well that's their problem."

"Don't know anything about him, but that's going to be a big problem for him," Trump said.

Trump said on Friday that he wanted Greenland "whether they like it or not" and "if we



Apartment buildings and houses are pictured in Nuuk, Greenland



Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and US President Donald Trump

don't do it the easy way, we're going to do it the hard way."

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has warned that an attack on a NATO ally would end the alliance.

While an agreement with Denmark allows the United States to station as many soldiers as it wants on Greenland, Trump has doubled down on US ownership, telling reporters on Sunday that "we're talking about acquiring not leasing."

The former real estate developer told The New York Times that ownership "is psycholog-

ically needed for success" and "gives you things and elements that you can't get from just signing a document."

Trump maintains the United States needs Greenland due to the threat of a takeover by Russia or China.

The two rival powers have both stepped up activity in the Arctic, where ice is melting due to climate change, but neither claims Greenland, which is home to 57,000 people.

'Bad ally'?

Vance, who slammed Denmark

as a "bad ally" during a visit to Greenland last year, is known for his hard edge, which was on display when he publicly berated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during a White House meeting in February.

It has not been announced if the Greenland meeting will be open to the press.

"If the US continues with, 'We have to have Greenland at all cost,' it could be a very short meeting," said Penny Naas, a senior vice president at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, a Washington think tank.

"If there is a slight nuance to it, it could lead to a different conversation," she said.

Denmark increases military presence in Greenland 'from today': defence ministry

Denmark will beef up its military presence in Greenland "from today", the defence ministry said Wednesday, just before high-stakes talks were to start in Washington over US President Donald Trump's threats to take over the Arctic island.

"The Danish armed forces are, from today, deploying capabilities and units related to ... exercise activities. In the period ahead, this will result in an increased military presence in and around Greenland, comprising aircraft, vessels and soldiers, including from NATO allies," the ministry said in a statement.



Denmark is a founding member of NATO and its military joined the United States in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the latter to much criticism.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



The President stands with ICE. I stand with ICE. We stand with all of our law enforcement officers

@VP

02



The new Amrit Bharat trains mark a significant step in improving passenger comfort and connectivity. Other benefits include boosting commerce and tourism!

@narendramodi

03



In Aleppo, Syria, due to fighting since 6 January, 2 paramedics and 2 health workers were injured. At least ten health facilities were forced to suspend operations due to insecurity, hostilities in their vicinity, and access constraints.

@DrTedros

04



We all want peace for Ukraine. For this, Ukraine must be in a position of strength. Today we table our proposal for a Euro90 billion loan for 2026 and 2027.

@vonderleyen

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

Thailand crane collapses onto train, **killing 32**



An aerial view of the wreckage of a train that crashed when a construction crane collapsed in Thailand's Nakhon Ratchasima province

AFP | Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand

A crane at a China-backed high-speed rail project in Thailand collapsed onto a passenger train on Wednesday and caused it to derail, killing at least 32 people, authorities said.

The massive crane's broken structure was left resting on giant concrete pillars, while smoke rose from the wreckage of the train below, footage from the scene verified by AFP showed.

The company contracted to build the section of the high-speed rail where the crane fell, Italian-Thai Development -- one of the Thailand's biggest construction firms -- has seen a series of deadly accidents at its sites in recent years.

The firm expressed condolences for those killed and the dozens injured, saying in a statement it would "take responsibility for compensating the victims' families and covering medical expenses for those injured".



Recovery workers watch as a carriage of a train that crashed when a construction crane collapsed is lifted off the tracks in Thailand's Nakhon Ratchasima province

Dozens of rescuers worked into the evening, using other cranes to remove wreckage and searching for missing people in the tilted carriages in Nakhon Ratchasima province, northeast of the capital Bangkok.

Mitr Intrpanya, who was at the scene, said he heard a loud noise "like something sliding down from above, followed by two explosions".

"When I went to see what

had happened, I found the crane sitting on a passenger train with three carriages," the 54-year-old told AFP.

"The metal from the crane appeared to strike the middle of the second carriage, slicing it in half."

The Thai health ministry said 32 people were killed, three were missing and 64 were hospitalised including seven in serious condition.

Egypt says won't 'hesitate to take necessary measures' to preserve Sudan unity

AFP | Cairo, Egypt

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said yesterday that Cairo would take all necessary measures to preserve Sudan's unity, as the neighbouring country approaches its fourth year of war between the army and its paramilitary rivals.

Speaking at a press conference with the UN secretary-general's special envoy for Sudan, Ramtane Lamamra, Abdelatty said Egypt "will not stand idly by and will not hesitate to take the necessary measures in a way that preserves Sudan, its unity and territorial integrity".

Egypt shares its southern border with Sudan, and is one of the closest allies of the Sudanese army, which has been fighting the paramilitary Rap-



Sudan's Prime Minister Kamil Idris (front, C) waves as he arrives to deliver an address in Khartoum

id Support Forces (RSF) since April 2023.

Abdelatty said that Egypt "will not accept and will not allow under any circumstances the collapse of Sudan, the collapse of Sudanese national

institutions or harming the unity of Sudan".

"These are red lines," he continued, adding that "a violation to Sudan's national security is a violation of Egypt's national security".

Qatar says some personnel departing US base over 'regional tensions'



A photograph shows the wreckage of a burnt firetruck displayed in front of Tehran University during the funerals of security forces personnel killed in recent protests in Tehran

AFP | Doha, Qatar

Some personnel have been asked to depart the United States' Al Udeid military base in Qatar, two diplomatic sources told AFP on Wednesday, with the Gulf state saying "regional tensions" were behind the move.

The decision comes after Washington threatened to respond to an Iranian government crackdown on protests while Tehran has said it would strike US military and shipping assets in the event of a new attack.

The measure was taken "in response to the current regional tensions", Qatar's International Media Office said in a statement.

"Qatar continues to implement all necessary measures to safeguard the security and safety... including actions related to the protection of critical infrastructure and military facilities," it added.

A diplomatic source told AFP earlier that a number of personnel were asked to leave the base by Wednesday evening.

A second source confirmed the information, also on condition of anonymity.

The US embassy in Qatar

declined to comment on personnel movement at Al Udeid.

In June, Iran targeted the United States' Al Udeid military base in Qatar in response to earlier American strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities.

Ali Shamkhani, a senior adviser to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, warned US President Donald Trump on Wednesday that the strike on the base had demonstrated "Iran's will and capability to respond to any attack".

Doha was able to leverage the unprecedented attack on its soil to help deliver a speedy truce between Washington and Tehran.

Washington has repeatedly said the United States is considering air strikes on Iran to stop a crackdown on protesters.

Iranian authorities called the American warnings a "pretext for military intervention".

Norway-based NGO Iran Human Rights said it had confirmed 734 people killed during the protests, including nine minors, but warned the death toll was likely far higher.

"The real number of those killed is likely in the thousands," IHR's director Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam said.

UK govt retreats on mandatory digital ID to work

London, United Kingdom

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Wednesday defended his decision to shelve plans to make a digital ID mandatory to work in Britain.

The latest U-turn in his Labour government's policies follows an intense backlash against plans to introduce a free digital ID for UK nationals and those residing in the country in a bid to curb illegal migration.

Officials briefed British media late Tuesday that the new ID which had been proposed by the government in September would no longer be mandatory for employment.

"I'm determined to make it



UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer

harder for people to work illegally in this country, and that is why there will be checks," Starmer told parliament.

"They will be digital, and they will be mandatory."

2025 was **third hottest** year on record: climate monitors

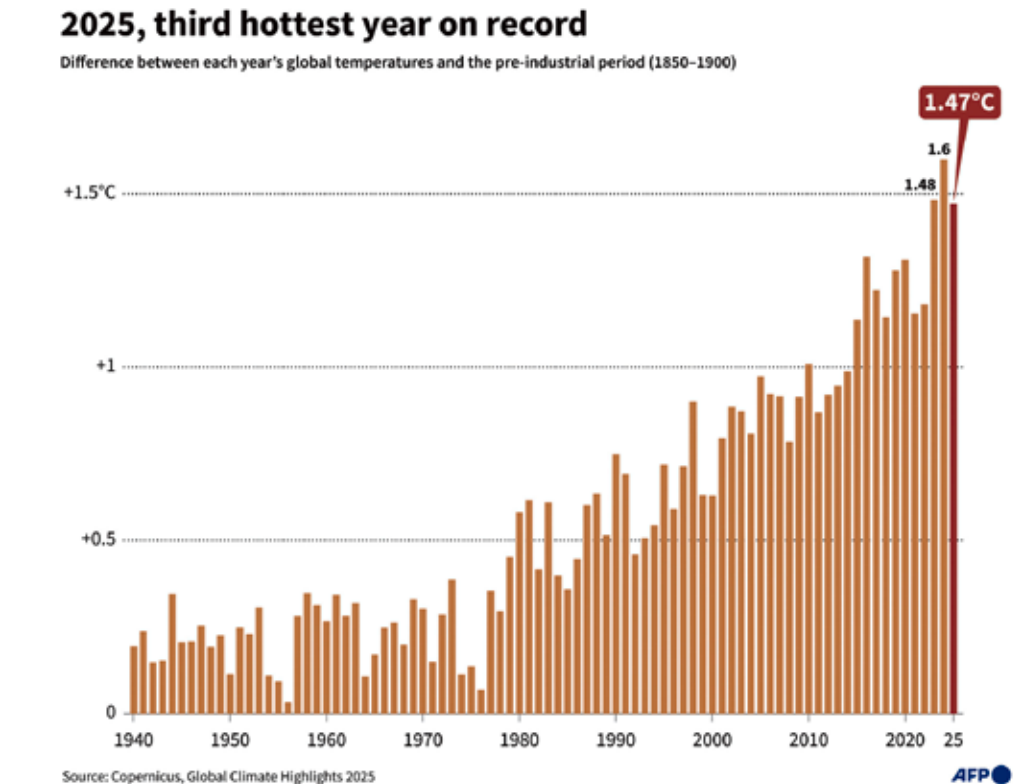
UN chief Antonio Guterres warned in October that breaching 1.5C was “inevitable”

● **Temperatures were 1.47C above pre-industrial times in 2025 -- just a fraction cooler than in 2023**

● **The WMO put the 2023-2025 average at 1.48C but with a margin of uncertainty of plus-minus 0.13C**

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

The planet logged its third hottest year on record in 2025, extending a run of unprecedented heat, with no relief expected in 2026, global climate monitors said Wednesday. The last 11 years have now been the warmest ever recorded, with 2024 topping the podium and 2023 in second place, according to the EU’s Copernicus Climate Change Service and Berkeley Earth, a California-based non-profit research organisation. For the first time, global temperatures exceeded 1.5C relative to pre-industrial times on average over the last three years, Copernicus said in its annual report. “The warming spike observed from 2023-2025 has been extreme, and suggests an acceleration in the rate of the Earth’s



warming,” Berkeley Earth said in a separate report. The landmark 2015 Paris Agreement commits the world to limiting warming to well below 2C and pursuing efforts to hold it at 1.5C -- a long-term target scientists say would help avoid the worst consequences of climate change. UN chief Antonio Guterres warned in October that breaching 1.5C was “inevitable” but the world could limit this period

of overshoot by cutting greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible. Copernicus said the 1.5C limit “could be reached -- over a decade earlier than predicted”. But efforts to contain global warming were dealt another setback last week as President Donald Trump said he would pull the United States -- the world’s second-biggest polluter after China -- out of the bedrock UN

climate treaty. Temperatures were 1.47C above pre-industrial times in 2025 -- just a fraction cooler than in 2023 -- following 1.6C in 2024, according to Copernicus. The World Meteorological Organization, the UN’s weather and climate agency, said two of eight datasets it analysed showed 2025 was the second warmest year, but the other six datasets ranked it third. The WMO put the 2023-2025

average at 1.48C but with a margin of uncertainty of plus-minus 0.13C. Despite the cooling La Nina weather phenomenon, 2025 “was still one of the warmest years on record globally because of the accumulation of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in our atmosphere”, WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo said in a statement. Some 770 million people experienced record-warm annual conditions where they live, while no record-cold annual average was logged anywhere, according to Berkeley Earth. The Antarctic experienced its warmest year on record while it was the second hottest in the Arctic, Copernicus said. An AFP analysis of Copernicus data last month found that Central Asia, the Sahel region and northern Europe experienced their hottest year on record in 2025.

2026: Fourth-warmest?

Berkeley and Copernicus both warned that 2026 would not break the trend. If the warming El Nino weather phenomenon appears this year, “this could make 2026 another record-breaking year”, Carlo Buontempo, director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service, told AFP. “Temperatures are going up. So we are bound to see new records. Whether it will be 2026,

2027, 2028 doesn’t matter too much. The direction of travel is very, very clear,” Buontempo said. Berkeley Earth said it expected this year to be similar to 2025, “with the most likely outcome being approximately the fourth-warmest year since 1850”.

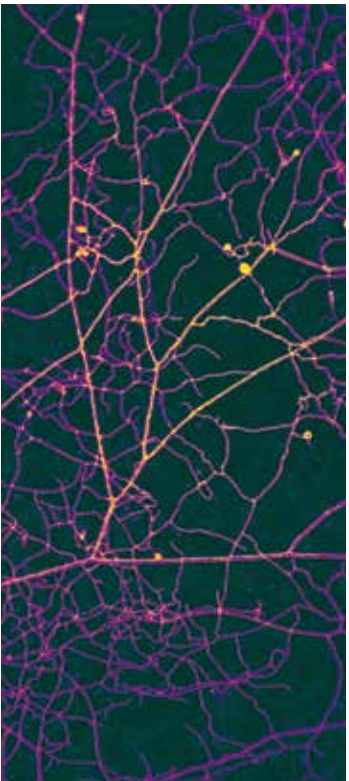
Emissions fight

The reports come as efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions -- the main driver of climate change -- are stalling in developed countries. Emissions rose in the United States last year, snapping a two-year streak of declines, as bitter winters and the AI boom fuelled demand for energy, the Rhodium Group think tank said Tuesday. The pace of reductions of greenhouse gas emissions slowed in Germany and France. “While greenhouse gas emissions remain the dominant driver of global warming, the magnitude of this recent spike suggests additional factors have amplified recent warming beyond what we would expect from greenhouse gases and natural variability alone,” said Berkeley Earth chief scientist Robert Rohde. The organisation said international rules cutting sulphur in ship fuel since 2020 may have actually added to warming by reducing sulphur dioxide emissions, which form aerosols that reflect sunlight away from Earth.

Scientist wins ‘Environment Nobel’ for shedding light on hidden fungal networks

AFP | Washington, United States

Beneath the surface of forests, grasslands and farms across the world, vast fungal webs form underground trading systems to exchange nutrients with plant roots, acting as critical climate regulators as they draw down 13 billion tons of carbon annually. Yet until recently, these “mycorrhizal networks” were greatly underestimated: seen as merely helpful companions to plants rather than one of Earth’s vital circulatory systems. American evolutionary biologist Toby Kiers has now been awarded the Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement -- sometimes called the “Nobel for the environment” -- for her work bringing this underground world into focus. By charting the global distribution of mycorrhizal fungi in a worldwide Underground Atlas launched last year, Kiers and her colleagues have helped illuminate below-ground biodiversity -- insights that can guide conservation efforts to protect these vast carbon stores.



microscopic image of network formed by arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi.

Plants send their excess carbon below ground where myc-

orrhizal fungi draw down 13.12 billion tons of carbon dioxide -- around a third of total emissions from fossil fuels. “I just think about all the ways that soil is used in a negative way -- you know, terms like ‘dirtbag,’” the 49-year-old University Research Chair at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam told AFP in an interview. “Whereas a bag of dirt contains a galaxy!” **Biological marketplace** Kiers began studying fungi at 19, after writing a grant proposal that won her a place on a scientific expedition to Panama’s rainforests, “and I started asking questions about what was happening under these massive trees in this very diverse jungle.” She still vividly recalls the first time she peered through a microscope and saw an arbuscule -- the mycorrhizal fungi’s tiny tree-like structure that penetrates plant cells and serves as the site of nutrient exchange -- which she described as “so beautiful.” In 2011, Kiers published a landmark paper in Science

showing that mycorrhizal fungi behave like shrewd traders in a “biological marketplace,” making decisions based on supply and demand. With filaments thinner than hair, fungi deliver phosphorus and nitrogen to plants in exchange for sugars and fats derived from carbon. Using lab experiments her team demonstrated that fungi actively move phosphorus from areas of abundance to areas of scarcity -- and secure more carbon in return by exploiting those imbalances. Plants, in other words, are willing to pay a higher “price” for what they lack. The fungi can even hoard resources to drive up demand, displaying behavior that echoes the tactics of Wall Street traders. The fact that all this happens without a brain or central nervous system raises a deeper question: how fungi process information at all -- and whether electrical signals moving through their networks hold the answer. **Debt of gratitude** More recently, Kiers and her

colleagues have pushed the field further with two Nature papers that make this hidden world newly visible. One unveiled a robotic imaging system that lets scientists watch fungal networks grow, branch and redirect resources in real time; the other mapped where different species are found across the globe. That global analysis delivered a sobering result: most hotspots of underground fungal diversity lie outside ecologically protected areas. With fungi largely overlooked by conservation frameworks, Kiers co-founded the Society for the Protection of Underground Networks (SPUN) to map fungal biodiversity -- and argue for its protection. To coincide with the prize, which comes with a \$250,000 award, SPUN is this week launching an “Underground Advocates” program to train scientists in the legal tools they need to protect fungal biodiversity. Her aim, she says, is to get people to flip how people think about life on Earth -- from the

surface down. “Life as we know it exists because of fungi,” she said, explaining that the algal ancestors of modern land plants lacked complex roots, and that a partnership with fungi enabled them to colonize terrestrial environments. **BETTER YOU KNOW** Beneath the surface of forests, grasslands and farms across the world, vast fungal webs form underground trading systems to exchange nutrients with plant roots, acting as critical climate regulators as they lock away 13 billion tons of carbon annually. Yet until recently, these “mycorrhizal networks” were greatly underestimated: seen as merely helpful companions to plants rather than one of Earth’s vital circulatory systems.

Centrepoint and Max Make Grand Return to Muharraq at Marassi Galleria



Al Rashid Group (ARG) has announced the grand opening of new Centrepoint and Max stores at Marassi Galleria, marking the highly anticipated return of these beloved brands to Muharraq. The launch was attended by senior officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, including Shaikh Hamad Bin Salman Al-Khalifa and Ms. Entesar Al Asfoor, underscoring confidence in Bahrain's retail growth. The new Centrepoint serves as the brand's fifth location in Bahrain, offering a premium family shopping experience. Meanwhile, Max opened its eighth store in the Kingdom, providing trend-forward fashion for the style-conscious community. Sandeep Narain, Country Head at Al Rashid Group, emphasized that this return is a direct response to deep-rooted community loyalty. He noted that the reimaged stores reflect ARG's commitment to innovation and customer connection.

Bahrain-based Philanthropist K.G. Baburajan Meets Dalai Lama



Bahrain-based businessman and philanthropist K.G. Baburajan, alongside Chandy Oommen MLA of Kerala, and Biju Bhaskar, held a high-profile meeting with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in Karnataka. The visit focused on the upcoming World Parliament of Religions, organized by Sivagiri Mutt and scheduled for June 2026 in Dharamshala. The initiative commemorates the centenary of the Aluva Universal Religious Conference, a milestone in interfaith harmony. K.G. Baburajan, a prominent figure in the Bahraini business community, played a key role in discussing the global summit's goals of peace and unity. During the audience, the delegation presented the spiritual leader with Sri Narayana Guru's *Daiva Dasakam* and a Tibetan-language poetry book authored by Dr. Lakshmidasan.

Oman Ambassador Opens 'Colors of the East International Art Exhibition 2026'



H.E. Faisal bin Harib Al Busaidi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Bahrain, inaugurated the Colors of the East International Art Exhibition 2026 at Seef Mall - Muharraq. Held on Bahrain's Diplomatic Day, the event features artists from over 30 countries. As the Guest of Honor, Oman's participation reflects the deep diplomatic and cultural ties between the two nations. The Ambassador praised the Omani Art Ambassadors team for their contemporary works and lauded the gallery's efforts in building artistic bridges. The exhibition marked the launch of the "Ports Exhibitions" series, starting from the historic Port of Dilmun in Bahrain. Organizer Engineer Mahdi Al-Jalawi stated that the event serves as a global platform for diverse visual experiences.

Midal Cables Sets Strategic Roadmap for 2026 at Annual Management Review



Midal Cables recently concluded its annual group-wide management review, bringing together global executive and senior leaders under the theme "We reflect. We adapt. We move forward." Chaired by Group CEO Mr. Khaled Abdul Latif, the meeting focused on aligning the group's 2025 performance with its 2026 strategic goals. Key priorities for the upcoming year include leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance operational efficiency, strengthening safety culture, and advancing workforce skill development. Mr. Abdul Latif highlighted that these sessions are vital for aligning leadership with the vision of Chairman Mr. Hamed Al Zayani and Managing Director Mr. Rashid Hamed Al Zayani. The review underscored Midal Cables' commitment to high governance standards and financial discipline.

World Hindi Day Celebrated at New Horizon School



New Horizon School marked World Hindi Day with a vibrant cultural program involving students from the Zinj and Segaya campuses. The event, held in the presence of Chairman Mr. Joy Mathews and Principal Mrs. Vandana Satheesh, was led by the Head of the Hindi Department, Mrs. Sindhu Mohanlal. The celebration showcased India's cultural diversity through songs, dances, speeches, and traditional games. A notable highlight was the "Nukkad Natak" (street play) performed by students. The ceremony also honored renowned Hindi literary figures and recognized student achievements, with Principal Satheesh distributing prizes to competition winners.

Asian School Students Donate Relief Kits to ICRF Bahrain



The Asian School Community Outreach Team has successfully gathered and donated dry ration kits to the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICRF Bahrain) to support underprivileged individuals. The student-led initiative was headed by Soham Pandit, Diya Mittaj, Merin Jibi, Sravya Takkellapati, and Tanish Mukherjee. Their efforts underscore a strong sense of social responsibility and compassion toward the community. ICRF officials commended the team for their dedication to humanitarian service and their commitment to helping those in need. This contribution aims to provide essential food security to vulnerable residents across the Kingdom. Those requiring assistance or wishing to support this ongoing charitable cause can reach the ICRF helplines at 35990990 or 38415171.

Classifieds



Call us on +973 36458394
email : advt@newsofbahrain.com

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(MAINTENANCEW).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 B03AZIZ@HOTMAIL.COM

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

ALNOOR SERVICES FOR SHIPPING 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 aqeel@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

LAGOONA BEACH RESORT&SPA has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17660383 or INTERMILAN_1984@HOTMAIL.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

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 17877209 or HANAN@ALHELLI.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

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

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

Al Helli Supermarket B.S.C Closed has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877209 or HANAN@ALHELLI.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

LAGOONA BEACH RESORT&SPA has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17660383 or INTERMILAN_1984@HOTMAIL.COM

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 Helli Supermarket B.S.C Closed has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877209 or HANAN@ALHELLI.COM

AL QASWA HOLIDAYS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37729998 or SAMEER-MESSAGE4U@YAHOO.COM

LILOU ARTISAN PATISSERIE has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17710271 or habibh@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 ELECTRCAL 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 WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING). GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17831000 or akjcont@gmail.com

BLACK NANKANA COMBINED FACILITIES ACTIVITIES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).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 37104606 or TANVIR87459@GMAIL.COM

STONE WELLNESS STUDIO has a vacancy for the occupation of INSTRUCTOR / COACH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36699305 or MSHAMASI@GMAIL.COM

TROPICAL FOR 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(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33303975 or mastana-l3330@gmail.com

BAHRIA CARE PRO SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35002840 or BAHRAIN.BH1947@GMAIL.COM

FREHA VEGETIBLE AND FRUITS has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17584235 or JAMAL.ALSAEDI66@GMAIL.COM

SHINE PROXIMA CARGO HANDLING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 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

MARAYEM CHATEAU SPA has a vacancy for the occupation of MASSEUR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36581119 or SJANA-HI41@GMAIL.COM

EBIN SINA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39477399 or ALALAWIF@GMAIL.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

MASHMOOM CLENIING 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 37415010 or SHABAZHUSSAIN786@GMAIL.COM

ARAB Union Contracting Co WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17533125 or GOLDENGROUPEBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

SKY TOWN FACILITIES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39484066 or GULF-BAHRAIN33@GMAIL.COM

SEAM MASTERS TAILORING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILORING FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33299543 or GHULAMHUSSAIN2916@GAMIL.COM

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

ZAINAB RICE TRADING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34431409 or ss.service.bh@gmail.com

Almoayyed Air Conditioning W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or proffice@almoayyedcg.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

Almoayyed Air Conditioning W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or proffice@almoayyedcg.com

CNL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33888886 or HAMAD@SPECTRUMOIL-FIELD.COM

CNL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33888886 or HAMAD@SPECTRUMOIL-FIELD.COM

PANORAMA CONTRACTING & ENGINEERING SERVI has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729935 or AHMED@PANORAMABH.COM

TAKAMUL SERVICES CO (TASCO) W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17344107 or MAJAJ101@HOTMAIL.COM

EBRAHIM AHMED MOHAMMED ALI has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36233880 or coolcare480@gmail.com

AL MOUSSAWI INTERNATIONAL FOR ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(ELECTRICIAN/ WIREMAN), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39688133 or sadeeiq@yahoo.com

ALFARAJ CONTRACTING & MAINTENANCE EST. has a vacancy for the occupation of ACCOUNTANT(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17693199 or ALFARAJ-CONST@HOTMAIL.COM

ALMOAYYED CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SCAFFOLDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17404949 or proffice@almoayyedcg.com

PANORAMA CONTRACTING & ENGINEERING SERVI has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729935 or AHMED@PANORAMABH.COM

DESI SHERAZ MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OF-

FICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37034219 or SHERAZSALEEM613@GMAIL.COM

TUHIN & MAHMUD WELDING WORKSHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37393526 or MDT52203@GMAIL.COM

KHANA ZARA CONTRACTING has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35137132 or KHANAZARABH44@GMAIL.COM

CAPITAL TOWN COMPUTER SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COMPUTER OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36929135 or MAHBEERK53@GMAIL.COM

LAAGMA GLOBAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38827037 or LAMAX-GULF@GMAIL.COM

ALLOYS JALAL W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17768200 or ALLOYS.JALAL@AIRMECH.NET

AMEERI INDUSTRIES (AMETECH) has a vacancy for the occupation of DRAFTSMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17166111 or hrameeri@ameeri.com.bh

4W SECURITY CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 177996666 or Government@mre.co

4W SECURITY CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 177996666 or Government@mre.co

Nidukki Trading Co. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17456218 or OPERATIONS@NIDUKKI.BH

MJ ASHOORI GENERAL TRADING has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34224254 or MOHUJ0140824.BH@GMAIL.COM

I'M ZAHRA BAKERY has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37275995 or abual-clearance@gmail.com

ALDAAYSI SONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of STORE LABOURER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39464237 or ALDAAYSI1@GMAIL.COM

MUHAMMAD USMAN ASLAM COMPUTER CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35577620 or USMANBH69999@GMAIL.COM

JAFFAR ABDULLA TAHA ALHADDAD has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17789073 or ABDULLA.ALHADDAD@GMAIL.COM

BATSCO CO. 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@bfmservices.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 CAMSDOC@GMAIL.COM

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

AAMIR NISAR GRIFFIN COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(-SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 66665177 or NISARAMIR878@GMAIL.COM

BADER TRADING COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES EXECUTIVE, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17583121 or acs@btccwll.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

MUBASHIR KHAN PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified appli-

cants can contact 34501443 or MOONLAND-BAHRAN@GMAIL.COM

A G DYNAMICS SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ACCOUNTANTS, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35119080 or info@agulfdynamics.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 OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33514410 or ELITEGC.AY@GMAIL.COM

ELITE GLOBAL CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33514410 or ELITEGC.AY@GMAIL.COM

BILAWAS KHAN CARGO AND COMBINED FACILITY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35354178 or BILAWASKHANC@GMAIL.COM

MACAS SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35466434 or USSIJIL@GMAIL.COM

MUGHAL PURA CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35137132 or AYSHASALEMBH12@GMAIL.COM

GOLDEN BREAD SWEETS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37790300 or RAKAEZ.BH@GMAIL.COM

SO SHEEK SALON has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER-HAIRDRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33236825 or NAFOLAD@GMAIL.COM

NAWAB CONTRACTING CO. BAHRAIN PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17340719 or STOPLEAK@BATELCO.COM.BH

Juffair Grand Hotel W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MASSEUR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17827600 or HRD@THE-JUFFAIRGRAND.COM

M N F CARS SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66646667 or ALBUAIN-AINF94@GMAIL.COM

JC RASHID COMBINED FACILITIES BAHRAIN PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38398065 or SHABAN-GUJJAR3002@GMAIL.COM

QUICK ZEBRA SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or hrd@dreamgroup.bh

CNL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33888886 or HAMAD@SPECTRUMOILFIELD.COM

BOMBAY BEACH CAFEFRIA has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39683992 or KARIMA-ALHIKI@HOTMAIL.COM

AHMED MOHAMMED JASSIM FURNITURE FACTORY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17784589 or hr@amjassim.com

QUICK ZEBRA SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or hrd@dreamgroup.bh

Sumayas Design Tailoring has a vacancy for the occupation of SEWER AND EMBROIDERER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33335393 or SUMAYASDESIGN@LIVE.COM

M AZAM SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39771163 or RS1327493@GMAIL.COM

MARIA PALACE BUTIKUE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33676709 or RAJUJOSE71@GMAIL.COM

ZIRI SALON AND SPA W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BEAUTICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39411377 or mashtan.hotel@yahoo.com

EXCELLENCE INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17532010 or a.jawahery@exibah.com

VISTA TRAVEL & TOURISM W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES SPECIALIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33264595 or MUHAMMADNADEEMTARIQ6@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

CHOF CHOF W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36125010 or CHOF.PANCAKES@GMAIL.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

MANGROVE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39633019 or PASHA@KCBABHRAIN.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 qualified applicants can contact 17551111 or hr.admin@hajihassan.com

AL-SHERA AUTO ACCESSORIES has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33795990 or bader.khaleq@gmail.com

GOLD DUST CLEANING SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 13118898 or GOLDDUST.BH@GMAIL.COM

CHAI CLUB W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CHEF, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33188200 or CHAICLUBBH@GMAIL.COM

ZUBAIR CARGO HANDLING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33321681 or TALHARANA45678@GMAIL.COM

ALHAJ HASSAN CRANE DIVISION has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER/OPERATOR(CRANE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17551111 or MOHAMED.ABUALI@HAJIHASSAN.COM

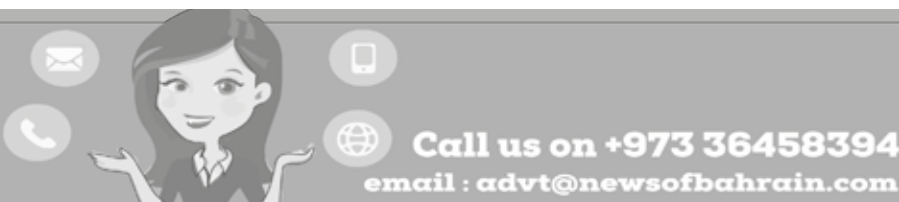
MOHAMED ASIF CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34405168 or HAJIASIF0067@GMAIL.COM

CLEANING LEADERS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33347766 or PER-WAIZ_I@HOTMAIL.COM

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

AIDA GARDENS W.L.L. has a

Classifieds



VACANCIES AVAILABLE CONTINUED

Bahrain Electromechanical Services Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(-MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17536275 or BEMCO@BATELCO.COM.BH

KHAN MAINTENANCE BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33390775 or anwarkamal3637@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

BUHESSA 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 ABDULLAH33821112@GMAIL.COM

AL SARAYA BAKERY FOR LOCAL BREAD has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35564562 or EIDM8688@HOTMAIL.COM

NEW FISH LOUNGE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39667588 or OSOOLAKHALEEJ@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-AHMED001@GMAIL.COM

SARGODHA DECORATION CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36903165 or yk33357949@gmail.com

LI SARA BOUTIQUE has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34168877 or ALIJAAAN83@GMAIL.COM

SKY TOWN FACILITIES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39484066 or GULF-BAHRAIN33@GMAIL.COM

GULF DIGITAL SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33056512 or MOMINSKH5@GMAIL.COM

HELSINKI CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37143431 or usamaasifqazi@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 RANAAM332@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 39187678 or KHANT19.MUJAHID@GMAIL.COM

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

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

AL DAR AL HAMRA CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of PLUMBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38801665 or ALDARALHAMRA.CONST@GMAIL.COM

ALMOAYYED CONTRACTING GROUP W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY VEHICLE DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or proffice@almoayyedcg.com

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

JUICES ON THE FLY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17404071 or pastriesonthefly@gmail.com

BAI BAI GOODS RE-EXPORT SERVICES CO BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66991090 or MIRZAMUBEEN1155@GMAIL.COM

BLACK HANIWALA COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37617271 or HAMMID777MP@GMAIL.COM

SABA FAMILY SALOON W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIRDRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35616728 or SWEETDORO82@GMAIL.COM

BELTAC REAL ESTATE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34126711 or AQIBCHAUDHRY225@GMAIL.COM

AKBAR AHAMAD COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of GRAPHIC DESIGNER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36675632 or MRMJANNATUL@GMAIL.COM

MARIA TARIQ SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39609881 or MOONLANDBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

DHA REPAIR OF MACHINERY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(-MAINTENANCE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34567895 or ABEERRAJPUTI@GMAIL.COM

AL JAZEERA SECURITY CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36945444 or info@jssbahrain.com

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Sinner in way as Alcaraz targets career Grand Slam in Australia

● Carlos Alcaraz seeks first Australian Open win

● Jannik Sinner aims for third straight title

● Victory would complete Alcaraz's career Grand Slam

● Djokovic pursues record 25th major title

AFP | Sydney

Carlos Alcaraz is targeting a career Grand Slam at the Australian Open but winning the only major to elude him will be no easy feat with great rival Jannik Sinner standing in his way.

Spain's Alcaraz already has six major titles under his belt aged just 22, but success on the Melbourne Park hard courts is a glaring hole in his resume.

He has not made it past the quarter-finals in four trips to Australia, losing at that stage in 2025 to Novak Djokovic and Alexander Zverev the year before.

"It's my first goal to be honest," Alcaraz said of Australia after winning the US Open last year, his second Slam title of 2025 after defending his crown at Roland Garros.

"When I just go to the pre-seasons to what I want to improve, what I want to achieve, Australian Open is there."

Should he snap his Australia drought at the tournament starting on Sunday, Alcaraz would



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz (R) shakes hands with Italy's Jannik Sinner (L) after their exhibition tennis match at Inspire Arena in Incheon

become the youngest man to bank a career Grand Slam, surpassing retired compatriot Rafael Nadal.

Nadal secured all four majors by the age of 24.

Alcaraz faces a significant roadblock in Italy's Sinner, the two-time defending champion who is chasing his own slice of history.

If the 24-year-old makes it three in a row in Melbourne he would join Djokovic as the only men in the Open era to do so. The Serbian legend has done the three-peat twice during his 10 titles at Melbourne Park.

"I feel like a better player than last year," warned Sinner after

completing his 2025 campaign with 58 wins and just six defeats.

"A lot of wins and not many losses. And in the losses I had, I tried to see the positive thing and tried to use it to evolve me as a player."

Sinner came from two sets down to defeat Daniil Medvedev in the 2024 Australian Open final before seeing off Zverev in straight sets a year ago.

Djokovic record hunt

While Sinner is the defending champion, Alcaraz leads 10-6 in their head-to-head record and bumped Sinner from the season-ending world number one spot.

They met in a light-hearted exhibition match in South Korea last weekend, the pair's only warm-up for Melbourne, with Alcaraz coming out on top.

Such is the dominance of "Sincaraz", as they are being called, they have shared the last eight Grand Slam titles, picking up four each since Djokovic won his 24th major at the 2023 US Open.

The Serb is back again at his most successful hunting ground, but there are questions over his fitness and form with the 38-year-old pulling out of this week's Adelaide International.

Still chasing a record 25th major crown, Djokovic could be at

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If Alcaraz wins, he would become the youngest man ever (22) to achieve a career Grand Slam, surpassing his compatriot Rafael Nadal, who completed the feat at age 24

his last Australian Open and will be desperate to win there again.

Djokovic made the semis at all four majors last year but went no further, admitting "I can do only as much as I can do".

World number three Zverev, along with Lorenzo Musetti, Alex de Minaur and Felix Auger-Aliassime, ranked five, six and seven respectively, will be looking to crash the party and win a first major.

Three-time losing finalist Medvedev is a dark horse after winning the lead-up Brisbane International, while American Learner Tien spearheads the new guard fresh from lifting the ATP Next Gen title.

Jakub Mensik and Joao Fonseca are also among the young talents looking to make a mark, while Alexander Bublik will fancy going deep after winning the Hong Kong Open and breaking into the top 10.

Roma sunk by late Torino winner in Italian Cup



Torino players celebrate during the match

AFP | Rome

Roma crashed out of the Italian Cup on Tuesday as they lost 3-2 at home to Torino despite a goal from 16-year-old prodigy Antonio Arena.

Trailing 2-1 going into the final 10 minutes, Gian Piero Gasperini decided to bring on the Australian-born centre forward who has represented Italy in underage football since last year.

On his debut for Roma, Arena sent the Stadio Olimpico wild as his first touch of the ball was to head in a leveller for the hosts.

But Roman joy was short-lived as Emirhan Ilkhan netted a 90th-minute winner for Torino.

Earlier, a Che Adams brace either side of a strike by Mario Hermoso had given Torino the advantage.

Torino will face Serie A leaders Inter Milan in the next round.

Semenyo an instant hit as Man City close on League Cup final

AFP | London

Antoine Semenyo made himself an instant Manchester City hero as Pep Guardiola's men took a giant stride towards the League Cup final with a 2-0 win at Newcastle.

The Ghana international, who joined from Bournemouth for £65 million (\$87 million) last week, opened the scoring and also had a second goal controversially ruled out.

But Rayan Cherki delivered what could be the knockout blow to the holders in the 98th minute.

The Magpies ended a 70-year wait for a domestic trophy by winning the League Cup last season, but will need a heroic fightback to reach Wembley when the sides meet again for the second leg of the semi-final on February 4.

Semenyo also scored on his debut on Saturday in a 10-1 demolition of Exeter in the FA Cup.

In previous years he would have been cup-tied after featuring for Bournemouth earlier in the competition.

Newcastle boss Eddie Howe made clear his dissatisfaction before the game with a rule change this season that allows players to play for two clubs in the one campaign and City took full advantage.



Manchester City's Ghanaian midfielder #42 Antoine Semenyo (C) celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal

Guardiola showed his desire to reach the final for the first time since 2021 as Erling Haaland made a first League Cup start in three years in a strong City selection just days before they visit Manchester United in the Premier League.

Yoane Wissa blazed a glorious early chance over the bar as Newcastle roared out of the blocks in front of a packed St. James' Park.

But that was the closest either side came in a cagey first half.

City goalkeeper James Trafford had been a long-term target for Newcastle prior to his return to the Etihad from Burnley in July.

The England under-21 international has had to play second fiddle to Gianluigi Donnarumma for most of the season but proved his worth with a stunning save to claw away Wissa's

looping header early in the second half.

Seconds later, Bruno Guimaraes blasted against the post as Newcastle pressed for the opening.

But they were caught with a sucker punch at the other end when Jeremy Doku sped towards the by-line and his cross was turned by Bernardo Silva into the path of Semenyo to prod home from close range.

Sabalenka favourite at Australian Open but faces Swiatek, US threats

AFP | Melbourne

Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka is favourite to win a third Australian Open in four years but faces strong competition from a United States contingent led by Coco Gauff and defending champion Madison Keys.

World number two Iga Swiatek is another big threat while two-time Melbourne champion Naomi Osaka will hope to be in the mix when the first Grand Slam of the year begins on Sunday.

Keys stunned title-holder Sabalenka 12 months ago in a classic three-set final to win her first major title aged 29.

But she failed to kick on from there, not winning another tournament all year, and the world number nine will have a target on her back as the title holder.

Three other Americans are ranked inside the world's top 10: Gauff (third), Amanda Anisimova (fourth) and Jessica Pegula (sixth).

The 21-year-old Gauff last year beat Sabalenka at the French Open for her second major crown, but her best performance



Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus waves to the fans after a match

on the Melbourne Park hardcourts was making the semi-finals in 2024.

Speaking at the mixed-teams United Cup, where she launched her 2026 campaign, Gauff said she spent the off-season “just overall becoming better and more comfortable with my

game”.

Her serve has been her biggest failing and she suffered a surprise defeat to Spain’s Jessica Bouzas Maneiro at the United Cup, but recovered to defeat Swiatek 6-4, 6-2 in a statement victory. It was Gauff’s fourth win in a row over Swiatek.

The 24-year-old Anisimova has emerged as a serious threat after enjoying the best year of her career in 2025, reaching the finals of Wimbledon and the US Open, and winning 1000 titles in Beijing and Qatar.

She also made the season-ending WTA Finals for the first time,

going down to Sabalenka in three sets in a high-octane semi-final.

“She always pushes me to play my best tennis,” said Sabalenka.

Like Pegula, a first major title remains elusive for Anisimova despite going close.

Swiatek, Sabalenka’s long-term rival for the top ranking, is overdue something special in Melbourne.

The Pole is a six-time Grand Slam champion and the Australian Open is the only major she has yet to win.

She matched her best Melbourne performance by reaching last year’s semi-finals, and did so in rampant style, only to lose to an inspired Keys.

“At a Grand Slam you have to really play great for two weeks, not have any bad days, be consistent,” the 24-year-old said at the United Cup.

Japan’s former world number one Osaka would be a popular winner if she were to add to her 2019 and 2021 Melbourne triumphs.

Now ranked 16th, the 28-year-old must rank as an outsider, capable of conjuring up her best tennis in flashes but unable to do it consistently and stay fit for

long stretches.

World number five Elena Rybakina, the Moscow-born Kazakh, is another to watch.

Imperious Sabalenka

It is hard to look beyond Sabalenka.

Having been stunned by the unfancied Keys, the Belarusian suffered more Grand Slam heartbreak in the French Open final against Gauff.

She then went down to Anisimova in the Wimbledon last four, before roaring back to get revenge over the American and retain her US Open title.

The Australian Open champion in 2023 and 2024, Sabalenka will be in an unfamiliar role when she goes into the tournament as runner-up from 12 months ago.

“Honestly, there is no difference,” the hard-hitting Sabalenka said in Brisbane this month, where she won the title for a second successive year in an ominous statement of intent.

“Every time, if I’m defending champion, if I lost first round last year, the goal is always the same -- to bring my best tennis and to improve my game.”

Al Khaldiya Strengthen Hold On Title



Al Khaldiya players celebrate their third goal against A'ali

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Matchweek 12 of the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League continued to shape the season yesterday, with table-toppers Al Khaldiya cruising to a 3-0 win over A'ali at Bahrain National Stadium, while Al Malkiya were held to a goalless draw by Al Hidd at Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Stadium.

Al Khaldiya, led by Tunisian manager Lassaad Chaabi, who took charge towards the end of 2025, took control early against A'ali. In the 15th minute, Moroccan playmaker Saifeddine Bouhra delivered a dangerous freekick cross, which Ahmed Bughamar glanced on. The ball deflected slightly off an A'ali defender and crept into the bottom corner, giving the hosts an early advantage.

The momentum stayed with the men in yellow, who doubled their lead just before halftime through Anas Ouahim. A cross from Badar Bashir appeared to be cleared by the A'ali defence, but a half-clearance fell perfectly for Ouahim, who calmly slotted the ball under the keeper.

A'ali had a chance to spark a comeback when Layton Nduwku was awarded a penalty in the 67th minute after Ayoub El Amloud fouled him in the box. Ricardo Silva, however, guessed correctly and saved the spotkick, maintaining Al Khaldiya's firm grip on the game. The miss proved costly, as Al Khaldiya added a third goal just three minutes later. El Amloud, redeeming himself after conceding the penalty, capitalised on Ouahim's rebound, volleying the ball off the turf and into the net to seal a ruthless 3-0 victory.

While Al Khaldiya celebrated, Al Malkiya and Al Hidd battled to a stalemate in a match defined by missed opportunities. Despite creating chances, neither side could break the deadlock, leaving both teams to settle for a point at 0-0.

Yesterday's results leave Al Khaldiya at the top of the table with 27 points, stretching their advantage as title favourites. A'ali remain in eighth with 13 points, while Al Malkiya stay fourth on 20, missing the chance to close the gap on reigning champions Muharraq. Al Hidd hold sixth with 14 points, continuing to struggle for consistency. Matchweek 12 continues tonight, with Muharraq facing Al Ahli at Khalifa Sports City and Sitra taking on Bahrain Club at Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Stadium, both fixtures kicking off at 7pm.

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Countdown underway for Bapco Energies Bahrain Championship

Prestigious press conference officially launches 2026 event at Royal Golf Club

Manama

The countdown to the 2026 Bapco Energies Bahrain Championship is officially on following a prestigious press conference at Royal Golf Club today, with an international field of leading DP World Tour players confirmed for the event.

Multiple Major winner Pádraig Harrington will headline the field, joined by Masters champion Sergio Garcia. The championship will feature a strong Olympic presence, with Harrington, Garcia, Matteo Manassero, Guido Migliozi, Thomas Detry, Ashun Wu, Bernd Wiesberger, Rafa Cabrera Bello, and Antoine Rozner all having represented their nations at the Olympic Games.

Past Bahrain champion Dylan Frittelli will return to the Kingdom of Bahrain, as the field is further strengthened by a strong contingent of multiple DP World Tour winners, including Rolex Series winners Paul Waring, Cabrera Bello and Wiesberger, alongside Thriston Lawrence, Pablo Larrazabal, and Ewen Ferguson. The lineup is completed by current Race to Dubai leader Jayden Schaper and 2025 Sir Henry Cotton Rookie of the Year Martin Couvra.

The event, attended by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and representatives from the General Sports Authority and Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority, shared insight into the tournament's final preparations, two weeks out from action getting underway.

The Bapco Energies Bahrain Championship, held under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, is set



to take place from January 29 to February 1 and will showcase a field of stars from more than 25 different countries.

Her Excellency Fatima bint Jaafar Al Sairafi, Minister of Tourism of the Kingdom of Bahrain, highlighted Bahrain's rising profile as a global sports destination, noting that hosting the DP World Tour attracts golf enthusiasts and visitors, supports tourism growth, and strengthens the Kingdom's position as a sports tourism hub. She emphasised the role of international media in showcasing advanced infrastructure for major events, and commended Bap-

co Energies for sponsoring this round of the tournament, highlighting the positive impact of such partnerships across related sectors.

Mark Thomas, Group CEO of Bapco Energies, added: "It is an honour for Bapco Energies to serve as title sponsor of the Bahrain Championship. As we bring world-class sporting experiences to our community, we are also proud to work with our partners to reduce fuel consumption and emissions, making sustainability a core part of this event's legacy."

With Bahrain now a buzz, His Excellency Faris Al-Koo-

heji, Secretary General of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, spoke of his excitement for this year's edition.

"This event highlights Bahrain's commitment to promoting sports excellence and reflects our vision of engaging our community. The tournament provides an opportunity to create meaningful experiences for local and international golfers, while shining on a global stage."

Tom Phillips, Director of Middle East for the DP World Tour, echoed the sentiment.

"The Bapco Energies Bahrain Championship holds a special place on the DP World Tour's

global schedule. This tournament is as much about showcasing world-class golf as it is about celebrating Bahrain's rich culture and proud heritage, and we are thrilled to return to Royal Golf Club and partner with Bapco Energies to deliver an event that again leaves a lasting impact."

Three Bahraini amateurs have also been confirmed to play on home soil. Ahmed Alzayed, winner of the Best Bahraini in King Hamad Trophy, Khalifa Almaraisi, the top ranked Bahraini Golf Association player of 2025, and Ali Mohamed Alkowari, having won the National Team Quali-

fying tournament, are all set to tee it up at Royal Golf Club in a fortnight's time.

"We're delighted to host such a prestigious tournament with a world-class field and local emerging talent at Royal Golf Club," said Captain Waleed from the Royal Golf Club. "We have received outstanding feedback from players and visitors, and we are excited to build on that momentum this year and into the future."

Now in its third year, the Bapco Energies Bahrain Championship has had significant impact since its inception, with an increase in tourism, economic activity and global recognition. Last year saw more than \$10.5 million injected into the local economy, while internationally, fans tuned in from upwards of 170 countries, resulting in a household reach of over 537 million. The tournament has also helped increase the number of golf rounds, membership requests and overseas visitors to Royal Golf Club.

This year's event will aim to build on the momentum, while also pioneering environmental initiatives focused on energy provision, including powering hospitality units and structures with solar energy and batteries.

Fans will be able to witness all the golfing action with free general admission tickets, while elevated and premium experiences are also available. Off the course, a full programme of fun, including a 100m zip line over the top of the Royal Golf Club, kids' entertainment and activities, traditional Bahraini souq and a wealth of food and beverage options make it a must-visit event for families and friends alike.

Keys overcomes serve demons to win latest Australian Open warm-up

AFP | Adelaide

Defending Australian Open champion Madison Keys overcame some first-set serve wobbles to win her latest warm-up match for the opening Grand Slam of the year yesterday.

The 30-year-old American, who will be seeded ninth when the Australian Open begins on Sunday, beat Czech teenager Tereza Valentova 6-4, 6-1 at the Adelaide International.

Keys, who won in Adelaide last year before going on to lift her maiden major, served up seven double faults in the opening set against the 18-year-old.

She improved in the second, breaking twice and converting her third match point to reach the quarter-finals after an 85-minute workout on court.



Madison Keys (L) is congratulated by Tereza Valentova

"Experience helps get through the tricky moments," Keys said. "I was able to take momentum in the second set and play really well. I had to raise my level. You have to take your chances on any opportunities you get."

World number 60 Valentova is one of a number of rising young talents on the women's circuit.

Mitchell century powers New Zealand to historic chase in India

AFP | Rajkot

Daryl Mitchell produced a commanding unbeaten century as New Zealand pulled off their highest successful run chase in India, beating the hosts by seven wickets in the second one-day international in Rajkot yesterday to level the three-match series 1-1.

Chasing 285, New Zealand reached 286 for 3 in 47.3 overs, with Mitchell's 131 not out off 117 balls steering the visitors home with 15 deliveries remaining at the Niranjan Shah Stadium.

New Zealand's reply had wobbled early as India's fast bowlers reduced them to 46 for 2 before Mitchell and Will Young turned the contest around with a decisive 162-run stand for the third wicket.

Young made a composed 87 off 98 balls, giving Mitchell the platform to attack India's spin-



New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell celebrates his century

ners, particularly Kuldeep Yadav, as the pitch quickened under the evening lights and New Zealand ended an eight-match losing streak against India in one-day internationals.

Earlier, India posted 284 for 7, built around a high-class un-

beaten 112 from KL Rahul after the hosts were sent in to bat on a surface that gripped in the afternoon.

Shubman Gill had earlier struck 56 to help India to a strong start before New Zealand's bowlers, led by seamer

Scorecard

Australia 567 (Head 163, Smith 138, Tongue 3-97) and 161 for 5 (Labuschagne 37, Weatherald 34, Tongue 3-42) beat England 384 (Root 160, Naser 4-60) and 342 (Bethell 154, Webster 3-64, Starc 3-72) by five wickets

Kristian Clarke with figures of 3 for 56, applied the brakes through the middle overs.

Mitchell, who brought up his eighth ODI hundred, was named player of the match after finishing the chase alongside Glenn Phillips, who contributed an aggressive unbeaten 32 off 25 balls.

The result gave Rajkot's new stadium its first successful ODI chase in five matches and set up a high-stakes series decider in Indore, where batters are expected to dominate in traditionally high-scoring conditions.