

Trump scrapped a proposed 20% Strait of Hormuz transit levy in favor of pursuing trade and investment deals with Gulf states | P6-7



Reaffirms SDG Commitment at UN



Sustainable Development Minister Noor bint Ali Al Khulaif represented Bahrain at the Ministerial Segment of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) at the United Nations in New York.

Addressing the General Debate, Al Khulaif reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 through national development plans focused on human capital, economic diversification, innovation, cultural preservation, and future-ready policies.

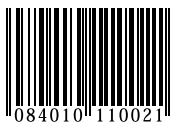
Anti-Trafficking Training Programme



The Bahrain Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) and the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) have launched a joint training programme to enhance national capabilities in combating human trafficking and promoting social justice.

The initiative will provide specialised training based on international best practices to strengthen institutional performance and professional skills. Officials from both organisations said the programme supports Bahrain's commitment to protecting human rights, improving institutional readiness, and reinforcing national efforts to combat human trafficking.

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United Against Regional Threats

President El-Sisi reiterates Egypt's support for Bahrain's sovereignty.

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa held talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi at Sakhir Palace. They reaffirmed the deep-rooted ties between Bahrain and Egypt and discussed the latest regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, along with several senior ministers.

The King praised Egypt's pivotal role in the Middle East, describing it as a cornerstone of regional security and stability. He also commended Egypt's steadfast support for Bahrain and its



solidarity with the Kingdom in the measures taken to safeguard its sovereignty, security, stability, and the safety of its citizens.

During the meeting, the two leaders reviewed the latest regional and international developments, focusing particularly on the evolving situation in the region and its implications

for peace and stability. They exchanged views on ongoing diplomatic efforts aimed at addressing the challenges facing the region.

President El-Sisi reiterated Egypt's strong condemnation of the continued Iranian attacks on Bahrain, describing them as a violation of state sovereignty,

international law, and established international norms, as well as a threat to regional and international peace and security.

HM King Hamad and President El-Sisi also reaffirmed their support for United Nations Security Council Resolution 2817, which strongly condemns Iran's attacks on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The resolution calls for the immediate cessation of all such attacks and provocations and affirms the inherent right of GCC countries and Jordan to defend themselves against Iranian aggression.

GCC Military Officials Meet



Major-General Ghanem Ibrahim Al Fudhala, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, chaired a meeting of GCC Assistant Chiefs of Staff for Operations in Bahrain.

The meeting, attended by senior GCC military officials, reviewed issues of common interest and explored ways to enhance military coordination and cooperation among the armed forces of GCC member states.

Security and Stability

HRH Crown Prince Meets UK Defence Advisor

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister met with Vice Admiral Edward Ahlgren, the United Kingdom's Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa, at Riffa Palace on Tuesday.

The meeting reviewed avenues to strengthen cooperation, discussed regional developments, and addressed issues of mutual interest.

HRH the Crown Prince highlighted the historic ties between Bahrain and the UK, emphasising both nations'



commitment to advancing their strategic partnership—particularly in military and defence cooperation—under frameworks including the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (CSIPA).

HRH stressed the UK's critical role, alongside its allies, in safeguarding regional and international security and stability.

Vice Admiral Ahlgren and his accompanying delegation were welcomed, with HRH noting the advanced levels of bilateral cooperation contributing to shared growth and prosperity.

Bahrain, Kuwait Pledge Closer Security Coordination

Talks focus on enhancing bilateral security cooperation and addressing regional developments

Interior Minister, General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, held talks on Tuesday with Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister, Shaikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al Sabah, during the latter's official visit to the Kingdom. The visit aimed at strengthening security cooperation and coordination between the two countries.

Welcoming the Kuwaiti minister, Shaikh Rashid highlighted the longstanding fraternal ties and historic relationship between Bahrain and Kuwait, founded on shared interests and common visions. He reaffirmed Bahrain's pride in its close relations with Kuwait and expressed the Kingdom's full support for all measures Kuwait



takes to preserve its security and stability.

Shaikh Fahad, in turn, reiterated Kuwait's support for Bahrain's security measures, emphasizing his country's solidarity with the Kingdom against any threat to its

security and stability. He stressed that Kuwait's position reflects the deep historical bonds between the two nations and their peoples.

The meeting also reviewed ways to further enhance bilateral security cooperation and

coordination, while discussing the latest regional and international developments. Both sides underscored the importance of strengthening joint Gulf security efforts to promote regional peace, security, and stability.

High Court Adjourns Terror Trial

The High Criminal Court on Tuesday adjourned the trial of 15 defendants accused of joining a terrorist organisation until July 21.

According to the Attorney General and Head of the Terror Crimes Prosecution, the defendants are accused of belonging to a group allegedly formed to undermine Bahrain's constitutional order, disrupt state institutions, and harm national unity. Prosecutors said the organisation promoted the ideology of Wilayat al Faqih, sought to spread its influence through places of worship and religious gathering sites, incited opposition to the political system, encouraged acts of terrorism and vandalism, and collected funds to support its activities.

The defendants appeared before the court in custody, represented by defence lawyers. The court adjourned the case to July 21 to allow the defence team time to review the case files, meet with the defendants, and complete the necessary legal procedures.



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Know the Rules Before You Rent

Muharraq Municipality issues advisory outlining the approval process, safety standards and legal requirements for shared group accommodation

- **Shared group housing applies to properties occupied by five or more unrelated people.**
- **Owners must notify the municipality and meet health, safety and security requirements before use.**

TDT | Manama
Neethu V

Muharraq Municipality is urging property owners to check with the municipality before turning any property into shared group accommodation, reminding them that municipal approval is mandatory under updated regulations

introduced through the Executive Regulations of the Municipalities Law. The reminder, shared as part of the municipality’s public awareness campaign, follows amendments introduced under Prime Minister’s Decision No. (30) of 2026, which require property owners to complete specific procedures and comply with health, safety and security standards before such properties can be occupied. Under Article (34) bis of the Executive Regulations, a property is considered shared group housing if it is occupied by five or more people who are not related up to the fourth degree. Before a property can be used for this purpose, owners must notify the competent municipality and

submit documentation confirming that all applicable health, safety and security requirements have been met. The municipality said the regulations are intended to organise the use of shared group accommodation while ensuring properties provide a safe, healthy and well-managed living environment. The measures are also designed to verify that buildings meet the required standards before they are occupied. Officials warned that using a property as shared group housing without completing the prescribed requirements and procedures constitutes a legal violation and could result in action under the law. Property owners have therefore been advised to consult their mu-



nicipality and complete all necessary formalities before allowing a property to be used as shared accommodation. The awareness drive forms part of Muharraq Municipality’s “Municipal Information – Knowledge is the First Step to Compliance” initiative, which aims to simplify municipal regulations and procedures, raise awareness of municipal services, encourage compliance with the law and promote public safety while contributing to a better organised urban environment.

Live Leech Found Inside Patient’s Nose After Nine-Day Ordeal

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

ENT doctors in Bahrain successfully extracted a live leech from a patient’s nasal cavity after the patient endured nine days of nasal obstruction and continuous bleeding. In a public awareness social media post, ENT surgery consultant Dr Deena Shabib., who serves as Government Hospitals ENT chairperson, said a careful examination

of the patient revealed a live leech inside the nasal cavity, which was then safely removed. She explained that the case falls under internal hirutiniasis, a rare condition that occurs when a leech enters the body, often by drinking unfiltered natural water or swimming in it. The leech attaches itself to the mucous membrane inside the nose, causing continuous bleeding and obstructing the



A still from the video shows the live leech after removed it from the patient’s nasal cavity and placed it in a test tube.

airway until removal. Dr. Shabib said the accurate diagnosis helped identify the cause of the symptoms and allowed the leech to be safely extracted. She stressed the importance of seeing a doctor when nosebleeds or nasal obstruction persist without a clear cause.



Dr. Deena Shabib

She urged the public to ensure the safety of water sources, particularly during trips and outdoor activities in natural areas, to avoid exposure to such rare cases, adding that prevention remains the most important way to safeguard one’s health.

Hotel Worker Admits Candle Caused Fatal Flat Fire

Victim died after becoming trapped inside bathroom as flames engulfed

TDT | Manama
Rehab Mohammad

A 21-year-old hotel receptionist admitted to accidentally starting a fire in a staff accommodation flat after leaving a candle burning following Hindu prayers, resulting in her colleague’s death. Appearing before the High Criminal Court, the woman pleaded guilty to causing the blaze through negligence and accepted responsibility for the death of her Indian flatmate, who became trapped inside the bathroom as the fire spread through the shared bedroom. According to prosecutors, the accused arrived in Bahrain on February 23 to work as a hotel receptionist. On March 20, at around 11 a.m., she lit a candle and placed it on a small white wooden table in the bedroom she shared with three other women. She told investigators that it was customary to leave such candles burning throughout the day. Before leaving the room, she photographed the candle and sent the image to her mother, as she had done on previous occasions. Around noon, she went to take a shower while the candle remained lit. The victim later entered the bedroom, while the accused moved to the living room to watch television with another flatmate. At approximately 2.15 p.m., one of the women received a phone call from the victim, who said the room was on



Illustration purpose only

fire and that she was trapped in the bathroom. The women rushed to the bedroom but found the bed engulfed in flames and thick smoke filling the room. The accused told investigators that she froze at the doorway as they heard the victim crying for help but were unable to reach her because of the intense heat and smoke. One of the occupants alerted building security while the others retreated to safety. A security guard testified that the building’s fire alarm sounded at around 2.20 p.m. Upon reaching the fifth floor, he found three women outside the burning apartment, who informed him that another resident remained inside. Emergency services were immediately called, and firefighters extinguished the blaze while paramedics attended the scene. The defence requested additional time to review the case documents and prepare its arguments. The court adjourned the case until July 20.

Man Jailed 15 Years for Smuggling Marijuana Hidden in Women’s Handbags



TDT | Manama
Rehab Mohammad

The High Criminal Court sentenced a 30-year-old man to 15 years in prison and fined him BD10,000 after convicting him of importing marijuana for trafficking and possessing other narcotic substances for personal use. The court also ordered the confiscation of all seized drugs and related items. According to the Public Prosecution, the defendant illegally imported cannabis (marijuana) into Bahrain on January 10, 2026, intending to traffic the drugs. He was also found guilty of possessing cannabis (hashish) and the psychotropic substance methamphetamine for personal consumption. The case began when an Assistant Customs Officer at Bahrain International Airport identified suspicious items while screening luggage arriving from an Asian country via Sharjah. A suitcase displaying unusual green-coloured substances on the X-ray scanner was flagged

for further inspection. When the defendant arrived at the customs inspection area, he was directed to the red channel. During a search of his luggage, officers discovered two women’s handbags containing six nylon packets filled with suspected marijuana weighing 185.8 grams. They also found small bags with printed designs and drug-use paraphernalia. A Ministry of Interior major testified that investigations confirmed the defendant had imported the narcotics for trafficking, distribution and personal use. The investigation also indicated that he had previously sold marijuana to individuals known to him. Prosecutors said the defendant admitted the seized items belonged to him and were found inside his luggage. An examination of his mobile phone uncovered photographs of various public locations marked with indicators, images of white crystalline substances packed in transparent bags, and online transaction records believed to be linked to drug-related activities.

Foreign Workers Can Now File Online Appeals More Easily

LMRA Streamlines Appeals Against Work Abandonment Notifications

- **Administrative approvals cut by 25%**
- **Work abandonment notifications can be appealed within 11 working days**
- **Digital transformation and service re-engineering efforts.**



The Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) has launched an enhanced digital service allowing foreign workers to file appeals against work abandonment notifications, as part of Bahrain’s ongoing government initiative to improve and re-engineer public services. The upgraded service enables foreign workers to submit an appeal within 11 working days from the date a work abandonment notification is filed. The enhancement has reduced the number of required administrative approvals by 25%, while standardising service information across all channels and simplifying procedures. As a result, appeals can now be processed within three working days. Ahmed Ibrahim Al Arabi, LMRA Deputy Chief Executive

for Services and Business, said the initiative reflects the authority’s commitment to adopting innovative digital solutions that improve service efficiency, simplify procedures, and enhance the overall customer experience. He added that the upgraded service is part of the LMRA’s broader efforts to continuously improve service quality, saving time and effort for users while strengthening the effectiveness of Bahrain’s labour market system. The initiative also supports Bahrain’s wider government digital transformation programme. More than 1,300 government services have been documented, translated, and published, with around 800 services undergoing development and re-engineering across government entities. These improvements are based on feedback received through the national suggestions and complaints system Tawasul, investor comments, and secret shopper service evaluations, alongside the introduction of service guides and service level agreements aimed at improving efficiency, service quality, and customer experience.

From The Court

TDT | Manama
Rehab Mohammad

Three Jailed for Life Over IRGC Espionage Plot

High Criminal Court hands down life sentences in two separate cases of collaboration with Iran’s Revolutionary Guard

High Criminal Court sentenced three individuals to life imprisonment for collaborating with Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in two separate espionage cases, the Terror Crimes Prosecution announced. In the first case, a fugitive operative working for the IRGC recruited a Bahrain-based individual to gather intelligence on vital national installations intended as targets for potential Iranian strikes. The second defendant independently contacted an IRGC-linked online account, supplying video footage of previous Iranian attacks on Bahraini facilities and transmitting precise coordinates of critical sites for future targeting. The Public Prosecution launched immediate investigations upon receiving both reports, questioning defendants, gathering witness testimony, and deploying technical experts to analyse seized electronic devices. Both cases were heard both cases separately, ensuring full legal guarantees, including representation by defence counsel. The Public Prosecution described espionage for hostile foreign states as among the gravest threats to national security, pledging continued and firm legal action against anyone endangering Bahrain’s stability. All seized items were ordered confiscated.

Up to 5 Years for 10 Over Violence During Attacks

The Head of the Terror Crimes Prosecution stated that the High Criminal Court, in its session yesterday, issued two judgments in two separate cases involving 10 defendants convicted of committing acts of violence and vandalism during the criminal Iranian attacks on the Kingdom of Bahrain in March. The court sentenced them to prison terms of up to five years and ordered the confiscation of the seized items. The two cases stemmed from reports submitted by the competent security authority at the Ministry of Interior, stating that the defendants were arrested in the act at the scenes of the incidents after participating in acts of violence and vandalism that coincided with the criminal Iranian attacks on the Kingdom of Bahrain, before being referred to the Public Prosecution. The Public Prosecution immediately launched investigations by questioning the defendants in detail while ensuring all their legal rights and guarantees. It ordered their pretrial detention pending investigation, heard testimony from witnesses in both cases, and requested technical reports. Based on the testimonial and forensic evidence, the defendants were referred to the High Criminal Court, which heard the two cases over several hearings before issuing the aforementioned judgments. The Public Prosecution affirmed that it will not hesitate to take firm legal action against anyone who disrupts public security or endangers the safety of society and its members by participating in acts of vandalism. It also stressed that it will continue to confront all forms of violence and disorder in accordance with the law to safeguard the security and stability of the community.

Delay in Carport Rules Halts Licence Applications

The decision has remained pending since the council approved it in January 2025

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Abdullah Al Qubaisi, Northern Municipal Council member for the Ninth Constituency, said a decision to regulate and license carports installed outside homes remains pending at the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture and has yet to be officially approved.



The draft decision would regulate and license carports installed outside homes



Decision remains pending at the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture

Al Qubaisi said the delay leads to the rejection of all



applications submitted by residents wishing to regularise their carports because requests are turned down by the electronic system, which currently lacks the legal authority to approve carport licences without a formal decision.

He explained that the file dates back to 2024, when the ministry provided the municipal council with a copy of the draft decision for a vote and members' feedback. Following

extensive study, the council approved the decision in January 2025, incorporating members' observations, and resubmitted it to the ministry for official launch. It has yet to be issued, he said, with no clear reason given for the delay.

Al Qubaisi called on the ministry to expedite approval of the decision, saying its implementation would resolve the random installation of car-



Swift implementation will end uncertainty and strengthen municipal oversight.

ABDULLAH AL QUBAIS, NORTHERN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEMBER

ports seen across residential areas, help reduce municipal violations, and provide a clear, organised legal mechanism for licensing that safeguards residents' rights and preserves the Kingdom's urban character.

Bahrain's Skills Story A Chef, an Artist and a Coder

The world marks World Youth Skills Day today, and Bahrain has three names that say it all



Yousif Alsayyad



Tala Bashmi



Huda Almarzooq



TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Tala Bashmi traded football for a kitchen and became the first female chef to win the Middle East and North Africa's Best Female Chef award in 2022, and the first woman to claim its Chefs' Choice Award — the only prize voted for by fellow chefs. Talent, she proved, grows where passion is fed.

Huda Almarzooq has drawn since she was five. That childhood habit became a following of millions online and artwork displayed at the Dubai headquarters of one of the world's largest social media platforms — one of only two Middle Eastern creators to earn that honour.

Yousif Alsayyad took cybersecurity to Shenzhen, China, last

month and returned with First Prize in the Network Track of a global tech competition drawing over 220,000 participants from 100 countries.

The United Nations warns that 40 percent of today's skill-sets no longer match job market needs and 22 percent of jobs will change by 2030. Bahrain's answer is already visible — in a kitchen, a canvas, and a line of code.

A chef, an artist and a cybersecurity student. Three different paths, one shared lesson. Skills are not certificates gathering dust in a drawer. They are a football rolled into a kitchen, a childhood sketch carried to Dubai, a Bahraini name read out before 100 countries. Today the world celebrates that idea. Bahrain, it seems, has been celebrating it all along.

Al Hilal Healthcare Group Reaffirms Loyalty to HM King Hamad

TDT | Manama
Pradeep Puravankara

Al Hilal Healthcare Group held an official Loyalty Pledge signing ceremony, bringing together leadership and staff to reaffirm their dedication to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Bahrain's healthcare vision.

The event was led by CEO Dr. Sharath Chandran, VP of Business & Strategy Mr. Asif Mohammed, Finance Manager CA Sahal Jamaludheen, and Group Head of Medical Services Dr. Amer Alderazi.

Dr. Chandran highlighted the group's diverse team of over 1,200 professionals from more than 15 nationalities, describing them as united by a single commitment to care. He reaffirmed the group's loyalty to national leadership and Bahrain's vision for the future. Senior leaders echoed



themes of loyalty, integrity, and professional excellence. Dr. Alderazi described the pledge as a renewal of humanitarian duty, calling patient care a direct expression of national loyalty.

As the Kingdom's largest private healthcare group, Al Hilal operates a comprehensive network of hospitals and medical centres, committed to delivering safe, high-quality, and affordable care in support of Bahrain's national development goals.



Asian Businessman Faces Drug Trafficking Charges

TDT | Manama
Rehab Mohammad

The High Criminal Court adjourned the case of a 37-year-old Asian businessman charged with possessing cannabis with intent to sell and cocaine for personal use.

The court granted the adjournment, set until July 20, 2026, to allow the defendant legal representation. He will remain in custody during the interim period. Investigators describe the charges as placing the accused at the centre of an organised drug trafficking net-

work operating across international borders into the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Investigators concluded that the case involved a structured, organised trafficking network that imported narcotics into Bahrain for financial gain. The group relied on the "dead drop" method — concealing drugs at covert locations for buyers to collect independently. Trafficking organisations commonly use this method to reduce personal exposure and limit traceable contact between members operating at different levels of the supply chain.

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain Hosts Third TEDx Event Celebrating the Human Dimensions of Healthcare

TDT | Manama

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) — Medical University of Bahrain hosted this semester TEDxRCSI Bahrain 2025-26 under the theme "Beyond Medicine" with an inspiring programme of talks celebrating the human dimensions of healthcare.

Organised by a dedicated team of students with the support of the University's Student Services, Events, Sports & Recreation Department and the Language and Culture Unit, TEDxRCSI Bahrain 2025-26 showcased ten inspiring student-led talks exploring the intersection of medicine, humanity and personal growth.

Drawing on their personal experiences, the student speakers reflected on resilience, anxiety,

burnout, professional identity and belonging, teamwork and the transformative power of compassion in healthcare. Through stories of overcoming setbacks, balancing ambition with wellbeing, embracing cultural identity and recognising the emotional dimensions of patient care, the talks challenged conventional perceptions of success and healing. Collectively, they highlighted that while universities equip future healthcare professionals with clinical knowledge and technical expertise, it is empathy, self-awareness, collaboration and meaningful human connection that define excellent practitioners.

Professor Sameer Ootom, President of RCSI Medical University of Bahrain, commented: "TEDxRCSI Bahrain 2025-26 continues



to demonstrate the remarkable talent, insight and leadership of our students beyond the classroom. The willingness of our speakers to share deeply personal experiences with authenticity and courage reflects the values we strive to nurture throughout their educational journey. Clinical excellence remains fundamental to healthcare, but compassion, resilience, effective

communication and emotional intelligence are equally important qualities for healthcare professionals. Events such as this provide an invaluable platform for students to develop their personal identity, inspire their peers and contribute to meaningful conversations that extend beyond medicine."

The University extends its

speakers for their outstanding contributions and for sharing their insightful and heartfelt experiences with community.

This private event held on campus brought together 100 students and staff members in accordance with TEDx event guidelines with the approval of the Higher Education Council of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

This third edition of a TEDx event at RCSI Medical University of Bahrain reflects the University's commitment to developing compassionate, resilient and globally minded healthcare professionals by creating opportunities that strengthen communication, reflective practice and leadership, reinforcing the RCSI values that underpin our healthcare education and our emphasis on patient-centred care.

The University extends its sincere thanks to all student speakers

- Ms Layla Al-Dahwi, Med2 student
"When the Music Stops: Listening Beyond Medicine"
- Mr Muhammad Nehal Hassan, Med4 student
"The Human Side of Healing"
- Ms Dora Safar, Med4 student
"The Juggle of Life: Redefining Success in Medicine"
- Mr Abdulrahman Al-Majmuel, Med3 student
"The Long Way Round"
- Ms Pearla Awad, Med2 student
"The Children Who Taught Me to Be Human"
- Mr Roman Pruski, Med3 student
"Medicine in Concert: Lessons from the Pianist"
- Ms Sharon Ann Shiju, Med4 student
"The Anatomy of Belonging"
- Dr Somieya Khan (Class of 2026)
"The Human Algorithm"
- Mr Ismail Mohammad, Med1 student
"Why anxiety drops performance"
- Ms Joy Maasarani, Med2 student
"The Illusion of the Invincible Healer"

EU, UK sign deal ending border checks between Gibraltar, Spain

Brussels, Belgium

The European Union and Britain yesterday signed a deal ending border checks between Spain and Gibraltar, six years after the UK officially left the bloc.

EU trade chief Maros Sef-

covic took part in the signing ceremony in Brussels alongside British and Spanish ministers as well as Gibraltar Chief Minister Fabian Picardo. The easier crossings will start Wednesday.

US actress Ellen Burstyn to get Venice Lifetime award

AFP | Rome, Italy

US actress Ellen Burstyn, best known for her roles in "The Exorcist" and "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore", will receive a lifetime achievement award at this year's Venice film festival, organisers said Tuesday.

The 93-year-old, who has starred in over 150 films, said she was "so honoured" by the decision to award her the Golden Lion.

"Wow! I not only get to travel to one of my top most favorite cities in the whole world. I get to return home



US actress Ellen Burstyn

carrying a Golden Lion in my arms!" she was quoted by the festival as saying.

This year's edition will run between September 2 and 12 and the jury will be led by US actress Maggie Gyllenhaal.

Trump hails new Iraq PM

Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump praised new Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi as a "champion" in a meeting at the White House yesterday, even as Washington presses Baghdad to curb Iranian influence.

Trump hinted at making major oil deals with Iraq as he hosted Zaidi, a businessman who came to power this year with US blessing after Trump vetoed another candidate.

"We have a fantastic champion, a new champion," Trump said as he welcomed the Iraqi premier to the Oval Office. "He's been a great fighter and a great fan of America."

Trump said he had even decided to hold an unscheduled lunch with al-Zaidi because of their "tremendous chemistry."

Zaidi has vowed to boost Iraq's fragile economy and disarm pro-Iran armed groups that have targeted US facilities.

He said he would not accept any armed groups outside state control once US forces leave Iraq on September 30, when the US-led anti-jihadist coal-



Trump greets Ali al-Zaidi

tion's mission ends.

"On September 30th, American forces will leave, and American companies will enter," Zaidi said. "After 30 September, we will not allow any entity to bear arms outside the state."

Zaidi arrived in Washington on Monday for his first international visit since assuming office -- a week-long trip during which he will also meet US officials and representatives of oil companies.

"We're going to be doing a lot of deals," Trump said. "We're going to create a lot of jobs for both countries, and we're going to be taking out a lot of oil."

Norway crown princess discharged from hospital after lung transplant

Oslo, Norway

Norway's Crown Princess Mette-Marit has been discharged from hospital as she recovers from a lung transplant in June, the royal palace said Tuesday.

"The Crown Princess's health is good under the circumstances," Are Holm, head of the Pulmonary Department at Oslo's Rikshospitalet, said in a statement.

Mette-Marit, 52, was diagnosed in 2018 with pulmonary fibrosis which causes scarring



of the lungs and shortness of breath. The Norwegian palace announced on June 17 that she had undergone a successful lung transplant.

"I really appreciate the care and concern I've received during my illness from so many people all over Norway. It has given me strength when I've needed it the most," the crown princess was quoted saying in the statement.

She also thanked organ donors and the healthcare staff.

Tell the Iranians to be ready



Trump warns: we're coming (and) there's not a damn thing they can do about it

● Trump vows to reimpose naval blockade

● Fighting surges to levels unseen since April ceasefire

● Trump threatens Pickaxe Mountain

AFP | Tehran, Iran

US President Donald Trump warned Iran to "be ready" as the United States launched a fresh wave of strikes across the country yesterday, sharply escalating tensions despite insisting that a negotiated end to the conflict remains possible.

"Tell the Iranians to be ready. Let them know we're coming (and) there's not a damn thing they can do about it," Trump said in an interview with conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt.

The renewed attacks came after Trump vowed to reimpose a naval blockade in the Strait of Hormuz, prompting Tehran to retaliate with strikes on targets linked to US allies across the region.

The US military said it targeted sites across Iran, including the port cities of Bushehr and Bandar Abbas, in an effort to "degrade Iran's ability to attack commercial shipping."

The latest US strikes have killed at least 28 people in Iran since last week, according to an AFP tally based on Iranian media reports and official statements.

The renewed fighting has reached levels not seen since an April ceasefire, raising fresh doubts over efforts to secure a lasting peace.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) announced that Iran's ports on the Strait of Hormuz would be blocked from 2000 GMT on Tuesday.

Oil prices climbed more than five percent yesterday.

No levy, but compensation

Trump yesterday also abruptly scrapped a planned 20% levy on ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz amid clashes with Iran, saying he would instead seek compensation from Gulf allies via trade deals.

Trump said Middle Eastern leaders persuaded him to reduce the toll just a day after he announced it -- and added that he was against charging any fees for the key waterway.

"Based on highly productive conversations with Middle



US STRIKES IRAN, REGIONAL ALLIES TARGETED

1 IRAN SAYS US HIT NUCLEAR PLANT CITY, BORDER ZONE

US strikes hit the port city of Bushehr, home to Iran's only civilian nuclear power plant, and an area near the border with Kuwait and Iraq.

Abadan, home to the oldest oil refinery in the Middle East, and port city of Mahshahr were also targeted, says Khuzestan province deputy governor Valiollah Hayati.

2 ISRAELI LEADER VOWS 'DECISIVE' HIT IF IRAN ATTACKS

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to strike powerfully against Iran if it staged a new attack on his country.

3 INDIA SUMMONS IRANIAN ENVOY OVER SHIP ATTACKS

India summoned Iran's senior diplomat in New Delhi to make a "strong protest" against attacks on two commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz that killed an Indian seafarer and wounded several others.

4 JORDAN, SAUDI INTERCEPT IRANIAN ATTACKS

Jordan's army said it shot down four missiles from Iran. Saudi Arabia said its air defenses intercepted several Iranian attacks.



5 UAE SAYS IRAN ATTACKED SHIPS, TANKER HIT OFF OMAN

UAE said Iran attacked two ships in the Strait of Hormuz with missiles, killing one crew member and wounding eight.

A missile also hit a tanker just off the Omani port of Limah, the UK Maritime Trade Operations agency said.

A Norwegian vessel, belonging to Stolt Tankers, was attacked off Oman, the MTI Network crisis response company announced.

6 OIL PRICES RISE AGAIN

Oil prices jumped again Tuesday after the latest US strikes against Iran.



7 CHINA CALLS FOR HORMUZ STRAIT SAFE PASSAGE

China called on the United States and Iran to restore safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

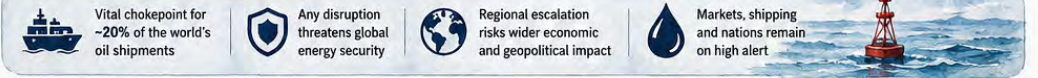
"Restoring normal and safe passage through the strait as soon as possible is a shared aspiration of the international community," a foreign ministry spokesperson said.

8 US TO REIMPOSE BLOCKADE ON IRANIAN PORTS

US Central Command (CENTCOM) said it would reimpose a blockade on Iranian ports beginning at 2000 GMT on Tuesday.

President Trump said the US is "taking over" the Strait of Hormuz and will be "reimbursed, at the rate of 20% of all cargo shipped, for any and all costs necessary to do the job of providing safety and security" through the strait.

KEY FLASHPOINT: STRAIT OF HORMUZ



Trump withdraws planned 20% levy on ships passing through Hormuz

East leadership, I have decided to replace the 20% United States Reimbursement Fee with Trade and Investment Deals that the various Gulf States will be making into the United States," Trump said on his Truth Social

network.

Trump had declared on Monday that Washington was now "THE GUARDIAN OF THE HORMUZ STRAIT" and would impose hefty fees. But the US leader said on Tuesday that he had changed

his mind after speaking to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

Trump says making 'speech to the nation'

Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump said he would make a primetime address to the nation on Thursday, in an announcement that comes amid a major flare-up of hostilities with Iran.

"President Trump will be making a Speech to the Nation

on Thursday evening, at 9 P.M. Eastern (0100 GMT Friday). Thank you for your attention to this matter!" Trump said Monday on his Truth Social network.

Trump did not reveal the subject of the speech, and the White House did not immediately respond to a request for details.



The US and Iran have had no formal diplomatic relations since 1980. Diplomatic ties were severed following the 1979-81 Iran hostage crisis, during which 52 Americans were held for 444 days.

City of Jerusalem is captured and plundered by Christian forces during the First Crusade

John Ball, a leader in the Peasants' Revolt, is hanged, drawn and quartered in the presence of Richard II of England



Battle of Grunwald (First Battle of Tannenberg, Battle of Žalgiris), one of Medieval Europe's largest battles during the Polish-Lithuanian Teutonic War.

The Rosetta Stone is found in the Egyptian village of Rosetta by French Captain Pierre-François Bouchard during Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign

An emboldened India holds out for better terms in US trade talks

Reuters | New Delhi/Washington

India and the U.S. did not reach a consensus on a trade agreement in recent talks, with New Delhi holding out for a better deal as Prime Minister Narendra Modi draws confidence from new trading partners, eased economic risks and political gains at home, officials and analysts said.

India's trade minister, Piyush Goyal, said on Monday both countries remain "fully engaged" in their commitment to an agreement which is balanced and beneficial to both economies.

After months of talks, the two nations failed to finalise an interim trade agreement during U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer's visit to New Delhi last month, despite expectations from both sides that a limited deal was within reach.

There was no consensus because Washington did not offer assurances on New Delhi's key demands: a tariff advantage over competitors such as China and no new U.S. levies after the deal, said an Indian government official aware of the talks.

"Our position is clear - we don't intend to rush into a deal that is not on favourable terms or compromise on red lines like ceding ground on agriculture," the official said.

Washington had hoped for quick trade concessions from a strategic partner as President Donald Trump prepares new tariffs likely to come into effect later this month, officials and analysts said, while India's holdout risks higher levies on its exports and prolonged uncertainty for businesses.

Goyal had been upbeat about a consensus but a day after the talks with Greer, he said the



U.S. President Donald Trump shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as they attend a bilateral meeting during the G7 Summit in Evian-les-Bains, France,

U.S. deal would not be implemented unless an advantage is ensured, indicating New Delhi's hardened position and lack of urgency despite the risk of higher tariffs.

Like most countries, the bulk of goods from India currently face a 10% U.S. tariff. But the Trump administration is expected to introduce steeper tariffs later this month through probes into excess industrial capacity. India has denied U.S. charges of surplus capacity.

Washington has already proposed new tariffs of up to 12.5% on dozens of nations, including India, over allegations they failed to curb trade in goods made with forced labour.

The U.S. view has been that India needs to earn the preferential treatment on trade provisions it has sought by making its own concessions, a U.S. source aware of the talks said.

The Indian official and the U.S. source did not wish to be named as negotiations are confidential. The Indian trade ministry and the Office of the United States Trade Representative did not respond to emailed requests for comment ahead of the story's publication.

"I had fantastic meetings with USTR Jamieson Greer when he visited Delhi in June," Goyal said on Monday. "Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to an agreement that is balanced, commercially meaningful, and delivers tangible benefits for businesses, farmers, workers, and consumers in both countries."

Indian Trade Secretary Rajesh Agrawal, the top official in the ministry, said: "The framework deal is ready, whenever it is the right time, it will be signed".

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Washington remained engaged with India and still expected an agreement, but did not offer a timeline.

The official however added India had at times been slow, bureaucratic and difficult in the negotiations, signalling that no quick deal was likely.

Asked about the impasse, White House spokesman Kush Desai said: "The Trump administration continues to productively engage with Indian officials to finalise a historic trade deal that puts Americans and America First."



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



I'm in Paris for my final meeting of the Coalition of the Willing. I'm proud to have worked with @EmmanuelMacron to bring 25 nations together, united in support of Ukraine and European security. Today, we stand stronger than ever. Our message remains clear: Ukraine's security is our security.

@Keir_Starmer

02



Today on the Champs-Élysées, we celebrate freedom, the cherished heritage of France. We know it; there is no freedom without defense. No lasting peace without the strength to preserve it. I thank France for its commitment. For the French army makes the strength of Europe.

@vonderleyen

03



Proud to see the Ukrainian military marching alongside our forces. A symbol of brotherhood, courage, and shared destiny. Thoughts to the Ukrainian people who are fighting for their freedom and, with it, for that of all Europeans.

@EmmanuelMacron

04



The outcome of my talks with Emmanuel and the work of our teams is an important agreement between Ukraine and France - a step that reflects France's true leadership in defense co-operation with Ukraine, in the interest of all of Europe.

@ZelenskyyUa

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

WIDE ANGLE

Father Amir: The Man Who Reimagined Qatar



JOEL INDRUPATI

“As the famous writer Abbas Mahmoud Al Aqqad said, ‘A genius sews his own garments. A genius cannot be made by others.’ The genius or the leader is self-made.”

These are the opening words of a documentary on the late Shaikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the former ruler of Qatar, who passed away on Sunday, 12 July 2026.

His genius, or leadership, becomes clear as you hear the interviews and recollections of his childhood friends, and his government's ministers and administrators.

The remarkable transformation of Qatar, under this late luminary—who was fondly called “Father Amir” after he abdicated the throne in 2013 in favour of his fourth son—is well celebrated by this poignant 2023 documentary titled Ode to Our Land.

The transmutation of Qatar from a pearling and fishing nation into an ultra-modern, globally connected economic powerhouse occurred under his visionary leadership.

The metamorphosis of Doha from a coastal city into a global metropolis—one that embraces stunning avant-garde architecture without abandoning its deep-rooted Arab heritage—is another example of his insightful leadership.

On several fronts, he led the rapid growth of the Qatar peninsula, itself part of the broader Arabian Peninsula, which was also keeping pace.

In the energy sector, Qatar expanded its liquefied natural gas (LNG) production, making it the world's richest country per capita (in most of 2010s) and one of the world's largest LNG exporters. In global media and soft power, it launched the Al Jazeera Media Network in 1996, giving Qatar a powerful international voice.

In education and culture, the Qatar Foundation and Education City brought branch campuses of elite global universities to Doha, including Carnegie Mellon, Georgetown, Northwestern, Texas A&M, and Weill Cornell Medicine.

In the sporting arena, Qatar placed itself on the global athletic map by launching the annual Qatar Open Tennis tournament, hosting the 2006 Asian Games, and winning the 2010 bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup. By staging the tournament successfully, it brought the world to its doorstep.

In diplomacy, the country was positioned as an international mediator in complex regional conflicts, including those in Lebanon, Sudan, and Palestine. The establishment of Al Udeid Air Base to deepen strategic U.S. defence ties was another example.

On the economic investment front was the founding of the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) in 2005 to manage and invest the country's massive reserve funds globally. Today, QIA is successfully transforming Qatar's finite hydrocarbon wealth into a diversified, globally influential sovereign wealth fund worth more than US\$600 billion, securing long-term economic stability and international soft power for future generations.

Interestingly, at a time when the wives of Gulf leaders rarely shared the public spotlight with their husbands, Shaikh Hamad and Shaikha Mozah broke with convention and emerged as a distinctive royal couple seen together at state visits, international summits, and global events.

In the documentary I watched, Qatar's former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Industry, Abdullah bin Hamad Al Attiya, who grew up alongside him, says, “I remember him from when I was five years old. I was his friend.”

“He was born with a charisma that no one else has. Since he was a child, he was always a leader. He was strict with us in soccer, especially as captain.”

On the late Father Amir's dream of hosting the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, Mohammed bin Hammam, the former Qatari football administrator, said: “I was shocked by the scale of (his) ambition. I asked myself, ‘Could it really happen?’ None of us imagined it would, but he did.”

For us, his greatest monument is not Qatar's skyline, but its confidence. Qatar—and indeed the entire Arab world—can proudly call him one of its finest visionaries.

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

France flaunts firepower, unity with allies in huge parade



France's President Emmanuel Macron (C) poses for a family photo at the end of the annual Bastille Day military parade on the Champs-Élysées Avenue in Paris

AFP | Paris, France

France yesterday showcased military power and unity with European allies in its largest-ever national day parade, as European rearment gathers pace in the face of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The final July 14 parade presided over by President Emmanuel Macron, the event brought together thousands of French troops, hundreds

of European ones and two dozen foreign heads of state and government, including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

The parade, which marks the storming of the Bastille fortress in the French revolution and is by far the largest such event in any western European nation, was held a day after Macron hosted a new summit of Ukraine's allies, four-and-a-half years into the full-scale Russian invasion.

Other European leaders at-

tending the parade included German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and, on one of his last foreign engagements, British Premier Keir Starmer, who has spearheaded with Macron European efforts to support Ukraine.

With nearly 6,700 troops, 98 aircraft, 31 helicopters and 315 vehicles, a record number of military personnel were marching the traditional route between the Arc de Triomphe and the Place de la Concorde in Paris.

Classifieds



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Classifieds

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plicants can contact 17210389 or tomas@sspbahrain.com

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region

GCC Condemns Iranian Attack on UAE Oil Tankers

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi strongly condemned the Iranian attack targeting two UAE-owned oil tankers, Mombasa and Al Bahia, describing the incident as a hostile act and a serious violation of international law and maritime freedom.

The attack resulted in the death of one crew member and injuries to several others, according to the GCC General Secretariat.

Albudaiwi said targeting the UAE commercial vessels represents a “flagrant violation” of international law, maritime navigation principles, and global efforts to ensure the safety of international shipping routes.

The GCC chief stressed that the attack also contravenes UN Security Council Resolution 2817, which calls for the protection of international navigation and prohibits attacks on commercial vessels or actions that threaten vital maritime corridors.

He reaffirmed that the GCC stands united with the UAE and supports all measures Abu



Dhabi takes to protect its security, sovereignty, vital facilities, and national interests

Albudaiwi urged the international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council, to fulfil its legal and moral responsibilities by taking decisive action against what he described as repeated Iranian attacks.

He called for immediate measures to prevent further threats, hold those responsible accountable, safeguard freedom of navigation, and preserve regional and global economic stability.

The GCC Secretary-General also extended his condolences to the family of the deceased crew member and wished a speedy recovery to those injured in the attack.

Oman Stresses Neutral Role in Strait of Hormuz Navigation

Oman has reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, emphasizing its neutral and transparent approach amid ongoing discussions surrounding maritime traffic in the strategic waterway.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Sultanate continues to cooperate with all parties to help restore and safeguard freedom of navigation in the Strait, in full accordance with international law. The ministry stressed that Oman remains fully committed to its obligations as a State Party to the United Nations Con-



vention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The ministry also called on all parties to respect international law and act in accordance with its provisions, reaffirming Oman's longstanding position of supporting maritime security, regional stability, and the uninterrupted flow of international shipping through one of the world's most important trade routes.

Italian PM Meloni Offers Condolences to Qatar's Amir



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni met with Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani at Lusail Palace on Tuesday to offer her condolences following the passing of Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

Meloni conveyed her sympathies to the Qatari leadership and people as Qatar continues

to receive condolences from world leaders, senior officials and dignitaries following the Father Amir's death on Sunday.

The Italian Prime Minister is among a growing list of international figures who have travelled to Doha to pay tribute to Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, whose leadership played a key role in shaping modern Qatar.

CHANGE OF NAME - MAJOR

I, **Aiman Shaikh, Daughter of Hidayat Shaikh**, holding Indian Passport No. **U1621684** dated **28/11/2019**, issued at Mumbai, having permanent residence at **Flat No. 28-3/4, 1st Floor, Chhotibai Chawl Park Site, Vikhroli-West, Mumbai, PIN: 400079, Maharashtra, India** (full address in India as in the passport), and presently residing at **Flat 21, Building 2046, Road 2341, Block 323, Manama Center, Bahrain** (full address in Bahrain), will henceforth be known as **Aiman Hidayat** (Given Name) **Shaikh**(Surname). Objection(s) if any, may be forwarded to Embassy of India, P.O Box 26106, Bldg 1090, Road 2819, Block 428, Al Seef, Kingdom of Bahrain.



World Cup final ball and halftime show outfits to be auctioned off for charity

AFP | New York

A sale of World Cup memorabilia, including a ball used in the final and outfits worn by performers at the halftime show, was announced Tuesday by New York auction house Christie's.

The week-long online auction begins on July 22 and raises funds for the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund, an initiative working to generate \$100 million (£75m) for children worldwide during the World Cup.

Top items include a yellow crop top and trousers worn by Colombian pop singer Shakira in her music video for Dai Dai,

the official song of the 2026 soccer tournament.

The outfit she will wear during her performance at the first-ever World Cup final halftime show - an 11-minute musical extravaganza also featuring Madonna, Justin Bieber and BTS - will also be auctioned.

Several soccer balls will go on sale including one from the July 19 final at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey and another from the opening match in Mexico last month.

A 2022 Argentina jersey signed by star player Lionel Messi is being auctioned too, as well as a US jersey signed by the United States' men's team.

Norway receive heroes' welcome in Oslo after World Cup exit



Large crowd greet the bus carrying Norway's players to Oslo

AFP | Oslo

Around 90,000 people welcomed back Norway's players to Oslo on Monday after they returned home from making a historic run to the World Cup quarter-finals.

Erling Haaland's side were knocked out of the tournament on Saturday after losing 2-1 to England in extra-time in the last eight in Miami, their best result in the competition.

The crowd packed the square in front of the royal palace in Norway's capital city as

the squad arrived around, and performed the now famous "Viking Row",

Haakon, Crown Prince of Norway, the heir apparent to the country of 5.6 million's throne, led the celebration with a drum -- he was also present at the defeat in Miami.

"It's simply incredible to see all the support we receive and to see how much the country is behind us," captain Martin Odegaard told public broadcasters NRK.

"It's really fantastic," the Arsenal playmaker added.

Firas Al Basri wins Bahrain under-14 billiards title

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Firas Al Basri took first place in Bahrain's opening under-14 billiards ranking tournament of 2026 after beating Faisal Al Basri 4-2 in the final.

The Bahrain Billiard Sports and Darts Federation event drew 12 players.

The final stood at 1-1 and then 2-2 before Firas won two frames in a row to take the title. Faisal had chances to finish several frames but failed to make them count, leaving Firas with openings at the table.

Firas had earlier beaten Hassan Shaker 4-2 in the semi-finals. Shaker dropped into the losers' bracket, where Faisal ended his hopes of reaching the final with a 4-1 win.

Firas made fewer mistakes than his rivals and kept his form from the early rounds through to the title match. He was also the calmer player at the table



and took greater care over his shot choice.

Competition supervisor Yousif Ibrahim handed Firas the winner's trophy. Faisal received the silver medal, Hassan Shaker

took bronze and Hassan Abdulla finished fourth.

Mohammed Al Shorooqi went out early after two straight defeats. He had finished runner-up in the Under-18 tournament.

Parents watched from the sidelines as the young players made their last outing before the first Under-21 ranking event, which begins early next week.

Young Reds step up road to Asia

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Under-20 side will face Syria twice in early August as the young Reds race to sharpen up before hosting the Asian Cup qualifiers later that month.

The qualifiers will run from August 31 to September 6, with places at the 2027 AFC Under-20 Asian Cup in China on the line.

Bahrain opened their build-up with two home friendlies against Palestine, winning the first 1-0 before falling to a 2-0 defeat in the second.

A third and final match against Palestine was due to be played later yesterday.

The squad will then head to Muscat for a training camp from July 19 to 26, using two matches against Oman to test players and drill the team's plans.

Two games against Syria are expected in the first week of August.



Bahrain under-20 football team

Bahrain will close their preparations with a short camp in Doha from August

20 to 24, where they will play Qatar before turning to the qualifiers.

The young Reds have been drawn in Group D with Jordan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Former PSG, Man United midfielder Herrera returns to Zaragoza

AFP | London

Former Manchester United and Paris Saint-Germain midfielder Ander Herrera rejoined third-tier Spanish side Zaragoza, his boyhood club, on Tuesday.

Herrera, who turns 37 in August, started his career with Zaragoza before moving to Athletic Bilbao in 2011 and then to Old Trafford in 2014.

The midfielder played for Boca Juniors in Argentina in the 2025-26 season before returning to Zaragoza, relegated last season, on a one-year deal.

"Herrera, a product of Real Zaragoza's youth academy, returns home at the age of 36 after a long and successful career defending the colours of some of the best clubs in the world," said Zaragoza in a statement.

Bahrain U18s end group stage with third defeat



TDT | Manama

Bahrain's under-18 volleyball team ended its group-stage campaign at the Asian Championship in China with a straight-

sets defeat to Iran, losing 25-12, 25-18, 25-14 yesterday.

Iran completed the match in three sets to finish top of the group with a perfect record and book its place in the quarter-fi-

nals, while Bahrain finished bottom after three defeats.

The result followed Bahrain's opening 3-1 loss to India and a second 3-1 defeat to the Philippines, leaving the side with-



out a point from its three group matches.

The Asian Under-18 Volleyball Championship is being held in Haikou, China, from 12 to 18 July, with Bahrain drawn alongside Iran, India and the Philip-

pines in Group B.

Despite the group-stage exit, Bahrain will continue its campaign in the classification rounds, where teams eliminated from the race for the title compete for the remaining placings.



Messi meets England at last with World Cup final place on the line

World Cup rivals renew historic fixture with Messi chasing another defining moment

- **Messi leads all-time World Cup goalscorers**
- **England relish facing football icon**

AFP | Atlanta

Lionel Messi has done just about everything possible in a glorious career, but the 39-year-old Argentinian great has never taken on England -- he will finally get the chance in Wednesday's World Cup semi-final.

Messi won his 200th cap for the Albiceleste in the group-stage victory against Algeria and dreams of leading his country to the final once again.

The diminutive playmaker is surely in the final days of a remarkable international career which began when he was a fresh-faced 18-year-old in 2005.

Having broken into the Barcelona team late the previous year, Messi had just starred for Argentina as they won the Under-20 World Cup in the Netherlands.

He was handed his Argentina bow by Jose Pekerman in a friendly against Hungary in Budapest that August, replacing Lisandro Lopez in the 64th minute and joining Hernan Crespo up front.



Ninety seconds later he was sent off for what the referee saw as an elbow. It was quite the ignominious way for his Argentinian career to begin.

“An 18-year-old kid who is making his debut for the national team and has so much hope -- he can’t be punished like that. The referee needed to be more understanding,” said Crespo.

Messi might look back now and laugh at that incident, which led to him being suspended for a friendly against England in Geneva three months later.

The nations have not met since, and so Messi will play against the Three Lions for the very first time under the roof of the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

“I have played against



Lionel Messi

World Cup Schedule (Semifinal)

Today

Time	Match	Venue
10:00 PM	England vs Argentina	Atlanta Stadium

(All games in Bahrain time)

everyone except England and it is special because they are a major nation, a powerhouse, and it is always nice to play against a side like that, especially in a World Cup semi-final,” said Messi after Argentina beat Switzerland in Kansas City in the last eight.

Emulating Maradona

The man who emulated Diego Maradona by inspiring Argentina to World Cup glory in Qatar four years ago will now hope to leave a similar mark on England as his legendary predecessor.

Any meeting of these countries evokes memories of the 1986 quarter-final at the Estadio Azteca in Mexico City, when Maradona punched in to score the ‘Hand of God’

opener and then ran past half the England defence for his team’s second goal -- perhaps the greatest World Cup goal of all time.

Messi has not scored one quite like that, but ahead of the semi-finals of the current tournament he had scored more World Cup goals than any other player.

With 21 goals from a tournament record 32 appearances, he led France skipper Kylian Mbappe by one after the quarter-finals.

The Inter Miami player had found the net in nine consecutive World Cup matches before the Switzerland game, when he let others -- notably Julian Alvarez -- take over the goalscoring duties.

Argentina are now one game away from reaching another World Cup final, as they aim to become the first team to retain the trophy since Brazil in 1962.

It would be a third final in four World Cups, and Messi could follow in the footsteps of Brazil great Cafu. The full-back played

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Messi’s Argentina debut in 2005 lasted just 90 seconds before a red card, and that suspension once ruled him out of a friendly against England. The two teams have not met since

in three in a row from 1994 to 2002 -- even Maradona only played in two.

“Getting to another semi-final is not a normal, mundane thing, so this is something we should really enjoy because we don’t know if it will happen again,” Messi said.

The England players will hope to enjoy it as well.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” Nico O’Reilly, who is likely to come up against Messi if he starts at left-back, told BBC Radio 5 Live.

“He’s coming towards the end of his career. For me personally, he’s the best player to ever touch a football pitch. And yeah, I can’t wait for the challenge.”

Brighton sign Croatia defender Vuskovic for record fee



Luka Vuskovic
AFP | London

Brighton have signed Croatia defender Luka Vuskovic from Tottenham Hotspur for a reported club record fee of £46 million (\$62 million) that could yet increase.

The 19-year-old, who played against England at the World Cup, has agreed a five-year contract with the Seagulls, with an option for a further 12 months.

The BBC reported Spurs could receive an additional £4 million in add-on fees, while the deal includes a 20 percent sell-on clause.

Vuskovic joined Tottenham from Hajduk Split in 2025 and spent last season on loan at German club Hamburg.

Glasner warns ‘no button to press’ for Forest success

AFP | London

Oliver Glasner believes the foundations are in place for Nottingham Forest to make a sound start to the new Premier League season even though there is “no button to press” that will guarantee success.

Glasner succeeded Vitor Pereira as Forest manager earlier this month following a successful stint in charge of Premier League rivals Crystal Palace.

The 51-year-old Austrian guided Palace to both the 2025 FA Cup and last season’s European Conference League -- the first two major trophies won by the south London club.

But he left Selhurst Park following a dispute over transfer policy.

He has arrived at the City Ground with Forest looking to improve on a 16th-place finish in last season’s Premier League and with the two-time European champions rebuilding after the sale of England midfielder Elliot Anderson to Manchester City.

“For me it is very important that it is exciting and challenging. I really believe that us all together – the staff, the players, the fans, the leadership of the club -- we can be really com-



Oliver Glasner waves to fans after a match (file photo)

”

There is no button to press that automatically makes it happen. It is a daily thing that will take progress over the coming weeks, which is what we have started

OLIVER GLASNER

petitive in the Premier League which makes me excited,” Glasner told Forest TV.

“There is no button to press that automatically makes it hap-

pen. It is a daily thing that will take progress over the coming weeks, which is what we have started.

“The people are what is most important and that is what gives me a lot of confidence for this project. I have met great people -- you can have the best stadium, the best training ground, but if you don’t have the right people, it doesn’t work.”

Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis got through four managers last season, with Nuno Espirito Santo, Ange Postecoglou and Sean Dyche all sacked before Pereira was hired in February.

Senegalese FA says Thiaw salary demands caused World Cup downfall



Senegalese coach Pape Thiaw reacts during a match (file photo)

AFP | Dakar

The Senegalese football federation (FSF) president said on Monday that toxicity surrounded the team at the World Cup after coach Pape Thiaw had demanded a pay rise.

Thiaw was sacked on Sunday after his side were knocked out in the last 32 by Belgium on 1 July.

“There was a breakdown in trust between Pape Thiaw and us”, FSF president Abdoulaye Fall told a press conference in Dakar, citing the initial failure to sign a new contract after Thiaw’s demand for more money.

Thiaw, 45 and a former Sen-

egal international, took over as national team boss in 2024.

Before leaving for the World Cup, he had asked for a salary increase from 20 million CFA (\$35 000) per month to 50 million CFA (\$87 000).

Ultimately, the sides landed on an agreement of 30 000 CFA during the World Cup and also settled other disputes such as bonuses.

At one point, Thiaw threatened not to travel to the World Cup if his demands were not met, Fall said, explaining Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Faye convinced him to change his mind on the day the team were due to depart for the United States.



Majestic Spain stun France to reach World Cup final

AFP | Arlington , United States

Spain stunned tournament favourites France 2-0 to reach the World Cup final on Tuesday, producing a tactical masterpiece to shatter Les Bleus' dreams of winning the title for the third time.

A first-half penalty from Mikel Oyarzabal and a 58th-minute Pedro Porro goal sealed an utterly clinical victory for the European champions at the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

Spain, World Cup winners in 2010, will now face either Argentina or England in Sunday's final in New Jersey.

France had entered the show-down as the overwhelming favourites for the tournament after a dazzling, goal-laden run to the semi-finals.

But France's vaunted front four of captain Kylian Mbappe, Ballon D'Or winner Ousmane Dembele, Bradley Barcola and Michael Olise were



Spain's forward #07 Ferran Torres and Spain's midfielder #15 Alex Baena celebrate after winning the match

snuffed out by a combination of Spanish poise and power.

Spain, who had beaten France in their previous two competitive meetings, had vowed to go on the front foot in the pre-match build-up and they proved as good as their word.

A commanding performance by Spain's midfield led by Manchester City star Rodri and assisted by Fabian Ruiz and Dani Olmo never allowed the French to gain a foothold in the contest.

Spain's midfield quick-

ly overran the outnumbered French duo of Adrien Rabiot and Aurelien Tchouameni, passing around their opponents with ease to control the early exchanges.

The first signs of French frustration came after just nine minutes when midfielder Rabiot was booked for treading on Olmo's foot on the edge of the area. Yet despite the early dominance, France looked the more threatening when venturing into the final third, and it needed a desperate late block by Pau Cubarsi to thwart Mbappe in the 16th minute as the French captain looked to break clear.

Early dominance

Spain's early dominance got its reward in the 20th minute, France's forward #10 Kylian Mbappe reacts after losing the semi-final match

though, when a hopeful cross by Marc Cucurella flew across the penalty area.

Lucas Digne didn't get enough purchase on his attempted headed clearance and as the Aston Villa player instinctively swung out a leg he kicked Yamal, sending the Barcelona star crashing to the turf.

El Salvadoran referee Ivan Barton pointed immediately to the spot and after a brief delay as French players loitered, Oyarzabal stepped up to sweep in a spot-kick that beat the dive of French goalkeeper Mike Maignan. France's rocky start got worse after 31 minutes when key central defender William Saliba hobbled off with an injury to be replaced by Maxence Lacroix.

Spain almost doubled their

lead with a sublime passing move on 38 minutes when wonderful interplay on the edge of the area sliced open France's defence, with Dayot Upamecano's block denying Fabian Ruiz.

France enjoyed their best spell in the closing minutes of the first half and only excellent anticipation from Spain goalkeeper Unai Simon denied Mbappe after Rabiot's clever through ball.

Spain, however, reasserted themselves at the start of the second half and Deschamps' failure to adjust France's tactics again left the Spanish midfield in charge.

On 58 minutes, Spain struck the hammer blow. Porro and Olmo worked a sensational one-two on the edge of the area that sent Porro through and the Tottenham defender clipped a fine finish past Maignan.

Only a fractional offside decision denied Spain a third goal in the 61st minute, when Lamal had the ball in the net.

Deschamps made a flurry of substitutions but France were unable to penetrate Spain's smothering defence, their best chance came when Mbappe's shot was blocked at the near post by Simon.

French frustration was symbolised by Mbappe in the closing minutes, booked for following through on Simon as Spain closed out the victory.

Arsenal agree Trossard fee for Beskitas switch



Leandro Trossard

AFP | London

Belgium international Leandro Trossard is set to move to Turkish club Beskitas from Arsenal, the Premier League champions confirmed on Tuesday.

"We have reached an agreement with Besiktas for the permanent transfer of Leandro Trossard," Arsenal said in a statement.

The 31-year-old forward has been given permission to travel to Istanbul to undergo a medical.

Besiktas confirmed the club "have initiated transfer negotiations, (Trossard) will arrive in Istanbul this evening to undergo medical examinations and complete the transfer process".

Trossard joined Arsenal in January 2023 from Brighton on a deal until 2027 worth 21 million pounds (\$28 million) plus add-ons.

He scored 36 goals in 174 appearances at Arsenal, helping Mikel Arteta's side win last season's Premier League title and reaching the Champions League final where they lost to Paris Saint-Germain.

Real Madrid, Barca LaLiga starts delayed



Jose Mourinho attends a training session (file photo)

AFP | Madrid

Jose Mourinho's first LaLiga game in charge of Real Madrid in his second spell at the club will be away at Espanyol on August 22 after Los Blancos' original opener was pushed back on Tuesday.

Madrid were due to host Real Sociedad on the opening weekend of the season but LaLiga have moved that game to August 26.

Champions Barcelona will now begin their season at Elche on August 23, with their original opener at home against Athletic Bilbao also delayed until August 27.

LaLiga made the decision to change the schedule because several players from both sides are involved in the World Cup semifinals.

Pogacar wins Tour de France 10th stage on Bastille Day

● Pogacar claims third stage victory

● Vingegaard loses further time

● Evenepoel finishes strong in second

AFP | Le Lioran

Tadej Pogacar shrugged off the boo-boys and powered to victory on France's national holiday with another dominant display on Tuesday's mountainous 10th stage to extend his overall lead at the Tour de France.

World champion Pogacar won his third stage at this year's Tour -- and for the third time on Bastille Day -- to extend his lead over Jonas Vingegaard to more than three and a half minutes.

It is the largest gap Pogacar has ever had over his rivals at this stage of the race.

It was also the four-time champion's 24th stage victory at the Tour, moving him to within one win of Frenchman Andre Leducq -- who twice won the Tour in the 1930s -- in fourth in that list.

And even some jeers from the side of the road did not detract from his enjoyment.



UAE Team Emirates - XRG's Slovenian rider Tadej Pogacar cycles to the finish line to win the 10th stage

"Today was an incredible day. The team did a super good job," said the 27-year-old Slovenian.

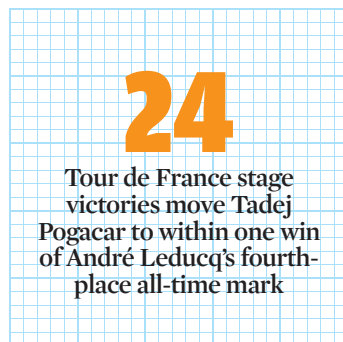
"We targeted this stage since a long time ago and it also happens that two years ago Jonas beat me in the sprint fair and square."

That was two years ago, and the last time that Vingegaard beat Pogacar in a battle to win a stage.

"I didn't know I'm gonna win until the last kilometre and then I remember it's Bastille Day and I try to honour the yellow jersey," added Pogacar.

"And thanks to all the fans that they came today to the road and it was an amazing atmosphere, even though (there was) some booing."

"All the guys that were booing, they give us more power."



Vingegaard wilts

The reigning champion attacked 15.5km from the finish of the 166.6km stage in the Cantal mountains and quickly opened up a decisive lead.

Behind him, the battle was for the minor placings -- both on the day and in the overall standings.

Olympic champion Remco Evenepoel dug in to finish second on the day, 32sec behind Pogacar, with French teenage hope Paul Seixas pipping Florian Lipowitz to third place two seconds later.

Vingegaard wilted on the uphill drag to the finish line and came home seventh at 44sec.

He is now 3min 36sec behind Pogacar with Evenepoel climbing to third overall another 30sec back.

Pogacar's team-mate Isaac Del Toro was the biggest loser on the day, dropping from third to seventh overall after finishing

the stage eighth at 1min 31sec.

It took about 50km for the day's breakaway to form as Mads Pedersen's Lidl-Trek team set a furious pace to set him up for the intermediate sprint, where he extended his lead in the green sprinters' jersey competition.

A 31-man group did get away but soon it was Spaniard Javier Romo who went solo for around 50km before Pogacar's UAE Emirates-XRG team reeled him in with 38km left.

That was also the signal for former Giro d'Italia winner Richard Carapaz to launch his bid for victory on the 7.8km-long Puy Mary climb.

He stretched that out to around a minute and a quarter on the rapid descent to the key 4.4km-long and punishingly steep Col de Pertus but once Pogacar launched his blistering attack just over a kilometre from the summit of that climb, the final result was never in doubt.

He flew past Carapaz 250m from the summit and crested that with a lead of 20sec over a group including Vingegaard, Evenepoel, Seixas, Lipowitz and Spaniard Juan Ayuso.

By the foot of the descent, Pogacar had a lead of around 16sec on the chasers, but he was simply too strong for them to close that and even eked out more time to the finish.