

1992

Nagorno-Karabakh War: Armenian troops massacre more than 20 Azerbaijani civilians during the Capture of Garadaghly.

1995

The **Cenepa War** between Peru and Ecuador ends on a ceasefire brokered by the UN.

1996

In Philadelphia, world champion **Garry Kasparov** beats the Deep Blues supercomputer in a chess match.



1996

NASA's Discovery Program begins as the NEAR **Shoemaker spacecraft** lifts off on the first mission ever to orbit and land on an asteroid, 433 Eros.



Bahrain has long been a diverse nation, a trading hub that has attracted business people from the region, and further afield, for centuries.

ment allows 100 per cent foreign ownership for most sectors. Operating costs are an average of 30pc lower than regional neighbours.

The public sector plays an increasingly important role in Bahrain's economy, and the Kingdom's strategy to transform the private sector into the main driver of growth and employment is delivering clear results.

The financial and banking sectors are leading non-oil growth and account for 15.8pc of GDP in mid-2018. Foreign direct investment reached \$830 million in 2018, while real GDP grew by an estimated 2pc, with non-oil growth at 2.7pc.

All of this development is conducted in line with the sustainable vision laid down in the National Action Charter – a vision later expressed globally in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, which Bahrain readily adopted.

The Charter also sets out Bah-

rain's international role, both within the Gulf Cooperation Council and further afield. Bahrain's diplomatic service, celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, has successfully built a network of international alliances and partnerships based on respect for the sovereignty of countries and good neighbourliness and building bridges through understanding.

The Charter commits Bahrain to core principles of peaceful settlement of disputes and a conviction that world and regional peace is a core, strategic goal that justifies the greatest effort. Bahrain's foreign policy is committed to promoting global solidarity and improving human security.

Bahrain is committed to the UN Charter and international laws and rules.

To mark its diplomatic achievements, by Royal decree Bahrain's Institute of Diplomacy will be transformed into a special academy for diplomatic studies, named for His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, the pioneer of Bahraini diplomacy.

All these achievements have been earned as a result of the vision laid out in the National Action Charter. And the Charter continues to guide Bahrain's policies, and the implementation of those policies, to this day.

There is more progress to be made, of course, but on this day Bahrainis acknowledge the progress achieved so far.

(Ahmed Mohammed Al Mannai is the Chief Executive Officer of Bahrain's National Communication Centre.)

status in its 2018 Trafficking in Persons report.

Agencies such as the Bahrain Economic Development Board and Tamkeen, which supports small- and medium-sized enterprises, help drive private sector growth and attract investment.

Bahrain's regulatory environ-

ust bash the French

fine art and béchamel

But a populist, right-wing government such as Italy's today needs an enemy to rally its electorate, in particular at a time of deep economic difficulties.

thing" – for having been twice cheated by the French, out of her love and her culinary expertise.

Food historians may have serious grounds to debate the exact parentage of béchamel and the fork, but many assumptions driving the current government's revisionism are unquestionably wrong. Whatever Di Battista thinks of French monetary policies in Africa, for example, the highest number of African migrants to Italy comes from Nigeria, a former British colony, and not from French-speaking countries.

But a populist, right-wing government such as Italy's today needs an enemy to rally its electorate, in particular at a time of deep economic difficulties. Better to redirect attention on immigration and the French than face up to high unemployment and overall stagnation: Italy formally entered a recession this quarter.

Of course, Macron hasn't helped matters by hardly behaving diplomatically himself. When Salvini, also Italy's interior minister, announced that migrant boats would no longer be allowed to dock in Italian ports, the French president called the move "cynical and irresponsible." This, even though France's border with Italy has been closed to migrants

and French authorities have been pushing them back into Italy. It is also undeniable that Europe's southernmost countries like Italy bear a heavier share of the immigration crisis than other European states, partly because of the Dublin Regulation, a much-criticised European law that requires the countries where asylum-seekers arrive to screen them and take care of them.

And yet, when the European Parliament has discussed reforms aimed at spreading more evenly the burden of immigration among members of the European Union, the League did not participate and representatives of the 5-Star Movement abstained from voting. At a final session last June, the Dublin Regulation wasn't amended, for lack of votes in favour of reform.

Not all Italians are on board, of course. On Feb. 7, after France called back its ambassador, Cuneo, a small Italian town near the French border, had something like the La Marseillaise moment in the movie "Casablanca": Federico Borgna, the leftist mayor, flew the French flag from a balcony of city hall – an unlikely symbol of dissent in an even more unlikely dispute.

(Ilaria Maria Sala is an Italian journalist based in Hong Kong.)



TOP
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TWEETS

01



"I didn't need to do this, but I'd rather to do it much faster."
—President @realDonaldTrump Mr. President, how can this possibly be an national emergency if you're saying you don't need to do it? Unreal.
#FakeTrumpEmergency
@SenSchumer

02



Trump's emergency declaration just got its first legal challenge. Legal advocacy group Public Citizen has filed suit on behalf of landowners in Texas and an environmental group. More lawsuits are expected.

@kylegriffin1

03



Clear sign that @realDonaldTrump's #FakeTrumpEmergency is not legitimate? The President himself says he didn't need to declare a national emergency – it's just a faster way to force taxpayers to foot the bill after Congress wouldn't let him have his way.

@SpeakerPelosi

04



The dastardly attack in Pulwama has anguished the nation. Yes, this is a time of great sadness. But, I assure every family that a befitting reply will be given!

@narendramodi

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

Bahrain walks the talk for fitness



CAPT. MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

Bahrain last week celebrated National Sports Day. Like the International Day of Yoga, this too could be cynically dismissed as a PR tactic.

However, one look at the delighted faces of youngsters and the surprised enjoyment in the faces of older people finding their 'running feet' after decades, would be enough to convince us all that it is time we rediscovered the health benefits of physical activity.

The value of sport and physical activity extends beyond physical benefits and embraces socio-economic improvement in local communities.

Bahrain has seen many sporting heroes emerge in recent years. Our own Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, who put the stamp of his energy and passion for sports on Bahrain Sports Day is a fine example of how to channel a talent for sports into nation-building.

After all, Bahraini youth look up to him as a winner of international tests of horsemanship, that most Arabian of all sports and as the winner of the tough endurance race 'Ironman'.

We have women runners, marathon champs, swimmers, even women's football teams and Olympic and special athletes, who have brought medals and honours to Bahrain.

Sports nurtures fitness, focus, discipline and team spirit. A young person brought up with these qualities will obviously make a fine leader in any sphere that s/he plays a role in.

Besides the nation-wide sports day celebration, Bahrain has consistently pushed to engage citizens in physical activity. There are well-planned walking tracks in most residential areas, parks with ample space for a game of basketball and many gyms to suit every budget.

One other thing that we should be proud of

is that an increasing number of Bahraini girls and women are taking a keen interest in sports.

We have women runners, marathon champs, swimmers, even women's football teams and Olympic and special athletes, who have brought medals and honours to Bahrain.

Above all, they have set the example for other women by putting health first. Today, it is not unusual to see women in traditional dress striding purposefully in the Corniche or park tracks, putting their health first.

A country that encourages its people to lay the foundation for good health through sports and exercise, is taking the vital first step towards productivity (fewer absentees) prosperity (better work output) and progress (more achievements).

As Professor Dame Sally Davies of the UK says, "If physical activity was a drug it would be regarded as a miracle, so everyone must take it seriously."

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)