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WEDNESDAY IPL chase of 224 **APRIL, 2024** 220 FILS

Buttler smashes second ton of the season in 55 balls | P12

Buttler ton powers Rajasthan to record

SPORTS

Jordan says won't become 'theatre of war'



Jessica Chastain hails 'beautiful' Anne Hathaway

BUSINESS

MF ups global growth forecast

Edict to enhance competitiveness for businesses



TDT | Manama

 ${
m H}^{
m is\ Royal\ Highness}$ Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday issued Edict (22) of 2024, which regulates trade concerning authorised distributors in a way that strengthens and promotes competitiveness for the benefit of consumers and empowers Bahraini business owners to provide products and services and develop the national economy, based on a proposal by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, and following the approval of the Cabinet.

Education Ministry extends classes suspension for students' safety

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Lation yesterday an-The Ministry of Edunounced the extension of the suspension of classes in all educational institutions, including public and private schools, to ensure the readiness of facilities and safety of students.

The Ministry's specialised teams surveyed buildings and facilities to ensure safety standards are met for students' return on April 21. Initially, the resumption of classes had been set for today.

Minister of Education, His Excellency Dr. Muhammad bin Mubarak Juma, said the safety of the students is a top priority and therefore a comprehensive inspection programme has been put in place in line with the best international practice in operating and regulating educational institutions.

220 fils (includes VAT)



HM King hails Al-Quds humanitarian efforts

TDT | Manama

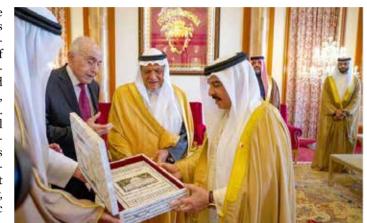
Fund, citing its efforts to support the Palestinians and alleviate their suffering by launch- briefed His Majesty about the Aling development projects, pro- Quds Empowerment Fund's goals grammes and basic services in and efforts to empower the Pal-Jerusalem.

kingdom's support for the Al- as well as provide them with basic Quds Empowerment Fund's needs across all vital sectors. endeavours, based on its firm stance towards the Palestinian highly HM the King's benevpeople and their just cause.

received at the Al-Safriya Palace yesterday His Royal Highness is Majesty King Hamad bin Prince Turki bin Faisal bin Ab-Hisa Al Khalifa commend- dulaziz Al Saud, the Board of ed the noble humanitarian role Trustees Chairman of the Alplayed by the Board of Trustees Quds Empowerment Fund, and of the Al-Quds Empowerment his accompanying delegation, who are on a visit to the kingdom.

HRH Prince Turki bin Faisal estinians in Jerusalem to support HM the King affirmed the them economically and socially,

His Royal Highness valued This came as HM King Hamad in supporting the Palestinian circumstances, praising Bah-



HM the King receives a memento

olent humanitarian initiatives people in various humanitarian rain's efforts in this regard.

In this regard, His Majes-

ty highlighted the major role played by the Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF), led by His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, HM the King's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, in implementing many development and humanitarian projects and providing relief aid to the Palestinian people, in addition to those of other countries.

HM the King expressed pride in the distinguished robust fraternal relations between the kingdoms of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia and their peoples, affirming their shared keenness to bolster bilateral ties in various

Regional threat

Israel's 'response' vow to Iran attack intensifies tensions in Middle East

AFP | Jerusalem

srael and Iran traded threats yesterday after Tehran's first ever direct attack on its arch foe sharply heightened regional tensions as the Gaza war ground on with no truce in sight.

Israeli military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said Iran would not get off "scotfree" after Iran and its allies launched a barrage of over 300 missiles, drones and rockets at Israel at the weekend.

"We cannot stand still from this kind of aggression," Hagari said, a day after Israel's military chief vowed there would "a re sponse" to Iran's offensive.

Iran said its attack was an act of self-defence following a deadly Israeli air strike on its consulate in Syria, and that it would consider the matter "concluded" unless Israel retaliated.



Iran's President Ebrahim Rai- A plume of smoke billows during Israeli bombardment at Al-Daraj neighbourhood in Gaza City. (AFP)

si warned that "the slightest action against Iran's interests will definitely be met with a severe, extensive and painful response".

US President Joe Biden stressed on Monday that "the United States is committed to Israel's security" and wants to prevent the conflict from spreading.

Washington, Israel's top ally and arms supplier, has made clear it will not join Israel in any attack on their common adversary Iran, a senior US official

Restraint and de-escalation

World leaders have urged re-

straint and de-escalation. During a phone call with Iran's Raisi, Russian President Vladimir Putin called on both sides to "prevent a new round of confrontation fraught with catastrophic consequences for the entire region", the Kremlin

Rainfall rampage

Storms wreak havoc in Gulf as Oman toll rises to 18

AFP | Dubai

Torrential rains and high winds lashed parts of the Gulf yesterday as the death toll from storms in Oman rose to 18, many of them children.

Flights were cancelled in Dubai, the region's financial hub, while schools were shut in the UAE and Bahrain.

Flooding hit many areas of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital, and cut off major roads, snarling traffic and leaving cars



A car stranded in flood amid heavy rain in Bahrain

blue and cloudless, darkened to ternoon as a second storm front Dubai's skies, usually electric night-like conditions in mid-af- blew in.

continue on Wednesday, UAE's Na-said in a statement.

tional Center of Meteorology said. Some inland areas of the desert country recorded more than 80 millimetres (3.2 inches) of rain, approaching the annual average of about 100 mm.

The weather board "urged residents to take all the precautions... and to stay away from areas of flooding and water accumulation" in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

A total of 17 inbound and outbound flights were cancelled during the morning and three The storms were expected to were diverted, Dubai Airports

news of bahrain

A game changer

Comprehensive health insurance pledged to national athletes

TDT | Manama

bill designed to offer extensive health insurance coverage for the national athletes representing Bahrain internationally was passed unanimously by the Council of Representatives yesterday.

This initiative primarily aims to secure the athletes' social welfare, which in turn strengthens their allegiance to the coun-

The provision of comprehensive health insurance, coupled with handsome compensation in the event of injury, is intended to encourage athletes to engage more actively in international competitions, thereby boosting their morale.

MP Hasan Ebrahim remarked, "His Majesty the King is the by our outdated sports infra-Bahrain."

sports is a powerful means to its recommended replacement deter the spread of negative every four years." habits in society."

issue: "Tens of young athletes athlete safety and well-being. are forced to prematurely end their careers each month due ing from her experience as a ateurs with no stable income, establish well-equipped clinics to severe injuries, often caused physician for the national team, underscoring the need for eq- within sports clubs.





"His Majesty the King is the foremost patron of sports in Bahrain."

- MP HASAN EBRAHIM

foremost patron of sports in structure, such as the artificial turf (Tartan) that remains in use He added, "Participation in for more than 15 years, despite

Additionally, MP Moham- on the urgent need for modern- pect: only a small percentage of for all athletes. med Al Alaiwi raised a critical ising sports facilities to ensure athletes receive full insurance

"Tens of young athletes are forced to prematurely end their careers each month due to severe injuries, often caused by our outdated sports infrastructure."

- MP MOHAMMED AL ALAIWI



Al Alaiwi's remarks shed light highlighted a concerning as- uitable treatment and support coverage. She emphasised that the pressing need to enhance MP Maryam Al-Dhaen, draw- athletes are often treated as am- sports medicine in Bahrain and

"There is a pressing

need to enhance

sports medicine in

Bahrain and establish

In addition, AlDhain stressed

Swamiji set to visit Bahrain for spiritual discourse program

From April 28 to 30

TDT | Manama

🚹 ata Amritanandamayi Seva Samiti Bahrain (MASS Bahrain) has announced the exclusive visit of Swami Amritaswarupananda Puri, the esteemed disciple of the renowned humanitarian and spiritual guru, Mata Amritanandamayi Devi (AMMA), nity has increasingly recogto Bahrain.

from April 28 to April 30. Dur- practical spiritual wisdom that ing his visit, Swamiji will con- can guide the world towards a duct a spiritual discourse and better, brighter future. Since bhajan on April 30 from 7pm 1993, she has been invited by to 9:30pm at the BMC Auditorium, Segaya.

organizing a FREE meditation es, environmental concerns, learning program in association with IMAC Bahrain. This program will introduce par- the Bahrain Coordinator of ticipants to the transformative MASS, invited all interested in-I AM meditation technique, dividuals to attend both events pioneered by AMMA and re- and experience the profound nowned for its proven efficacy teachings and practices of in stress management.

program is scheduled for April 29, from 7pm to 9:30pm at the BMC Auditorium. Preregistration is mandatory for this program.

The international commu- 8025)

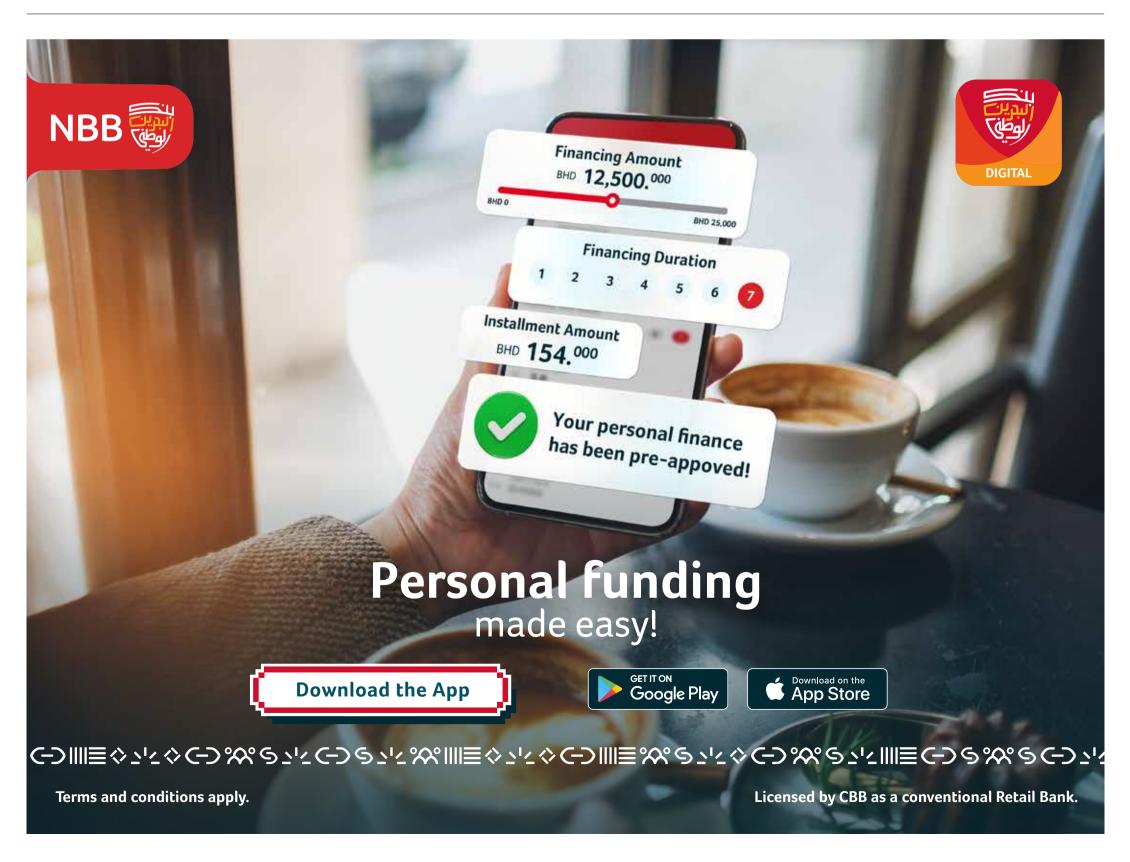


Swami Amritaswarupananda Puri

nised Mata Amritanandamai Swamiji will visit Bahrain as a treasured repository of international organisations to address various global issues, In addition, MASS Bahrain is including religious differenceducation, and peacemaking.

Mr. Sudheer Thirunilath, Swami Amritaswarupananda The meditation learning Puri and the I AM meditation technique.

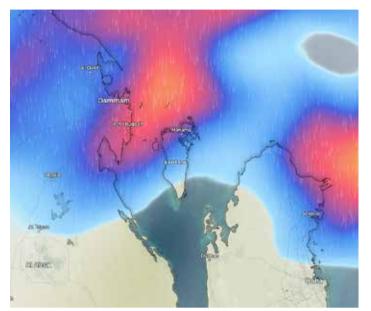
> For further details and registration, please contact Sreeja (3929 3112), Sajina (3322 275), and Chinnna Swamy (3913



news of bahrain

Soaked and stranded

Residents struggle to cope with severe flooding amidst heavy rainfall



A weather satellite image shows the impact of the heavy rain

Zahra Ayaz TDT | Manama

rently in the throes of a at home. severe flooding crisis following relentless downpours ucation swiftly responded to the that commenced yesterday.

transformed roads into water- private and public schools. ways, leaving vehicles stranded

In light of safety concerns, a significant number of indi-The entire nation is cur- viduals have opted to remain

Yesterday, the Ministry of Edadverse weather conditions by The torrential rains have announcing the closure of both



Scenes in Juffair (Pictures by Ashen Tharaka)



This proactive measure was The Ministry of Municipalities and its supporting teams are working on sucking and causing chaotic traffic contaken to ensure the well-being rainwater from the region and its streets and pumping it to Lake Al-Luzi



Interior Ministry tackles heavy rain aftermath

of students and staff members. prompted widespread fear ways, offering much-needed reamong residents, discouraging lief to the beleaguered populace. them from venturing out in their vehicles.

Work has deployed a dedicat- itself grappling with the immeed team to address the crisis diate consequences of the heavy head-on. The team is tirelessly rainfall.

working to drain rainwater from The alarming situation has affected households and road-

The flooding has brought about unprecedented challenges for the people of Bahrain. With roads submerged and cars However, the Ministry of immobilized, the nation finds

Intensive rain response efforts

TDT | Manama

The concerned departments of the Ministry of Interior have initiated intensive efforts to address the repercussions of the heavy rains sweeping across the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Operations Department, in collaboration with police directorates in all four governorates, civil defense, and traffic authorities, has implemented on-ground measures to assist citizens and residents in managing their affairs amidst the

These measures include professionally and urgently addressing rainwater accumulation issues and responding to reports concerning falling trees, lighting poles, umbrellas, and electrical short circuits. Pumps have been deployed to with-Ministry of Works.





The General Traffic Department directs traffic and tow vehicles stranded in flood

Simultaneously, the General in rain pools, organizing traffic traffic flow.

draw rainwater in coordination Traffic Department has been flow at intersections and main with the Ministry of Municipal handling various reports, in- streets, implementing diver-Affairs and Agriculture and the cluding directing traffic acci-sions, monitoring traffic movedents, towing vehicles stranded ment, and ensuring smooth



Under the instructions of His Excellency Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the Northern Governor Ali bin Shaikh Abdulhussain Al Asfoor made an inspection visits to the affected areas to determine the damage resulted from the heavy rainfall. During the visit, the Governor praised the efforts of the Ministry of Interior for their assistance provided to citizens and residents in regulating the traffic, handling cases and for raising awareness to achieve public safety. The Governor stressed the importance of teamwork between all concerned authorities with the aim of providing the necessary services and protecting the local community from the impacts of unstable weather







news of bahrain

Economic empowerment

Council of Representatives passes proposal to establish national fund to support SMEs

TDT | Manama

national fund aimed at spurring countering foreign domination. economic growth by providing terday's session.

It was tabled by the Committee on Financial and Economic to promote entrepreneurship Affairs and spearheaded by MP awareness by highlighting the Ahmed Alsalloom.

in favor and six votes against, climate of entrepreneurship. and four abstentions.

the financial burden on the national budget. Additionally, the proposal was passed by proposal aims to empower local the Council of Repre-SMEs, thereby reducing dependsentatives to establish a ency on outside sources and

It addresses the issue of unsupport to small and medium employment by creating job enterprises (SMEs) during yes- opportunities through support for SMEs.

Moreover, the proposal aims advantages of individual busi-The proposal received 17 votes ness ventures and fostering a

It also aims to attract innova-The proposal aims to achieve tions and opportunities, thereby several overarching objectives. opening new horizons for SMEs.



MP Ahmed Alsalloom tries' economic initiatives.

Enthusiasm

Firstly, it seeks to diversify Lastly, supporting SMEs aligns pressed enthusiasm for the pro- Finance and National Economy ing Bahrain's SME sector amidst income sources by alleviating Bahrain with neighboring counposal, emphasizing that it would as well as the Labour Market ongoing economic challenges.



MP Mohammed Al Marrafi

hancing their competitiveness.

MP Mohammed Al Marrafi ex- rejection from the Ministry of significant step toward bolster-

Regulatory Authority (LMRA), citing intersecting goals with existing institutions like the Labour Fund (Tamkeen) and the Ministry of Social Development.

Umbrella

In response, MP Alsalloom clarified that establishing this fund would serve as an umbrella under which other funds could operate, allowing philanthropic contributions and strictly supporting Bahraini businesses.

Despite reservations from strengthen Bahraini SMEs, en- some members about the proposal's clarity and operational However, the proposal faced aspects, the passage signifies a

Asian man's jail term for drugs upheld

Five years in prison

TDT | Manama

The High Appeals Court has upheld a five-year prison sentence for an Asian man who attempted to smuggle over 100 drug capsules inside his body upon arriving at Bahrain International Airport.

The incident unfolded when the accused arrived at Bahrain International Airport on a flight from his home country. He was directed by a customs officer to proceed to the red channel and questioned about his condition and posses-

The accused claimed he did not possess any prohibited items, raising suspicion among the customs officer who referred him to a doctor after noticing his unsettled state.

Subsequent medical tests and scans revealed foreign objects in the accused's intestines. Under mounting pressure, the accused confessed to having swallowed drug capsules and necessary medical procedures were undertaken to extract them.

Admission

Over 100 compressed narcotic tablets were recovered, and the accused admitted to preparing the cannabis substance in his home country and encapsulating it in an attempt to smuggle it into Bahrain.

Further security investigations revealed that the accused operated within a drug trafficking network.

Consequently, he was referred to the Public Prosecution, which charged him with intentionally bringing drugs, specifically cannabis and psychotropic substances, into Bahrain's airport security zone. He was also charged with possessing and acquiring the drugs for personal consumption.

Bill for social insurance parliamentary oversight under review



H.E. Ghanim Al Buainain

TDT | Manama

The Council of Representmentary oversight of the So- SIO's ongoing operations are cial Insurance Organisation's strictly in line with relevant laws

A naming issue arose in the Shura Council, leading to the of safeguarding public funds, been stalled over wording debill's referral back to the Council fostering efficient and effective spite consensus on its substance for additional review.



MP Eman Showaiter

to maintain its original name SIO's final account. to prevent ambiguity when enacted.

This bill proposes amendand regulations.

administration, driving pro-The dispute over the bill's gress, and engaging in judicious bodies name stems from the various investments with minimal risk changes the social insurance exposure. Additionally, the bill funds have experienced. The introduces a parliamentary sentatives was echoed for the cially given the vital role of these ures of the Social Insurance Council unanimously agreed oversight mechanism for the imperative need for oversight. retirement funds in protecting Organisation.



MP Mahdi Al Showaikh

Law's passage

H.E. Ghanim Al Buainain, 1 atives reviewed a bill rements to Law (3) of 2008 con-Minister for Shura Council and turned by the Shura Council, cerning social insurance. Its House of Representatives Afaimed at establishing parlia- foremost goal is to ensure the fairs, proposed that the law's public release of actuarial re- among pensioners, ever since wording be entrusted to the council's legal consultants.

It underscores the criticality the law's passage, which has documents, according to Showamong legislative and executive

within the Council of Repressive roper investments, espessive to the fail-

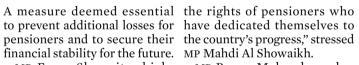


MP Basma Mubarak

inancial stability for the future. MP Mahdi Al Showaikh.

MP Eman Showaiter highlighted the necessity for the sised that the ongoing worry ports in addition to the final re- the discontinuation of the anports, which the SIO has shown nual 3 percent increase, revolves This move aims to hasten reluctance in providing these around their future financial

Weaknesses



MP Hanan Fardan

MP Basma Mubarak emphasecurity.

MP Hanan Fardan pointed out that the challenges of poor investment choices, voluntary "Continuous scrutiny is cru- early retirement, and the out-A unanimous sentiment cial to pinpoint weaknesses and dated administrative structure

Digital deception

TDT | Manama

young man in his twen-A young man in his twenthe defendant, who apologised
the defendant, who apologised transfers using the "Benefit" application.

pleading not guilty, claims he return the stolen funds but latwas managing their finances er failed to do so. at their request.

on behalf of his sisters, filed a through the "Benefit" apcomplaint with the authorities. plication. However, the first the defendant was entrusted with managing the financial affairs of his aunts due to their health conditions.

In 2020, the defendant almoney, they were informed contained BD20,000.

that the first aunt's account was empty. The second aunt contacted

stealing over BD24,000 from and requested that she not file his two aunts through online a complaint for the sake of his future. The bank also filed a complaint against the defend-The defendant, who is ant, who initially promised to

The defendant then claimed The case came to light after that the transfers were made the defendant's uncle, acting with the first aunt's consent According to the complaint, aunt denies ever creating an account on the platform or having the ability to use online banking.

The second aunt, 61, and retired, testified that she was legedly took one of the aunts shocked to discover the missto the bank and had her sign ing funds in her sister's acdocuments without knowing count and that the money had the purpose of this move. Lat- been transferred to the defender, in February 2023, when the ant's account. She checked her aunts attempted to withdraw bank account and found that it

Child reunited with mother after 13 years

TDT | Manama

In a heart-wrenching case that **⊥**unfolded at the lower criminal court, a child under the age of 15 found himself at the center of a custody battle that had deprived him of his mother since he was just five months old.

The child's father, who had custody, attempted to return years, but the reunion proved challenging as both the child and his mother felt alienated from each other due to their prolonged separation. The court, in a surprising turn of events, acquitted the mother of charges of child abuse and mistreatment

The incident came to light when the child repeatedly ran away from school, prompting the authorities to intervene. A

one occasion, the child could saw her son only twice. not be found until he was eventually discovered and placed in a child care center.

When given the choice to return home with his mother, the child refused, citing his psychological and social reports as evidence against her.

According to the court records, the child's father had taken him away from his mother when he was him to his mother after 13 long only five months old to live with him and his wife. Throughout

> The child's father had taken him away from his mother when he was only five months old to live with him and his wife.

police report was filed, and on the 13-year period, the mother the child's transfer to a Child

Stranger

Court acquits mother of child abuse charges

child's father either left his past experiences. him with his moth-

sion, the child expressed his siblings. unwillingness to live with his mother and her children, feeling harming her son but admitted like a stranger among them.

had raised him since he was did not have an emotional bond young. Eventually, he managed with him. to escape, leaving his mother in distress.

cident to the police, leading to cused mother.

Protection Center. The center's reports confirmed that the child was a victim and suffered from On both occasions, the psychological problems due to

The prosecution charged the er for a short time mother with harming the child before taking him and subjecting him to mistreatback forcefully, or ment, based on reports from the his stepmother Child Protection Center. These dropped him off at reports indicated that the child the mother's house refused to return to his mothand then promptly re- er because he felt a difference trieved him. On each occa- in treatment compared to his

The mother denied abusing or to lacking feelings for him. She During the two weeks the acknowledged that she knew child spent with his mother, she was not only guilty toward he repeatedly attempted to es- the child but also toward his cape and expressed his desire stepmother, as she could not to live with his stepmother, who bear the child's behaviors and

The court ruled that there was no evidence of negligence The mother reported the in- or abuse on the part of the ac-

Starbucks Foundation, Alshaya Starbucks committed to Gaza aid

Donates \$3 million to World Central Kitchen for food aid; partners (employees) in the region are offering further support









The Starbucks Foundation and Alshaya Starbucks are supporting World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit whose work focuses on feeding crisis-impacted communities

TDT | Manama

tarbucks has always been Africa. about more than coffee. tributing positively and sup- porting World Central Kitchen, sations, The Starbucks Foundapeople who are suffering.

uation in Gaza, and the many Foundation, has spearheaded region, Alshaya Group and Star- to stay close to World Central Gaza."

The Starbucks Foundation Morocco. We're committed to con- and Alshaya Starbucks are suppeople at risk of hunger," said dozens of hunger relief opera- bucks EMEA have also launched Kitchen to ensure they have the

Duncan Moir, president of Startions, delivering aid to impacted a partner (employee) donation resources for their humanitarian the company's charitable giving bucks Europe, Middle East and communities in all corners of matching initiative aimed at mission to proceed. the globe, such as Lebanon and raising additional funds for food

As a result of ongoing convertral Kitchen.

aid in Gaza through World Cen-

We grieve with World Cenporting others who do so. In a nonprofit whose work focuses tion and Alshaya Starbucks com-tral Kitchen's team in Gaza and response to the great need for on feeding crisis-impacted com- mitted to providing the equiva- their families around the world. humanitarian aid in Gaza, we are munities. World Central Kitch- lent of 1 million meals to people As the organization takes the donating to help provide food to en has been a primary disaster in need in Gaza through a joint time to reevaluate when its oprelief partner of The Starbucks donation of \$3 million to World erations will resume in the re-"We are heartbroken for all Foundation since 2019 and, with Central Kitchen in March. To gion, our commitment remains

Mohammed Alshaya, Execufolding in Gaza, and our hearts partners and others. are with all the people affected. We are committed to supporting and longest standing licensed our local communities and our partners across the world, Alpartners and, inshallah, through shaya Group has operated Starthese donations we will provide bucks in the Middle East and the people impacted by the sit- the support of The Starbucks expand our support from the unwavering. We will continue aid and relief to the people of North Africa (MENA) region

The Starbucks Foundation is store in Kuwait in 1999.

arm that strives to positively impact people and communitive Chairman, Alshaya Group, ties by supporting nonprofit orsaid, "We are deeply saddened ganizations in partnership with by the mass tragedy that is un- Starbucks partners, licensee

As one of Starbucks biggest since the opening of its first

Tamkeen launches second phase of CIC programme with Bahrain Polytechnic

The second phase supports participants in establishing startups, expanding the scope of their businesses, and enhancing their competitiveness in local, regional, and international markets

TDT | Manama

The Labour Fund (Tamkeen), in partnership with Bahrain Polytechnic, announced cation Technology (ICT) sector, itated by experts from Amazon the launch of the second phase a key contributor to the nationof its Cloud Innovation Center (CIC) programme. The initiative aims to enhance the cloud computing skills of Bahraini talent and bolster the Kingdom's in- al economy, which accounted novation and entrepreneurship ecosystems. The second phase builds on the success of the in 2022 and serves as a primary first, and was designed to support its promising graduates by providing them with a platform concepts in the market.

in local, regional, and interna- Partnerships Ali Hassan. tional markets. The programme generate innovative solutions program at the University of to a range of challenges, and en-Bahrain. Since their inception, courage qualified Bahraini professionals to embark on entreit contributes to the growth of innovate solutions through inthe Information and Communi-



for 6.8% of the Kingdom's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) driver for its digital transfor-

to develop and accelerate their rain Polytechnic is aimed at de- Research and Enterprise Dr. veloping the cloud computing Philippe Pringuet.

Based on the first phase out- skills of Bahraini professionputs, the second phase supports als and helping to transform participants in establishing their innovative concepts into startups, expanding the scope successful businesses," said of their businesses, and en- Tamkeen Executive Director hancing their competitiveness of Program Development and

In addition to the Cloud Inaims to expand the use of cloud novation Center at Bahrain computing technologies, facil- Polytechnic, Tamkeen also itate the delivery of services, provides support to a similar these Cloud Innovation Centers have together supported 106 preneurial journeys. Moreover, students, encouraging them to tensive hands-on training facil-Web Services (AWS). This has resulted in 34 innovative models, which have been proposed as solutions to challenges faced by the public sector.

"We are committed to nurturing the next generation of leaders in innovation and establishing a new standard for supporting startups and fostering their growth," added Bahrain "This collaboration with Bah- Polytechnic Dean of Applied

MF ups global growth forecast

AFP | Washington

The IMF has raised its out-The IMF has raised this year, while maintaining a gloomy forecast over the medium term, according to fresh data published yesterday.

The International Monetary Fund now expects the world economy to grow by 3.2% this year, up 0.1% age point from its previous forecast in January, and by a further 3.2% in 2025. Economic Outlook (WEO) re-

Global headline inflation is expected to ease from 5.9% this 0.4% expansion -- before pick- year is India, which the IMF year to 4.5% in 2025, support- ing up to 1.5% in 2025. ed by elevated interest rates in many countries.

in the United States to hit 2.7% this year -- up 0.6% age points forecast was unchanged. from the January forecast marking an acceleration from the 2.5% growth recorded in

slow to 1.9% in 2025, slightly changed from January. higher than previously expect-

slightly above last year's tepid One of the bright spots this Brooks told reporters.



according to the latest World (L-R) International Monetary Fund (IMF) Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, IMF Research Department Deputy Director Petya Koeva Brooks and MF Research Department Division Chief Daniel Leigh hold a press briefing

The outlook for the United Kingdom and Canada this year The IMF now expects growth has also been revised lower, while Japan's 2024 growth again

China unchanged

China, the world's second-largest economy, is still Growth in the world's largest expected to grow by 4.6% this economy is then expected to year, and by 4.1% in 2025 -- un-

The growth slowdown is largely down to the easing of rate investment, "robustness" In contrast, the euro area is a "postpandemic boost to con- in private consumption, and imnow expected to grow by just sumption and fiscal stimulus," 0.8% in 2024 -- down 0.1% age and ongoing weakness in the ing, IMF Research Department point from January and only property sector, the WEO said. deputy director Petya Koeva

now expects to grow by 6.8% -- up 0.3 points from January's forecast -- and by 6.5% in 2025.

Russia outlook improved,

The Russian economy is now expected to expand by 3.2% this year, and by 1.8% in 2025, well above January's forecast.

Such unexpected strength is down to four key factors, including Russia's steady oil export volumes, strong corpopact from government spend-

AFP | Amman, Jordan

Then Iran attacked Is-

country must not become "the

If the Gaza war raging since

October 7 has created tough chal-

lenges for Jordan, it now faces the

additional threat of being literally

stuck in the middle of a widening

Jordan, about half of whose

population is of Palestinian or-

igin, is also a close US ally and

signed a peace treaty with neigh-

war, Jordan's king has repeatedly

bouring Israel 30 years ago.

theatre of a regional war".

Israel-Iran conflict.

rael at the weekend,

V V Jordan intercepted multiple missiles and drones, but

King Abdullah II has stressed his

TO BE YOURSELF IN A WORLD THAT IS CONSTANTLY TRYING TO MAKE YOU SOMETHING ELSE IS THE **GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT** RAI PH WAI DO EMERSON

Christopher Columbus signs a contract with the Spanish monarchs to find the "Indies" with the stated goal of converting people to Catholicism. This promises him 10% of all riches found, and the governorship of any lands encountered.

Iran -- which labelled its at-

tive participation in and support

for settler attacks on Palestinians,"

and France, that helped Israel moned the Iranian ambassador and stressed that Jordan "will not it to play".

safeguard its own sovereignty the danger had come from Isra- air sorties "to prevent any air- became very clear."

el, Jordan would have taken the space infringement and defend



Iran -- which labelled its attack an act of

self-defence after a deadly Israeli strike

on its Syria consulate -- warned Jordan

it could be "the next target", a military

source was reported as saying by Iran's

In anticipation of a possible positioning within the US-relat- "Jordan did not defend Israel but

Nimrod Goren, senior fellow ond Arab country to do so after the Zionist project," he told AFP.

arrived for the second day of

proceedings in the trial, where

two weeks before lawyers even

at the Middle East Institute, said Egypt, although several others "It does not want to get in-

Fars news agency.

Treaty of Shimonose- 1,400 Cuban exiles land in ki is signed ending the Bay of Pigs in a doomed nese War (1894-95)

Goren said Iran could seek "to

meddle in Jordan and change the

dynamics there in its favour, like

Because the Iranian attack hap-

pened "above their territory", he

said, it constituted a direct threat

to "their defence (and) their sta-

Jordan's former information

"Jordan has nothing to do with

Jordan signed a peace treaty the struggle for influence be-

with Israel in 1994, only the sec- tween the Persian project and

it did in other countries".

1,400 Cuban exiles land in the Bay of Pigs in a doomed attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro

The future of Sudan

I requires the contri-

butions, participation

and vision of all Suda-

nese. I will not relent in

my calls to silence the

guns, and meet the aspi-

rations of the Sudanese

people for a peaceful and

@antonioguterres

secure future.

News in brief

◆ US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with his Chinese counterpart Dong Jun via video teleconferencevesterday, the Pentagon said, in the first substantiv talks between the superpowers' defense chiefs in nearly 18 months. "The two officials discussed US-PRC **US. China defense** defense relations and regional and global security issues," the Pentagon said chiefs hold first in a statement, referring to the People's talks in 18 months: Republic of China. "Secretary Austin emphasized the importance of continuing to open lines of military-to-military

communication between the United States and the PRC" following talks between the two sides in recent months, the statement said. Austin also "reiterated that the United States will continue to fly sail, and operate -- safely and responsibly -- wherever international law allows," and "underscored the importance of respect for high seas freedom of navigation guaranteed under international law, especially in the South China Sea."

◆ **Ukraine said vesterday** it had identified almost 37.000 people. identifies 37,000

including military personnel, who are unaccounted for since Russia's invasion began in February 2022, warning the actual figure may be "much higher". Calculating the exact number of missing is difficult, as Russian forces still occupy around a fifth of the country and neither side regularly releases data on military casualties. "Almost 37,000 people are considered missing --

children, civilians and military. These figures may be much higher," Ukraine's human rights ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets said. He said Ukraine and the Red Cross had identified about 1,700 people "illegally detained" by Russia, which he accused of "abducting civilians" since 2014, when war with Moscow-backed separatists in the country's east first broke out.

◆ The UN agency for Palestinian refugees said yesterday it had found unexploded 1,000-pound bombs inside schools after Israel pulled troops out of southern Gaza's main city Khan Yunis. The Israeli army has carried out relentless air strikes and bombardments in Gaza since Hamas militants attacked Israel on October 7. UN agencies led an "assessment mission" in Khan Yunis after Israeli forces withdrew from the embattled city last week, UNRWA said. It found "significant challenges in operating safely due to the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXOs), including 1,000-pound bombs inside schools and on roads". "Thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) 🚛 require a range of lifesaving assistance, including health, water and sanitation, and food," it said.



by enrolling at the school she

and ability to achieve them

munity School, said "a school

SPOTLIGHT

Student loses UK court bid over prayer rituals ban

London, United Kingdom

A pupil lost a UK court challengeyesterday against a top London school's ban on prayer rituals, in a case about freedom of religion in schools that captured national atten-

The student, who cannot be named, took legal action against Michaela Community School in northwest London, the court reportedly heard. claiming the policy was dis- In a written ruling, judge criminatory and "uniquely" Thomas Linden dismissed the affected her faith due to its pupil's arguments, ruling that ritualised nature.

She argued the school's pro- had effectively accepted being hibition of on-site prayer un- subject to restrictions on manlawfully breached her right to ifesting her faith. religious freedom and was "the He concluded that the kind of discrimination which prayer ritual policy was "promakes religious minorities feel portionate" and that its aims alienated from society".

The school -- state-funded "outweighs" any "adverse efbut independently run and fects" on the rights of Muslim renowned for its academ- pupils at the school. ic achievement record and Responding to the decision strict rules -- countered that Katharine Birbalsingh, headthe policy imposed last year teacher of Michaela Com-

The High Court in London should be free to do what is hearing the case was told right for the pupils it serves". the ban introduced last year "The court's decision is stemmed from several dozen therefore a victory for all students beginning to pray in schools," she added on X (forthe school's yard, using blazers merly Twitter).

to kneel on, the BBC reported. "Schools should not be It then imposed the new forced by one child and her rules due to concerns about mother to change its approach a "culture shift" towards "seg-simply because they have deregation between religious cided they don't like somegroups and intimidation with- thing at the school." in the group of Muslim pupils",



AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

srael's army said yester-Lday that Iran will not get off "scot-free" after the Islamic republic launched an unprecedented wave of missiles and drones at Israel last weekend.

"Iran will not get (off) scot-free with this aggression," military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari told reporters at Julis military base while displaying the remains of an intercepted missile.

"We will not allow this aggression in the region," Hagari said, speaking in English

He said that, even as the world was talking about the "nuclear threat from Iran," the Islamic republic was "building a conventional threat, meaning to create a ring of fire across Israel".

From late on Saturday to early Sunday, Iran launched more than 300 drones, missiles and ballistic missiles at Israel but caused just minor damage, including at a military base in the country's

US will 'not hesitate' to tighten sanctions on Iran:

Washington, United States

U^S Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned in prepared remarksyesterday of further sanctions targeting Iran, following its unprecedented attack on Israel over the weekend.

"Treasury will not hesitate to work with our allies to use our sanctions authority to continue disrupting the Iranian regime's malign and destabilizing activity," according to excerpts of Yellen's speech ahead of the spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington this week.

Russia orders fresh

evacuations

AFP | Moscow, Russia

Sea cargo traffic: EU admiral

Amid the half-year-old Gaza on the weekend, during a media tour at the Julis military base near the southern

Israeli city of Kiryat Malachi



More warships needed to boost Red

Yemeni coastguards loyal to the internationally-recognised government ride in a patrol boat in the Red Sea off the government-held town of Mokha in the western Taiz province, close to the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait

AFP | Larissa, Greece

The head of an EU force pro-ships so far and none has sus-L tecting cargo ships from tained damage whilst under Huthi attacks in the Red Sea our escort." yesterday said the operation "This is a point of reference had met its goals, but freight on which we can build to intraffic cannot increase without crease the number of ships

more warships. cent, it is possible to escort any ternational shipping.

ship that requests protection." "We have accompanied 79

under protection... with the "The distances that need to means currently at our dispos-

be covered are huge," Rear Ad- al, this is not possible," he said miral Vasileios Gryparis told Operation Aspides, named AFP at EU operation headquar- after the Greek word for ters in the central Greek city of shield, was launched by the Larissa. "So far, because ship- European Union in February ping is down by over 50 per- with the goal of protecting in-

Man, 88, jailed for killing wife

AFP | Saint-Denis De La Reunion, France

Israeli military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari (C) and other members of

the Israeli military stand next to an Iranian ballistic missile which fell in Israel

An 88-year-old man from the French island of Reunion was on Monday sentenced to 20 years in prison for killing his ill wife and her in-house carer, a judicial source saidyesterday.

The accused, a retired teacher, said that he had acted out of compassion because his 78-year-old spouse suffered from Alzheimer's disease. The double murder took place in Saint-Joseph, in the south of the Indian Ocean French overseas territory, in March 2021.

Ahead of Monday's verdict, the public prosecutor had called for 25 years' im-

The accused has been described as a "violent" and "authoritarian" man.

The man struck his wife several times with a sledgehammer and then killed the couple's domestic helper, who arrived at the scene soon after.

Israeli forces taking part in settler attacks on **Palestinians: UN**

The government said its mili- same measures".

Jordan says won't become 'theatre of war'

voiced strong criticism of Israel ger or transgression by any par-

and directed his military to fly ty". But this did not spare it from

A strong supporter of the Pal- tack an act of self-defence after

estinian cause, the monarch has a deadly Israeli strike on its Syr-

described Jordan's relationship ia consulate -- warned Jordan

with Israel as a "cold peace". it could be "the next target", a

Then, last weekend, Jordan was military source was reported as

attack drones launched by Iran "questioning" its positions.

daily food airdrops to help be- Iran's anger

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

ather than defend Israel

tary "will confront anything that

would expose the security and

safety of the nation... to any dan-

The UN voiced grave concern rights office spokeswoman Ravi-L yesterday over escalating vio- na Shamdasani told reporters in lence in the West Bank, demand- Geneva. ing that Israeli security forces "Israeli authorities must instead "immediately" stop supporting prevent further attacks, including settler attacks on Palestinians in by bringing those responsible to the occupied territory.

With the Gaza war raging, She stressed that "those reasonthe United Nations rights office ably suspected of criminal acts, decried that Palestinians in the including murder or other un-West Bank had been "subjected lawful killings, must be brought to to waves of attacks by hundreds of justice through a judicial process Israeli settlers, often accompanied that complies with international or supported by Israeli security human rights standards, following

"The Israeli security forces effective and transparent investi-

a prompt, impartial, independent.

account.



Frustrated Trump vents on day two of historic trial

King Abdullah, in a phone call Jordan during the Iranian attack have since also established dip-volved in a regional conflict."

Ayman Safadi, head of Jorda- Israeli response, Jordan's army ed camp in the region, which is rather defended its sovereignty



AFP | New York, United States

among a group of nations, also in-saying by Iran's Fars news agency. with US President Joe Biden on had "played a role that I think bility". "That's a major concern

shoot down missiles, rockets and and demanded that Tehran stop be the theatre of a regional war". "It definitely shows Jordan's minister, Samih al-Maaytah, said

Jordan stressed its aim was to nian diplomacy, insisted that "if said vesterday it was increasing something that is not new, but it and the security of its territory"

cluding the United States, Britain Jordan's foreign ministry sum- Sunday, called for de-escalation was larger than many expected for Jordan."

fuming Donald Trump be- he is accused of falsifying busi-Agan another day of jury seness records in a scheme to lection in his historic criminal cover up reports on the eve of trial Tuesday, in stark contrast his 2016 election victory that to his White House rival Pres- he had an extramarital affair ident Joe Biden who headed with a porn star. Jury selection out to campaign in a key swing was expected to take as long as

No other ex-president in US start to present their cases. history has been hauled before "I should be right now in a criminal court and the trial Pennsylvania and Florida -in an unglamorous Manhat- in many other states, North tan courthouse comes as scan- Carolina, Georgia -- campaigndal-plagued Trump is fighting ing," Trump said as he entered to make a shock return to the court. He called the presiding White House in November. judge, Juan Merchan, "Trump

Trump, 77, was angry as he hating."

used F-16 jets to Argentina



AFP | Copenhagen, Denmark

Denmark's defence ministry said yesterday that try is renewing its air force.

air base.

Denmark is in the process of upgrading its fleet to the more modern F-35, and has around forty F-16s, of which around 30 are in operation, according to Danish media.

Denmark sells 24



the country was selling 24 used F-16 fighter jets to Argentina, as the Nordic coun-

The contract, which followed a declaration of intent unveiled in March, was formally signed during a visit by Argentina's Defence Minister, Luis Alfonso Petri, at the Danish Skrydstrup

and love over hate. Together, we can create a world where peace is not just a dream, but a reality. @DrTedros

World peace begins with each one of

us. Let's prioritize empa-

thy over conflict, under-

standing over ignorance,



⊥ to Israel's defense. Following Iran's unprecedented attack against Israel, we have been coordinating a diplomatic response to seek to pre vent escalation.

@SecBlinken



cans call my Afforda ble Connectivity Program - the plan responsible for getting 23 million households affordable internet - 'wasteful.' Tell that to the mom who used to park outside a restaurant so her child could get online and do homework.

fire had been brought under building was more or less burnt. dle of Copenhagen in flames. It

control. "The fire is under con- Earlier in the day, witnesses is our shared cultural heritage", trol to the extent that we at this watched in tears as more than Prime Minister Mette Frederikmoment are dealing with what 100 firefighters battled to save sen told public broadcaster DR.

rector of emergency services "This is our Notre-Dame! "hundreds of years of history Jakob Vedsted Andersen told This is a national treasure," lo- going up in flames." Denmark's a press conference, adding the cal resident, 45-year-old Elis- King Frederik X said in a statework would continue for "many abeth Moltke, told AFP. "It pains ment that the country had wokhours". He said that half of the us all to see Borsen in the mid- en up to "a sad sight."

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

Kashmir reclaims its title as Indian Cinema's 'Paradise'

D ussia yesterday began **I**fresh evacuations from towns and villages in western Siberia threatened by devastating floods, as Kazakh leader Kassym-Jomart Tokayev met with people evacuated from rising water on his side of the border.

Russia and Kazakhstan have been hit by the worst floods in decades, as massive rivers rise with their ice cover melting. The floods are expected to peak this week on Siberia's Tobol and Ishim rivers.

The governor of the Tyumen region, Alexander Moor, said emergency services had begun "urgent evacuations" from towns expected to be inundated.

The picturesque landscapes I of Kashmir are once again becoming the preferred backdrop for Bollywood and South Indian film productions, with more than 200 filmmakers seeking permission to shoot in the valley in In 2023, Kashmir emerged as

a focal point for the film industry, hosting the shooting of 102 films and web series. Notable productions included Kartik Aryan's "Chandu Champion," John Ibrahim's "Veda," Shahrukh Khan's "Danki," Aamir Khan's "Laal Singh Chaddha," and Ranbir Singh and Alia Bhatt's "Rocky and Rani's

The film policy implemented



by the government has played applied for shooting permissions, tribute subsidies and established tering collaboration between the a pivotal role in attracting film- with 300 receiving the green light. a single-window mechanism to public and private sectors to meet makers to Kashmir. Over the past The policy introduced a Film streamline the shooting process, the demands of the evolving film two years, around 700 producers Development Fund (FDF) to dis-facilitating hassle-free applical landscape.

Kashmir's cinematic legacy

dates back to the era before the 1990s, with iconic films like "Bobby," "Kashmir Ki Kali," "Aap Ki Kasam," and "Junglee" being shot against its breathtaking backdrop. Despite facing setbacks due to terrorism, efforts are underway to revive the region's film infrastructure, particularly in tourist hotspots like Pahalgam, Gulmarg, and Dal Lake. Pertinently, Lieutenant Gov-

ernor Manoj Sinha earlier emphasized the significance of the film policy in revitalizing Jammu and Kashmir's cinematic heritage. The policy aims to foster innovation and competitiveness in the industry, leveraging the region's natural beauty and fos-

UN to launch \$2.8 bn global appeal for Gaza, West Bank

The United Nations to-**⊥** day will launch a \$2.8 billion appeal for donations this year to help the war-ravaged population of the Gaza Strip as well as West Bank Palestinians, a senior agency official said.

"Of course 90 percent of it is for Gaza." Andrea De been \$4 billion for 2024 but budgeting was slashed given manitarian aid distribution

AFP | United Nations, United

Domenico, head of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Palestinian territories, said yesterday, noting that the original plan had the "limited ability" of hu-

Fire at Copenhagen landmark 'under control' **AFP** | Copenhagen, Denmark

17th-century former stock exchange, ravaging the building and toppling its iconic spire, was "under control." Amid flames and black smoke, the 54-metre (180-foot) spire crashed into the street below the Borsen building on

been undergoing renovation. GMT), rescue services said the we call final extinguishing," di- the building.



Shortly after 4:00 pm (1400 Smoke rise out of the Old Stock Exchange, Boersen, in Copenhagen, Denmark

Ryan Coogler and Michael B. Jordan start filming supernatural thriller



Ryan Coogler and Michael B. Jordan Celebretainment | Los Angeles Wunmi Mosaku.

their top secret new movie project over the weekend.

The pair - who worked together on films including Coogler's 2013 directorial debut 'Fruitvale Station', 2015 era South and possibly involve 'Rocky' spin-off 'Creed' and 'Black Panther' - have reteamed for third time and details about their new project brothers, but the details are have been kept tightly under unconfirmed. Production is wraps but it's now been revealed as a supernatural thrill- New Orleans, Louisiana. er involving vampires.

dacted the film's title from the film. post on Instagram.

film is a "supernatural thriller" 'Creed III', which was the first due for release in March 2025 film in the 'Rocky' series not to and also stars Jack O'Connell, feature creator Sylvester Stal-Delroy Lindo, Jayme Law- lone as heroic fighter Rocky son, Omar Benson Miller, and Balboa.

Comicbookmovie.com reports the film was kept so se- ${
m R}^{
m yan\ Coogler\ and\ Michael}$ cret, studio bosses who were interested had to "make the pilgrimage" to the offices of Coogler's agents just to take a look at the script.

> The website reports the film will be set in the Jim Crow-"vampires and Southern supernatural traditions" and Jordan may be playing twin believed to be taking place in

Meanwhile, Jordan is set to Cinematographer Autumn continue his story as heavy-Durald Arkapaw confirmed weight champion boxer Adonfilming is now underway by is Creed - the son of Apollo posting a picture of a clapper Creed, Rocky's most famous board from the set, but he re- opponent - in a fourth 'Creed'

The Hollywood star made Deadline.com reports the his directorial debut on 2023's

Jessica Chastain hails 'beautiful' Anne Hathaway

On the other

Anne's perfor-

said: "She's re-

"You see

The actress

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Jessica Chastain thinks Anne Hathaway is a "beautiful

The 47-year-old actress adwith her long-time showbiz friends. pal in 'Mother's Instinct', their new psychological thriller film.

Speaking to 'Extra'. Jessica explained: "She's a dream come true."

The Hollywood star feels fortunate that she's been given the opportunity to appear alongs i d e Anne,

homme-directed movie.

Jessica - who previously worked with Anne on 'Interstellar', the 2014 sci-fi film - said: "I hand, Jessica mean, we should all be so lucky admitted to bemits that it's a "dream" to work to dream up projects with our ing wowed by

> 'She's just ... lovely. What a mance in the film. beautiful, beautiful, beautiful person."

Despite this, Jessica ally incredpreviously admitted that ible and it was difficult to have an can just on-screen conflict with switch on Anne in 'Mother's In- a dime.

During an appear- actresses ance on BBC Radio who have to 4's 'Woman's Hour', rev it up for a Jessica shared: "It long time, but was more difficult she's not like to play friends who that. She's have conflict in the profes story, especially sional, when you care about a n d

the person so much." o n c e Jessica explained that cam-Jessica Chastain **Anne Hathaway**

41, in the new Benoit Del- she'd prefer to work with Anne eras roll she is able to conjure up this depth of feeling." when "we don't have an extreme conflict".

Meanwhile, Anne recently praised Christopher Nolan for rescuing her career by casting her in 'Interstellar'. The Oscar-winning actress told Vanity Fair: "A lot of people wouldn't give me roles because they were so

> concerned about how toxic my identity had become on-

"I had an angel in Christopher Nolan, who did not care about that and gave me one of the most beautiful roles I've had in one of the best films that I've been a part

Nicole Kidman remembers 'emotional' wedding day to Keith Urban

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Nicole Kidman's wedding day was one of the most "emotional things" that has ever happened to her.

The 56-year-old actress - who was initially married to fellow Hollywood star Tom Cruise from 1990 until 2001 and has Isabella, 31, and 29-year-old Connor with him - tied the knot with musician Keith Urban in 2005 and reflected that the day was "extraordinary", especially as she was in the company of her late father.

She told People: "I remember being in Sydney and driving down the street and Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban



I was with my dad, who's obviously not around now, and he was in the car with me... We were driving to the church and there were so many people on the street, sort of celebrating us.

"It was just one of the most emotional things in my life... It really was an extraordinary day."

At the time, a wedding guest said: "Nicole cried all the way to the church in the car." Another said: "When Nicole and Keith looked at each other it was like they were the only two people in the room... It was the most incredible wedding."

Jaden Smith feels 'grounded' by nature

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

 $J^{\text{aden Smith feels "grounded"}}$ when he surrounds himself with nature.

The 25-year-old star - who is the son of Jada Pinkett-Smith and Will Smith - has revealed that he's looking forward to the Coachella music festival in California

He told PEOPLE: "I just love the desert. I love Coachella. I love being out there and watching the sunset, swimming inside of the ocean, climbing a tree, climbing a mountain. These all the time. things really force me to not what's going on in the world back in, I can tap in with a full his siblings.



Jaden Smith

be on my phone or looking at I can just tap out really give me delic drugs have helped him to certain things or caring about a refresh so that when I tap form a better relationship with

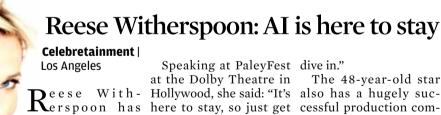
reserve and be ready to handle certain things."

Jaden generally considers himself to be a "summer person" - but he's currently really enjoying the spring time.

He shared: "I was born in the summer, and I'm more of a summer person. But this year I think the biggest surprise that has happened to me is spring.

"It's come super hot. The sun's beaming. Last year was all about summer for me. This year, bringing the spring in has been amazing."

Meanwhile, Jaden previ-"Those little moments where ously claimed that psyche-



it is "here to stay". actress doesn't believe job. So learn about it. it is artificial intelli-

who know how to and our own ethics. use it successfully,

creativity. **Reese Witherspoon**

warned Hollywood to used to it. And I think AI pany, Hello Sunshine, "get used to" AI because is not coming for your job; and she believes there people who know how to has been a huge change

"That's a whole connot be scared of it, let's anything.

The 'Morning Show' use AI are coming for your with streaming services in the wake of the Holly-"It should be a tool upon wood strikes, which will gence "coming for your which we lay our own cre- ultimately make it "a litjob", but the people ativity, our own humanity tle bit harder" to sell new shows.

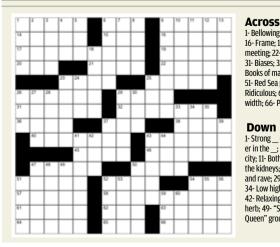
She said: "Streamso urged those in versation – for women ing was like the biggest the industry to and people of colour and thing for three to four learn more about people who are othered years, and there was a the technology sometimes in those de- never-ending constant and how it can velopmental spaces really smash for content, and be used to boost need to get in there... let's like literally we could sell

SUDOKU

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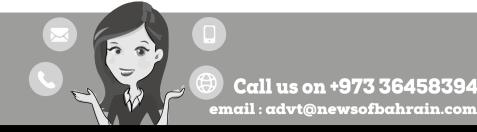
1- Bellowing; 6- Bro or sis; 9- Yoga posture; 14- Tending to droop; 15- Get thee __nunnery; 16- Frame; 17- Mutual arrangement; 19- Snow conveyances; 20- Bridal bio word; 21- Cong meeting; 22- Icon; 23- Comic Foxx; 25- Glass marble; 26- To a greater extent; 29- Stitched 31- Biases; 32- Gift; 36- Human bone, located in the arm; 37- Blemish; 38- Poor grades; 40-Books of maps; 43- Takes by theft; 45- Junk e-mail; 46- Zit; 47- Tortilla chip dip; 50- District; 51- Red Sea peninsula; 52- Prefix with dexterity; 54- Spring mo.; 57- Single things; 58-Ridiculous; 61- Do-over button; 62- Spots on TV; 63- Composer Berg; 64- Pitchers; 65- Shoe width; 66- Peachy!;

Down

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Classifieds



VACANCIES AVAILABLE

REVIRA HOTEL has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729222 or admin@ inventhouse.net

Wyndham Garden W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66316666 or mannai.hr@ mannaitrading.com

SHUTDOWN MAINTENANCE SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SERVICES HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17742961 or SMSWLL@

ZARWAN FIBER GLASS FACTORY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17600144 or ZARWAN@HOTMAIL.COM

ABDULAZIZ ALSAYED TRADING CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of LABOURER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33747598 or AHMEDALSAYED88@HOTMAIL.COM

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I WOOD WORKS has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33330082 or ALWASEEMGROUP@GMAIL.COM

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SULTAN SHAIKH SCRAP has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39168031 or AMINASULTAN66@GMAIL.COM

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can contact 37154008 or SAFEERVKS1@ GMAIL.COM

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LEEN3633225J8BH@GMAIL.COMJ
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KAYNATNOOR4@HOTMAIL.COM

36343888 or binu@go-communications.con PRISM INTERNATIONAL SOLUTIONS **W.L.L** has a vacancy for the occupation of STOREKEEPER ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17500105 or INFO@ PRISMWLL.COM

suitably qualified applicants can contact

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SEVEN DAYS CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39454342 or SDC.SPC@YAHOO.COM

AL

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MAJEED.DHAIF@GMAIL.COM

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qualified applicants can contact 66648111 or

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39391449 or rajeefpm@gmail.com
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Babar back as captain as Pakistan face New Zealand in World Cup build-up

Pakistan hopes team bonding aids performance

Hosts hope army camp boosted team spirit

New Zealand missing key players due to IPL

AFP | Karachi

abar Azam makes his re-turn as Pakistan captain in a five-match Twenty20 series starting Thursday against an understrength New Zealand with the World Cup weeks away.

that ended the short-lived reign good for bonding. of Shaheen Shah Afridi, raisplayers.



Babar Azam plays a shot for Pakistan at Eden Park in Auckland

Azam regained the captaincy time together at a fitness camp much on their minds. last month in a shock U-turn at an army base will have been

ing fears of a rift between the said yesterday that the T20 come all the shortcomings so World Cup last year.

The hosts hope that spending ed States and West Indies is very

"I have full faith in the selected squad and the morale is very Head coach Azhar Mahmood high in the team, so we will over-World Cup in June in the Unit- that we can do our best in the



in captain, Michael Bracewell, is returning after a year-long injury layoff

World Cup," he told AFP.

"You cannot take any team lightly in the T20 format and if New Zealand is missing their sent a security team last month. key players then there is an players."

Pakistan suffered major upheaval following their firstround exit from the one-day

in all three formats and head with Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Zaka Ashraf.

interior minister, took up the have played a lot of T20 crickboard's top post and reorganised et growing up," said Bracewell, the selection committee, pav- who has returned after a yearing the way for batsman Azam's return.

and spinning all-rounder Imad as a group we will just try to play Wasim also return to international cricket in this series after coming out of retirement.

Youthful New Zealand

New Zealand arrived in the country at the weekend, having

In 2021 the Black Caps pulled opportunity for their young out of a tour of Pakistan at the 11th hour over security fears, but returned twice in 2023.

New Zealand are missing nine top players including skipper Kane Williamson because of the Azam stepped down as captain Indian Premier League.

Stand-in skipper Michael coach Mickey Arthur left along Bracewell says it is a chance for the younger players.

"I think the group of young Mohsin Naqvi, the country's players have come through and long injury lay-off.

"They have fresh ideas on how Fast bowler Mohammad Amir the game should be played and our game.'

> Ace pacer Tim Southee, the world's top wicket-taker in Twenty20 internationals with 157, is rested.

The experienced duo of Adam Milne and Finn Allen suffered injuries a day before the team's

All-rounder Zac Foulkes, hard-hitting batsman Tim Robinson and seamer Will O'Rourke are uncapped in T20s.

The first three games of the series are in Rawalpindi, with Lahore hosting the last two.

Exciting finish to day two of 9th **Inter-Hotel Charity Tournament**



from Awais Rafiq (Financial Controller, The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain)

TDT | Manama

The 9th Inter-Hotel Charity
Tournament continued on the third match. Wyndham April 15, 2024, with intense Grand's Uzaal Nasar was cricket action and competitive named man of the match as spirit on display across multi- his team won by 3 wickets. ple matches.

Four Seasons faced off against tinental Regency by 4 wickets. Swiss Belhotel Seef. Four Sea- Jumeirah Bahrain's Inzimam sons' Ali Saqlain was named Gul was the man of the match. the man of the match as his team emerged victorious by

Address Beach Resort. Grand Swiss Belhotel's Srinivas Bingi by 10 runs. was the star of the show, helpvictory and earning himself the man of the match title.

Wyndham Grand Manama faced off against Royal Am-The 9th Inter-Hotel Charity bassasor (Onyx by Rotana) in

In the fourth match, Jumei-In the first match of the day, rah Bahrain defeated Intercon-

The final match of the day saw Trader Vic's Bahrain take on Gulf Hotel. Trader Vic's The second match saw Bahrain's Abdul Salam was Grand Swiss Belhotel take on named man of the match as his team emerged victorious

The tournament will coning his team secure a 59-run tinue for another week, with plenty more exciting matches



Uzzal Nasar (Wyndham Grand Manama) receive "Man of the Match" certificate from Ashish Prasad (Director of Human Resources, Wyndham Grand Manama)

'Shame' of penalty pantomine overshadows big Chelsea win for Pochettino

auricio Pochettino said on Monday he will not accept seeing his players squabble over penalty duties after his biggest win as Chelsea boss was marred by teammates fighting to take a spot-kick.

Cole Palmer eventually took responsiblity to score his fourth goal in a 6-0 rout of Everton on to move the Blues to within three points of the Premier League's top six.

However, a night to savour for Pochettino was soured by Noni Madueke and Nicolas Jackson having to be forcibly removed by captain Conor Gallagher to allow Palmer to continue his perfect record from the spot this season with the score at 4-0.

"It's a shame," said Pochettino. "I was telling the players. in this way.

"I told them this is the last again."



Nicolas Jackson (left) tries to take a penalty off Cole Palmer (centre)

time I accept this type of behaviour. It's impossible after a penalty of the campaign took performance like this to show him level with Manchester City this kind of behaviour.

We had a meeting with all the fighting for big things we have tle to win the Golden Boot.

Palmer's ninth successful striker Erling Haaland on 20 "If we want to be a big team Premier League goals in the bat-

staff, I think we cannot behave to think more of the collective... Raheem Sterling pulled rank the top, but everyone wants to I won't accept that this happens on his former City teammate win - we are laughing and jokwhen he missed a penalty in ing about it.'

I told them this is the last time I accept this type of behaviour. It's impossible after a performance like this to show this kind of behaviour

MAURICIO POCHETTINO

Chelsea's FA Cup quarter-final win over Leicester last month.

Palmer was adamant he will remain on spot-kicks but tried to play down the significance of the incident.

"Other players wanted to take it, but I am the penalty taker and I wanted to take it," said Palmer.

"I think we are showing everyone is wanting to take responsibility. It may be a bit over

LeBron's Lakers take on Pelicans as NBA play-in tips off

AFP | London

eBron James will be out to Lextend his 21st NBA campaign yesterday when his Los Angeles Lakers open the NBA play-in tournament against the New Orleans Pelicans, the winner booking a playoff meeting with the defending champion Denver Nuggets.

The Lakers closed the regular season with a dominant victory over the Pelicans on Sunday.

James said the Lakers can't afford a let-down against a Pelicans team eager to turn the

"They're going to be extremely ready for us, and we have to come in with the same sense of remains a formidable force in the league.

The losing team will get one offs, taking on the winning team from yesterday's game between through the play-in to reach reaching the NBA Finals where Boston Celtics.



LeBron James #23 of the Los Angeles Lakers warms up prior to a game against the New Orleans Pelicans

urgency," said James, who at 39 the ninth-seeded Sacramento the Western Conference finals, State Warriors for a first-round la Jokic and the Nuggets. meeting with Western Confer-

Kings and 10th-placed Golden where they were swept by Niko-

The Miami Heat did even betmore chance to reach the play- ence top seeds Oklahoma City. ter out of the play-in, earning in the East -- and a first-round Last season the Lakers came the eighth seed in the East and meeting with the top-seeded

they also succumbed to Denver.

The Heat will be trying to retrace that path when they travel to Philadelphia on Wednesday to play the 76ers -- the winner booking a first-round meeting with Eastern Conference second seeds the New York Knicks.

"We've had some great battles with (Miami)," 76ers coach Nick Nurse said. "I always expect that versus them."

Nurse was confident that reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Joel Embiid, who sat out the final game of the regular season to rest his surgically repaired knee, would be "ready to go" against Miami.

The Sixers are 31-8 with Embiid playing this season.

The loser of that game will play the winner of Wednesday's Atlanta-Chicago contest for the eighth and final playoff berth

Nadal wins on injury comeback

Rafael Nadal breezes past Flavio Cobolli at Barcelona Open in first ATP Tour match since January

Nadal faces 11thranked Alex de Minaur in the second round

AFP | Barcelona

afael Nadal made light work of Flavio Cobolli on a triumphant return from injury at the Barcelona Open yesterday.

The 22-time Grand Slam champion had not played an ATP Tour match since January but dispatched the Italian 6-2, 6-3 in one hour and 25 minutes to reach the second round.

Nadal, 37, was able to play on clay for the first time since winning the French Open in 2022 and showed flashes of his usual brilliance in a solid display.

"It was a good start -- when you return you can't get rid of the doubts in one day, above all, on a physical level," Nadal told Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Flavio Cobolli

was a good first round. He made game that I had to play."



"Within what it could be, it mistakes and I think I played the

Roland Garros a record 14 times, keep up with, but I'll try," Nadal



Nadal played on clay for the first time since 2022 and is using the Barcelona Open as a stepping stone to prepare for the French Open, which he plans to be his final tournament

is hoping to play there in May in what he expects to be the final year of his professional career.

missed most of 2023 injured, will face Alex de Minaur on Wednesday after breezing past

"It will be at a speed that I Nadal who has triumphed at don't know if I will be able to

I think now is actually

a good time for me to

give myself a bit of a

mental and physical

break, get my body

right. If I'm required

to get in during the

tournament, I can

hopefully get back into

a really solid mental

and physical space

where I can still have

an impact

GLENN MAXWELL

I've gone months without being able to serve, (and) although I've got a lot of excitement to play here and do the best I can, I'm not going to go crazy with the serve. I have to serve with caution that the moment I'm in dictates... there are moments in which I feel more liberated and others in which I'm

> more careful RAFAEL NADAL

The clay court king, who said of facing the 11th-ranked De Minaur.

After a double fault to fall 30-0 behind Nadal found his rhythm, with Cobolli intimidated by the that the moment I'm in dictates... fervent support for the Spaniard on the court named after him.

Nadal converted his third which I'm more careful."

break point in the fourth game for a 3-1 lead, with Cobolli surviving four more to hold at 4-2

The 12-time Barcelona Open winner broke again to claim the set in 43 minutes, clenching his fist in celebration.

Cobolli handed Nadal a break for 2-0 in the second set with two more unforced errors but finally put some pressure on Nadal's serve in the third game to

However Nadal broke again for 3-1 after Cobolli's third double fault and served it out to triumph.

The Spaniard did not produce any aces and his serve was effective but not explosive.

"I've gone months without being able to serve, (and) although I've got a lot of excitement to play here and do the best I can, I'm not going to go crazy with the serve," added Nadal.

"I have to serve with caution there are moments in which I feel more liberated and others in

Maxwell takes indefinite 'mental and physical break' from IPL

AFP | Bengaluru

ustralia's Glenn Maxwell Awill take an indefinite "mental and physical break" from the IPL after struggling for form with Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

The big-hitting all-rounder has scored just 32 with the bat in six games and skipped the defeat on Monday in a record run-fest against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

It was Bengaluru's sixth defeat in seven matches and Faf du Plessis's side are bottom of the 10-team table.

"I think now is actually a good time for me to give myself a bit of a mental and physical break, get my body right," the 35-yearold Maxwell said after playing no part in his side's 25-run defeat.

during the tournament, I can 2019. hopefully get back into a respace where I can still have an aside for the time being. impact."

Cup in June, was one of the first someone else," he said.



Glenn Maxwell in action in the IPL earlier this month

"If I'm required to get in from international cricket in

He said on Monday it was "a ally solid mental and physical pretty easy decision" to step

Maxwell, who will be key after the last game and said I felt take a lot of pride in my perforfor Australia at the T20 World it was probably time we tried

cricketers to recognise mental "I have been in this situation on the wrong side of 30. I think health issues and took a break in the past where you can keep that physical and mental toll playing and get yourself deeper into a hole."

Known as "Mad Max" and "I went to Faf and the coaches strokeplay, Maxwell added: "I Indian Premier League total.

my body right for every game. "And it has been a pretty

tough struggle, given my body is probably just wore me down a little bit."

Hyderabad amassed 287-3 at "The Big Show" for his attack- the M.Chinnaswamy Stadium ing batting and unconventional on Monday, the highest-ever

They also smashed the most mance, and I put in a lot of hard sixes in an IPL innings, with 22 work behind the scenes to get shots flying over the fence.

Bangladesh name Pakistan's Mushtaq as new spin coach

AFP | Dhaka

 ${f B}$ angladesh named former Pakistan leg-spinner and World Cup winner Mushtaq Ahmed yesterday as the spin-bowling coach for the men's national cricket team.

Mushtaq will join the side before a preparation camp for next month's five-match Twenty20 international series against Zimbabwe and will work with the Bangladesh team until the end of the T20 and the United States.

hunt for a spin-bowling coach said. since Sri Lankan Rangana Herath left in November. Local the role and want to pass my coach Sohel Islam filled in dur- experience to the players being the recent series against cause they are very coachable Sri Lanka.

with England from 2008-14, teams around. the West Indies in 2018-19 and Pakistan from 2020-2022.

and 2016.



Mushtaq Ahmed

"It is a great honor for me World Cup in the West Indies to be a part of the Bangladesh cricket team as a spin-bowling Bangladesh has been in the coach," 53-year-old Mushtaq

"I am looking forward to and I always believe that they Mushtaq was spin coach are one of the most dangerous

"They can beat anyone because they have the capability, He was also Pakistan's bowl- the resources and the talent. I ing consultant between 2014 will try to instill that belief into them," he said.

Alejandro Garnacho reacts during a match (file photo)

Man Utd speak to Garnacho over social media activity

AFP | Manchester

anchester United have spo-after the winger liked social media posts criticising manager Erik ten Hag over his handling of the player.

The Argentina international, taken off at half-time in their 2-2 draw at Bournemouth on Saturday, liked two messages on X, by United fan and YouTuber Mark Goldbridge.

One post accused Ten Hag of "throwing (Garnacho) under the bus" because of comments the United boss made about the 19-year-old's performance.



Alejandro Garnacho has become a key player for United this season, scoring nine goals and providing four assists in 42 games

a poor first half but taking him The other said Garnacho "had off at half time and holding him allow people saying things Wembley on Sunday.

up as the problem is a joke".

both messages, an action the club Hag of misrepresenting reabelieves shows contrition, and a sons why he was not in the United source told the PA news side. agency the matter had been dealt with internally.

player for United this season. January. scoring nine goals and providing four assists in 42 games.

September when Jadon Sancho which left United seventh in the said on X that he had been made Premier League table, 13 points a "scapegoat" after being left off the top four. out of the squad for the Arsenal match, with Ten Hag saying he ware that United can win this had trained poorly.

that (are) completely untrue", Garnacho swiftly "unliked" interpreted as accusing Ten

The 24-year-old was banished from the first team before being The teenager has become a key loaned to Borussia Dortmund in

Ten Hag's position has come under renewed pressure after The incident follows one in the draw against Bournemouth,

The FA Cup is the only silverseason -- they take on second-tier Sancho said he would "not side Coventry in the semi-final at

Buttler ton powers Rajasthan to record IPL chase of 224

Buttler smashes second ton of the season in 55 balls

Buttler surpasses Gayle's IPL centuries

AFP | Kolkata

os Buttler smashed an unbeaten 107 to trump Sunil Narine's first T20 century as Rajasthan Royals pulled off a joint record IPL chase against Kolkata Knight Riders off the final ball yesterday.

Chasing 224 for victory, Rajasthan looked in trouble at 121-6 in the 13th over but Buttler 60-ball blitz to achieve the tar- Kolkata's Eden Gardens.



Jos Buttler plays a shot

record from 2020 when they chased down 224 against Kings XI Punjab in Sharjah.

Buttler, who came in as an impact substitute, reached his second ton of the season in 55 balls with a six off Varun Chakravarthy at the start of the last over.

Buttler, struggling with cramp, then played out three dot balls before a two and a single on the final delivery ensured Rajasthan held on to top spot in the table with six wins in seven matches.

ahead of Chris Gayle with seven IPL tons and is only behind tournament.

Buttler built key partnerships

Rajasthan Royals equal their own record for joint record IPL chase

England's Buttler, who hit Powell (26) and then an unnine fours and six sixes, moved beaten 38-run stand with Avesh Khan (0 not out).

Spinners Narine, Chakravar-Virat Kohli's eight in the T20 thy and fast bowler Harshit Rana took two wickets each for KKR.

Narine hammered 109 off 56 including 50 runs with Riyan balls to guide Kolkata, who stay moved through the gears in his get with two wickets to spare at Rajasthan equalled their own Parag (34), 57 with Royman second in the 10-team standings,

Narine put on 85 runs for the second wicket with Angkrish Raghuvanshi, who hit 30, and got together for a 51-run stand with Andre Russell.

Narine, playing his 504th T20 match, reached his ton from 49 balls with a six and a four off Yuzvendra Chahal for Kolkata's third hundred in the IPL as he jumped for joy.

He was finally bowled by a Trent Boult yorker before he returned to a standing ovation.

Narine moved into the top three in the batting charts led by Royal Challengers Benguluru's Kohli (361) with 276 runs.

Rinku Singh finished off the innings on a high with his unbeaten nine-ball 20 including a four and two sixes.

Bellingham 'used to' racist abuse in Spain as calls for action fall on deaf ears

AFP | Madrid

Jude Bellingham said he and his Real Madrid teammates have become accustomed to dealing with racist abuse at away grounds in Spain, but the England international does not believe the authorities will do enough to quell the problem.

A racist gesture was made towards France's Aurelien Jude Bellingham



Tchouameni after he scored the to it," said Bellingham at a pre-Mallorca on Saturday.

ior has been a repeated target to Manchester City. of racial abuse and Bellingham said he and his teammates were a player to have to prepare for rible" treatment.

only goal in a 1-0 win at Real match press conference ahead of Madrid's Champions League Brazilian star Vinicius Jun- quarter-final, second leg away

"I think it's a horrible way for "used to" have to deal with "hor- a game knowing that they're probably going to get racial-"I think in the games where ly abused. It's disgusting. It we go away in La Liga espe-shouldn't happen. The people cially, you almost get so used in power need to do more."

ing tournaments taking place

throughout the kingdom. Such

discussions underscore Saudi

Silva says double treble an 'inspiration' for Man City



Manchester City's Portuguese midfielder #20 Bernardo Silva punches a ball away during a training session (file photo)

AFP | Manchester

 ${
m B}^{
m ernardo}$ Silva says an unprecedented double treble is an "inspiration and motivation" as Manchester City prepare to host Real Madrid on Wednesday with a place in the Champions League semi-finals

Last season, Pep Guardiola's men became just the second club in English history to win the treble of Champions League, Premier League and FA Cup -- 24 years after neighbours Manchester Unit- has done since I've been here ed achieved the feat.

City drew the first leg of he said. "We want to create their Champions League quarter-final with 14-time European champions Real 3-3 at the fielder added: "We want to win Bernabeu last week.

As the finishing line of the 2023/24 season approaches, they are two points clear at the top of the Premier League with League twice in a row... and six games to go and face Chelsea in the FA Cup semi-finals this weekend.

Silva told reporters yesterday he was not surprised by City's relentless success but said there was still a long way

"Obviously it is an inspiration and motivation because everything to be a step closer we know how well this team to that goal."

Obviously it is an inspiration and motivation because we know how well this team has done since I've been here -- this is my seventh season. We want to create that legacy

BERNARDO SILVA

-- this is my seventh season," that legacy."

The Portugal attacking midanother Premier League to do six in seven years and to do four Premier Leagues in a row.

"We want the Champions if we can do that and two trebles in a row that no one did, that would be a legacy so that's definitely motivation, knowing that it's very, very difficult.

"Because in one week we could be out of all the competitions but we're fighting for it and we're going to do

All systems go for Saudi Open Golf Championship

TDT | Manama

The Saudi Open, presented by ■ the Public Investment Fund (PIF), is poised to commence today at the esteemed Riyadh Golf Club.

This four-day event, representing the Asian Tour, will witness the participation of a diverse array of international golf stars from both the DP World Tour and the local Arab and Saudi Arabian golfing elites. Notably, reigning Saudi Open champion, Thai player Dinwit Boiponsop, will be among the luminaries competing for the title. Joining him are prominent figures such as Henrik Stenson, Peter Olvan, and Haotong duration. Li, all of whom harbor hopes

the world's best, thus fortifying their children. the sport's growth in the region.



Top stars with the trophy

These include various golf-reof hoisting the coveted trophy. lated activities and a diverse by low scores over the course of Additionally, a contingent of array of segments, most notably its four days. 144 players from 33 countries live music sessions at sunset. By organizers aim to provide fans The tournament will feature and attendees with an opportu- on TV in December and followed of Saudi Arabia, including three and entertainment through the observed many impressive per-

player anticipates an exhilarating tournament characterized

Reflecting on his particiaround the world will be vying offering such attractions, the pation, Ohlin remarked, "I watched the Saudi Open 2023 the involvement of seven play- nity to experience the seamless the recent Aramco Internationers representing the Kingdom integration of sports, culture, al Women's Championship. I professionals, as well as thirteen Bazaar and the dedicated Fan formances, but the outcome Arab players who received in- Zone, which are both tailored hinges on weather conditions ticipants to the tournament. vitations to compete alongside to accommodate families and and the influence of the wind. This is my first time in Riyadh, In a related context, Peter having previously visited Jed-In addition to the fierce compe- Ohlin, a member of the Leaf dah multiple times. I am eagerly confidently predicted that the tition on the course, the tour- golf team, is making his inau- looking forward to this experi- tournament's duration would nament encompasses a wide gural visit to Riyadh. Express- ence, especially after conversrange of accompanying events ing his delight at competing in ing with Saudi player Othman ther elevating golf's prestige at and festivities throughout its the Saudi capital, the American Al-Mulla about the upcom- the Riyadh Golf Club.

Arabia's pivotal role in fostering the development of this sport." Li Haotong, a four-time win-

ner of the DP World Tour, has decided to participate in the Saudi Open, courtesy of the Public Investment Fund. The Chinese player's decision stems from the burgeoning growth of golf in Saudi Arabia. Haotong stated, "I desire to explore new golf courses and visit uncharted territories. Therefore, I am tremendously excited about the launch of this tournament and deeply honored to contribute to the game's development to the fullest extent possible."

The tournament's inauguration was preceded by a press conference featuring CEO Noah Alireza, who addressed the media and emphasized the significance of providing opportunities for Saudi and Arab players to showcase their talents in the Saudi Open.

Alireza expressed his satisfaction in welcoming all parwhich originated as one of the Asian Tour events last year and now continues to flourish. He witness abundant triumphs, fur-