

**Ceasefire on the brink of collapse?**

US warns of renewed strikes as Iran resists peace deal, with blockade tightening and tensions rising in the Strait of Hormuz. | P7

REGION 08 Oman Air Restores Direct Muscat-Bahrain Route



“Victorious Ultimate Challenge” Testing Elite Fitness and Endurance 11 SPORTS

BUSINESS 05 Chamber backs wage support plan, urges stronger public-private coordination

# Emergency Motion Filed

Unified Parliamentary Stance on Iranian Attacks Targeting GCC States

TDT | Manama

Bahrain has called for stronger international cooperation to safeguard peace and stability, as the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallem, delivered the Kingdom's address at the 152nd Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Istanbul.

The high-level gathering brought together representatives from more than 116 parliaments worldwide.

In his speech, Al Musallem said that promoting hope, strengthening security, protecting peace, and securing social justice for future generations remain key pillars of Bahrain's national vision, guided by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and supported by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

He emphasised that Bahrain's legislative framework actively



Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallem, Speaker of Parliament



supports these principles through law-making, parliamentary oversight, and diplomatic engagement on the international stage.

Al Musallem drew attention to recent regional developments, stating that the forum was being held amid ongoing attacks affecting Bahrain, other GCC countries, and Jordan. He described these incidents as violations of international law and humanitarian principles, as well as challenges to state sovereignty and maritime

regulations.

He said Bahrain, representing the GCC and Jordan, had submitted a draft resolution to the United Nations Security Council, which was adopted as Resolution (2817) on March 11, 2026, with support from 136 member states. He added that this reflected broad international backing for protecting sovereignty and maintaining global peace.

He also referred to a separate resolution passed by the UN Human Rights Council (Resolution

38 of 2026), which condemned the attacks with consensus support from 106 countries.

Despite these developments, Al Musallem noted that hostile actions had continued, including missile and drone strikes targeting civilian infrastructure such as airports, ports, energy installations, and residential areas. He warned that any disruption in the Strait of Hormuz would have serious implications for global energy security and trade flows.

Calling for collective action,

he urged the Inter-Parliamentary Union to play a stronger role in encouraging the international community, particularly the United Nations, to take a firm stance against such violations and ensure compliance with international law.

He also confirmed that Bahrain had submitted an emergency agenda item to the IPU Assembly, based on recent UN resolutions, seeking condemnation of the attacks against GCC states and Jordan.

**Drug bust nets over 5kg**



The Ministry of Interior confirmed that the Drug Control Directorate under the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science has arrested a 43-year-old Arab national in connection with a major drug case.

The arrest was made as part of ongoing efforts to protect society from the dangers of narcotics.

Authorities said the suspect was found in possession of approximately five kilograms of various narcotic substances and psychotropic substances. The estimated street value of the seized drugs exceeds BD36,000.

# Deadly school shooting in Turkey prompts Gulf-wide sympathy

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain and the State of Kuwait expressed solidarity and sympathy with the Republic of Turkey following a school shooting in Kahramanmara, southern Turkey, which left several people, including children, dead and injured.

The Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated it stands in solidarity with Turkey and conveyed its deepest condolences to the government, people of Turkey, and the victims' families. The Kingdom also wished a speedy recovery for those injured in the tragic incident.



Family members and mourners react on the coffin of 10-year-old Belinay Nur Boyraz as they attend the funerals for nine victims killed in a school shooting by a 14-year-old.

In a separate statement, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also expressed its sympathy and solidarity with Turkey, offering sincere condolences to the victims' families and wishing the injured a swift recovery.

According to Turkish authorities, at least eight students and one teacher were killed, and 13 others were injured (six critically) after a shooting at Ayser Çalik Secondary School in the Kahramanmara region.

Officials said the attacker, a 14-year-old student, was also killed during the incident. Turkish Interior Minister Mustafa Cif-

ci confirmed the details while investigations into the attack's motive are ongoing.

Local reports suggest the suspect entered classrooms armed with multiple weapons and ammunition. Authorities also detained the attacker's father, a former police officer, as part of the investigation.

The incident follows another school shooting in southern Turkey a day earlier, in which 16 people were injured before the attacker took his own life.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed condolences and wished a speedy recovery for the injured.

The incident has shocked the country, with distressed parents gathering outside the school as investigations continue. The funerals take place for eight children aged 10 and 11 and a 55-year-old teacher.



- Turkish authorities have detained over 160 people over online activity linked to recent school shootings.
- Charges include spreading misleading information and praising the deadly attacks.
- Justice Minister Akin Gurlek said 95 people have been taken into custody so far.
- Authorities are currently seeking an additional 35 suspects.
- Access to 1,104 social media accounts has been blocked.
- Investigators identified accounts that allegedly targeted schools and suggested possible future attacks.
- Authorities have detained 67 users linked to threatening posts directed at 54 schools.

**10-DAY CEASEFIRE IN LEBANON**



A pause in hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah could help pave the way for a peace deal in the US-Iran war. | P07

CASE OF DETAINEE DEATH

# Case of Detainee Death Sent to High Criminal Court

TDT | Manama  
Rehab Mohammad

The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) has announced the completion of its investigation into the death of a detainee and referred the accused, who is currently in custody, to criminal trial on charges of assault resulting in death.

According to the SIU, it first became aware of the incident on 27 March 2026 after reports

circulated on social media, as well as through an official notification from the Inspector General of the National Intelligence Agency. The notification stated that the deceased had been detained by the agency and was assaulted by one of its personnel, resulting in multiple injuries. He was later transferred to hospital, where he died from those injuries.

Following the report, the SIU immediately took over the investigation under its legal man-

date. A forensic expert was appointed to determine the nature of the injuries and the cause



وحدة التحقيق الخاصة  
Special Investigation Unit

of death. Investigators also reviewed the circumstances of the arrest, confirming that the detainee had been taken into custody along with others under a lawful arrest warrant.

As part of the investigation, the unit collected medical reports, official documents, and video evidence, and conducted a site inspection. Judicial police inquiries were intensified, while statements were taken from the deceased's father and witnesses. The accused was also

interrogated and reportedly admitted to the allegations.

Based on the evidence gathered, the SIU concluded that sufficient grounds existed to refer the accused, while in custody, to the High Criminal Court.

The unit reaffirmed its commitment to carrying out its mandate with full judicial authority to uphold the rule of law and ensure justice, while stressing the importance of protecting human rights, particularly those of detainees and prisoners.

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# Tenants Face Double Rent Burden

● Landlords face financial pressure

● Rent reduction or contract termination may be possible

TDT | Manama  
Hasan Barakat

As regional tensions continue to affect daily life in Bahrain, the pressure is increasingly felt inside people's homes, forcing many tenants to make difficult choices between safety and financial responsibility.

Some families have left their homes suddenly, taking only essential belongings and locking their doors without knowing when they might return.

Despite the circumstances, lease agreements remain legally binding. Tenants are generally required to continue paying rent for the full contract period, even if they vacate the property early.

However, Bahraini lawyer Afaf Tarada notes that exceptional situations may influence how the law is applied.

"The lease remains valid as a rule," she said. "But if staying in the property becomes impossi-



**"The lease remains valid as a rule, but each case must be evaluated individually."**

LAWYER AFAF TARADA

simply stop paying rent without proper legal grounds.

For many residents, the financial strain is immediate. Families who relocated abruptly now face the burden of paying for two homes: one for safety and another they may no longer use. "We left in one night. There was no time to think about the contract," one resident said.

Landlords are also under pressure, as many depend on rental income to meet their own financial obligations.

According to Tarada, tenants and landlords have three main options. The first is to reach a mutual agreement. The second depends on the lease contract, as some agreements include clauses allowing flexibility in exceptional circumstances. The third option is to seek a legal ruling.

"If the case goes to court, judg-

**"We left in one night. There was no time to think about the contract."**

RESIDENT

es will decide whether the situation qualifies as force majeure or severe hardship," she explained.

Depending on the ruling, contracts may be terminated if fulfilling them becomes impossible, or rents may be reduced if the burden is deemed excessive.

Ultimately, the situation reflects a delicate balance. Tenants are seeking safety, landlords are protecting their income, and communities are navigating uncertainty together.

While the law provides a framework, fairness remains the true measure in such challenging times.

TDT | Manama  
Ashen Tharaka

The commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), Admiral Brad Cooper, said military partnerships with regional allies across the Middle East are stronger than ever, highlighting close coordination on air defence and shared security commitments during the ongoing ceasefire period.

Speaking at a press conference in Washington, Cooper said his discussions with senior civilian and military leaders from allied nations reaffirmed a unified commitment to regional stability.

"My discussion with regional allies and partners, both at the senior civilian level and senior military level, reinforced a shared commitment to regional security," he said. He added that recent joint operations and shared experiences in the field further strengthened these relationships.

Cooper said U.S. forces are maintaining a "very active defence posture" across the region, stretching from northern Iraq through the Arabian Peninsula and into the northern Arabian Gulf. He described this as contributing to what he called "the largest air defence umbrella in the world" across the Middle East.

He noted that U.S. air defence specialists have been embedded



**"We are maintaining a very active defence posture across the entire region during the ceasefire period."**

ADM. BRAD COOPER

alongside partner nation forces, working "side by side" to strengthen operational coordination. He also pointed to strong personal ties between Gulf leadership and deployed U.S. personnel, stating that Bahrain's King and Crown Prince were personally familiar with American service members working in the country.

According to Cooper, leaders across the Gulf have consistently expressed appreciation for U.S. troops and joint defence cooperation. He named Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and Jordan as "exceptional teammates" in regional security efforts.

# Private Firms To Join Mosquito Control Drive

● Speed, coordination, and effectiveness

● Preventive measures at home are key

● Residents advised to use repellents

TDT | Manama  
Hasan Barakat

Council also recommends better reporting systems and faster response mechanisms. Demand for mosquito-control devices is increasing in local markets, with sales of swatters and traps rising.

Households are increasingly purchasing multiple devices, reflecting growing concern over

the issue.

Mosquito irritation is becoming an increasing daily concern across Bahrain, as complaints rise and residents report a growing presence of insects in homes and neighbourhoods.

What was once seen as a minor nuisance is now affecting everyday comfort more noticeably, with calls mounting for stronger and faster control measures.

In response, the Northern Municipal Council has recommended involving specialised private pest control companies to support public insect control operations. The aim is to improve response times and better contain local outbreaks.

Recommendation

The proposal, submitted by



**"Prevention starts at home. Even small amounts of stagnant water can become breeding sites if left unattended."**

municipal member Mohammed Saad Al Doseri, comes amid pressure on existing resources and highlights the need for quicker and more targeted field action.

Health experts warn that the issue goes beyond discomfort. Dr Ameera Barakat, Consultant Family Physician at Dar Al Hayat Medical Centre, said mosquito bites are among the most common complaints in Bahrain, often causing itching, swelling, and in some cases infection or pain.

She also noted that vector-borne diseases account for more than 17 percent of infectious diseases globally, stressing the importance of prevention.

Prevention

According to Dr Barakat, prevention begins at home. Small overlooked sources such as stag-

nant water in buckets, drains, or outdoor containers can become breeding grounds. She advised regular cleaning of outdoor areas, covering water storage, maintaining drainage systems, and using mosquito repellents. Protective clothing, especially light long sleeves, can also reduce exposure during peak mosquito activity.

For those affected, she recommended basic care such as washing bite areas, applying cold compresses, and avoiding scratching to prevent infection. Medical attention is advised if symptoms worsen or are accompanied by fever or fatigue.

The council's recommendation also focuses on improving coordination and response systems, including faster reporting mechanisms, active hotlines, and stronger collaboration be-

tween relevant authorities to prevent escalation.

Market

Meanwhile, demand for pest control products is rising in local markets. During a field visit by The Daily Tribune, shops reported a sharp increase in customers purchasing mosquito-control devices.

Two main products are in demand: handheld electric swatters for direct use, and stationary electric traps designed to attract and eliminate insects continuously.

Retailers say many households are now buying both types together. Prices typically range between BD15 and BD50, with some families purchasing multiple units for different rooms, reflecting a shift toward more proactive household-level mosquito control.

## 3-Month Jail Term for Illegal Use of Subsidized Flour

TDT | Manama  
Rehab Mohammad

A bakery worker received a three-month jail sentence and a 250 Bahraini dinar fine for misusing government-subsidized flour.

The First High Criminal Court also ordered the confiscation of the seized flour after finding the defendant guilty of illegally handling a subsidized commodity in violation of the law.

According to case details, the incident occurred while the defendant was working at a bakery that had applied to benefit from the government's subsidized flour program through the Consumer Protection Directorate.

During an inspection visit, authorities discovered several bags of subsidized flour stored at the bakery. The seized items included 11 new blue bags, two new red bags, one opened red bag, three empty red bags, and one empty blue bag.

Investigators questioned the bakery worker and representatives of the business. The defendant stated that he received the flour from another bakery that was temporarily closed.

Authorities also found that part of the subsidized flour had been used in bread production before obtaining official approval from the Consumer Protection Directorate, which violates existing regulations.

The court issued its final verdict of a three-month prison sentence, a fine, and confiscation of the seized items.



# Key Bills Face Shura Council Decision

● Law targets unlicensed financial operations

● Measure linked to upcoming FATF review

● Officials warn of risks to financial reputation

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

## Disability Hiring Quota Hike Faces Resistance

Bahrain's Shura Council is set to debate a proposal to increase the employment quota for people with disabilities in private companies, despite a recommendation to reject the plan.

The draft law, already approved by Parliament, seeks to raise the minimum quota from 2% to 4% in firms employing 50 workers or more. It would amend parts of Law No. 74 of 2006, which governs the care, rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities.

The proposal also makes it mandatory for the Labour Minister, in coordination with relevant authorities, to identify government positions where qualified individuals with disabilities would receive hiring priority.

However, the Shura Council's Services Committee has advised against the bill, arguing that the issue lies in weak enforcement of the current law rather than the quota itself.

According to a recent audit, 96% of eligible companies failed to meet the existing 2% requirement, highlighting sig-



Raising the quota would open more doors for people with disabilities and encourage inclusion

- DR JAMEELA AL SALMAN, HEAD OF SHURA COUNCIL'S SERVICES COMMITTEE



Delays in strengthening regulations could affect Bahrain's global standing

- KHALID AL MASKATI, HEAD OF SHURA COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



Regulation is important, but it must support creativity rather than restrict it

- NANCY KHADOURI, SHURA COUNCIL MEMBER

nificant compliance gaps. The committee stressed that stricter enforcement, improved training and better job preparation would be more effective than raising the quota.

While some civil society groups support the increase, others emphasized the need for enhanced rehabilitation, workplace readiness and better coordination between government bodies.

## New Law Targets Illegal Financial Services

Shura Council will review stricter penalties for unlicensed financial activities, including jail terms and fines of up to BDI million.

The proposal, issued as Decree-Law No. 37 of 2025, amends the Central Bank of Bahrain and Financial Institutions Law. It targets violations such as operating financial services without a licence or misusing regulated financial terms.

The Shura Council's Financial and Economic Affairs Committee recommended approving the measure, citing the need to combat money laundering and terrorism financing more effectively.

The committee warned that delays in strengthening regulations could expose Bahrain to international risks, including possible placement on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list, which could impact investment and financial credibility.

Officials also highlighted the urgency of implementing the law ahead of Bahrain's upcoming FATF evaluation.

If approved, offenders could face imprisonment, fines, or both, depending on the severity of the violation.

## Licensing Law for Artists Pulled Due to Delays

A proposed law to regulate artistic professions in Bahrain

was withdrawn after the government failed to provide feedback.

The draft legislation, submitted in May 2025, aimed to introduce licensing requirements for artists, including actors, musicians and performers.

It would have made it mandatory to obtain official approval before practicing in the sector.

The bill's sponsors withdrew the proposal after the Ministry of Information did not respond to requests for its opinion, leaving lawmakers without sufficient input to proceed.

The proposed law also included plans for a professional licensing system, fees for foreign artists and the creation of a fund to support the arts sector in the Kingdom.

Although withdrawn, the bill marked a significant attempt to formally regulate Bahrain's creative industries and enhance support for local artists.

## UoB Board Reviews Major Academic and Investment Projects

The Board of Trustees of the University of Bahrain held its second regular meeting for 2026, chaired by Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma, Minister of Education and Chairman of the Board, with members and invited attendees participating via video conferencing.

At the beginning of the meeting, the board reviewed the latest updates on construction, investment, and academic projects being implemented at the university's Sakhir campus. These initiatives aim to diversify resources and further

enhance both educational and operational performance.

The board also examined several partnerships and memoranda of understanding signed between the University of Bahrain and various local, regional, and international entities.

In addition, the board reviewed reports submitted by the Academic Committee and the Audit and Finance Committee. It approved the necessary decisions regarding the recommendations in these reports and tasked the university presidency with following up on their implementation.

## Broadening representation in global arbitration sector



Professor Marika Patrani Paulson, Secretary-General of the Centre at the forum.

A senior official from the Bahrain International Dispute Resolution and Arbitration Centre spoke at the International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA) conference in Madrid.

Professor Marika Patrani Paulson, Secretary-General of the Centre, joined a panel session focused on "Diversity," where experts examined how representation and inclusion are shaping the future of international arbitration and related decision-making frameworks.

In her remarks, she referred to key findings from her research paper titled "Diversity

and Its Risks: Towards Effective Implementation in International Arbitration." The study presents practical recommendations aimed at strengthening diversity in a meaningful and results-oriented way.

She underlined the need for a clear and precise understanding of diversity, its alignment with excellence standards, and the importance of broadening the geographical and institutional reach of arbitration practices. She also pointed to capacity building as a key pillar, along with replacing superficial indicators with deeper, more

substantive inclusion measures.

# Traditional Gulf Dance Finds a New Voice

● Preserving tradition through research and teaching

● Growing international interest in Khaleeji dance

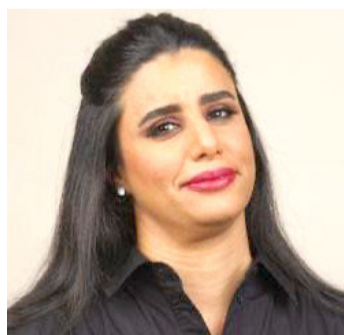
● A step toward institutional recognition of traditional dance

**Ghadeer Alkumaish**  
TDT | Manama

Bahraini artist Shareefa AlZayani, a former DJ and now a Khaleeji dance teacher, is working to preserve one of the Gulf's important cultural traditions.

In November 2022, she published a book documenting the movements and meanings of Khaleeji women's dance.

AlZayani began teaching Khaleeji dance in 2020 after noticing a lack of proper learning resources.



There were very few books—so I decided to create one myself

- SHAREEFA ALZAYANI



Shareefa AlZayani teaches children traditional Khaleeji women's dance with joy and pride. Right, the book documenting its movements and meanings

Her background in Physical Education from the University of Bahrain helped her develop a structured teaching method. She focused on breaking down movements into simple and clear steps for her students.

"It was very challenging when I started teaching," she explained. "There were very few books, and most of them focused

on music, not the movements." Determined to fill this gap, AlZayani began researching and documenting the dance herself. "I thought, there are no books—so let me do it," she said.

Her book took months of work, as she carefully analyzed and recorded the dance movements. Despite the challenges, she succeeded in creating a

guide that others could easily follow.

The response to her work has been very positive. Many readers appreciated her efforts and were proud that a Bahraini woman was the first to document this art form in a book.

AlZayani has also gained students from across the GCC and other countries. She said inter-



national audiences enjoy and respect Khaleeji dance.

"I hope we can have academic schools, a local committee, and even a Khaleeji Dance Championship every year," she said.

Looking ahead, she remains dedicated to spreading awareness. She encourages aspiring dancers to learn, watch performances, and study the art.

## BisB Celebrates Futsal Team Following Bahraini Federation Cup Victory

Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB) recently welcomed its futsal team in recognition of their victory in the Bahraini Federation Cup, following a well-earned 2-1 win over Ahlia University in the final. The team was received by Mr. Zaid Khalid Abdulrahman, Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Ms. Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Executive Officer of BisB.



On this occasion, Mr. Zaid

Khalid Abdulrahman highlighted that this achievement reflects the standard of excellence BisB continues to uphold across different arenas, noting that such accomplishments embody a corporate identity rooted in ambition, distinction, and the continuous pursuit of outstanding outcomes.

For her part, Ms. Fatema AlAlawi expressed her pride in the team's remarkable performance and spirit throughout the tour-

nament, affirming that the title is the result of discipline, commitment, and teamwork – values that BisB holds firmly and strives to embed across its work environment and wider initiatives.

This recognition forms part of BisB's ongoing commitment to celebrating achievements associated with its brand, thereby reinforcing an ethos of appreciation and underlining its support for impactful projects.

## Al Salam Bank Opens Applications for the Installment Deferment Service Starting 19 April

Manama

In line with the directives of the Central Bank of Bahrain, Al Salam Bank has announced that applications for its 3-month installment deferment service will open on Sunday, 19 April and remain available through Thursday, 30 April. This enables clients to benefit from the initiative in accordance with approved terms and conditions, reflecting the Bank's commitment to supporting its clients to manage their financial obligations with greater flexibility.

Clients wishing to benefit from the installment deferment service can view the application steps through the Bank's Instagram account and apply easily through the Al Salam Bank App or by visiting their nearest branch, with full visibility on installment schedules and all related details of the installment deferment service.

Al Salam Bank will also host



a live session on its Instagram account on Sunday at 11 AM to address client inquiries and provide further clarification on how to benefit from the service.

## Strategic Economic Partnership



Manama

Minister of Finance and National Economy, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, met with UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves in Washington on the sidelines of the IMF and World Bank Spring Meetings.

During the meeting, Shaikh Salman highlighted the strong and longstanding relations between Bahrain and the United Kingdom, noting continued progress across

various sectors, particularly in finance and the economy. He stressed Bahrain's commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation within the framework of their strategic partnership, supporting shared goals and mutual interests.

The meeting was attended by Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashid Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States, and Khalid Ibrahim Humaidan, Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain.

## Bahrain Chamber Supports Strategic Push for Sustainable Growth



Nabeel Khalid Kanoo, Bahrain Chamber Chairman with legislative members.

Manama

In his first official visit to the Parliament since assuming office, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Nabeel Khalid Kanoo underscored the importance of unified national efforts to advance the Kingdom's economic goals and sustainable development.

Kanoo emphasized that the current phase calls for stronger coordination between the legislative and executive branches, alongside private sector institutions, to achieve desired economic outcomes and reinforce Bahrain's long-term development trajectory.

He expressed deep appreciation for the continued support of the Kingdom's leadership, praising the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the commitment to economic development at the highest levels. Kanoo also highlighted the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, noting their significant role in launching impactful economic initiatives, improving economic performance, and enhancing Bahrain's readiness to face evolving challenges.

He added that these initiatives, led by the wage support program and complemented by broader financial and economic measures, reflect a comprehensive strategic vision aimed at reinforcing economic stability, achieving sustainable growth, and ensuring the continued prosperity of Bahrain. Kanoo further noted that the Chamber views these efforts as a cornerstone for stabilizing the labor market and enhancing the private sector's ability to adapt to economic changes, ultimately fostering a more resilient business environment and strengthening Bahrain's regional and global competitiveness.

During his meeting with the Services Committee at Parliament, Kanoo commended the responsible vision and national focus reflected in the proposed initiatives, stating that they demonstrate a clear

understanding of economic challenges and a commitment to balanced, practical solutions that safeguard market stability.

He reaffirmed the Chamber's full support for recently announced economic measures, particularly the decision to pay the wages of Bahraini employees in the private sector for April 2026 through the unemployment insurance surplus fund. Kanoo described the move as timely and aligned with national priorities.

According to Kanoo, the initiative provides direct support to the national workforce, strengthens job stability for Bahrainis in the private sector, and alleviates financial pressures on business owners—especially micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, which play a vital role in driving economic growth and job creation.

He added that these initiatives, led by the wage support program and complemented by broader financial and economic measures, reflect a comprehensive strategic vision aimed at reinforcing economic stability, achieving sustainable growth, and ensuring the continued prosperity of Bahrain.

Kanoo further noted that the Chamber views these efforts as a cornerstone for stabilizing the labor market and enhancing the private sector's ability to adapt to economic changes, ultimately fostering a more resilient business environment and strengthening Bahrain's regional and global competitiveness.

## Stocks rise as optimism over Mideast war takes hold

AFP | London

Stock markets advanced yesterday on expectations that a Mideast ceasefire would soon let oil and gas tankers resume transit through the Strait of Hormuz, easing inflation pressures that have upended economies worldwide.

Signs of fresh talks aimed at ending the war launched by the US and Israel against Iran have pushed stock indexes to all-time highs, suggesting investors expect a quick economic rebound from the conflict.

The Tokyo stock market reached a record high yesterday, following all-time peaks for key US indexes on Wednesday as investors cheered healthy earnings for US blue chips despite surging oil prices and rising inflation overall.

Global stock markets "have staged one of the fastest recoveries in recent memory", said Matt Britzman, senior equity analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown.

At the same time, "oil prices remain elevated... as investors look towards a possible extension of the ceasefire between



A man looks at an electronic quotation board displaying the Nikkei Stock Average on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo

the US and Iran while weighing the chances of a broader agreement that could ultimately reopen the Strait of Hormuz", he said.

The waterway, through which

on surging energy prices, official data showed yesterday.

Yet even as the global economy reels from the fallout of war in the Middle East, China's economic growth topped expectations in the first quarter of the year, official figures showed.

Gross domestic product in the world's second-largest economy expanded 5.0 percent in the quarter from a year earlier.

"Hope has given way to a bright, beaming light at the end of the peace tunnel," said Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management.

"The market is no longer asking whether there will be a deal. It is trading as if the deal is already signed, sealed, and quietly filed away."

The Tokyo and Seoul stock markets led a rally in Asia, as traders poured back into the AI-based tech investments that helped send global stock markets surging before the Middle East war started on February 28.

In a sign of the still-strong demand for artificial intelligence, Taiwanese chip manufacturer TSMC reported a record first-quarter profit of \$18 billion, far outpacing estimates.

one-fifth of oil and gas usually passes, has been choked by Iranian forces since the US-Israeli offensive began.

In the eurozone, inflation leapt to 2.6 percent in March

**Russian strikes kill at least 16 across Ukraine**

AFP | Kyiv

A massive Russian drone and missile barrage killed at least 16 people in cities across Ukraine, more than four years into the war with peace talks stalled, Ukrainian officials said yesterday.

AFP journalists heard loud bangs echoing over the capital during the night and saw huge plumes of black smoke rising over central Kyiv at dawn.

The Ukrainian air force said Russia had launched 659 drones in the attack and 44 missiles, over the last 24 hours, adding that its air defence units downed 636 drones and 31 missiles.

Officials across the country said 16 people were killed and more than 100 were wounded in the attacks in several regions.

"Another night has proven that Russia does not deserve any easing of global policy or lifting of sanctions," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky wrote on social media after the attack.

"Russia is betting on war," added the president, who has been touring European countries to drum up support.

**US Democrats file impeachment articles against Pentagon chief**

AFP | Washington

US House Democrats introduced six articles of impeachment against Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth on Wednesday, accusing him of "high crimes and misdemeanors" including waging war on Iran without congressional approval.

The impeachment resolution is led by Yassamin Ansari, a Democratic Congresswoman from Arizona, and has slim chances of passing due to the Republican majority in the House.

Impeachment is the process by which the US House of Representatives brings charges against a government official for alleged wrongdoing, with removal from office only possible if the Senate convicts after a trial.

"I've introduced Articles of Impeachment against Pete Hegseth for violating his oath, endangering U.S. servicemembers, and committing war crimes, including attacks on civilians and a girls' school in Minab, Iran," Ansari wrote on X.



Lebanese army soldiers secure the site of an Israeli drone attack that targeted a vehicle on the highway of Saadiyat, south of Beirut

**US threatens to resume strikes if Iran spurns peace offer**

Vance offers "grand bargain" but Iran's enrichment stance remains key obstacle

- Previous talks ended without agreement
- US considers another round in Islamabad
- Strait of Hormuz remains blocked

AFP | Tehran

The United States warned yesterday it could resume air strikes on Iran and continue a naval blockade of its ports if Tehran refuses to accept a deal to end the war that has engulfed the Middle East.

The warning came as Pakistan's army chief travelled to Tehran to meet senior Iranian officials as part of efforts to arrange another round of talks between the two sides.

Iranian state television showed

Field Marshal Asim Munir meeting parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who led Tehran's delegation at last week's US-Iran talks in Pakistan, which ended without agreement.

"If Iran chooses poorly, then they will have a blockade and bombs dropping on infrastructure, power and energy," Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said at the Pentagon.

Earlier, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said further talks would "very likely" take place in Islamabad, adding that discussions were ongoing.

Despite expectations of renewed talks, the United States said it would maintain its blockade of Iranian ports and use the two-week ceasefire period to strengthen its military position.

**Diplomatic Uncertainty**

Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman Tahir Andrabi said no date had been set for the next

YOU

KNOW WHAT

Multiple vessels attempting to leave Iranian ports were turned back during the initial phase of the US blockade, with CENTCOM stating "zero ships have broken through"

round of talks, though mediation efforts continue.

US Vice President JD Vance said Iran is being offered a "grand bargain" to end the six-week war and address the dispute over its nuclear programme.

Israel's defense minister Israel Katz said Iran faced a clear choice between abandoning its current course or facing further consequences.

Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz — a key global oil route — has been disrupted since the conflict began and remains a central source of tension.

Washington said its blockade had effectively halted maritime trade involving Iran, with US Central Command reporting that vessels attempting to leave Iranian ports had been turned back.

The United States has also imposed fresh sanctions targeting Iran's oil sector, aimed at senior figures within the regime.

**Threats and Escalation**

Iranian military officials warned that failure to lift the blockade could jeopardise the ceasefire.

They also warned that contin-

ued pressure could disrupt shipping routes across key regional waters.

Senior figures linked to Iran's leadership threatened action against US vessels in the strait if Washington attempts to enforce control over the shipping channel.

**Nuclear Dispute**

US President Donald Trump has said any deal must permanently prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

He launched the war on February 28, citing concerns that Tehran was advancing toward developing an atomic bomb.

Washington has proposed a long-term suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment programme, while Iran has offered a shorter-term alternative that has been rejected by US officials.

Iran continues to maintain its position on enrichment, leaving a key issue unresolved.

**US to blockade Iran ports 'as long as it takes': Pentagon chief**

AFP | Washington

The United States will blockade Iranian ports for "as long as it takes," US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said yesterday, threatening renewed strikes if Tehran does not make a deal.

"If Iran chooses poorly, then they will have a blockade and bombs dropping on infrastructure, power and energy," Hegseth told a news conference at the Pentagon.

US forces began blockading

"

If you do not comply with this blockade, we will use force. So far, 13 ships have made the wise choice of turning around

GENERAL DAN CAINE

Iranian ports at 1400 GMT on Monday after peace talks in Pakistan ended without an agreement the previous day.

General Dan Caine, the top US

military officer, said the blockade "applies to all ships, regardless of nationality, heading into or from Iranian ports."

"If you do not comply with this blockade, we will use force," Caine said alongside Hegseth. "So far, 13 ships have made the wise choice of turning around," Caine added.

Hegseth meanwhile said Iranian forces are attempting to dig out equipment buried during the more than five weeks of US-Israeli strikes against the Islamic

republic.

Addressing Iranian leaders directly, he said: "We know what military assets you are moving and where you are moving them to. While you are digging out -- which is exactly what you're doing, digging out of bombed out and devastated facilities -- we are only getting stronger."

"You are digging out your remaining launchers and missiles with no ability to replace them -- you have no defense industry, no ability to replenish your

offensive or defensive capabilities," Hegseth said.

Admiral Brad Cooper, the head of US Central Command, which is responsible for American forces in the Middle East, said Washington is using the ceasefire to rearm and adjust.

"We're rearming, we're retooling, and we're adjusting our tactics, techniques and procedures. There's no military in the world that adjusts like we do, and that's exactly what we're doing during the ceasefire," Cooper said.

1942

Christopher Columbus signs a contract with Spanish monarchs King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I to find the "Indies" with the stated goal of converting people to Catholicism



1895

Treaty of Shimonoseki is signed ending the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)

1917

Vladimir Lenin issues his radical "April Theses" calling for Soviets to take power during the Russian Revolution

1961

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

## Taiwan reaches WHO Gold Tier in Hepatitis C fight

TDI | Agencies

For decades, hepatitis C has been recognized as a major global public health challenge, with an estimated 58 million people living with chronic hepatitis C infection worldwide. Although no vaccine currently exists, hepatitis C is now curable with highly effective direct-acting antiviral (DAA) therapies delivered through treatment courses of 8-12 weeks. Therefore, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the Glasgow Declaration on Viral Hepatitis in 2015, setting ambitious goals to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

In line with the WHO's Guidance for Country Validation of Viral Hepatitis Elimination and Path to Elimination, Taiwan has reached the Gold Tier programmatic targets under the WHO Path to Elimination (PTE) framework for hepatitis C. This progress has been driven by the government's political will and the systematic integration of hepatitis prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment into a universal health-care system.

Through Taiwan's Adult Preventive Healthcare Services for hepatitis B and C, as well as the National Health Insurance program for DAA reimbursement, hepatitis C screening and treatment are widely available, thereby reducing financial and structural barriers to care. As of June 2025, an estimated 90.2% of individuals with chronic hepatitis C have been diagnosed, and 92.6% of those diagnosed have received DAA treatment, exceeding the WHO PTE Gold Tier benchmarks.

Prevention and patient safety remain indispensable components of hepatitis C elimination. Taiwan maintains 100% screening of donated blood and 100% safe medical injection practices. Comprehensive harm reduction programs are also provided to ensure wide access to sterile injecting equipment for people who inject drugs (PWID), with more than 150 syringes distributed per person. These measures are essential for reducing new infections and safeguarding elimination gains over time.

Consistent with the WHO and Sustainable Development

**58M**  
people are estimated to be living with chronic hepatitis C infection worldwide, though the disease is now curable with 8-12 week antiviral treatments

Goals (SDGs) principle of Leave No One Behind, Taiwan has focused on populations facing higher risks and greater barriers to care. High screening coverage and treatment rates have been achieved among people living with HIV, patients with end-stage renal disease, individuals receiving opioid agonist therapy, and prisoners in correctional facilities. These outcomes reflect the equity of our healthcare systems and reflect the WHO's core principle.

Over the past two decades, Taiwan has observed a substantial decline in liver cancer incidence and mortality, trends closely linked to long-standing hepatitis prevention and treatment policies. The achievements

presented in the Taiwan Hepatitis C Elimination Report are the result of close cross-sectoral collaboration among central and local governments, public health authorities, clinical providers, and civil society organizations. Taiwan's success is also rooted in the government's political will, supported by robust surveillance systems and transparent data reporting.

As the global target toward the 2030 viral hepatitis elimination goals, the "Taiwan Model" offers clear evidence that elimination is achievable when science, political will, and equity converge. The Taiwan Hepatitis C Elimination Report has been submitted to the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) for validation under the PTE Gold Tier for hepatitis C elimination. We look forward to the recognition of Taiwan's demonstrated leadership and contributions in advancing hepatitis C elimination. Taiwan remains committed to working with the international community and sharing our experience to help accelerate global progress toward a world free from hepatitis C.

## Syria says has taken control of all bases previously operated by US forces

AFP | Washington

Syria yesterday said it had taken control of all military bases previously hosting US forces, who had long been in the country leading an international coalition against the Islamic State group.

The foreign ministry in a statement said it "welcomes the completed handover of military sites where United States forces were previously present in Syria to the Syrian government".

It added that "the handover of these sites was carried out... in full coordination between the Syrian and American governments".



TOP  
**4**  
TWEETS

01



Security in the Gulf and in Europe are interlinked. I extended our full solidarity to the Gulf Cooperation Council and its members @GCCSG @jasemalbudaiwi as they face unprovoked attacks from Iran. Recent events demonstrate very clearly why Iran should never have nuclear weapons. Grateful also for the solidarity and mediation efforts many Gulf States have shown in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Times are calling for a closer partnership between Europe and the Gulf countries. The EU-GCC Summit later this year offers us the perfect opportunity to further strengthen our relations. I'm looking forward to continuing the discussions in Cyprus next week.

@vonderleyen

02



Many countries are trapped in cycles of unresolved debt crises & held back by an unfair system of vast debt repayments that drain public resources & undermine long-term investment. The Borrowers Platform - a new mechanism supported by the @UN - is a breakthrough in global financing - bringing borrowing countries together learn from each other & speak with a collective voice.

@antonioгутerres

03



I know parents are worried about social media and its impact on their children's safety. They rightly expect fast action. Today, I'm calling on senior leaders from X, Meta, Snap, YouTube and TikTok to step up. I will do whatever it takes to keep children safe online.

@Keir\_Starmer

# Trump says Israel, Lebanon agree to 10-day ceasefire

AFP | Washington

US President Donald Trump announced that Israel and Lebanon have agreed to a 10-day ceasefire starting yesterday, though there was no indication if Iran-backed Hezbollah was on board.

Trump said the truce followed "excellent" conversations with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, taking place two days after Israel and Lebanon held peace talks in Washington.

"These two Leaders have agreed that in order to achieve PEACE between their Countries, they will formally begin a 10 Day CEASEFIRE at 5 P.M. EST," Trump



Smoke rises from the site of a series of Israeli strikes that targeted the southern Lebanese city of Nabatieh

said on his Truth Social network. Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and top US military officer Dan Caine to work with the two countries

"to achieve a Lasting PEACE."

"It has been my Honor to solve 9 Wars across the World, and this will be my 10th, so let's, GET IT DONE!" said Trump, who launched the war on Iran alongside Israel on February 28.

Hezbollah then pulled Lebanon into the Middle East war, firing rockets at Israel in support of its backer Tehran.

Since then, Israeli strikes on Lebanon have killed more than 2,000 people and displaced more than one million, and Israeli ground forces have invaded the country's south.

Trump said late Wednesday that Aoun and Netanyahu were due to speak yesterday, but there was no confirmation that any such call had happened.

## Pope slams 'tyrants' on Cameroon conflict visit after spat with Trump

AFP | Bamenda

Pope Leo XIV yesterday criticised the "tyrants" ransacking the world, on a high-security visit to a "bloodstained" region of Cameroon following a war of words with US President Donald Trump.

Since his landmark four-nation African tour kicked off earlier this week -- after Trump lashed out against the pope's criticism of the Middle East war -- the pope has abandoned his previous restraint in speaking out in favour of world peace.

"Woe to those who manipulate religion and the very name



Pope Leo XIV releases a white dove after calling for peace in Cameroon

of God for their own military, dragging that which is sacred economic and political gain, into darkness and filth," Leo

said in the northwestern city of Bamenda, the epicentre of a nearly decade-long English-speaking separatist insurgency that has killed thousands.

"The world is being ravaged by a handful of tyrants, yet it is held together by a multitude of supportive brothers and sisters," the pontiff warned, in a solemn speech at Bamenda's Saint Joseph's Cathedral.

Coming after US Vice President JD Vance -- a Catholic -- urged the Vatican to "stick to matters of morality", the remarks could deepen the rift between the Trump administration and the Chicago-born pontiff.

Yet the mood was joyous as the pope arrived under a military escort in a popemobile with bulletproof windows, blessing the worshippers who had gathered, many singing and blowing vuvuzela horns, to welcome him to Bamenda.

As he left the cathedral, Leo released white doves, a symbol of peace in a region of the central African country he called a "bloodstained yet fertile land that has been mistreated".

"Those who rob your land of its resources generally invest much of the profit in weapons, thus perpetuating an endless cycle of destabilisation and death," he said.

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

# Saudi Arabia Deposits \$2B to Boost Pakistan's Reserves

● Inflow follows recent \$1.4 billion Eurobond repayment

● \$3.5 billion in UAE outflows continue

● Rebuild reserves under the IMF program.

Pakistan's central bank announced on Thursday that it has received \$2 billion from Saudi Arabia, providing immediate support to the country's foreign exchange reserves as it works to stabilize its external position.

The funds are part of a broader \$3 billion financial assistance package pledged by Saudi Arabia to help Pakistan manage ongoing external financing pressures.

In a statement, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said the amount was received from Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Finance on April 15, 2026.

Pakistan continues to depend on external financing to meet import requirements and debt repayments. Support from allies like Saudi Arabia remains crucial, alongside the coun-



try's ongoing program with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which aims to restore macroeconomic stability.

The latest inflow comes shortly after Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb confirmed that Saudi Arabia committed an additional \$3 billion in support and agreed to extend an existing \$5 billion deposit to strengthen Pakistan's reserves.

The country is working to rebuild its foreign exchange reserves following a prolonged balance-of-payments crisis. Under its \$7 billion IMF program, Pakistan aims to increase

reserves to approximately \$18 billion by the end of the current fiscal year in June.

Saudi Arabia has long been a key financial partner for Pakistan, providing deposits, oil financing, and budgetary support during periods of economic stress.

The recent inflow follows Pakistan's repayment of about \$1.4 billion in Eurobonds and comes as the country faces outflows of around \$3.5 billion to the United Arab Emirates due to maturing deposits, highlighting continued pressure on its external account.

## Guard of Honor Presented to PM in Qatar



After visiting Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visited Qatar. He was received by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi.

A ceremonial guard of honor was presented by a contingent of the Qatari Armed Forces, highlighting the importance of the visit. Pakistani flags were displayed across Doha International Airport and various parts of the city to mark the Prime Minister's arrival.

During the visit, Prime Minister Sharif held a bilateral meeting with the Amir of Qatar, Shaikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. The leaders discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations and ex-



PM Shehbaz Sharif receives fighter jet escort on arrival in Qatar

changed views on Pakistan's efforts to promote regional and global peace.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi, and the Prime Minister's Spokesperson for International Media Mushahid Zaidi.

## Oman Air resumes Bahrain flights starting April 18

Oman Air announced the resumption of its direct flights between Muscat and Bahrain starting April 18, 2026, restoring air connectivity between the two Gulf capitals after several weeks of suspension.

The airline normally operates daily services between Muscat International Airport and Bahrain International Airport, with up to seven flights per week under regular schedules. However, the initial restart is expected to begin with reduced frequency as operations gradually return to normal.

As of mid-April 2026, Bahrain International Airport continues to operate at reduced capacity, with airlines restoring services in stages. European carriers re-



main affected by a conflict-zone advisory restricting operations in Bahrain's airspace until at least April 24, 2026.

Although the restriction does not apply to Oman Air, it has impacted several European airlines, including British Airways and Lufthansa, which have not yet resumed services to Bahrain.

Oman Air has also introduced

flexible rebooking and refund options for passengers affected by earlier cancellations, including full refunds, free date changes, and destination adjustments under specific conditions. All rebookings must be completed by May 31, 2026.

Passengers are advised to contact the airline directly or their travel agents for assistance with existing bookings.

## EU Chief Warns Iran Over Nuclear Ambitions



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that security in the Gulf region and Europe are closely connected, stressing the need for stronger cooperation amid rising global tensions.

In a statement on social media platform X, von der Leyen expressed solidarity with the Gulf Cooperation Council and its member states, including the Gulf Cooperation Council, following what she described as unprovoked attacks from Iran. She also said recent developments highlight why Iran should not be allowed to ac-

quire nuclear weapons.

She thanked Gulf countries for their support and mediation efforts in response to Russia's war in Ukraine, noting that these diplomatic roles have strengthened international dialogue during the conflict.

Von der Leyen added that the European Union and Gulf states should move toward a closer partnership, saying the upcoming EU-GCC Summit later this year presents an opportunity to deepen ties.

She also highlighted discussions with NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, focusing on the need for Europe

to increase defence investment and production capacity as the war in Ukraine continues. She stressed the importance of building a stronger and more innovative defence industry capable of producing both advanced systems and cost-effective technologies, including lessons learned from Ukraine's battlefield experience.

Reaffirming the strategic importance of cooperation between Europe and NATO, she said such partnerships are essential in an increasingly complex global security environment, particularly as Russia expands its military production.

## UAE and World Bank launch strategic governance partnership

The UAE Government announced a strategic partnership with the World Bank Group aimed at strengthening global government management and development practices.

The initiative focuses on adopting innovative methodologies, improving operational efficiency, and empowering governments to better adapt to rapid global transformations. It also aims to help public sector institutions prepare for future challenges using modern and flexible gov-

ernance tools.

According to the announcement, the collaboration will support knowledge exchange and capacity building, enabling governments worldwide to enhance performance and deliver more effective services.

The partnership reflects ongoing efforts to promote for-



ward-looking governance models that prioritize innovation, agility, and sustainable development in the public sector.

## President Aliyev in Türkiye for Global Forum



President of Ilham Aliyev arrived in Türkiye for a working visit to attend the 5th Antalya Diplomacy Forum, following an invitation from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Aliyev was accompanied by First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva. Upon arrival at Antalya International

Airport, the Azerbaijani president and his delegation were received by Antalya Governor Hulusi Sahin and other officials.

The forum is expected to bring together global leaders and policymakers to discuss key international issues.

# Classifieds



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**LAHORI CHANNA PARATHA W.L.L** has a vacancy for the occupation of CHEF, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33282011 or [QAMARSAQIBBH@GMAIL.COM](mailto:QAMARSAQIBBH@GMAIL.COM)

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**AL AMANI OASIS SPARE PARTS W.L.L.** has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17140090 or [ALAMANI@BATELCO.COM.BH](mailto:ALAMANI@BATELCO.COM.BH)

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**Food Vest Holding W.L.L** has a vacancy for the occupation of DIRECTOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17111722 or [MAIL@FOOD-VESTHOLDING.COM](mailto:MAIL@FOOD-VESTHOLDING.COM)

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**KHAIR AL KHALEJ JEWELLERY** has a vacancy for the occupation of JEWELRY GOLDSMITH (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33229242 or [AWAIS.BASHIIR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:AWAIS.BASHIIR@GMAIL.COM)

**C M PASOL AND CO SERVICES W.L.L** has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33548384 or [CM-PASAOL122@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CM-PASAOL122@GMAIL.COM)

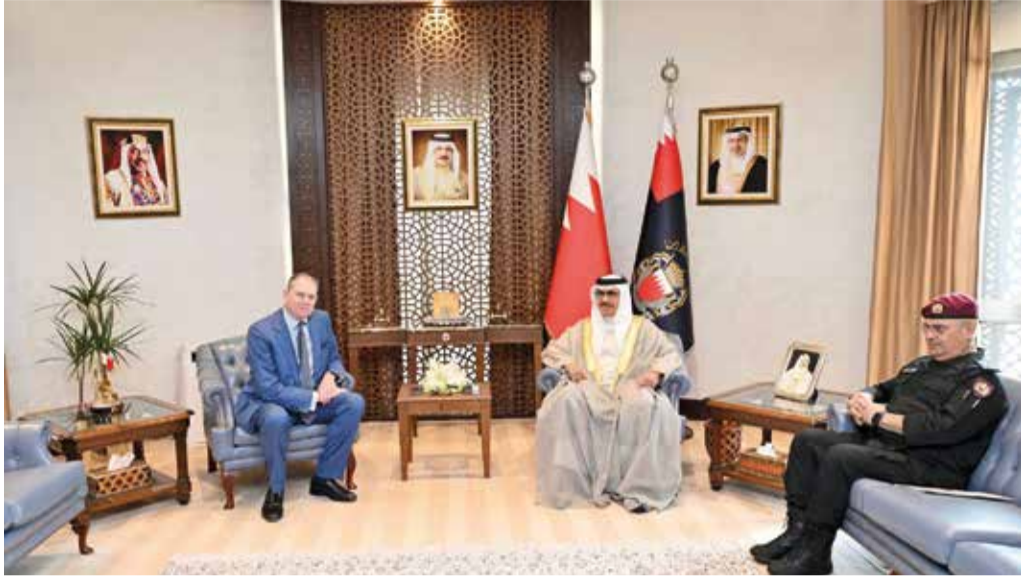
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**AL ZAIN MANPOWER SUPPLY SERVICES** has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17246665 or [ALJEDDAR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ALJEDDAR@GMAIL.COM)

**Bahrain and Italy Discuss Strengthening Security Cooperation**



Interior Minister HE Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa received the Italian Ambassador, HE Andrea Catalano, today to discuss enhancing bilateral security ties. The meeting focused on exchanging police expertise and developing joint security programs. Accompanied by Chief of Police HE Lt. Gen. Tariq bin Hassan Al Hassan, the officials also reviewed the latest regional and international developments and their impact on regional stability.

**Bahrain Condemns Regional Attacks at Istanbul Parliamentary Summit**



HE Engineer Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Sisi Al-Buainain, Secretary-General of the Bahraini House of Representatives, met with African Parliamentary Union Secretary-General HE Eddy Gadou Aboubakar during the 152nd IPU Assembly. Al-Sisi Al-Buainain condemned recent Iranian attacks on the Kingdom as a "dangerous escalation" and a violation of international law, urging the international community to take a firm stand. The meeting also focused on strengthening legislative ties between Bahrain and African nations to support global stability and development.

**Zain Bahrain and Basketball Federation Extend Historic Partnership**



The Bahrain Basketball Federation (BBF) and Zain Bahrain have renewed their strategic partnership for three additional seasons. This collaboration, which began in 2008, remains the longest-running sports sponsorship in the Kingdom. BBF President Eng. Sheikh Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Khalifa praised the move as a milestone for the sport's development. Zain Bahrain Managing Director Mohammed Zain Al-Abidin reaffirmed the company's commitment to national talent and social responsibility. The agreement aims to elevate the local game and support sustainable community initiatives.

**Muharraq to Transform Arad Park Flag Platform into National Monument**



Governor HE Salman bin Isa bin Hindi Al-Mannai has announced a project to develop the Arad Park flag platform into a permanent national monument. The initiative, discussed in a coordination meeting with municipal leaders, aims to preserve Muharraq's historical identity and enhance spaces for national celebrations. The project is a collaborative effort between the Governorate, Muharraq Municipality, and engineering firms. Once completed, the monument will serve as a key destination for official events, symbolizing national unity and the Kingdom's cultural heritage.

**Mohammed Mahdi Claims Top Prize at GSEA Bahrain**



The Entrepreneurs' Organization of Bahrain (EO Bahrain) concluded the Farouk Almoayyed Global Student Entrepreneurship Award (GSEA), with Mohammed Mahdi from the University of Bahrain taking first place for his project, "Petrolas." Omar Saba (AUBH) secured second place, while Mustafa Al-Ani (AUBH) and Jad Al-Khoury (BIBF) tied for third. Organized in partnership with Almoayyed Computers Middle East (ACME), the competition featured eight finalists evaluated on innovation and scalability. EO Bahrain Chairman Farid Bader highlighted the award as a vital platform for empowering the next generation of leaders. The winner will now represent Bahrain on the global GSEA stage.

**Bahrain and UAE Seek IPU Condemnation of Regional Attacks**



HE Jamal Mohammed Fakhro, First Deputy Chairman of the Shura Council, briefed an Australian parliamentary delegation on an emergency proposal submitted by Bahrain and the UAE at the 152nd IPU Assembly. The proposal calls for a formal international rejection of Iranian attacks targeting GCC nations and Jordan, citing widespread UN support for regional security. Mr. Fakhro urged global parliaments to protect civilians and vital infrastructure, while the Australian delegation reaffirmed its commitment to supporting peace and stability in the Middle East.

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# Manama fight to save series

Hussain Almaskati  
TDT | Manama

The 2025-26 Zain Bahrain Basketball League finals continue tonight at Khalifa Sports City Arena at 7pm. Game 4 could prove decisive in the series, with Muharraq one win away from the championship and Manama fighting to keep their season alive.

Reigning champions Muharraq lead the best-of-five series 2-1 and are chasing a fifth league title under German head coach Peter Schomers. Record champions Manama, who hold 25 titles and are targeting a 26th, responded in Game 3 with an 89-83 win to extend the series and shift momentum.

That victory was driven by new signing Donovan Smith, who produced 29 points, 14 rebounds and 3 blocks. He controlled 32 minutes of action and played a key role on both ends in turning the game Manama's way.

The Red Wolves remain in control of the series after edging the opening two games 74-73 and 88-80 through late-game execution under pressure. Another win tonight would complete their treble,



Smith gets the Manama faithful on their feet in Game 3

having already won the season curtain-raiser Super Cup and the Khalifa bin Salman Cup in March, both at Manama's expense.

Manama, led by coach Sal-

man Ramadhan, face a simple task. A win forces a deciding Game 5 on Monday at 7pm at the same venue, while defeat brings their title challenge to an end.

# HH Shaikh Nasser Tops Fitness Challenge



HH Shaikh Nasser in action  
TDT | Manama



Podium finishers

His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, claimed victory at the "Victorious Ultimate Endurance Challenge," a demanding multi-stage competition that pushed athletes to their physical and mental limits.

The event brought together elite competitors to test speed, strength, agility, endurance, and recovery across a brutal series of challenges. By the final stage,

only the most consistent performances remained in contention.

Shaikh Nasser completed seven physical challenges across five stages, finishing first with a time of 01:28:35. He was followed by Yusuf Farhan in second place (01:36:25) and Keny Wallace in third (01:38:53). Mohammed Al Ghais finished fourth (01:40:23), while Abdullah Salem rounded out the top five (01:41:34).

Attendees included HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, HH Shaikh Faisal bin Rashid Al Khalifa, and HH Shaikh Salman bin Mohammed Al Khalifa,

highlighting strong high-level support for the event.

Speaking after his win, Shaikh Nasser described the challenge as unforgiving in its intensity, noting that even the best preparation cannot fully simulate race-day conditions. "The challenge was difficult, as expected. No matter how much one prepares, the reality of competition is always tougher," he said.

He also praised Bahrain's continued support for initiatives of this scale and expressed hope that the competition will evolve into a global endurance event in the future.

## Longtime Messi friend Hoyos unveiled as Inter Miami coach



Head Coach Guillermo Hoyos of Inter Miami CF talks to the media prior to a training session

AFP | Miami

Guillermo Hoyos said his long friendship with Lionel Messi will not stop him working the Argentine superstar hard in training, as he was unveiled as the new coach of MLS side Inter Miami on Wednesday.

Hoyos, previously Miami's sporting director, replaces Javier Mascherano, who departed the club for "personal reasons" Tuesday just four months after guiding the club to its first MLS Cup title.

The 62-year-old Hoyos was a key former mentor of Messi with Barcelona's youth team more than two decades ago, and the Argentine pair have remained close ever since.

"Friendship is non-negotiable. We share a friendship that spans many years," said Hoyos,

speaking in Spanish, at his first press conference.

"However, that friendship does not mean that we will be constantly hovering over him or in his face every single day."

A club statement initially said Hoyos will take charge of the team for the "upcoming matches," but the team has since referred to him as head coach in social media posts.

Club sources told AFP that Hoyos is expected to remain at the helm only until the middle of the year, with a new coaching setup in place by the start of the Leagues Cup in August.

After seven rounds this season, Inter Miami sit third in the MLS Eastern Conference.

Messi, a 2022 World Cup winner and eight-time Ballon d'Or laureate, is the jewel in the crown of Miami's squad.

# Kane lauds Diaz 'moment of magic' after Bayern knock out Real

AFP | Munich

Harry Kane praised Luis Diaz's late "moment of magic" which delivered the killer blow as Bayern Munich eliminated Real Madrid to reach the Champions League semi-finals on Wednesday.

Holding a 2-1 first-leg advantage, Bayern fell behind three times on the night in the first half as record 15-time champions Real produced a familiarly strong performance on the European stage.

The tie was level at 4-4 on aggregate when Diaz struck in the 89th minute to put Bayern in front, before Michael Olise added another in stoppage time.

Bayern will face holders Paris Saint-Germain in the semis after winning 4-3 on the night and 6-4 on aggregate.

"I think even in the last 20 minutes of the game I felt like we were the team trying to make something happen," Kane told reporters.

"They started to tire a little bit, and it just sometimes takes a moment, a moment of magic, an unbelievable finish, or an unbelievable pass.

"In this case it was two great finishes by Lucho (Diaz) and Michael (Olise), to finish the game off for us, and that's what the Champions League is about.

"Sometimes, you can be the dominant team and lose, so it's nice to get through and win this one."



Bayern Munich forward Harry Kane celebrates with winger Luis Diaz

## 50

goals have been scored by Harry Kane this season, a rare milestone for an English player in Europe

The England captain credited his side's patience for helping them overcome Madrid.

"The highs and lows throughout the first half especially was pretty unique," Kane said.

"We stayed in the game, we stayed patient, especially in the second half, we knew as the game would go on we would become stronger.

"Physically this season we've been really strong in the last 10-15 minutes, and that's kind of what happened today. We took our chances when we needed to at the end."

Kane's first-half strike made him the first English player in a



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HARRY KANE

top-five European league since 1930-31 to score 50 goals in all competitions in a season.

"It's a reward for a lot of the hard work that we put in, not just me, but the team," Kane told TNT.

"It wouldn't be possible without the players around me and for me it's just about keeping it going.

"We've still got six weeks left in a Bayern shirt, we (England) have a World Cup in the summer and I just want to stay physically fit and sharp and just be out there to help the team."

Bayern coach Vincent Kompany said his side were ready to take on PSG.

"We believe in ourselves more than ever," Kompany said.

"We believed until the very end, never giving up after two tough battles against a great Real Madrid."

# Champions on the move

Bahrain drawn into tough GCC Games group in Doha

**Hussain Almaskati**  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's senior men's handball team heads into the 4th GCC Games as one of the leading contenders following yesterday's draw in Doha, Qatar.

The regional event runs from May 11 to 22 and brings together all six GCC nations, with handball expected to be among the most competitive disciplines.

The Kingdom's representatives face a demanding group stage, opening against Kuwait on May 15 before meeting Oman on May 17 and Saudi Arabia on May 19. They then take on hosts Qatar on May 20 in a rematch of the Asian final, before concluding their campaign against the United Arab Emirates on May 21.

With the schedule confirmed, attention immediately turns to preparation. The Bahrain Handball Federation has named a 25-player squad that has already begun training under head coach Robert Hedin at the BHF Arena in Um Al Hassam.

The squad has a settled look heading into the tournament, with several familiar names forming its core.

Hussain Al Sayyad, Mohammed Abdhussain and Mohammed Habib Ahmed are expected to shoulder much of the leadership responsibility. They are supported by a wider group including Hassan Madan, Jassim Khamis, Ahmed Redha, Salman Alshowaikh, Ali Al Asheeri and Qassim Qambar.

With five matches in seven days, Bahrain will need to lean heavily on squad depth. Rotation and defensive discipline could prove decisive over the course of the group stage.

Bahrain arrive in Doha on the back of a landmark year, having reached the podium in every GCC Games edition, winning gold in 2011 and silver in 2015 and 2022.

More significantly, they claimed their first continental title earlier this year by



Mohammed Habib celebrates in Bahrain's Asian final against Qatar, whom they meet again at the Games

defeating Qatar in the Asian Men's Handball Championship final, securing qualification for the 2027 IHF World Championship in Germany. That breakthrough in Kuwait has shifted expectations, placing them firmly among the teams to beat.

The rematch with Qatar stands out as the key fixture of the group stage, carrying both competitive and psychological weight.

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait also represent traditional threats in a tightly balanced group.

The tournament will be staged across multiple venues in Doha, including Aspire Dome, Qatar Sports Club, Al Gharafa SC, Al Arabi SC, and the Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club.

Bahrain enters the competition not as outsiders, but as proven champions expected to deliver once again.

# Silva to leave Man City at end of season



Manchester City's Portuguese midfielder #20 Bernardo Silva (L) vies with Arsenal's German midfielder #29 Kai Havertz (R)

**AFP** | London

Bernardo Silva will leave Manchester City when his contract expires at the end of the season, the Premier League club announced yesterday as they hailed his "incalculable" contribution to our "greatest sustained period of success".

The 31-year-old Portuguese playmaker, who is the current club captain, joined City from Monaco for £43 million (\$58 million) in 2017 and has gone on to make over 450 appearances for manager Pep Guardiola's side, winning 15 major trophies, including six Premier League titles and one Champions League as well as this season's League Cup.

He has also scored 76 goals and provided 77 assists to date, with Silva also involved as City won the 'treble' of Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League in the 2022/23 season.

Silva recently moved into the top 10 of all-time City appearance holders, overtaking several notable former players, including David Silva, Paul Power and Willie Donachie.

"Manchester City can confirm Bernardo Silva will leave the club this summer," said a City statement.

"Bernardo will now focus on seeking to try and ensure his remaining time at City ends with even more silverware, with Pep Guardiola's side still very much in the hunt to win both the Premier League title and the FA Cup.

"In short, he will be deservedly remembered both as one of City's finest and most popular players of all time."

Confirming his departure from the Etihad on his Instagram page, Silva wrote: "When I arrived nine years ago, I was following a dream of a little boy, wanting to succeed in life, wanting to achieve great things."

## Caicedo Extends Chelsea Stay With New Deal



**Moises Caicedo**  
TDT | agencies

Chelsea midfielder Moises Caicedo has agreed a new long-term contract with the club, extending his stay at Stamford Bridge until 2033, according to reports.

The 24-year-old Ecuador international had been seeking improved terms after playing a key role in Chelsea's recent successes, including their UEFA Conference League and FIFA Club World Cup triumphs last season. He initially joined the club from Brighton & Hove Albion in 2023 for a then British-record fee that could rise to £115 million.

Chelsea view Caicedo as a central figure in their long-term project and among the leading midfielders in world football.

## Muharraq Go Top, Budaiya Boost Survival Hopes

**Hussain Almaskati**  
TDT | Manama

Matchweek 18 of the Naser bin Hamad Premier League, which began yesterday, delivered major shifts at both ends of the table. Muharraq moved to the top of the standings, while Budaiya boosted their survival hopes with a late win over Al Najma

At Khalifa Sports City Stadium, reigning champions Muharraq edged Al Hidd 1-0 in a tightly contested match that opened up after the interval. The Red Wolves initially thought they had taken the lead in the 33rd minute when Sami Frioui finished a flowing move involving Soufiane Mahrouk and Bruno Santos, but the effort was ruled out for offside following a VAR check.

The decisive moment arrived in the 66th minute, when Frioui reacted quickest inside the box to turn home from close range after Mahrouk and Edimar Ribeiro da Costa combined to break down the Al Hidd defence. Muharraq controlled the game from there, and they were briefly denied a chance to double their lead when they appealed for a penalty in the 72nd minute after a handball by Rashid Boumousous. However, referee



Sami Frioui celebrates his winning goal with teammate Soufiane Mahrouk

Mohamed Bunafoor reviewed the incident and overturned the claim after VAR intervention, awarding a goal kick instead.

That proved enough to secure all three points and send Muharraq top on 43 points, with a game in hand over Al Khaldiya,

while Al Hidd remain fifth on 24 points after a disciplined display undone by a single moment.

At Al Ahli Stadium, Budaiya

came from behind to defeat Al Najma 2-1 in a match defined by quick replies and late drama. Al Najma struck first in the 36th minute when Mohammed Abdulqayoom met a set piece with a composed volley, but their lead did not last long. Six minutes later, Kablan Davy N'Goma latched onto a precise through ball from Clement Ogobe to bring Budaiya level before the break.

The contest swung late on when Al Najma captain Saud Al Hazza was sent off for a foul on N'Goma, conceding a penalty in the process. Although N'Goma's initial spot-kick was saved, VAR ruled that goalkeeper Ammar Mohammed Jaffar had stepped off his line, forcing a retake that Naser Mohammed converted to complete the turnaround.

Al Najma pushed for a late equaliser, but Zachary Hadji missed a clear opportunity as Budaiya held firm under pressure. The result leaves Al Najma in the relegation play-off zone in 9th place on 19 points, while Budaiya climb to 7th on 21 points, easing their survival concerns.

League action continues tonight with Bahrain Club facing Al Ahli at 5:25pm, followed by Sitra meeting Al Khaldiya at 7:35pm at Khalifa Sports City Stadium.