

Collective duty

Bahrain and Jordan call for urgent protection of the Strait of Hormuz against disruption



His Majesty welcomes the Jordanian Monarch, in the presence of HRH Prince Salman

● **HM King Hamad and HM King Abdullah II strongly condemn Iranian attacks on Arab Gulf states**

TDT | Manama

His Majesty the King and His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan stressed the urgency of maintaining the security of vital maritime routes, particularly the Strait of Hormuz.

They warned against any attempts to disrupt navigation in one of the world's most critical channels for oil supplies and global trade.

Their Majesties emphasised that protecting these waterways is a shared international responsibility requiring collective cooperation.

The remarks came as HM King



HM the King holds talks with HM King Abdullah II

Hamad welcomed HM King Abdullah II on his visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain yesterday.

They held talks to discuss regional developments and their implications for security and stability in the region.

The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister; His Highness Shaikh

“Protecting these waterways is a shared international responsibility requiring collective cooperation.”

- THEIR MAJESTIES

in the region, which constitute violations of state sovereignty and international law and pose a threat to international peace and security.

The Jordanian Monarch reiterated Jordan's solidarity with Bahrain in defending its sovereignty, security, and stability, and in ensuring the safety of its citizens.

Support

HM the King also underscored Bahrain's support for Jordan in the face of Iranian attacks.

They highlighted the points addressed by Security Council Resolution 2817, which strongly condemned all attacks launched by Iran on Arab Gulf states and Jordan and called for their immediate cessation, along with any provocations or threats to neighboring countries.

During the meeting, Their Majesties reviewed deep-rooted ties and ways to enhance cooperation, coordination, and joint action.

Abdullah bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Personal Representative of His Majesty the King; His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs and National Security Advisor; and other ministers.

Their Majesties addressed the blatant and ongoing Iranian attacks targeting countries

Focus on plans to address impact of Iranian aggression



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, remotely chaired the 521st Government Executive Committee meeting. Plans implemented to address the impact of the hostile Iranian aggression towards the Kingdom of Bahrain were reviewed.

Deep concern over Strait of Hormuz closure threats

● **Maritime security threat**

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain expressed its deep concern over Iranian threats to close the Strait of Hormuz to international navigation.

Such actions violate international law and the law of the sea, pose a serious threat to maritime security in the Gulf region, and are considered a dangerous escalation that threatens regional stability and international peace.

This situation calls for a firm international response to protect freedom of navigation in this strategically vital area for

all countries and their critical interests.

The Ministry emphasised the importance of safeguarding international navigation and ensuring the security of oil supplies and global trade through the Strait of Hormuz and Bab Al Mandab Strait.

It urged countries affected by this potential closure to act swiftly to strengthen maritime security initiatives and reaffirm the importance of adhering to international laws and regulations governing freedom of navigation.

It also called on the United Nations Security Council to fulfill its legal responsibilities regarding Iranian threats to close international navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, which would expose the global economy to significant losses.

Kingdom condemns hostile Iranian attacks on UAE
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The Kingdom of Bahrain expressed strong condemnation and denunciation of the continued hostile Iranian attacks targeting civilian and vital facilities in the UAE, which resulted in the death of a resident and the injury of others.

The incident followed the fall of a missile on a civilian vehicle in the Al Bahya area of the capital, Abu Dhabi.

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Kingdom stressed that these attacks constitute a flagrant violation of international law, international humanitarian law, all international conventions, and the principles of good neighbourliness.

Kuwait targeted in terror plot

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The Kingdom of Bahrain expressed strong condemnation and denunciation of the sabotage terrorist plot that targeted the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait and sought to undermine its security and stability, spread chaos, disrupt public order, and endanger the safety of citizens and residents as well as state resources.

In a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Kingdom affirmed the firm position of solidarity with Kuwait and its full support for the measures it takes to safeguard its sovereignty, security, and stability.

HM King ratifies Bahrain and Cyprus academic deal

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa ratified and issued Decree (20) of 2026, approving the agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus regarding the mutual academic recognition of higher education qualifications for admission and continuation of study in higher education institutions, based on the proposal of the Minister of Education and following the approval of the Cabinet.

The agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus



HM the King

was signed in Manama on January 25, 2026.

The Minister of Education shall implement this decree, which shall take effect following the date of its issuance and be published in the Official Gazette.

Salary support approved to protect private sector jobs

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

MPs yesterday approved an urgent proposal to protect private sector jobs.

The proposal was submitted by Dr Hasan Eid Bukhamas, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee.

It calls on the government to direct Tamkeen to launch an exceptional programme covering the full salaries of Bahraini employees working in small and medium enterprises affected by current conditions.

Dr. Bukhamas said the move comes amid exceptional region-

The approved proposal aims to ensure salaries continue without interruption, while easing financial pressure on business owners. The lawmaker noted that protecting their stability is essential to prevent disruption and avoid layoffs that could directly affect many families.

al circumstances, including ongoing conflict and its direct and indirect economic impact on Bahrain, which has disrupted business activity and increased operational costs.

He stressed that small and medium enterprises form a core

pillar of the national economy and a key source of employment for Bahrainis.

The lawmaker noted that protecting their stability is essential to prevent disruption and avoid layoffs that could directly affect many families.

Bahrain gets 1.5% of power from renewables

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahrain is still getting only a small share of its power from renewable sources.

Electricity and Water Affairs Minister, His Excellency Yasser Humaidan, said green energy now accounts for about 1.5 per cent of the Kingdom's yearly electricity output of roughly 20,000 gigawatt-hours.

H.E. Humaidan added that figure should be read as part of a measured shift, not a finished picture, as the Kingdom moves bit by bit towards a fuller renewables system.

Firm penalties

New decree enforces strict prison terms and fines for bank regulatory breaches

● MPs pass jail term amendment in banking law

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A decree-law introducing jail terms and fines of up to BD1 million for breaches of Central Bank of Bahrain licensing and compliance rules was approved by Parliament yesterday.

Ministers told MPs the measure had already been in force since 8 September 2025 as Bahrain prepares for a Financial Action Task Force review this month.

Decree-Law No. 37 of 2025 rewrites the opening paragraph of Article 161 of the Central Bank of Bahrain and Financial Institutions Law of 2006.

Under the new wording, anyone who breaches Articles 40 and 41 of the law, or rules issued under Article 42, may face imprisonment, a fine of up to BD1 million, or either one of those penalties, without prejudice to any harsher punishment under the Penal Code or any other law.

Imprisonment

The amendment adds imprisonment to a provision that had previously allowed only a fine of up to BD1 million.

The offences concern carrying out regulated financial activity without a licence and



H.E. Ghanim Al Buainain



Ahmed Qarata



Khalid Humaidan

“The tougher penalty for breaches involving virtual asset service providers would strengthen deterrence and bring punishment into line with the gravity of the offence and its effect on the financial system.”

— H.E. GHANIM AL BUAINAIN, MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

the use of protected financial or insurance terms by unlicensed parties.

During the debate, MP Abdulhakim Al Sheno called the decree-law one of the measures that would “close some gaps” in Bahrain's banking law, but questioned the timing behind the urgency case.

Review

“We are now at the end of March,” he told the chamber. “How will there be enough time for it to be reviewed by the Shura Council?”

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, His Excellency Ghanim Al

Buainain, replied that the issue had already been addressed in the grounds of urgency accompanying the decree-law.

“The decree-law has been in force since 8 September 2025,” he said. “What we are doing now is only completing the constitutional procedures.”

Punishment

It also said the tougher penalty for breaches involving virtual asset service providers would strengthen deterrence and bring punishment into line with the gravity of the offence and its effect on the financial system.

The government said the case

for urgency also met the constitutional test of necessity, chiefly because time was needed before the FATF review to show that the new rule was being applied in practice.

Article 40 bars anyone from providing financial services subject to Central Bank oversight in Bahrain without a licence from the bank.

It also bars the establishment of a financial institution in the kingdom without Central Bank approval, subject to the Commercial Companies Law.

Article 41 bars unlicensed parties from using the word ‘bank’, or similar wording in any language, or any term suggesting they carry on banking business, in a trade name, address, letters, invoices or notices.

The same restriction applies to insurance activity. Unlicensed parties may not use names or wording suggesting they provide insurance or reinsurance services.

MP presses for Bahraini nursing jobs, elderly transport and housing review

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Calls to give Bahraini nurses and young doctors a stronger foothold in the health system, waive utility and municipal dues for bereaved families, provide transport for elderly patients and reopen some cancelled housing applications were pressed in Parliament yesterday by MP Dr Maryam Al Dhaen.

The lawmaker said Bahrainis must be “the first choice” in nursing jobs and that some families needed “a real solution”.

Dr Al Dhaen opened by praising the government, the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) and the Ministry of Interior for their work during what she called the “heinous attack” on Bahrain.

Reply

She also welcomed the government's reply to an urgent proposal calling for clear media plans for major incidents, disasters and emergencies, with fast guidance for citizens and residents and full use of technology.

The legislator said the work done by state bodies during the crisis deserved praise, before turning to a run of government replies on health, family support and housing.

On nursing, Dr Al Dhaen renewed her call for full Bahrainisation at Salmaniya Medical Complex and health centres.

She said the push should be felt most clearly in hiring



“Bahrainis must be the first choice in nursing jobs and that some families needed a real solution.”

— MP DR MARYAM AL DHAEN

at health centres, adding that there were many Bahraini graduates in the field still waiting for work and that “the Bahraini should be the first choice”.

Proposal

The MP also spoke in favour of a proposal for the Labour Fund to support the training of newly employed doctors in private hospitals through a wage support scheme linked to training inside government hospitals.

She said this “will serve newly graduated doctors well, reduce unemployment rates, and give them a real chance for training and employment so that we may benefit from their abilities”.

Few Bahraini homes cross power support threshold

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Only a minority of Bahraini household accounts went above the summer support thresholds in 2025, Electricity and Water Affairs Minister, His Excellency Yasser Humaidan, told Parliament yesterday.

He said 20,115 subsidised domestic accounts were above

5,000 electricity units in May and that the figure rose to 73,940 by September, while bills above BD150 for subsidised homes climbed from 1,917 to 9,550 over the same period.

H.E. Humaidan gave the figures as he defended the Electricity and Water Authority's reply to a parliamentary question from MP Dr Mahdi Al Showaikh, who had complained that the writ-



H.E. Yasser Humaidan

ten answer dealt mainly with accounts and bills that stayed below the thresholds rather than those that exceeded them.

Approach

The minister said the approach had been deliberate.

“It was not an attempt to avoid the answer,” he told the chamber, saying the authority chose to begin with the larger group of

households still within the subsidised range in order to show “the efficiency and effectiveness of government support” and how it had helped keep electricity and water costs at ‘reasonable levels’ for most Bahraini families.

He said the figures showed that the cases above the thresholds were still limited when set against the full number of Bah-

raini domestic accounts.

Accounts

For subsidised homes, the number of accounts above 5,000 units rose from 20,115 in May 2025, equal to 5 per cent, to 44,419 in June, or 10 per cent, then 57,680 in July, or 13 per cent, 66,495 in August, or 15 per cent, and 73,940 in September, or 17 per cent.

Salmaniya nursing Bahrainisation may take 10 years: Jalahma

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahrainising the nursing workforce at Salmaniya Medical Complex could take between five and 10 years, according to Government Hospitals chief executive Mariam Al Jalahma.

He told Parliament yesterday that the pace is tied to a simple gap in numbers: there are more than 1,500 non-Bahraini nurses in post, while Bahrain produces only about 200 Bahraini nursing graduates each year.

She said that made a full handover far slower at Salmaniya than at health centres, where the smaller staff base made the first wave of replacement far easier to carry out.

At the kingdom's main public hospital, the scale is different. Any shift, she said, has to be phased and thought through with care.

Al Jalahma said the plan also counts on natural retirement as part of the changeover.

'Breathing room'

MPs approve urgent fee relief plan for war-hit small and medium-sized businesses

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

War-hit businesses could be spared water, electricity and municipal charges after Parliament backed an urgent proposal yesterday aimed at easing the strain on firms hit by the regional conflict.

MPs approved the measure during the Council's weekly sitting after its sponsors said small and medium-sized businesses had taken a direct hit from attacks reaching Bahrain and from the market strain that followed.

The proposal was put forward by Mohammed Janahi, Ahmed Qarata, Ahmed Al Salloom, Mamdouh Al Saleh and Hassan Bukhammas. Janahi said firms across Bahrain had been hurt by broken supply routes and dearer day-to-day costs.

"Many small and medium-sized enterprises in the Kingdom of Bahrain have been harmed as a result of supply



"Many small and medium-sized enterprises in the Kingdom of Bahrain have been harmed as a result of supply chain disruption and higher operating costs."

— MP MOHAMMED JANAH

chain disruption and higher operating costs," he said.

Cash

He said the case for relief was plain: businesses were running short of ready cash at a

time when traders still had to keep goods moving and shops stocked.

"In war conditions, companies suffer from a lack of liquidity," Janahi said, adding that easing payment burdens would

leave traders with "immediate cash sums" to help them carry on trading and keep goods in the market.

He also linked the move to food and medicine supplies, saying lower upfront charges at entry points would help speed key goods through and cut hold-ups linked to financial clearance.

"Reducing advance financial burdens at customs points speeds up the flow of strategic goods and prevents their accumulation or delay," he said.

Price

Janahi said the move would also help check price rises.

He said instant tax payment at the border created "a financing cost" that traders often passed on to shoppers in the final selling price.

Delaying that payment, he said, would help keep prices steady for Bahrainis.

He based the proposal on the exception set out in paragraph (b) of Article 51 of the Value Added Tax Law No. 48 of 2018.

MP Seroor seeks nursing Bahrainisation timetable



MP Dr Muneer Seroor
Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

MP Dr Muneer Seroor called for clear figures on current Bahrainisation levels in hospital nursing and a timetable for reaching 100 per cent at Salmaniya Medical Complex and health centres.

He told Parliament yesterday that the government had supported the aim but had not given the numbers or a path to get there.

During debate on the proposal, Dr Seroor welcomed the government's reply and its view that Bahraini staff should be first in line for hiring, calling that a good sign.

But he said the response stopped short of giving the present share of Bahrainis in hospital nursing or saying when the target would be met.

He said the proposal was not meant to make hiring harder or pile on red tape.

Hiring

Its purpose, he said, was to widen the hiring of Bahraini staff in a field tied closely to people's health and their sense of safety in the health system.

Dr Seroor said reaching 100 per cent Bahrainisation in primary healthcare centres was an achievement worth praising, but said it also raised a fair question: if that had been done there, why not in government hospitals too, above all at Salmaniya.

He said this called for a clear staged programme, especially with trained nursing graduates leaving college each year and looking for work.

Drug smugglers caught at airport

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

What appeared to be a routine arrival at Bahrain International Airport turned into a major drug bust after customs officers intercepted two passengers carrying narcotics concealed inside luggage.

According to court records, the incident began when a customs officer monitoring X-ray scans noticed irregularities in two suitcases on the baggage conveyor belt.

The bags, belonging to a man and a woman arriving from an Asian country, were flagged for inspection and directed to the red channel.

When asked if they had any-

thing to declare, both passengers said no.

Search

A subsequent search revealed multiple sealed packages of dried fish and shrimp.

Authorities said the narcotics were carefully concealed in six transparent bags embedded within the seafood, in what investigators described as a deliberate attempt to evade detection.

Similar packages were found in the second suitcase, concealed among clothing and food items.

During questioning, the male defendant told investigators he had received the suitcase abroad and that he had been promised payment for delivering it to a



contact in Bahrain.

Account

The woman gave a similar account, saying she had been asked to transport the bag and hand it over upon arrival.

Investigators later uncovered that a hotel room had been arranged for the pair, where the handover was expected to take place. Under police supervision, the suspects contacted the individual believed to be coordinat-

ing the operation.

The handler instructed them to photograph the suitcases and provided combination codes to open them.

Pair

He told the pair that someone would collect the bags from the hotel. No one arrived.

Instead, the suspects were told to leave the suitcases in the room, place the key nearby and return to the airport, where they were informed that tickets had been arranged for their departure.

Authorities later determined the tickets were fraudulent. Efforts to trace the handler were unsuccessful, and he ceased communication shortly afterwards.

Nurana Island plots left without roads or services

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Nurana Island has been left hanging for 15 years, with plot owners still paying the price while roads, sewerage and lighting remain absent, Services Committee chairman Mamdouh Al Saleh told Parliament yesterday.

He said plots had been sold and distributed in 2011, yet those who bought them were still waiting for the most basic works needed to build or live there.

The people bearing the cost, he said, were not residents but owners who had met their side of the bargain and were still left with bare land and little else.

"How can a citizen build or live on an island that lacks the most basic infrastructure?" Al

Saleh said. "No roads, no sewerage, no lighting... nothing that makes it possible to start life there."

He said some owners were still paying off loans after years of delay, despite no real work being carried out on site. That, he told the chamber, had left them in a hard and unfair position.

Al Saleh rejected the government's reply to the urgent proposal on Nurana, saying it gave no firm answer and instead relied on old measures and open-ended dates tied to unclear steps. In practice, he said, that meant the delay was still going on.

The government said in its written reply that the aim of the proposal was already being met through planning, regulatory and executive steps already in force.

Push for three-month loan payment freeze

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

An urgent parliamentary proposal calls for personal loan instalments to be put off for three months, with no extra interest, after MPs warned that the economic fallout from the Iranian attacks could hit household budgets.

The proposal asks the relevant bodies to study the move in coordination with the Central Bank of Bahrain, banks and finance firms, with the aim of giving families breathing space while keeping the banking sector stable.

Khalid Buanaq, one of the MPs behind the proposal, said the call came amid regional strain and security unrest that could carry an economic toll for individuals and families.

Households

He said some households



"A pause for a set period would help ease the strain and give people time to reorder their finances."

— MP KHALID BUANAQ



Payment delay should come without any added interest or fees so that the move gives real relief rather than leaving people with a bigger bill later.

might face short-term money strain because of a drop in some business activity or a rise in living costs, making it harder to keep up with monthly dues.

"In such exceptional circumstances, some families may face

temporary financial challenges," he said.

He added that this could affect "their ability to meet their financial obligations, especially personal loan instalments due to banks and financial institu-

tions".

Dues

The lawmaker said personal loans were among the monthly dues carried by a large share of citizens, and that keeping those payments due during emergency economic conditions could place another weight on some families.

A pause for a set period, he said, would help ease the strain and give people time to reorder their finances.

Buanaq said the delay should come without any added interest or fees so that the move gives real relief rather than leaving people with a bigger bill later.

"It is also important that this postponement be made without charging any additional interest or fees during the postponement period," he said, "so that the intended purpose of this measure is achieved in genuinely easing the burden on citizens".

Shared strength

When citizens and institutions unite, security becomes a collective achievement

● **Shura committee hails community partnership as pillar of security and stability**

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

Community partnership has become a fundamental pillar of security and stability.

It reflects the integration between state institutions and citizens and demonstrates the maturity of national awareness and society's ability to positively confront challenges.

This was affirmed by the Foreign Affairs, Defense and National Security Committee at the Shura Council, chaired by Dr. Ali bin Mohammed Al-Romaihi.

The committee noted that this approach has been strengthened by the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, which have established a firm path for strengthening

national unity and promoting partnership between the state and society to safeguard national achievements and ensure sustainable security and stability.

Support

Marking Community Partnership and National Belonging Day, celebrated annually in Bahrain on March 18, the committee praised the continued support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, in translating the Royal directives into practical programs and initiatives that enhance community participation and reinforce the role of citizens as key partners in development.

The committee also expressed its appreciation for the vital role played by the Ministry of Interior, led by Minister of Interior, His Excellency General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, in strengthening the concept of community partnership through modern security policies based on openness, communication with the public, and initiatives aimed at raising



Dr. Ali bin Mohammed Al-Romaihi



The Kingdom marks Community Partnership and National Belonging Day annually on March 18.

awareness and strengthening trust between security agencies and the community.

In this context, the committee praised the national campaign "Bahrain is Good... Because of You" and the "Ma'an (Together)" initiative as leading national models that promote social responsibility, strengthen respect for the law, and encourage cooperation among all segments of society.

Engagement

The committee added that the strong public engagement with these initiatives reflects the high level of awareness and national belonging among Bahraini society, which has consistently demonstrated its ability to unite and cooperate with state institutions in various circumstances.

It further noted that citizens' awareness and their responsible response to the Ministry of Interior's messages during the current regional developments represent a positive example of community partnership and enhance the country's ability to address challenges effectively within the framework of strong national unity.

Tribute for Sarah

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A minute's silence and the recitation of Al Fatiha opened Parliament's sitting yesterday after MP Zainab AbdulAmeer asked the chamber to honour Sarah Abdulhameed Dashti, who died after an Iranian strike hit a residential building in Seef District before dawn.

Rising on a point of order, AbdulAmeer said: "Bahrain lost its daughter, the martyr Sarah Dashti."

She asked that the sitting begin with "a minute's silence and the recitation of Al Fatiha for the soul of the martyr", praying that God would "envelop her in His vast mercy and accept her among the martyrs".

She also asked for Dashti's name to be entered in the official minutes, saying it should be "immortalised in the record of this homeland".

Voice

Parliament, she said, is "the voice of the people, the voice of her bereaved family, and the voice of this homeland, which lost its daughter".

Sarah Abdulhameed Dashti, 28, died after an Iranian strike hit a residential building in Seef District, in an attack that drew grief and sympathy across Bahrain.

AbdulAmeer ended her remarks with a prayer that God would protect the Kingdom of Bahrain and preserve its security and stability under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Proposal calls for Gulf Union support

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A proposal calling for backing for the Gulf Union project has been put forward by MP Mohammed Al Rifai, who said it would lead to a steadier and more prosperous future for the peoples of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

He said the GCC, since its founding in 1981, had made clear gains in the economy, security and political coordination. But he argued that the strain and shifts facing the region now call for a move beyond cooperation and towards union, in a way that would deepen Gulf integration as a whole.

Al Rifai said Bahrain's National Action Charter had already laid down the case for closer Gulf integration, adding that the security of the Gulf

states forms one shared system that cannot be split apart.

The lawmaker said this gives a national and constitutional footing to any move towards a Gulf Union.

He said the project would bring a range of gains.

These include stronger collective security through a shared defence system, a firmer Gulf economy through unified markets and easier movement of trade and investment, and greater weight abroad through a single political stance on regional and world affairs.

He ended by saying the Gulf states have the historic, cultural and economic means needed to make such a union possible, and called for support for the plan as a key step towards a stronger and steadier future for the region.

Posting sensitive photos online sends defendants to court

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

Several defendants have been referred to criminal trial after allegedly photographing and publishing images of sensitive sites that are prohibited from being photographed, according to the Head of the Terrorism Crimes Prosecution.

The Public Prosecution said the suspects shared the images on social media, revealing information and details related to vital locations, at a time when the Kingdom is facing what officials

described as Iranian attacks on its territory.

Authorities stated that such actions could harm the country's national security.

Reports

The case began after the Public Prosecution received reports from the Cybercrime Division of the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security.

The reports indicated that several social media accounts had posted photos of sensitive sites, including locations target-

ed in the recent attacks as well as other strategic areas.

Investigations conducted by the authorities led to the identification of the suspects, who were later arrested and questioned by prosecutors.

The Public Prosecution ordered their pretrial detention pending the investigation before referring them to criminal court.

Directives

In a statement, the Head of the Terrorism Crimes Prosecution stressed that official directives

issued by the competent authorities are legally binding and strictly prohibit photographing or sharing images of vital sites, military or security measures, or any information related to ongoing operations during the current circumstances.

He also urged the public to act responsibly when using social media, especially during the exceptional conditions facing the Kingdom, warning that any violation of these regulations or actions that could undermine national security will be met with strict legal measures.

Vocational training law draft amendment

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The Services Committee at the Shura Council, chaired by Dr. Jameela Mohammed Redha Al Salman, continued discussing a draft law proposing the addition of a new article (Article 16 bis) to Law No. 17 of 2007 on vocational training, based on a legislative proposal submitted by the Shura Council.

The proposed amendment aims to encourage large employers to contribute to national efforts to make Bahraini citizens the preferred choice for employment.

It would require large companies to provide training opportunities for university graduates within their establishments, helping them gain suitable employment and contributing to efforts to reduce unemployment rates.



Shura Council Services Committee members hold online discussion

The proposal also seeks to raise awareness among new graduates entering the labor market about the importance of working in the private sector and to support the role of the relevant ministry in strengthening employment policies and managing unemployment rates.

During the same meeting, the committee also continued reviewing three draft laws proposing amendments to Article 41 of the Military Retirement Law issued by Decree No. 11 of 1976, Article 87 of Law No. 13 of 1975 regulating pensions and retirement benefits for government employees, and Article 90 of the

Social Insurance Law issued by Decree-Law No. 24 of 1976.

The draft amendments propose increasing the marriage grant given to widows or pension beneficiaries to an amount equivalent to 24 months of their entitled pension, instead of the current 18 months, with a minimum of BD1,000.



Image used for illustrative purposes only

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

MPs yesterday approved an urgent proposal calling for a temporary waiver on fees charged on shipments arriving through Bahrain's ports, after supporters said local firms were being hit by higher sea freight costs and new charges linked to regional strain.

The proposal was put forward by MP Hassan Ebrahim Hassan, First Deputy Speaker Abdulnabi Salman, Mamdouh Al Saleh, Hisham Al Ashiri and Dr Mahdi Al Shuwaikh.

They urged the government to grant a time-limited exemption on incoming cargo and goods during the current peri-

od to help Bahraini companies and keep supply lines working.

Costs

Supporters said firms were facing extra costs from war-risk charges, route-change fees and added transport bills when consignments were diverted through other ports before reaching Bahrain.

They warned that the rise in freight, transport and storage costs was likely to feed through to prices in the local market.

Ebrahim said shipping firms had recently imposed charges "that were not previously in place", including war-risk fees and charges tied to changes in shipping routes.

Tougher action call against cyber fraud

Response to growing scam calls, sham texts and suspect transfers

● **Government backs MP proposal to step up public awareness**

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Scam calls, sham texts and suspect transfers drove renewed calls in Parliament yesterday for tougher action against cyber fraud, after the government backed MP Hassan Ebrahim's proposal to step up public awareness.

In reply to the government's response, Ebrahim said the threat now reached far beyond stray online trickery and posed a real risk to people's money and private data.

He said public awareness was the first line of defence and argued that many cases could have been avoided if people knew not to share bank details, open suspicious links or answer calls from unknown sources.

Reply

The lawmaker welcomed the government's backing for his proposal and said its reply set out work already being done through awareness campaigns, media programmes and joint work with the banking and telecommunications sectors.

Those efforts, he said, were



Image used for illustrative purposes only

appreciated, but the present need was for a wider and more steady push rather than short-lived campaigns.

Ebrahim said he had put the proposal forward after repeated complaints reached MPs from citizens and residents who said they had been targeted through scam text messages, phone calls, fake links and sham websites posing as state bodies or financial firms in order to steal personal and banking data and take money.

"What is worrying is that these fraudulent methods have become more advanced and better organised," he said.

Technology

Ebrahim added that fraudsters were using new technology



“What is worrying is that these fraudulent methods have become more advanced and better organised.”

— MP HASSAN EBRAHIM

and the speed of social media to reach as many victims as they could.

He said older people and those with less knowledge of online scam methods could face a greater risk than others.

The MP called for warning messages to be spread through every available outlet, including television, radio, local newspa-

pers, digital platforms and social media.

Awareness, he said, should become a continuing public programme rather than a seasonal or limited effort.

Campaigns

Ebrahim also called for campaigns aimed at groups with different patterns of technolo-

gy use, including older people, school and university students, and workers.

Each group used technology in its own way, he said, and the message should match that.

But awareness alone, he told the chamber, would not be enough. Stronger technical and procedural protection was also needed in banking work.

He said banks in Bahrain already had advanced systems, yet the fast change in scam methods meant those systems had to be updated on a continuing basis.

He called for stronger alert and notice systems before some financial transactions are carried out, above all large transfers or transfers to overseas accounts, so there is greater certainty that the account holder is the one making the move and not a victim of fraud.

Ebrahim also urged a study of added checks for sensitive banking transactions, so the customer is given a chance to review the payment before it goes through, chiefly in cases where an account may have faced an attempted breach or misuse.

Turning to the telecom sector, he said there could be no real push against cyber fraud without a strong role being played by telecommunications firms and the bodies overseeing them in cutting down scam text messages and suspicious calls reaching users.

MPs condemn Al-Aqsa closure

● **Affirming support for Palestinians**

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

MPs approved a statement condemning the continued closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque and restrictions imposed on worshippers, reaffirming Bahrain's support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

The decision reflects Parliament's unified stance, highlighting the issue's political and social importance as developments in Al Quds continue to draw strong regional reactions.

MPs stressed that the situation holds deep religious and humanitarian significance, noting that restrictions on worship at Al-Aqsa resonate far beyond its physical location, touching the sentiments of millions.

The approval comes at a time of heightened regional tension, where events in Palestine remain closely followed by communities in Bahrain.

For many, Al-Aqsa is not only a religious site, but a symbol of identity, history and shared concern.

MP calls for emergency units across governorates

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahrain should move to build fully integrated emergency departments across its governorates as housing growth and fast-rising population put more strain on the health system, MP Jalal Kadhém said.

Addressing Parliament yesterday, he said the spread of new residential areas and the rise in demand for care now called for a wider health network that could give people quicker access to treatment near where they live.

Jalal Kadhém said the Ministry of Health's efforts were valued, but argued that the next stage required a clear shift in how health services were shared across the country. New housing cities, he said, had made it harder to rely mainly on central hospitals.

He said Salmaniya Medical Complex could no longer carry so much of the emergency and treatment load on its own, with the number of citizens and residents nearing 1.6 million.

The strain, he said, had grown heavier on medical staff and health services, especially with the rise of chronic illness needing ongoing and urgent care.

He drew attention to the Northern Governorate, saying that although it has the highest population density, it still lacks a fully integrated medical centre on a level with the main hospitals.

Current care there, he said, remained limited.

Protecting rights, reinforcing values

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

MPs approved an official statement marking the Arab Human Rights Day, reaffirming Bahrain's commitment to principles of dignity, justice and human rights.

The move reflects Parliament's engagement with regional and humanitarian issues, particularly as broader developments across the region continue to shape public and political discourse.

MPs stressed that the occasion provides an opportunity

to highlight the importance of protecting rights and reinforcing values that support social stability and cohesion.

They noted that such statements are part of a broader responsibility to uphold principles that contribute to balanced and inclusive societies.

The approval comes amid ongoing regional tensions, where discussions around rights, security and stability remain closely connected. In such periods, official positions carry both political and social weight, reflecting the direction of national priorities.

Man jailed for drunk driving causing death of girlfriend

Rehab Mohamad
TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court has sentenced a man in his twenties to two years in prison after convicting him of causing the death of his girlfriend while driving under the influence of alcohol.

According to the Public Prosecution, the defendant caused a fatal traffic accident due to his negligence while driving under the influence and exceeding the maximum speed limit, which resulted in the death of the victim and injuries to another passenger.

Kids excited about Eidiya celebration

Neethu V
TDT | Manama

As Eid al-Fitr nears, families across Bahrain are preparing to celebrate, with children eagerly awaiting the cherished tradition of Eidiya.

Joining the celebration, banks are providing new banknotes to ensure families can partake in the festivities smoothly.

NBB is offering BD1 and BD5 notes at Seef Mall, Souq Waqif, Riffa Bu Kowarah, Muharaq Souq, and Marassi Galleria from March 17 until stocks last, Khaleeji Bank providing notes at ATMs in Hidd, Wadi Al Sail, and Sanad branches and BisB making Eidiya notes available at various ATMs and branches.

Joy

Beyond family celebrations, efforts to spread joy have extended to children in need.

The Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF), through its humanitarian volunteer initiatives team "Shaim Al-Khair,"



The Royal Humanitarian Foundation brings smiles to children

led by Shaikha Shaima bint Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, launched the initiative- "Our Eidiyah is different with Shaim Al-Khair".

Volunteers distributed Eid gifts to more than 200 children, including orphans, ensuring that the spirit of giving reaches those who need it most.

Traditions

As Eid approaches, the continuation of Eidiya traditions, supported by both families and

organizations like RHF, highlights the enduring values of kindness, generosity, and togetherness, bringing smiles and hope to children across Bahrain.

This beloved custom of gifting money or small presents in colourful envelopes brings excitement while teaching values of generosity and sharing.

In the days leading up to Eid, children plan visits to relatives, looking forward to collecting their festive treats.

BisB holds virtual Ordinary and Extraordinary General Meetings for Year Ended 2025

Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), the leading provider of innovative Islamic financial solutions for simplifying money matters in the Kingdom of Bahrain, held its Ordinary and Extraordinary General Meetings virtually on Tuesday, 17th March 2026.

After confirming that the quorum had been met at 86.48%, the meeting commenced with a speech from Mr. Zaid Khalid Abdulrahman, Chairman of BisB, in which he welcomed all attendees including shareholders, delegates from the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC), Bahrain Bourse, the Chairman of the Sharia'a Supervisory Board, and representatives from the Bank's External Auditors and Shares Registrar (Bahrain Clear).

Following an overview of the agenda, the attendees approved the minutes of the previous OGM no. (49) held on 24th March 2025. They listened to the Board of Directors' Report on the Bank's activities and its financial position for the year ended 31st December 2025, alongside the External Auditor's and the Sharia'a Supervisory Board's Report for the same year. The attendees also reviewed and approved the Bank's audited financial statements, as well as the notification of transactions conducted between the Bank and related parties including major shareholders, as detailed in note (28) of the consolidated financial statements under Article (189) of the Bahrain



Commercial Companies Law.

The OGM further approved the Board of Directors' recommendation to allocate the net profit for the financial year

ended 31st December 2025, distributing cash dividends to shareholders at a rate of 5% of the nominal value of each share (5 fils per share, excluding

fractional shares), equivalent to BD5,298,070 - to be distributed starting from 8th April 2026, subject to the approval of CBB. Additionally, BD 638,209 was

allocated to the Bank's Zakah fund, BD 70,000 for charitable donations, BD1,853,696 transferred to statutory reserves, and BD 10,676,984 to retained earnings.

BD 273,998 remuneration

The meeting also approved the payment of a total amount of BD 273,998 as remuneration to the Board of Directors for the financial year ended 31st December 2025, along with all other benefits and privileges stated in the Board of Directors' Report. The attendees further approved the sitting fees for the year 2026 at a similar rate to the previous year. In line with the CBB's requirements, the Bank's Corporate Governance Report for 2025 was also reviewed during the session.

Additionally, the attendees approved the request to absolve the members of the Board of Directors from liability for their actions for the year ended 31st December 2025. Furthermore, KPMG Fakhro was reappointed as the Bank's external auditors for the year 2026, with authorisation granted to the Board of Directors to determine their fees, subject to the approval of CBB. No additional OGM items were raised under Article (207) of the Bahrain Commercial Companies Law.

Following discussion of the agenda items of the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), the attendees approved the minutes of the previous EGM no. (27) held on 28th March 2022. The meeting also approved the amendment of Article (29) of the Bank's Articles

of Association concerning the responsibilities of the members of the Board of Directors, in accordance with Decree-Law No. (38) of 2025 amending certain provisions of the Commercial Companies Law, subject to the approval of the Central Bank of Bahrain. The amendments specifically cover provisions (1), (3), (7), (8), and (9) of the Article. Furthermore, the shareholders approved authorizing the Chairman or his delegate to take all necessary legal and official procedures to implement the approved amendments to the Bank's Memorandum and Articles of Association. No additional EGM items were raised under Article (207) of the Bahrain Commercial Companies Law.

Mr. Zaid Khalid Abdulrahman closed the meeting by offering his sincere appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, whose visionary leadership continues to shape a strong and resilient financial sector in the Kingdom.

The Chairman extended his gratitude to the members of the Sharia'a Supervisory Board for their invaluable guidance, and to BisB's shareholders and customers for the confidence they place in the Bank year after year. He also acknowledged the Board of Directors, Executive Management, and the wider BisB team, whose commitment and professionalism remain the foundation of the Bank's continued progress.



Motorcity Bahrain achieves 3rd place globally in Jetour International Service System Evaluation 2025

Manama

Motorcity, the authorized dealer of Jetour in the Kingdom of Bahrain, secured 3rd Place globally in the Jetour International Service System Evaluation 2025. The award was presented during a visit to Motorcity Service by Marcus, Vice President (International) of

Jetour, together with senior officials from Jetour International. The achievement is an international recognition that highlights aftersales performance across markets outside China. The results are based on Jetour's global service evaluation framework, which measures international dealers against a range of

criteria, including customer satisfaction, adherence to service standards, technical capability, aftersales support, spare parts and warranty management, and overall operational efficiency. Chief Strategic Officer, Ghasan Friewat said: "This international recognition reinforces our long-term strategy of

building sustainable excellence across both sales and aftersales operations, in alignment with Jetour's global standards and vision. It reflects the strength of our partnership with Jetour and our continued focus on customer trust."

Head of Service, Padmanab-

han Narayanan said: "This recognition reflects our team's unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality service and ensuring an exceptional ownership experience for every Jetour customer. We are proud of our service team's dedication and performance, which have

positioned Bahrain among the top global markets."

Motorcity continues to focus on enhancing technical capabilities, operational processes, and service quality as part of its broader commitment to the automotive market in Bahrain.



شركة البحرين لتصليح السفن والهندسة ش.م.ب.
THE BAHRAIN SHIP REPAIRING AND ENGINEERING COMPANY B.S.C.

Notice

BASREC decides to hold the Annual General Meeting virtually

Bahrain Ship Repairing and Engineering Company B.S.C. (BASREC) announces to its esteemed shareholders that, in light of the prevailing circumstances and in the interest of public safety, it has been decided to hold the Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 26 March 2026 at 10:00 AM (Bahrain Time), remotely via electronic means through the Microsoft Teams platform.

Shareholders may also review the meeting agenda, related documents through the Bahrain Bourse website:

www.bahrainbourse.com

We kindly request our shareholders to follow the following steps to attend the AGM:

- Request to attend the AGM by registering through the following link (the link will be open 2 hours before the scheduled meeting time):
<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/35994420448822?p=SDdEkmVfbcxdpUNhYg>
- Meeting ID: 359 944 204 488 22
- Passcode: Hs9cG3xD
- The attendee must enable video call and camera must be switched on. The attendee will be required to provide their investor number/shareholder number and a valid passport or valid ID card along with a proxy form, if required.

War fuels fears of new oil crisis

AFP | Paris, France

Attacks on oil infrastructure in the Gulf region and soaring oil prices are raising the spectre of a new oil crisis, although economists say we're not quite there just yet.

What is an oil crisis?

An oil shock is generally understood to mean a supply shortage that sparks a sharp rise in oil prices and consequently a negative impact on global economic growth, although there is no single definition.

The world is currently experiencing an energy price shock, but "it may be a bit too early to call it a true oil shock" such as those of 1973 or 1979, Helene Baudchon, deputy chief economist at BNP Paribas, told AFP in an interview.

"Supply constraints today are less severe" than some fifty years ago and remain concentrated around the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of global consumption of oil and liquefied natural gas typically passes.

Member states of the International Energy Agency have also decided to release 400 million barrels from their strategic reserves and the IEA says it is prepared to release more "if necessary."

Philippe Dauba-Pantanacce, global head of geopolitical analysis and senior economist with Standard Chartered Bank, notes that "hydrocarbon supply is much more geographically diverse than it was in the 1970s typically, electricity sources have also expanded with the renewables."

He added that "all of this is not to say that there won't be consequences to the current oil supply shock, but there are many variables to take into consideration. We have revised our average for Brent to \$85.50 for 2026, up from \$70 before."

Additionally, global growth these days is less oil-intensive, requiring "four times less oil to generate one percentage point of GDP than in the 1970s," according to private bank Edmond de Rothschild.

Three oil shocks

- 1973 : On October 16, ten days into an Egyptian and Syrian offensive against Israel, six Gulf region OPEC members hike oil prices by 70 percent, the first time the producers' cartel has

Oil prices climb as fresh strikes target infrastructure

Key figures at around 1340 GMT

West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 1.7% at \$95.08 per barrel
Brent North Sea Crude:	▲ 2.0% at \$102.16 per barrel
New York - Dow:	▲ 0.9% at 46,946.41 points
New York - S&P 500:	▲ 0.7% at 6,742.97
Nasdaq Composite:	▲ 0.7% at 22,517.17
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.9% at 10,411.62
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 1.0% at 8,015.22
Frankfurt - DAX:	▲ 0.8 percent at 23,742.52
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 0.1% at 53,700.39 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▲ 0.1% at 25,868.54 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.9% at 4,049.91 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1538 from \$1.1510 on Monday
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3347 from \$1.3327
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 158.88 yen from 159.14 yen
Euro/pound:	▼ N at 86.43 pence from 86.36 pence



An oil tanker is guided to a berth at a port in Qingdao, in China's eastern Shandong province
London, United Kingdom

Oil prices rose again Tuesday as Iran launched fresh attacks on crude-producing neighbours, while stock markets were higher ahead of key central bank meetings.

Prices rebounded from the previous day's sharp losses, which came after the head of the International Energy Agency said more stockpiles could be tapped if needed.

Equity markets mostly gained after US chip titan Nvidia said it expected to make at least \$1 trillion in revenue through the end of 2027 and several airlines reported better-than-expected revenue in the first quarter, taking some attention away from conflict in the Middle East.

pushed through a price rise without the agreement of oil companies.

OPEC imposes an embargo

The three main US indices opened higher in New York while most major European bourses were also in the green in mid-afternoon trading.

Delta Airlines and American Airline were up almost 5%. Stock markets have shown "resilience", said David Morrison, Senior Market Analyst at Trade Nation, but "there was undoubtedly a cautious tone as investors weighed geopolitical risks and shifting monetary policy expectations."

Earlier in Asia, Hong Kong, Seoul and Taipei closed higher, though Tokyo and Shanghai dipped.

International benchmark Brent North Sea crude and the main US oil contract West Texas Intermediate were both up around 2%.

on Western countries deemed pro-Israel, triggering a price surge and a global oil crisis. In December, the price per barrel

reaches \$11.65, four times higher than in September. The price then quintuples a year later. The consequences for Western countries: higher prices at the pump, an inflationary spiral, recession -- and rising unemployment.

- 1979: The Islamic revolution in Iran and a halt in Iranian exports sees oil spike once more, hitting \$40. In September 1980, the Iran-Iraq war brings further rises.

- 2008 : From mid-2004, barrel prices rise strongly but progressively, against a backdrop of conflict in the Middle East and attacks in Iraq as well as social unrest in several producer states.

In August 2005 a barrel hits \$70 after Hurricane Katrina hits oil industry infrastructure.

In January 2008, prices surpass the symbolic threshold of \$100, then soar again to \$147 in July for what was dubbed the third oil shock, triggered by a combination of factors: strikes in Venezuela, unrest in Nigeria, and the war in Iraq.

That period also brought rising demand from emerging economies. Speculators were also singled out as a contributing factor.

Fears of a new shock

During major geopolitical crises, the spectre of a new oil shock resurfaced, with the price per barrel incorporating a "geopolitical risk premium," to reflect the probability that a conflict will cause a drop in supply. The possibility of such a shock resurfaced after the start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, when the price per barrel surpassed \$100, and after the war in Gaza, following the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

The current war in the Middle East is causing "the most significant disruption" to oil supplies in history, according to the International Energy Agency. The two global benchmarks for crude, Brent and WTI, are hovering around \$100 per barrel, a surge of 40 to 50 percent since the start of the war against Iran which the United States and Israel launched on February 28.

Edmond de Rothschild notes that "there are very few alternatives to the Strait of Hormuz" for regional supplies. Storage capacity in producing countries are also reaching saturation, forcing production cuts.

US Fed expected to keep rates steady as Iran war impact looms



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks to the media

US average gasoline prices have increased around 27 percent since the start of the war

AFP | Washington, United States

The US Federal Reserve opened its two-day meeting yesterday with policymakers expected to keep interest rates unchanged as they digest weak economic data and gauge the economic effects of the Iran war.

The central bank's rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) began its gathering at 10:30 am Eastern time (14:30 GMT), a central bank spokesperson said.

The meeting comes as the Fed battles stubbornly high inflation and weak demand in the US labor market, with its dual mandates potentially at odds with one another.

The US-Israel war on Iran, launched on February 28, is also expected to have major economic implications, with oil prices surging and supply chains disrupted.

Rising oil prices are expected to have knock-on global inflationary effects, including in the United States, where price increases have remained above the Fed's long-term two-percent target for years.

US average gasoline prices have increased around 27 percent since the start of the war, according to the AAA motor club's gauge.

Analysts have also warned of the conflict causing supply chain disruptions and oil shortages that will drag down economic growth.

Central banks tend to ignore the inflation effects of short-term price shocks, but it is unclear how long the war in Iran will drag on.

US households have been battered by years of higher-than-expected inflation after the Covid pandemic.

In January, the Fed's preferred inflation gauge came in at 2.8 percent, with core in-

flation rising by 3.1 percent, its highest level since March 2024.

The US labor market has also shown weakness in recent months, with unemployment ticking up in February due to weak labor demand.

Last week, there was more bad news, with new data showing the US economy grew at a significantly slower pace than initially estimated for the final months of 2025.

The new data and outlook for effects of the Iran war have seen traders change their expectations of the Fed.

Before the war, a rate-cut was expected as soon as the summer, with another possible later in the year.

On Tuesday, CME's Fed-Watch tool showed expectations of just one rate cut by the end of the year, likely coming after September.

Trump has repeatedly insulted and criticized Fed Chair Jerome Powell, and attempted to unseat another Fed Governor.

Last week, a Department of Justice investigation into Powell over cost overruns related to Fed building renovations ran into an obstacle when a federal judge quashed subpoenas in the case.

Powell's term as Fed chair ends in May, making this his penultimate meeting.

Trump has nominated Kevin Warsh to replace him, but he has yet to be confirmed by the Senate.



The Fed cut rates at three consecutive meetings late last year, but they remain above levels that US President Donald Trump has demanded.

Xbox opens 'Starfield' to PlayStation gamers in further blow to exclusivity

AFP | Paris, France

Microsoft subsidiary Bethesda said Tuesday hit space exploration game "Starfield" will appear on rival Sony's PlayStation 5, effectively ending the practice of keeping some releases exclusive to Xbox consoles.

Only available on the latest-generation Xbox machines

and PC since its 2023 release, "Starfield" was developed by the same Bethesda studio as hit series "Fallout" and "The Elder Scrolls".

Bethesda Softworks' parent company ZeniMax Media was bought by Microsoft for \$7.5 billion in 2021.

A similar buyout in late 2023 of "World of Warcraft", "Can-

dy Crush" and "Call of Duty" publisher Activision Blizzard was supposed to stoke purchases of Xbox hardware -- although Microsoft assured gamers that the "Call of Duty" shooter series would remain available on PlayStation.

But slumping sales of the tech giant's Xbox Series X and S, released in 2020, have prompted

Microsoft to change tack since 2024. Some previously exclusive titles have been available more broadly as the company looks to recoup the swelling costs of developing high-end games.

In 2025, Microsoft said that the next instalment in its sci-fi shooter saga "Halo" would also come out on PlayStation, a first for the series. Microsoft -- which

has been selling successive versions of the Xbox for 25 years -- is not giving up on the hardware market.

Its gaming unit this month said it was working on a new console, dubbed "Project Helix". And the group's former AI chief Asha Sharma has taken over the gaming division from previous leader Phil Spencer.

Microsoft has not named a release date for "Project Helix", which Xbox vice-president Jason Ronald said will be capable of playing both PC and Xbox games. The machine will offer "an order of magnitude leap" in graphics capability, Ronald promised, leading to "more realistic, immersive and dynamic worlds for players".

QUOTE OF THE DAY

WAR MAY SOMETIMES BE A NECESSARY EVIL. BUT NO MATTER HOW NECESSARY, IT IS ALWAYS AN EVIL, NEVER A GOOD
— JIMMY CARTER

Hezbollah denies any members in Kuwait after arrest of 16 alleged affiliates

Beirut, Lebanon

Hezbollah on Tuesday denied it had any members in Kuwait a day after the Gulf country announced the arrest of 14 Kuwaitis and two Lebanese nationals allegedly affiliated with the group over a “sabotage plot”.

“Hezbollah categorically denies the allegations and accusations issued by the Kuwaiti interior ministry,” the Iran-backed Lebanese militant group said in a statement, calling the allegations “baseless” and adding: “There are no Hezbollah cells, members or networks in Kuwait.”

Tanker struck by ‘unknown projectile’ near Oman: UK maritime agency

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

An “unknown projectile” struck a tanker off the coast of Oman, a UK maritime agency said Tuesday, noting there were no reported injuries.

“A Tanker has reported being struck by an unknown projectile whilst at anchor,” UK Maritime Trade Operations said in a post on X.

“Minor structural damage reported. No injuries to crew.”



Indian vessel 'Nanda Devi' carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) arrives at Vadinar Port in the Jamnagar district of Gujarat state yesterday after Iran allowed it to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, a key energy corridor that remains disrupted by the Middle East war. Indian-flagged tankers 'Shivalik' and 'Nanda Devi', carrying around 92,700 metric tonnes of LPG, had reached ports in Gujarat state, marking a rare exception in commercial passage through the chokepoint.

UAE's oil industrial zone of Fujairah was also hit yesterday, sparking a fire but causing no injuries

Iraq seeks Hormuz passage

Iraq said it was in contact with Iran to try to arrange passage for some of its oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz.

“Communications are underway with the relevant authorities to authorise the passage of certain oil tankers to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, in order that we can resume our exports,” Oil Minister Hayan Abdel Ghani told local TV station al-Sharqiya

One killed in Abu Dhabi

Falling debris from a missile intercept killed one person in the Emirati capital of Abu Dhabi and injured two medical staff in Kuwait, authorities said.

Qatar said it had intercepted a missile attack after an AFP journalist reported hearing several explosions in Doha.

In Dubai, an AFP journalist heard three explosions after authorities warned residents of United Arab Emirates’ most populous city to “immediately seek a safe place” over “potential missile threats”.

Oil prices jump

The price of oil jumped three percent amid new Iranian attacks in the Middle East war and as several countries pushed back against US President Donald Trump’s demand that they help secure the key Strait of Hormuz.

At around 1115 GMT, international benchmark Brent crude was at \$103.18 a barrel while West Texas Intermediate was at \$96.36.

Israel says Larijani killed

● Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said Larijani was “eliminated last night”

● Larijani, 68, has been described as a “true insider” in Iran

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Israel said Tuesday it had killed Iran’s powerful national security chief, Ali Larijani, in what would be a huge blow to the Islamic republic more than two weeks into the war engulfing the Middle East.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said Larijani was “eliminated last night”, although this has not been confirmed by Iran.

It comes less than three weeks after US-Israeli strikes on February 28 killed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s supreme leader since 1989, triggering a regional war with global repercussions.

Larijani, 68, has been described as a “true insider” in Iran, close to the late ayatollah and central to the republic’s nuclear policy and strategic diplomacy over decades.

After the war broke out, he

became even more powerful. While the new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, has not been seen in public since he was appointed to replace his slain father, Larijani was seen walking with crowds at a pro-government rally last week in Tehran.

The reported assassination comes as strikes shook countries across the Middle East on Tuesday, from Gulf nations to Iraq, Lebanon and Iran.

An AFP reporter had earlier Tuesday reported blasts in Tehran, after a night of heavy bombardment mixed with thunder and rain.

Targeting leaders

Israel also said Tuesday it had killed Gholamreza Soleimani, head of the Basij paramilitary force of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, in a strike on Monday in Tehran.

And it said it had targeted Akram al-Ajouri, head of the military wing of the group Palestinian Islamic Jihad, in a strike in Iran, though he was not confirmed dead.

Israel has since the October 7, 2023, attacks by Hamas pursued what analysts have described as a policy of decapitation, targeting the leaders of its enemies, including Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah in Lebanon, as well as top leaders in Gaza.

Larijani’s accounts post note as Israel says killed him

Tehran, Iran

The official social media profiles of Iran’s security chief Ali Larijani posted a handwritten note on Tuesday, shortly after Israel said it had killed him.

Tehran has not confirmed Larijani’s death, nor did the post address the claim.

The social media post was a tribute to the 84 Iranian sailors who were killed when their frigate was sunk by a US submarine in the Indian

Ocean earlier this month.

The note, which did not include the date it was written, was published on Larijani’s accounts on X and Telegram.

“The martyrdom of the brave men of the Navy of the Army of the Islamic Republic aboard the Dena is part of the sacrifices of the valiant nation that has emerged at this juncture of struggle against international oppressors,” said Larijani’s note, which was written in black ink.

The whereabouts of Iran’s new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, is the subject of much speculation, and US President Donald Trump said Monday that “we don’t know... if he’s dead or not”.



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli air strike that targeted an area in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital Beirut

Senior US counterterrorism official resigns to protest Iran war

AFP | Washington, United States

A senior US counterterrorism official resigned on Tuesday to protest the US-Israeli war against Iran and said the Islamic Republic posed no imminent threat to the United States.

“I cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran,” Joseph Kent, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), said in his resignation letter to President Donald Trump.

Kent -- a former member of the Green Beret special forces who served multiple combat tours -- said “Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby.”

Kent, 45, who was appointed to head the NCTC by Trump, is the first senior US official to resign from his administration to protest the war against Iran.

Kent’s wife, Shannon, also served in the US military and was killed in a

suicide bombing in Syria in 2019.

“As a veteran who deployed to combat 11 times and as a Gold Star husband who lost my beloved wife Shannon in a war manufactured by Israel, I cannot support sending the next generation off to fight and die in a war that serves no benefit to the American people nor justifies the cost of American lives,” Kent wrote. As head of the Virginia-based NCTC, Kent worked under Tulsi Gabbard, the director of national intelligence, analyzing and coordinating the US response to terrorist threats and serving as the principal counterterrorism adviser to the president.

“Until June of 2025, you understood that the wars in the Middle East were a trap that robbed America of the precious lives of our patriots and depleted the wealth and prosperity of our nation,” Kent said in his letter to Trump, which he posted on X.

“Early in this administration, high-ranking Is-

raeli officials and influential members of the American media deployed a misinformation campaign that wholly undermined your America First platform and sowed pro-war sentiments to encourage a war with Iran,” he said.

“This echo chamber was used to deceive you into believing that Iran posed an imminent threat to the United States, and that should you strike now, there was a clear path to a swift victory,” he said. “This was a lie and is the same tactic the Israelis used to draw us into the disastrous Iraq war that cost our nation the lives of thousands of our best men and women,” Kent said.

“I cannot support sending the next generation off to fight and die in a war that serves no benefit to the American people nor justifies the cost of American lives,” he added.

After leaving the US Army, Kent served as a paramilitary officer in the Central Intelligence Agency. He ran twice unsuccessfully -- in 2022 and 2024 -- as a Trump-endorsed Republican for a seat in the US House of Representatives from Washington state.



1123

First Council of the Lateran (9th ecumenical council) opens in Rome, agreements of the Concordat of Worms are ratified

1314

Jacques de Molay, the 23rd and last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, is burned at the stake by King Philip IV of France



1890

German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck resigns after 19 years after a disagreement with German Emperor Wilhelm II

1922

British magistrates in India sentence Mahatma Gandhi to six years imprisonment for disobedience



Firefighters work at the site of an Israeli air strike near the airport in Beirut



Qatar's Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani (R) meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah II, at the Diwan in Doha.

Iran has fired more than 1,900 missiles and drones at the UAE, more than any others targeted

Trump admits Iran shocked him

Trump on Monday admitted he was "shocked" at Iran's response to the US-Israel attacks, saying: "They weren't supposed to go after all these other countries in the Middle East. Those missiles were set to go after them. "So, they hit Qatar, Saudi

So, they hit Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait. Nobody expected that. We were shocked

TRUMP

Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait. Nobody expected that. We

were shocked." Lebanon was drawn into the war when Tehran-backed Hezbollah militants struck Israel over Khamenei's killing.

The war is also spreading to Iraq, which has long been a proxy battleground between the United States and Iran, but

has sought to avoid taking sides. A drone and

rocket attack target-

ed the US embassy in Baghdad early yesterday, while a strike killed four people at a house reportedly hosting Iranian advisors, security officials said.



Resignation of US intel official over Iran 'good thing': Trump

Washington, United States

A senior US counterterrorism official who resigned to protest the Iran war was "very weak on security" and it's a "good thing" that he stepped down, President Donald Trump said Tuesday.

Joseph Kent, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), resigned on Tuesday saying he "cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran." "I always thought he was weak on security, very weak on security," the president told reporters in the Oval Office. He said that when he saw Kent's resignation statement "I realized that it's a good thing that he's out."

Falling debris from missile interceptions killed one person on Tuesday in the Emirati capital of Abu Dhabi and injured two medical staff in Kuwait, authorities said, as Iran pressed its attacks against Gulf countries.

In the UAE capital, debris fell in the Bani Yas area "following the interception of a ballistic missile by air defences", the Abu Dhabi Media Office said on X.

Pakistan's embassy there later identified the victim as a Pakistani national, saying it was "saddened by the tragic loss".

The day before, a Palestinian was killed on the edge of the city when a missile hit his car.

As well as hitting ports, airports, residential buildings, hotels and military sites around the region, Iran has also struck energy facilities across the hydrocarbon-rich Gulf.

On the east coast of the UAE, the oil industrial zone of Fujairah was hit on Tuesday morning, sparking a fire but causing no injuries, local authorities said.

It was the second day in a row that the site was hit, with a source telling AFP on Mon-



A handout satellite image from Landsat-8/9, made available by the US Geological Survey, shows smoke billowing from the Mina Petroleum facility at Salalah Port in Oman

day that oil storage loading had been shut down by an attack.

In Kuwait, two medical staff were injured when shrapnel fell on an emergency medical centre where they were working, the health ministry said.

Two barrages of missiles were also launched at Qatar on Tuesday, with the Gulf state's defence ministry saying it had intercepted the projectiles in two separate statements.

After the first salvo, the tiny, gas-rich country's civil defence said it was dealing with a minor fire in an industrial area following the interception, with no injuries reported.

In nearby Dubai, an AFP journalist heard three explosions after a mobile phone alert warned residents of the Emirates' most populous city to "immediately seek a safe place" due to "potential missile threats".

China offers help

China said it will provide humanitarian assistance to Middle Eastern countries, including Iran and Lebanon.

"China has decided to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to Iran, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. It is hoped this will help alleviate the humanitarian plight faced by the local populations," foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a press conference.

US embassy attacked

A drone and rocket attack targeted the US embassy in Baghdad early Tuesday, while a strike killed four people at a house reportedly hosting Iranian advisors, security officials said. Black smoke was seen rising from the embassy compound after the attack.

British Airways halts some Middle East routes until June

London, United Kingdom

British Airways said it has cancelled flights to and from several destinations in the Middle East until June as war in the region disrupts the global aviation industry.

The airline has cancelled

flights to Amman, Bahrain, Dubai, and Tel Aviv through 31 May, it said in a statement shared with AFP on Tuesday.

Flights to Doha have also been suspended until 30 April, with the airline operating a "limited schedule" until 31 May. "Due to the continuing un-

certainty of the situation in the Middle East and airspace instability... we've extended the temporary reduction in our flying schedule in the region," the airline said in a statement.

Routes to Riyadh and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia will continue to operate, while its flights to Abu

Dhabi will resume on October 25, as previously announced.

Global airlines have been hit by the effects of the war in the Middle East, as fuel prices soar and customers reassess their travel plans.

While the region's

airlines like Qatar Airways, Emirates and Etihad have been hit the hardest, most major international carriers have also been affected, as they operate flights both to and through the Gulf region.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Such a pleasure to see UN Messenger of Peace @Malala again last week. During these troubled times, I'm especially grateful for her tireless advocacy for women and girls around the world — including in Afghanistan, where girls are banned from secondary school and women and girls have been systematically erased from public life. At a moment of growing setbacks in gender equality, her voice and determination are needed more than ever.

@antonioguerres

02



Good meeting with @DrSJaishankar today. At the EU-India Summit in January, we concluded our Free Trade Agreement — the mother of all deals — and signed a Security and Defence Partnership. Now we are focused on efficient implementation, to deliver for the people of Europe and India as soon as possible. We also discussed developments in the Middle East and in Ukraine. De-escalation, stability and energy security are our shared objectives.

@vonderleyen

03



An upsurge in hostilities between #Afghanistan and #Pakistan has resulted in at least 6 health facilities reportedly being impacted in Afghanistan since late February. In addition, a reported overnight strike on the Omid Drug Rehabilitation Facility in Kabul, managed by the Ministry of Interior, killed more than 400 people, and injured at least 250, who were being treated for substance use disorders.

@DrTedros

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

EU to help reopen blocked oil pipeline in Ukraine

Brussels, Belgium

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen said yesterday the bloc will help reopen a damaged pipeline that pumps Russian oil through Ukraine to Hungary -- after Budapest accused Kyiv of stalling on repairs in an escalating row. Tensions have ratcheted up between the neighbours over the pipeline, with Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban invoking the issue to block a vital 90-billion-euro (\$104-billion) loan to Kyiv as well as a fresh round of sanctions on Russia.

Writing to President Volodymyr Zelensky, von der Leyen and European Council head Antonio Costa voiced hope the pipeline's "rapid repair" would allow the bloc to move forward "in a timely manner" with both the EU loan and sanctions package. "The EU has offered Ukraine technical support and funding. The Ukrainians have welcomed and accepted this offer," she said in a statement, released along with the letter and Zelensky's reply.

"European experts are available immediately," she said. Landlocked Hungary and Slovakia have accused Ukraine of deliberately delaying reopening the Druzhba pipeline, which Kyiv says was damaged by Russian strikes in January.

Ukraine had meanwhile been resisting the offer of EU help to get oil flowing again -- with Zelensky calling it "blackmail" to link the pipeline issue with support for its war effort.

But the letters published Tuesday showed the Ukrainian leader relenting, as the EU dialed up the pressure. Zelensky told the EU chiefs he accepted the "necessary technical support and funding to be able to conclude the repair work" on the pipeline, and would invite the chief of Ukraine's state oil and gas firm Naftogaz to "take this forward" with the EU.

Israel threatens of Gaza-level destruction in Lebanon 'unacceptable': UN

Geneva, Switzerland

Threats from Israeli officials to unleash Gaza-level destruction on Lebanon are "wholly unacceptable", the UN said Tuesday, and warned that "deliberately attacking civilians or civilian objects amounts to a war crime".

"Another tragic chapter in Lebanon's history is being written," United Nations rights office spokesman Thameen Al-Kheetan told reporters in Geneva.

He said the situation was already "catastrophic", voicing alarm at comments from Israeli officials.

US does 'not need' help from allies on Iran, Trump says

● **Trump accuses NATO of 'foolish mistake' over Strait of Hormuz**

● **Trump says 'we no longer need' help to reopen Strait of Hormuz**

● **Trump says Britain's Starmer made 'big mistake' not supporting US in Iran**

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump said Tuesday that US forces "no longer need" military help in the Iran war, after his calls for assistance from allies to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to oil traffic were largely

rebuffed.

The American president has spent recent days griping about how world powers have so far declined to send warships to escort tankers through the narrow waterway in and out of the Gulf and key to the transit of crude.

With the war in its third week, Trump has repeatedly stressed that US and Israeli air strikes have decimated Iran's leadership, military facilities, and weapons manufacturing capacity.

"The United States has been informed by most of our NATO 'Allies' that they don't want to get involved with our Military Operation against the Terrorist Regime of Iran, in the Middle East," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform.

"Because of the fact that we have had such Military Success, we no longer 'need,' or desire,

the NATO Countries' assistance

-- WE NEVER DID! Likewise, Japan, Australia, or South Korea," Trump said, adding: "WE DO NOT NEED THE HELP OF ANYONE!"

Speaking of allies who have rejected his call for assistance, the 79-year-old Republican said he is "not surprised by their action, however, because I always considered NATO, where we spend Hundreds of Billions of Dollars per year protecting these same Countries, to be a one way

street."

The US-Israeli war on Iran has expanded dramatically across the Middle East, with Iran targeting the energy facilities of its

crude-producing neighbors.

Tehran has also attacked and threatened tankers transiting the Strait of Hormuz, all but closing the vital waterway through which one fifth of global crude oil passes.

French President Emmanuel Macron insisted Tuesday that his country would not participate in operations to open the Strait of Hormuz given the current context of air strikes and other military dangers, but once the situation becomes "calmer" it could participate in an "escort system" alongside other nations.

Britain has also waved off Washington's request for assistance. But Trump on Monday suggested Paris and London would lend a hand to the United States in the operation, and said several other countries -- without naming them -- had responded favorably to his call.



France ready to join Hormuz ship escorts once situation 'calmer'

AFP | Paris, France

France is ready to help escort ships through the Strait of Hormuz but only once the situation has become "calmer", said President Emmanuel Macron yesterday.

His comments follow US President Donald Trump's demand that allies help secure the waterway effectively shut by Iran in response to the war launched by the United States and Israel on February 28.

Global oil prices have surged by 40 to

50 percent since Iran started attacking shipping in the critical waterway and launched waves of missile and drone strikes across the Gulf. "We are not a party to the conflict and therefore France will never take part in operations to open or liberate the Strait of Hormuz in the current context," Macron said.

"However, we are convinced that once the situation becomes calmer... we are ready, alongside other nations, to take responsibility for an escort system."



New particle discovered by Large Hadron Collider

Paris, France

The Large Hadron Collider has discovered a new particle, the 80th identified so far by the world's most powerful particle smasher, Europe's CERN physics laboratory announced Tuesday.

The new particle has been named "Xi-cc-plus". Scientists hope the particle -- which is similar to a proton but four times heavier -- will reveal more about the strange behaviour of quantum mechanics.

All the matter around us -- including the protons and neutrons that make up the nucleus of atoms -- are made of baryons.

These common particles are composed of three quarks,



A man rides his bicycle along the beam line of the Large Hadron Collider which are fundamental building blocks of matter.

Quarks come in six "flavours": up, down, charm, strange, top and bottom. Each has varying mass, electric charge and quantum properties.

In theory, there could be many different types of baryons that mix these flavours

-- however most are extremely difficult to observe.

To chase them down, the Large Hadron Collider sends particles whizzing around an underground ring at phenomenal speeds until they smash into each other.

This gives scientists a brief chance to measure how the more stable elements decay, then deduce the properties of the original particle.

The newly discovered "Xi-cc-plus" contains two "charm" quarks and one "down" quark.

Normal protons have two "up" quarks and one "down" quark. Because the new particle has two heavier "charm" quarks instead of "up" ones, it has a much greater mass.

Seven foreigners arrested in India after allegedly training Myanmar rebels: reports

Myanmar descended into civil war after a junta seized power in a 2021 coup

● **The Ukrainian foreign ministry confirmed Tuesday its citizens were detained by India**

● **The United States embassy in New Delhi said in a statement Tuesday they were aware of the matter**

AFP | New Delhi, India

Indian investigators have arrested seven foreigners, including six Ukrainians and an American, on suspicion of illegally crossing into neighbouring Myanmar to train armed militia groups, the public radio broadcaster reported yesterday.

Myanmar descended into civil war after a junta seized power in a 2021 coup, with pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic-minority armed groups fighting for control of large parts of the country.

India has long been suspicious of certain Myanmar factions that have the same ethnicity as populations on the Indian side of the border, fearing a spillover of violence and unrest.

On Monday, a closed court in New Delhi remanded the seven foreign nationals in custody for 11 days of interrogation after they allegedly illegally entered sensitive Mizoram state without an official permit, All India Radio (AIR) reported.

The seven then allegedly passed from Mizoram into neighbouring Myanmar, where they were "training ethnic war groups... associated with insur-

gent groups in India", according to AIR.

They are also suspected to have illegally transported a "huge consignment of drones from Europe" into India for use in Myanmar, AIR said, without specifying the type of drones or their countries of origin.

After they returned to India, officials from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested the Ukrainians in the cities of Delhi and Lucknow, and the American in Kolkata, the report said.

The Indian Express newspaper reported that they had been charged with conspiring to commit terrorist acts against the Indian state, a crime that carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Multiple calls by AFP to the NIA spokesman went unanswered on Tuesday.

The Ukrainian foreign ministry confirmed Tuesday its citizens were detained by India on March 13 and requested the country's authorities to provide "unimpeded consular access" to them.

"As of now, there are no proven facts confirming the involvement of the aforementioned Ukrainian citizens in illegal activities on the territory of India or Myanmar," it said in a statement.

"The embassy is in contact with other relevant Indian authorities to clarify all circumstances and reasons for the detention," it added.

The United States embassy in New Delhi said in a statement Tuesday they were aware of the matter but "cannot comment on cases involving U.S. citizens" for privacy reasons.

Mizoram's chief minister

claimed last year that "thousands" of Western mercenaries had passed through the state on the way to Myanmar, but the assertion is hard to verify.



India is building a 1,643-kilometre (1,020-mile) fence along its porous border with Myanmar, which runs through remote jungles and snow-capped Himalayan peaks.

Afghan govt says 'around 400' killed in Pakistani strike on Kabul rehab clinic

Hundreds more were said to have been wounded at the facility

● Interior ministry spokesman Abdul Mateen Qani gave a toll of "408 killed and 265 wounded"

● Crowds gathered outside as family members sought news of their loved ones

● The United Nations mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on Tuesday called for an "immediate ceasefire" **AFP** | Kabul, Afghanistan

The Afghan government said yesterday that about 400 people were killed in a Pakistani air strike on a drug rehabilitation centre in the capital, Kabul, in the deadliest attack in the recent violence between the two neighbours.

Hundreds more were said to have been wounded at the facility, which was hit on Monday night, flattening buildings used to treat people from across the country for addictions to marijuana, amphetamines and other narcotics.

There was no immediate independent verification of the toll but AFP reporters saw at least 30 bodies taken from the site in the chaotic and smouldering aftermath of the attack on Monday night.

They then saw more than 65 removed on Tuesday as rescuers picked through the rubble in the search for victims and survivors.

"The toll is not final as the rescue operation is still going on but we have around 400 martyrs and more than 200 wounded," said health ministry spokesman Sharafat Zaman, calling the strike "against the Geneva Convention and all international laws".

Interior ministry spokesman Abdul Mateen Qani gave a toll of "408 killed and 265 wounded" at the same briefing.

The Italian NGO Emergency said soon after the strike that it received three bodies at its hospital in Kabul and was treating



Afghan firefighters douse flames at the site after Pakistani airstrikes hit the Secondary Rehabilitation Services Centre in Kabul



Taliban security personnel inspect the site after Pakistani airstrikes hit the Secondary Rehabilitation Services Centre in Kabul

27 wounded but expected the toll to be much higher.

In Geneva, UN rights office spokesman Thameen Al-Kheetan called for a swift, independent and transparent investigation into the strike, with those responsible "held to account in line with international standards".

But Pakistan's Information

Minister Attaullah Tarar said Taliban government claims that Pakistan deliberately targeted the clinic were "entirely baseless".

"No hospital, no drug rehabilitation centre, and no civilian facility was targeted," he wrote on X.

"The targets were military and terrorist infrastructure, includ-

ing ammunition and technical equipment storage sites and other installations linked to hostile activity against Pakistan."

The two sides have been in conflict for months, with Islamabad accusing its neighbour of harbouring Islamist extremists who have mounted deadly cross-border attacks on its territory.



Coffins carrying the victims' bodies arrive in ambulances as Afghans wait for their deceased relatives at the site after Pakistani airstrikes hit the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital in Kabul,

Search for survivors

Chairs, blankets, pieces of hospital beds and human remains could be seen in the blackened ruins of the rehabilitation centre as dawn broke.

Crowds gathered outside as family members sought news of their loved ones, as rescuers picked through the rubble nearby.

Habibullah Kabulbai, 55, arrived at the centre on Monday night, hoping to find his brother, Nawroz, who was admitted five days ago.

"I can't find him," he said, weeping. "What should we do? I have no words... We are helpless. This has not only happened to me but the whole of Afghanistan."

Monday evening's attack triggered panic in Kabul, sending people running for cover as anti-aircraft guns fired back not long after they had broken their daily Ramadan fast.

"I heard the sound of the jet patrolling," Omid Stanikzai, 31, a security guard at the drug treatment centre, told AFP.

"There were military units all around us. When these military units fired on the jet, the jet dropped bombs and a fire broke out."

All of the dead and injured were civilians, he added.

Pakistan's Tarar said the six strikes conducted on Monday also hit the eastern border province of Nangarhar, calling them "precise, deliberate, and professional".

'De-escalate'

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, said he was "dismayed" by reports of the air strikes and civilian casualties, and called on both sides to "de-escalate".

The United Nations mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on Tuesday called for an "immediate ceasefire". Between February 26 and Monday before the strike, at least 76 civilians had been killed in Afghanistan due to the hostilities, it added.

India called Monday's strike "a cowardly and unconscionable act of violence" that threatened regional peace and stability.

China said on Monday that its special envoy has spent a week mediating between the two sides and urged an immediate ceasefire.

But South Asia expert Michael Kugelman, from the Atlantic Council international affairs think-tank, said the fighting showed little sign of ending soon, particularly with Gulf states who have previously mediated "bogged down by their own war".

"Pakistan appears intent to keep hitting targets in Afghanistan, and the Taliban determined to retaliate with operations on Pakistani border posts and potentially with asymmetric tactics -- from launching drones to sponsoring militant attacks in wider Pakistan," he told AFP.

"There are no off-ramps in sight."

Tens of millions more in acute hunger if Mideast war drags on: UN

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

An extra 45 million people could face acute hunger if the Mideast war carried on through June, swelling the number worldwide to a "terrible" high, the United Nations warned yesterday.

The war, now in its third week, has killed hundreds and seen Iran launch retaliatory strikes against Israel and Gulf nations, as well as a front opening in Lebanon with Israel battling Hezbollah.

"If the Middle East conflict continues through June, an additional 45 million people could be pushed into acute hunger by



Volunteers prepare sweets for displaced people from southern Lebanon sheltering at a school in the southern coastal city of Sidon

price rises," Carl Skau, the deputy executive director of the UN's World Food Programme, told a press conference in Geneva.

"This would take global hunger levels to an all-time record, and it's a terrible, terrible prospect," he said, with 319 million people -- already an historic high -- currently acutely food insecure.

"Really it is again taking this to a whole other level."

Skau said the WFP was already facing a "perfect storm" before the war erupted on February 28.

"Hunger has never been as severe as now," he said, driven by extreme weather events, con-

flict and pockets of famine being declared.

"At the same time, the resources fell sharply from 2023 and 2024 levels."

Having had to cut staff and streamline operations, "we are basically stretched to the limit", said Skau.

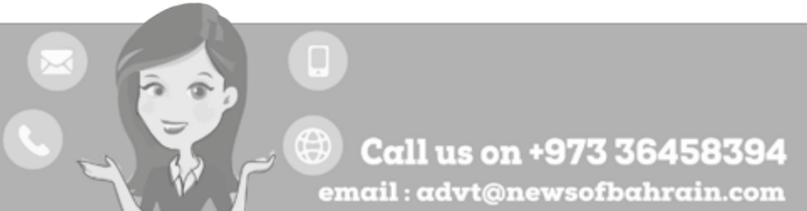
He said the Middle East war was making WFP's operations "much, much more expensive".

Skau said the agency was trying to deal with supply chain disruptions but its operating costs had shot up, notably through soaring fuel prices and longer routes.



The war began on 28 February 2026, when the United States and Israel launched hundreds of coordinated airstrikes on Iran, targeting military sites and leaders

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NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SAFETY OFFICER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

ALMOAYED GROUP W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SYSTEM ANALYST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17828828 or AMMAR@ALMOAYEDICT.COM

AL MANARTAIN COMPANY AND ALI ALSHEAB GROUP WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON ASST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17590097 or ALSHAAB@BATELCO.COMM.BH

AL MANARTAIN COMPANY AND ALI ALSHEAB GROUP WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON ASST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17590097 or ALSHAAB@BATELCO.COMM.BH

AYMEN SWEET WATER AND ICE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39898348 or MUNEERPATLA398@GMAIL.COM

MOHAMMED AHMADI CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER-CLEANING-(HAND & CHEMICAL SOLUTIONS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17268111 or hrd1@macbh.com

KOREAN BAKERY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17587666 or FAISAL@ALIREZA.BH

MOHAMMED AHMADI CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER-CLEANING-(HAND & CHEMICAL SOLUTIONS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17268111 or hrd1@macbh.com

AHMED MOHAMMED JASSIM CONSTRUCTION CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17784584 or HR@AMJASSIM.COM

HAJAR TRADING AND TECHNICAL SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR (SITE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17551377 or SALES@hajartech.com

NATIONAL POULTRY CO. has a vacancy for the occupation of POULTRY FARM WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17631311 or DRIBRAHEEM_SLEEM@YAHOO.COM

SHAFIQ AHMAD MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33150626 or IAMFLYINGJATT@GMAIL.COM

PERFECT TOUCH AUTO CENTER has a vacancy for the occupation of GENERAL MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17610666 or A.HADIALHAYKI@GMAIL.COM

MANSOOR ISA MANSOOR ALHAYKI has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCE).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17728856 or MANSOORPLAZA@HOTMAIL.COM

THE KIDS CLINIC MEDICAL CENTRE has a

vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17715515 or thekidsclinic83@gmail.com

MOHAMMED NOOR BUKHARI RES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of KITCHEN WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17295527 or hisham@bokhari.net

CLICKON GENTS SALOON W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39247500 or AZZAMMANPOWER@YAHOO.COM

THE RISE BUILDERS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77454545 or CFO@REDXINDUSTRIES.COM

PLATINUM SOLUTIONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66616646 or SUNIL_S@ME.COM

BANNU BEEF PULAO RESTAURANT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35506142 or Jamshaidkhan45@yahoo.com

DAR AL SEEF SUITES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34526144 or SOURAVANAND9745@GMAIL.COM

GHULAM MUJTABA AND CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33841044 or GHULAMMUJTABAHUJRA@GMAIL.COM

CHICKEN LAND BROASTED has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34228931 or hz.mosawi@gmail.com

GOURMET BURGER W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36020031 or PRINCEBURGER@GMAIL.COM

Hydrapro For Trading & Services Co.W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17623723 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

KOOHEJI CONTRACTORS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TILES FIXER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17786500 or careers@kcbahrain.com

KOOHEJI CONTRACTORS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TILES FIXER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17786500 or careers@kcbahrain.com

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BURGER EXPRESS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35414424 or M.MNAWAZ829@GMAIL.COM

UNIVERSAL READYMIX CONCRETE has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17620672 or SHUBBAR60@HOTMAIL.COM

ALDOOR EXCAVATION & BUILDING CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877246 or zainabhr@aldoorbh.com

ALDOOR EXCAVATION & BUILDING CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER/OPERATOR(EARTH MOVING MACHINES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877246 or zainabhr@aldoorbh.com

kenz manufacture of wooden furniture umbrella and curtains W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17343976 or sameer@kenzfurnishing.com

BURGER EXPRESS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35414424 or M.MNAWAZ829@GMAIL.COM

ALDOOR EXCAVATION & BUILDING CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877246 or zainabhr@aldoorbh.com

ALDOOR EXCAVATION & BUILDING CON-

TRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17877246 or zainabhr@aldoorbh.com

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

URBASER BAHRAIN CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17534342 or sajjalnath@urbaser.com

MAGIC SHINE CLEANING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17345051 or info@magicshinebh.com

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

ELITE SEEF RESIDENCE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HOST(CONFERENCES/MEETINGS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17313373 or hrd@dadabhaconstruction.com

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANICAL HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

WARDYA SWEETS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER,PASTRY COOK & CONFECTIONER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38776622 or ALAWADHI.EBTESSAM@GMAIL.COM

JAMILA AKHTAR CONTRACTING has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17346157 or jac.servicesbh@gmail.com

ALFOOM STATIONERY & GENERAL TRADE has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER-EDGE BUNCHER-(BOOK BINDING), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39466237 or ABUAHMED41@HOTMAIL.COM

amina aljassim design has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937545 or Jason.khobar@gmail.com

Newtech Contrating Co. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17410931 or muhammadashaq976@gmail.com

BOLAY MIX CONSULTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 32107003 or LEILADULAY@GMAIL.COM

TH COFFEE INTERNATIONAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COFFEE SERVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33530495 or Fatima.Almosawi@timhortonsme.com

TH COFFEE INTERNATIONAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COFFEE SERVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17564451 or Fatima.Almosawi@timhortonsme.com

ALEXANDRIA DECORATION BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34405373 or ELNOOR2020@GMAIL.COM

CORE PLUS CONSULTANTS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36941285 or UMER.FAROOQ.CH@OUTLOOK.COM

A - KARIM ALJAHROMI CONTRACTING COMPANY WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17831000 or akjcont@gmail.com

A - KARIM ALJAHROMI CONTRACTING COMPANY WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17831000 or akjcont@gmail.com

A - KARIM ALJAHROMI CONTRACTING COMPANY WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of EMPLOYEE(OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17831000 or akjcont@gmail.com

AHMED ISA CONTRACTING CONSTRUCTION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17552234 or AECONT@HOTMAIL.COM

BAHRAINI TOURISM COMPANY - CROWNE PLAZA BAHRAIN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified ap-

plicants can contact 17746318 or Hassan.Ali@crowneplazabahrain.com

YUSUF ALMEBAD SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34449104 or SANCTUARYMEDIA19@GMAIL.COM

YOUSIF AL-ZAYANI TRADING & CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17224381 or ZAYNICO@BATELCO.COM.BH

AL HILAL HOSPITAL COMPANY - BSC (CLOSED) has a vacancy for the occupation of SPECIALISED DOCTOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17344700 or HRD@ALHILALHEALTHCARE.COM

ALMASHFA MEDICAL CENTER has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSULTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39600979 or ZUHAIRALHADDAR@GMAIL.COM

RAMEE PALACE HOTEL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17811688 or hrs.bh@rameehotels.com

ROSHAN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36299838 or ROSHANITSOLUTIONS.BH@GMAIL.COM

MOHAMMED HUSAIN ALI QANBER CAR SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER (CAR MECHANICAL WORKSHOP), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39862147 or SULINDERSINGH25@YAHOO.IN

NAVEED FOOD TRANSPORTATION SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(MOTOR-CYCLE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34352692 or BILALHANIF96014@GMAIL.COM

DOCTOR MOBILES ACCESSORIES has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33344254 or HAS20075AM@HOTMAIL.COM

FLORA CONTRACTING MAINTENANCE SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANICAL FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17623882 or accounts@florabh.com

HOTERS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17745060 or HR@NEWVISIONGRP.COM

BIRYANI BUNGALOW RESTAURANT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17533293 or SALEHREDHA@GMAIL.COM

AL THAMAN CAFETERIA has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36446633 or ALAUZDAYI@HOTMAIL.COM

Gold Caesar Salon has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIR DRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39819854 or BAHRAINE70@GMAIL.COM

AHMED OMAR TRADING & CONTRACTING EST.W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17258545 or admin@ahmedomer.com

BOLAN TOWER CONTRACTING has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17000490 or bolanbh@gmail.com

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANICAL HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of RIGGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

A.J CONTRACTING & MANAGEMENT SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17672088 or JEHANGIR.BH@GMAIL.COM

Classifieds

VACANCIES AVAILABLE CONTINUED

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING COMPANY W.L.L. CLEANTEC has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36636640 or HAN-ANKHALAF84@GMAIL.COM

ANAYA SERVICES BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(PAINT FINISHER), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39034941 or AMIRIKRAM121@GMAIL.COM

TREVI MARKETING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36880843 or E.BRA5058@YAHOO.COM

DSV SOLUTIONS B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(MAINTENANCE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17461000 or bincy.varghese@dsv.com

JAHECON W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17244111 or JAHECON@BATELCO.COM.BH

FAST LINE VISA SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35134899 or POINTK88@GMAIL.COM

SOUTHLINK CONTRACTING CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39623401 or AH.PERSONAL.ORG1122@GMAIL.COM

NOZHA BAKERY has a vacancy for the occupation of BREAD BAKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34377370 or ALAMINBINELEYAS@GMAIL.COM

DSV SOLUTIONS B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(MAINTENANCE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17461000 or bincy.varghese@dsv.com

ALADALIYA CONTRACTING ESTABLISHMENT has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39602882 or alsediqqi12@outlook.com

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

Arkan Ithad Development Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(FOOD DISTRIBUTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 13300444 or HROFFICER@AIMSBAHRAIN.COM

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CRANE OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANICAL HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NASS MECHANICAL CONTRACTING COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANICAL HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

NICK SERVICE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33828399 or NOORULISLAM45896@GMAIL.COM

Aqua Global Logistics W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39581236 or mgr.colrrp0q88@aquagloballogistics.com

KIRANDEEP SERVICES W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37476000 or ASADM6607@GMAIL.COM

.SAMI COSMETICS STORE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES AGENT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39041320 or AALBUDR@GMAIL.COM

MEKSELA W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33203116 or monday-tefera@gmail.com

KARAM VILLAGE RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39479667 or sales@lucky4group.com

ALAA INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT FACTORY CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17772900 or Y.RASHOODI@GMAIL.COM

GEO STAR CONSTRUCTION W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33375865 or sameeritaf@gmail.com

HUMAYUN CITY RESTAURANT W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66672489 or SATHARH@GMAIL.COM

HARLEEN SPECIALIZED CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33615001 or BITTUSANDHU530@GMAIL.COM

BLUE SHINE RAINBOW ADVERTISING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of PLUMBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33217233 or naveelshahzad11@gmail.com

Aqua Global Logistics W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39581236 or mgr.colrrp0q88@aquagloballogistics.com

HAZRAT BILAL CARGO CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39674188 or BILALTHORDHAER@GMAIL.COM

MOHAMMAD BILLAL SUPERMARKET W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35987391 or BAHARFARIDMIA83@GMAIL.COM

KAFLAN CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33316767 or kaflanconstruction@gmail.com

AHMED MOHAMMED JASSIM CONSTRUCTION CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17784584 or HR@AMJASSIM.COM

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

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

BEN EID TOWERS CLEANING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250078 or KEHF-2011@HOTMAIL.COM

SIYANA INDUSTRIAL SERVICES & SIAM SCAFFOLDS- SIMPLE COMMANDITE COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of EMPLOYEE(OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17273133 or SIAM7373@BATELCO.COM.BH

ANTONIO INTERIORS AND TRADING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37592227 or fabulfath@hotmail.com

AL NAWAHED FOR SECOND HAND GOODS W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37092324 or SAMIULLAHSEALBADSHAH@GMAIL.COM

SEVENTIES KARAK has a vacancy for the occupation of SANDWICHES MAKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39664667 or KARAK1977.BAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

GOLDEN METAL SCRAPS W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 38441427 or INFOGOLDENMETALSCARP@GMAIL.COM

CLASSIC SUPERSTAR GARAGE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38796959 or SADAM38796959@GMAIL.COM

SMALCO CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33040002 or smalco.bh@hotmail.com

ZAFER CONSTRUCTION W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39339937 or ZAFER2030@YAHOO.COM

MICRO CODING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of COMPUTER SOFTWARE SPECIALIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39779913 or MUSALEM@MICROCENTERENGINEERING.COM

red gulf contracting has a vacancy for the occupation of PLUMBER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17251216 or abual1792008@gmail.com

AL SHALAYEL FOR ACCESSORIES AND CAR SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of CAR WASHER/CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37779723 or ABDULLA.SALMANNAEI@HOTMAIL.COM

COSTPLAN CONSTRUCTION AND ADVERTISING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36725023 or SHAREEFBAPUS@GMAIL.COM

Al Rayah For Safety Items WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17822228 or RASHEED@SECURICORE.BH

Al Rayah For Safety Items WLL has a vacancy

for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17822228 or RASHEED@SECURICORE.BH

ABU MUNEEB MAINTENANCE SERVICE CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33414013 or m.fazain4550@gmail.com

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

RAMSIS ENGINEERING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17830801 or Abbas@ramsisc.com.bh

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

YUSUF BIN AHMED KANOO COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SR TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17728151 or saba.mohd@kanoo.com

AREEBA CLEANING OF BUILDINGS COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34245978 or ARIZONASERVICES33@GMAIL.COM

black lion men hair salon has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIR DRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36685848 or UMNAYEF7812@OUTLOOK.COM

V BEACH RESORT HOTEL W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of TELEPHONE OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 13303353 or ahmadan@addresshotels.com

QLUB TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 32328181 or SUSANN@QLUB.IO

Assure Audit Co Bahraini Partnership has a vacancy for the occupation of SENIOR AUDITOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17532030 or ASSURECONSULT@GMAIL.COM

UM OBSANAAN BOUTIQUE has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN(FABRICS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34005167 or OMERMKR18@GMAIL.COM

ALMADAN NUMISMATICS EVALUATION W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33440279 or SINOALAN180@GMAIL.COM

SOUTH GATE CONSTRUCTION AND CLEANING has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77061717 or YKHALFAN@GMAIL.COM

DELTA STAINLESS STEEL CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17874544 or DELTASAMA2020@GMAIL.COM

AFLATOON FOOD STUFF has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33766966 or lkp-school@yahoo.com

SHIFT ARABIA W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CHIEF EXECUTIVE, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33469696 or MOSHSUZUKI@SHIFTING.JP

NOOR ALJENAN COLD STORES has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38889558 or Reef.1970@hotmail.com

MAQBOOL GOLD DESIGNING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38709116 or tufailirfanmuhammad@gmail.com

SHAFLOOT RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33045970 or NAWAF.ADILL@GMAIL.COM

SNT DAR AL-JAMAL W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of BEAUTICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36077280 or AHMADABDULSAMAD574@GMAIL.COM

FRESH & CLEAN HAIR DRESSING SALON W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIR DRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38173107 or SEEMABIFKHATIB@MAIL.COM

‘Hollywood story’: Russia’s Mr Nobody makes history with Oscar win

A small-town videographer beats Netflix favourites to win an Oscar for his anti-war film



(L-R) Radovan Sibrt, Alzbeta Karaskova, David Borenstein, Pavel Talankin, and Helle Faber, winners of the Best Documentary Feature Film Award for “Mr. Nobody Against Putin”, pose in the press room

● Pavel Talankin wins Best Documentary Feature

● Film beats Netflix favourite “The Perfect Neighbour”

● Film used smuggled footage of school propaganda

● Teamed with US filmmaker David Borenstein

AFP | Paris

Tributes to “Mr. Nobody Against Putin” poured in on Monday after Pavel Talankin, a videographer from a small-town Russian school, won an Oscar for his anti-Kremlin film and cemented his place in Hollywood history.

Netflix documentary “The Perfect Neighbour” had been widely tipped to win the top prize for best documentary feature.

But 35-year-old Talankin’s film -- based on hours of footage he had smuggled out of Russia -- beat the odds and took home the statuette on Sunday.

Some said it was a story worthy of a Hollywood script.

After the start of Moscow’s war against Ukraine, Talankin was instructed by school authorities to film patriotic lessons and morning drills at his secondary school in the Russian industrial town of Karabash.

Seeking to resist the intensity of pro-war propaganda at his school, Talankin eventually teamed up with US filmmaker David Borenstein and fled Russia in 2024, leaving behind his mother, brothers and sisters.

Vitaly Mansky, one of Russia’s top documentary makers, called Mr Nobody a “strong” film, though its win still came as a surprise.

“I think that the figure of Pavel Talankin played a very big role in the Academy members’ decision to vote for this film,”

Ukrainian-born Mansky told AFP. “It truly is a Hollywood story.”

Mansky, a member of the Academy, said Talankin’s sincerity won people over.

“They were moved to vote for the film,” he added.

‘Stop wars now’

Speaking to AFP in the lead-up to the Oscars, Talankin said he and Borenstein were up against strong competitors.

“Netflix, they are giants,” Talankin, who lives in Europe, said this month.

But he also joked he was ready for the fight.

“I’ve already dusted off the shelf for it,” he told AFP in January, referring to the golden statuette that he ended up taking.

Film critic Anton Dolin said he was not surprised by the film’s success.

“The film stands out, just like its protagonist,” he said.

In his acceptance speech Talankin said Russia’s war against Ukraine as well as other wars must stop.

“For four years we have looked at the sky for shooting stars to make a very important wish,” he said in Russian.

“But there are countries where instead of shooting stars, they have shooting bombs and shooting drones.”

“In the name of our future, in the name of all our children, stop all these wars. Now,” he added.



The film’s victory was a major upset against “giant” Netflix productions, fueled by Talankin’s personal story of resisting orders to film patriotic drills at an industrial town’s secondary school before fleeing Russia

“For four years we have looked at the sky for shooting stars to make a very important wish. But there are countries where instead of shooting stars, they have shooting bombs and shooting drones. In the name of our future, in the name of all our children, stop all these wars. Now

PAVEL TALANKIN

‘Did not watch this film’

In his speech, Borenstein appeared to draw parallels between the policies of Vladimir Putin in Russia and Donald Trump in the United States.

“Mr Nobody against Putin is about how you lose your country,” he said.

“What we saw when working with this footage is that you lose it through countless small little acts of complicity.”

The Kremlin has sidestepped questions about the documentary.

“I did not watch this film,” Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday.

Russian state-controlled media either ignored the film’s win or chose their words carefully.

One news outlet said: “A film about President Vladimir Putin received an award at the Oscars.”

The documentary has proved polarising even among anti-Kremlin Russians, and some argued that children were filmed without parental consent.

Alexander Baunov, an international policy expert, said he liked the film, adding he wished he had been part of such a project when he himself was a schoolboy in the Soviet Union.

For many children featured in Talankin’s film their participation in the project, he said, “will remain among the most important events of their lives, if not the most important.”

Laporta's new Barca chapter begins with Newcastle clash

Re-elected president begins new term aiming to restore Barcelona's European dominance

● Laporta targets Champions League success

● Last Champions League title in 2015

● Camp Nou rebuild progresses

AFP | Barcelona

Cava was flowing before the votes had even begun to be counted, and it was spilling everywhere when the counting was done, and long after that too, Barcelona's president reelect Joan Laporta exuberantly shaking a bottle of it in the early hours of Monday morning in his beloved party venue Luz de Gas.

The battle was over, rival election candidate Victor Font dispatched with consummate ease, but now the real fight begins -- with Laporta desperate to propel Barcelona back to the European throne.

Newcastle visit on Wednesday in the Champions League last 16, the tie delicately poised after a 1-1 draw on Tyneside last week, Eddie Howe's men underdogs but posing a clear threat to Laporta's dream as shown by their strong first leg display.

If the last five years were about bringing Barcelona back from the ICU, as he put it after



Barcelona's Brazilian forward #11 Raphinha celebrates scoring (file photo)

inheriting a tower of debt, then the next five must build on the platform they have created.

Should the Catalan giants go one better than last season, when they reached the semi-finals for the first time in six years, and then triumph in Budapest, theoretically Laporta wouldn't even be the president yet.

His second consecutive mandate -- and fourth in total, having led the club from 2003-2010 -- begins in July, with temporary chief Rafa Yuste in charge until then.

"If Yuste wins this Champions League, it will be wonderful, he is like a brother to me," said Laporta.

However the reality is charismatic 63-year-old Laporta will be pulling the strings, as he did on Sunday's election day, zealously greeting famous faces from the club's past who turned up to vote.

Sergio Busquets was one of them, with the defensive midfielder part of three Champions League triumphs with Barcelona, in 2009, 2011 and 2015.

The latter of those was the last time Barca lifted the trophy, over a decade ago, with all-time great Lionel Messi still at the peak of his powers, still wearing Blaugrana colours.

Losing the Argentine, whom he had pledged to keep at the club, just a few months after taking charge in 2021 was a black mark on Laporta's presidency.

There was plenty to criticise, with the return to the club's partially rebuilt Camp Nou home delayed by a year, and registration issues with Dani Olmo's



contract embarrassing the club. Many feared Laporta's decision to activate the 'palancas' -- financial levers -- would send the club to ruin, selling off future television rights and parts of the club for an immediate cash injection.

'Best years of our lives'

However the approach worked, at least in the short term. Laporta and his sporting director Deco bet the house on Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha, and Jules Kounde, trying to power Barca back to the elite, and in time the deals paid off.

Most importantly, the duo turned to Hansi Flick. That was a gamble too, on the former Bayern Munich coach, but Flick's thrilling attacking football en-

tertained fans and has proven successful.

It led the team to a domestic treble last season, and the final four in Europe where they fell short against Inter Milan.

Flick's side were defensively weak, and that still appears to be the case, with Newcastle aiming to get in behind their high line to cause an upset in Catalonia.

However in teenage winger Lamine Yamal and midfielder Pedri Gonzalez, Barca have arguably the best two players in their positions in the world.

"We are going to live the best years of our lives these next five years," pledged Laporta after his victory, a sizable claim considering he also oversaw the arrival of Ronaldinho, the emergence of Messi and Pep Guardiola's treble-winning campaign in 2009.

With Camp Nou now able to house nearly 63,000 fans, and a planned capacity of 105,000, Laporta believes Barca's finances are now in a healthier position to compete with clubs funded by Gulf states, including Saudi Arabian owned Newcastle.

"No one can stop us," added a jubilant Laporta before heading into the Barcelona night, although 11 years of misery in Europe hints the Catalans are sometimes capable of stopping themselves.

The Magpies' visit gives Barca the chance to begin Laporta's new era with a bang, with a Champions League quarter-final place beckoning.

Former tennis world number 39 banned for doping



Australian player turned coach Marinko Matosevic in action (file photo)

AFP | Sydney

Australian tennis player turned coach Marinko Matosevic was slapped with a four-year ban yesterday for breaching anti-doping rules between 2018 and 2020.

The former world number 39, who most recently helped coach current Australian players Chris O'Connell and Jordan Thompson, initially denied all charges.

But he admitted to blood doping in comments shortly before the hearing was scheduled to take place, the International Tennis Integrity Agency

(ITIA) said.

An independent tribunal found he committed five anti-doping rule violations.

They included "use of a prohibited method through blood doping and facilitating another player to blood dope".

He also "provided advice to others on how to avoid positive tests, and use and possession of the prohibited substance clenbuterol".

Clenbuterol, a medication prescribed for treating asthma and other breathing difficulties, is sometimes misused by bodybuilders and athletes as an off-label performance enhancer.

Iran 'negotiating' with FIFA over moving World Cup games to Mexico: embassy

AFP | London

Iran's football federation is "negotiating" with FIFA to relocate the country's first-round matches at the World Cup to Mexico from the United States, citing the conflict in the Middle East, Iran's embassy in Mexico said.

Iran's participation at this summer's finals in the United States, Canada and Mexico has been thrown into doubt since the war began late last month.

"When (US President Donald) Trump has explicitly stated that he cannot ensure the security of the Iranian national team, we will certainly not travel to America," Iranian football chief Mehdi Taj said in remarks posted on the embassy's X account.

"We are currently negotiating with FIFA to hold Iran's matches in the World Cup in Mexico."

Iran are scheduled to face New Zealand and Belgium in Los Angeles, followed by Egypt in Seattle.

The team's base camp for the tournament is currently slated to be located in Tucson, Arizona.



The official World Cup trophy is displayed during its presentation within the FIFA World Cup 2026 Trophy Tour in Mexico

Abolfazl Pasandideh, Iran's ambassador to Mexico, on Monday denounced "the US government's lack of cooperation regarding visa issuance and the provision of logistical support" for the Iranian delegation ahead of the World Cup, in a statement published on the embassy's website.

He added that he had also "suggested to FIFA that Iran's matches be moved from the United States to Mexico."

FIFA did not immediately respond to a request for comment from AFP.

Trump triggered uproar last week after stating that while Iran's football team would be "welcome" in the United States, they should not travel to the tournament "for their own life and safety."

Trump's comments came after FIFA president Gianni Infantino had given assurances that Trump had promised him

When (US President Donald) Trump has explicitly stated that he cannot ensure the security of the Iranian national team, we will certainly not travel to America. We are currently negotiating with FIFA to hold Iran's matches in the World Cup in Mexico

IRANIAN FOOTBALL CHIEF MEHDI TAJ

that the Iranian team would be welcome.

Iran hit back at Trump's comments saying "no one can exclude Iran's national team from the World Cup."

Iran's place at the tournament was thrown into question after the United States and Israel launched a massive offensive against the Islamic Republic, which responded with waves of missiles and drones targeting Israeli territory and American targets across the Middle East.

Al Khaldiya, Muharraq chase Super Cup crown

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Al Khaldiya and Al Muharraq will face off in the 2025-26 Bahrain Super Cup at Khalifa Sports City tonight, with kick-off at 9:30pm. The fixture pits last season's King's Cup winners, Al Khaldiya, against reigning Nasser Bin Hamad Premier League champions Muharraq, making it one of Bahrain's most eagerly anticipated matches of the season.

Al Khaldiya enter the match on the back of a 4-1 league win over Bahrain Club, a result that lifted them to the top of the table. Having also beaten Muharraq in January, the league leaders head into the Super Cup with added confidence. Tunisian coach Lassad Al Chabbi has further strengthened that momentum by guiding the team to this year's King's Cup semi-finals.

Meanwhile, Muharraq, coached by Portuguese Fernando Manuel de Jesus Santos, have been one of the standout sides this season, despite sitting two points off the top. They lead the league in goals scored, have conceded the fewest, and have suffered the least losses, while also boasting top scorer Edimar Ribeiro da Costa with 12 goals. They too reached the King's Cup semi-finals and will be looking to respond after last month's Khalid bin Hamad Cup final defeat to Riffa on penalties.

While both sides arrive in strong form, cup finals often defy the league table, and in one-off matches like the Super Cup, momentum and composure can prove more decisive than season-long statistics.



Action from Al Khaldiya's league win over Muharraq in early January

With that in mind, sources indicate that both teams may include under-21 players in their lineups. Amid a congested schedule and the demands of the Ramadan period, coaches

are balancing squad rotation with the need to remain competitive. This would give young talent a chance in a major final while resting key senior players. The Super Cup also carries

added significance for both teams. Al Khaldiya are chasing a fourth consecutive title, while Muharraq are aiming to return to the winner's circle for the first time since 2018.

Doncic leads Lakers to sixth straight win, Spurs sink Clippers



Luka Doncic soars over Reed Sheppard to make a layup

AFP | Los Angeles

Luka Doncic scored 36 points as the in-form Los Angeles Lakers powered to their sixth straight victory with a 100-92 defeat of the Houston Rockets on Monday.

A crucial showdown between the third and fourth-ranked Western Conference teams ended with the Lakers pulling away in the final minute of the fourth quarter to claim an impressive win on the road.

The victory gives the Lakers (43-25) a valuable cushion over the Rockets (41-26) as they jostle for postseason positions in the West.

Doncic was once again instrumental in dragging the Lakers over the line while a hard-nosed defensive effort kept the Rockets' scoring in check.

LeBron James finished with 18 points and Austin Reaves 15 while Jabari Smith Jr. led Houston's scoring with 22 points.

"We held them to 92 points, which for this team is pretty

awesome. We did a great job defensively," Doncic said.

"We could have done better, but all that matters is that we got the win. We've got to keep this going."

The San Antonio Spurs relied on another balanced offensive display to edge the Los Angeles Clippers 119-115 and cement their grip on second place in the West.

Stephon Castle led the Spurs scorers with 23 points while Victor Wembanyama had 21 points, 13 rebounds and four blocks in another dominant all-round display.

San Antonio have now won 18 of their last 20 games and clawed their way out of a 14-point deficit in the first quarter to take the win.

"They pushed us in the first quarter and sometimes the basketball is not working," Wembanyama said.

"So we had to get nasty a little bit."

San Antonio improved to 50-18 and are firmly in sight of the Oklahoma City Thunder (53-15) at the top of the standings.

Malaysia hit with 3-0 forfeits to send Vietnam to Asian Cup



Vietnam's Chau Ngoc Quang (L) fights for the ball with Malaysia's players

AFP | Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's 2027 Asian Cup hopes were ended yesterday after the country was hit with 3-0 forfeits in two qualifiers for fielding ineligible players, sending Vietnam through instead.

It was the latest and possibly final chapter in a scandal over seven foreign-born players who were later banned for using forged documents to play for Malaysia's national team.

"The defendant fielded ineligible players in the relevant AFC Asian Cup 2027, (Qualifiers Final Round) matches," the Asian Football Confederation said.

The Kuala Lumpur-based AFC also slapped an additional \$50,000 fine on the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM).

The ruling leaves Vietnam with an unassailable six-point lead in qualifying Group F for Saudi Arabia in 2027, leapfrogging the Malaysians at the top.

There is one more round of matches, pitting Vietnam home to Malaysia on March 31 in what is now a dead-rubber.

"Although the match no longer holds decisive significance for the final group standings, it is still expected to be a noteworthy contest," Vietnam's football federation said in a statement.

FIFA launched an investigation into claims that ineligible players featured in a 4-0 Malaysia win over Vietnam in a qualifier in June.

Two of the seven players at the centre of the scandal scored.

Hard-hitting Conway steers New Zealand to victory over South Africa

AFP | Hamilton, New Zealand

Devon Conway blasted a half-century before New Zealand skittled South Africa cheaply to win the second Twenty20 international by 68 runs yesterday and level the five-match series 1-1.

Conway's 60 off 49 balls set the home side up for a competitive 175-6 after being sent in to bat at Hamilton's Seddon Park.

The Proteas lost wickets regularly to be dismissed for 107 off 15.3 overs, with pace bowlers Ben Sears and Lockie Ferguson snaring three wickets each.

South Africa won game one in Mount Maunganui on Sunday by seven wickets.

Both sides are fielding largely second-tier lineups, choosing to rest their first-choice players in the wake of the T20 World Cup.

New Zealand lost the final of the global tournament to hosts India earlier this month, having beaten South Africa in the semi-finals.

Conway produced easily the most important innings of the game, the 34-year-old posting five fours and two sixes.



New Zealand's Devon Conway (L) plays a shot as South Africa's Connor Esterhuizen reacts

The South African-born left-hander played with controlled aggression as wickets fell around him to reach his 13th half-century in the format.

Conway was delighted to contribute after being an unused squad member throughout the World Cup.

"It has been a very quiet couple of months for me, going over

Scorecard

New Zealand 175 for 6 (Conway 60, Clarkson 26*, Mulder 2-14) beat South Africa 107 (Linde 33, Sears 3-14, Ferguson 3-16) by 68 runs

to India and not featuring at the World Cup," he said.

"It's been nice to come back

and play and be able to contribute for the boys and the group."

Josh Clarkson raced to 26 not out at the death while allrounder Wiaan Mulder took 2-14.

Mulder's addition was the only change to South Africa's team from game one, replacing Jordan Hermann, who was ruled out of the remainder of the series with a hamstring injury.

Barca Flick's 'last job' but not yet certain on renewal

German coach says he's happy but needs family talks before extending deal

● Flick intends to retire at Barcelona

● Focus on Newcastle clash

● Laporta keen to extend deal

AFP | Barcelona

Hansi Flick said yesterday that he does not know yet if he will extend his Barcelona contract, but is certain that leading the Catalan giants will be his last job in football.

Recently reelected Barcelona president Joan Laporta said previously that he plans to extend the 61-year-old former Germany and Bayern Munich coach's deal for a further year beyond 2027.

However, Flick said, on the eve of the Champions League last 16 clash against Newcastle, that even though he is enjoying life with the Spanish champions, he will have to consult with his family before extending his stay.

"It's not the right moment (for that), tomorrow is a very important game for us, for the club, for



Barcelona's coach Hansi Flick leads a training session (file photo)

the future," Flick told reporters. "Everyone knows I am really happy here. I have to speak with my family first. We have time to

League semi-finals last season, playing attacking football which the club's fans have enjoyed. "I have no thoughts about go-

ing to another place or (something) like that. No. I'm here, it will be my last club, my last job here, and I'm really happy for that," Flick continued.

Barcelona drew 1-1 at Newcastle in the first leg last week, a match in which they were largely outplayed.

"It will be a tough game tomorrow. They're a physical team, aggressive man-to-man, in transition they are fast players," said Flick.



Despite being only 61 years old and coming off a domestic treble, Hansi Flick explicitly stated that he has "no thoughts about going to another place," effectively making Barcelona his career's final destination



It's not the right moment (for that), tomorrow is a very important game for us, for the club, for the future. Everyone knows I am really happy here. I have to speak with my family first. We have time to speak about that but at the moment, it's not the right moment

HANSI FLICK

"We have to play our perfect game tomorrow and this is important -- we'll try to do this."

Barcelona defender Pau Cubarsi said that he believed his team can put on a much improved showing at home.

"The intensity they had at their stadium was spectacular. We played in the league phase there too," said the 19-year-old centre-back.

"We had a good defensive set-up but lacked fluidity in attack. It will be different. We're at home with the fans supporting us."

Pope says idea England 'weren't fussed' about the Ashes was tough to take

AFP | London

Ollie Pope believes the idea England "weren't fussed" during their woeful Ashes tour of Australia was unfair on the squad but understands why the "misperception" became lodged in the minds of many fans and pundits.

Ben Stokes' tourists went down to a 4-1 series loss to Australia over five Tests in 2025/26, with the troubled campaign still the subject of an England and Wales Cricket Board review.

In addition to their poor on-field performance, concerns about the culture of the England squad emerged during a break in Noosa, an Australian resort, where there were reports of excessive drinking by players.

This was followed by revelations that vice-captain Harry Brook had had an altercation with a nightclub bouncer on the pre-Ashes visit to New Zealand.

Pope, however, insists England's were fully focused on regaining the Ashes and might have been more successful had they cemented an encouraging start to the first Test in Perth.

"Going into that series, there was a lot spoken about



England batsman Ollie Pope in action (file photo)

the preparation of it," Pope told reporters yesterday. "As a team, the misconception might be that we weren't as fussed as it came across."

The 28-year-old, speaking at county side Surrey's media day, added: "The tough thing for everyone in that first game (Test) was the nature of it. Had we won that, and we'd done slightly better on day two, the idea is different.

"Of course we want to be a well-liked team, on and off the pitch, and unfortunately our performance didn't allow that to happen in Australia.

Van de Ven insists it's 'nonsense' to say players don't care about Spurs' plight

AFP | London

Micky van de Ven is adamant it is "nonsense" to suggest Tottenham Hotspur players are indifferent about the threat of relegation from the Premier League.

Spurs are just a point above the bottom three and their season went from bad to worse with a 5-2 loss away to Atletico Madrid last week in the first leg of a last-16 tie in the Champions League.

Spurs did rally with a 1-1 draw at Liverpool on Sunday to provide fresh belief and Van de Ven, criticised for a red card against Crystal Palace earlier this month, has dismissed accusations some players have "checked out" in the battle to beat the top

"The only thing I can say is it's not true," he told reporters yesterday on the eve of the second-leg tie with Atletico.

"It would be strange if a player was in the dressing room now and saying, 'I'm going to leave either way, or I don't focus about the situation because everything that's going to happen, it doesn't affect me', so I think it's just nonsense."

The 24-year-old added: "The other day when we read something about one guy that said



Liverpool's Swedish striker #09 Alexander Isak (R) shoots to score

to everyone that he's probably going to leave and doesn't care about the situation they're in, and then someone reads this and we're just like, how does this come out? People are just making things up.

"It's just frustrating for us as well because it brings so much more trouble as well, because the fans are starting to believe

this. "Trust me all the people involved on the pitch, the staff, the players, everyone, they care so much about the situation we're in right now.

"We just want to turn things around and that's the most important, that's the main focus for everyone.

"I just want to stay fit and turn

things around. Obviously, the last games from my side hasn't been the best and I know that as well.

"It's just most important that I keep showing to everyone that I always give 100 percent to this club. I will always do as long as I play. For me, the most important is that we turn things around right now."