



Oil tank leak in Sitra area under control

TDI | Manama

The Supreme Council for the Environment has announced the successful control of a leak originating from one of the oil tanks owned by Bapco Energies in the Sitra area.

The incident, attributed to a limited technical fault exacerbated by recent adverse weather conditions and heavy rainfall across the Kingdom of Bahrain over the past two days, was promptly addressed to ensure minimal impact on the surrounding environment and community.

Upon detection of the leak, the Supreme Council for the Environment, in collaboration with relevant authorities, swiftly implemented necessary measures. This included the immediate closure of the area surrounding the leak site and the initiation of measures to effectively control and rectify the situation.

Jury selection woes disrupt historical Trump criminal trial

AFP | New York

Two jurors selected for Donald Trump's historic criminal trial were excused yesterday as prosecutors and defense attorneys struggled to fill a panel to sit in judgment of the deeply polarising former US president. Judge Juan Merchan, who is presiding over the blockbuster case in New York, is hoping to find 12 jurors and six alternates by the end of the week and have opening arguments on Monday.

But the proceedings suffered a setback yesterday as two already-chosen jurors were excused - one because she had concerns her identity has been revealed, and the other following doubts about the accuracy of some of his answers during questioning.

100 vessels attacked

AFP | Sanaa

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels said yesterday they have attacked almost 100 vessels in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden in months of strikes that have disrupted global shipping.

Wake-up call

UN chief warns Middle East on brink of 'full-scale regional conflict'

AFP | United Nations

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres yesterday painted a dark picture of the situation in the Middle East, warning that spiraling tensions over the war in Gaza and Iran's attack on Israel could devolve into a "full-scale regional conflict."

Guterres also said Israel's military offensive on Hamas fighters in the Gaza Strip, in retaliation for their unprecedented October 7 attack, had created a "humanitarian hellscape" for civilians trapped in the besieged Palestinian territory.

His speech came hours before a vote in the Security Council on a Palestinian bid for full UN membership - an initiative likely to fail, as the veto-wielding United States, Israel's main ally, has voiced its opposition.

"The Middle East is on a precipice. Recent days have seen a perilous escalation - in words and deeds," Guterres told a high-level Council meeting with several foreign ministers present, including from Jordan and Iran.

"One miscalculation, one miscommunication, one mistake, could lead to the unthinkable

One miscalculation, one miscommunication, one mistake, could lead to the unthinkable - a full-scale regional conflict that would be devastating for all involved

ANTONIO GUTERRES, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

- a full-scale regional conflict that would be devastating for all involved," he said, calling on all parties to exercise "maximum restraint."

"Let me be clear: the risks are spiraling on many fronts. We have a shared responsibility to address those risks and pull the region back from the precipice."

Attack

Iran unleashed a barrage of missiles and drones on Israel over the weekend, after an attack on its consulate in Damascus widely blamed on Israel.

Israeli officials have not said when or where they would retaliate, but the country's military chief has vowed a response.



Guterres speaks during a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East. (AFP)

"It is high time to end the bloody cycle of retaliation," Guterres said. "It is high time to stop."

Guterres again called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, where at least 33,970 people have been killed, according to the health ministry in the Ha-

mas-run territory.

Casualties

Hamas' October 7 attack resulted in the deaths of 1,170 people in southern Israel, mostly civilians, according to official Israeli figures.

Hamas also took about 250

hostages. Israel estimates 129 of them remain in Gaza, including 34 who are presumed dead.

"In Gaza, six and a half months of Israeli military operations have created a humanitarian hellscape," Guterres lamented, calling on Israel to do more to allow aid to flow into the territory.

Fiery fury



Mount Ruang spewing hot lava and smoke as seen from Sitaro, North Sulawesi. This volcano has erupted several times in Indonesia's outermost region overnight, forcing hundreds of people to be evacuated after it spewed lava and a column of smoke more than a mile into the sky. (AFP)

Israeli forces intensify deadly strikes on Gaza

AFP | Jerusalem

Vow

Israel launched more deadly strikes on besieged Gaza yesterday as Western governments unveiled sweeping sanctions against Iran's military drone programme in response to the country's unprecedented attack on its arch enemy Israel.

World powers have been watching nervously since Israel vowed to retaliate against Iran for the weekend assault, with fears soaring that escalating tit-for-tat attacks could push the region towards wider war.

Further stoking tensions, Israel warned yesterday that if Israel struck Iranian atomic sites during its expected retaliation, Tehran would in turn target Israeli "nuclear facilities".

And more than six months into the bloodiest ever Gaza war, the Israeli army said it had bombed dozens of targets in the territory, as Qatar said efforts to broker a truce have stalled.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has vowed to destroy Hamas over its October 7 attack that started the war, has stressed that Israel "reserves the right to protect itself" against Iran.

The Islamic republic last weekend carried out its first ever attack to directly target its regional foe but Israel, backed by its allies, intercepted most of the 300 missiles and drones, and suffered no deaths.

Iran's attack was retaliation for an April 1 air strike, widely blamed on Israel, which levelled its consulate in Damascus and killed seven Revolutionary Guards.

The international community has urged de-escalation since Iran's attack, which came after months of violence involving Israel and Iran-backed groups in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

"The Middle East is on a precipice," UN chief Antonio Guterres warned yesterday.

Bahrain greets Syria on Independence Day

TDI | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, sent cables of congratulations to President Bashar Al Assad of Syria, on his country's Independence Day.

HM King Hamad and HRH Prince Salman wished the president abundant health and to the people of Syria further progress and prosperity.

HM the King and His Royal Highness praised the strong Bahraini-Syrian relations, affirming the keenness to further strengthen ties in various domains.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister sent a similar cable to Prime Minister Hus-



HM the King



HRH Prince Salman



President Al Assad

sein Arnous.

Shura Council Chairman Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh and Council of Representatives Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam also sent cables of congratulations to Hammouda Youssef Sabbagh, Speaker of

the People's Council of Syria.

Al Saleh and Al Musallam sent a similar cable to His Excellency Mohammed Ali Ibrahim, Ambassador of Syria to Bahrain.

They praised the strong Bah-

raini-Syrian relations, wishing Speaker Sabbagh abundant health and the people of Syria further progress and prosperity, and affirmed the Kingdom's keenness to support and enhance parliamentary cooperation.

LMRA takes part in Mideast human trafficking forum

Muscat

The Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) participated in the Fifth session of the Government Forum for Combating Human Trafficking in the Middle East 2024, held in Muscat under the theme "Combating Human Trafficking through Legislation and Work Procedures."

Nibras Taleb, CEO of LMRA and Chairman of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, affirmed that since its inception in 2019, the forum has become a key annual regional platform to review and shape a combined vision for developing innovative solutions with realistic approaches.

He highlighted that the Kingdom's firm stance against the crime of persons trafficking, in all its forms, was underpinned by religious principles, moral culture, and an advanced constitutional, legal, and legislative system. He added that endorsing legislation was not sufficient un-

less it was accompanied by a procedural system capable of enforcing that legislation in practice.

Talib said that Bahrain's efforts to counter trafficking in persons included developing protection mechanisms alongside providing protection and justice to victims and potential victims.

The LMRA CEO emphasised the need to constantly review procedures to ensure their sustainability and effectiveness. He added that there were many challenges that required legislative and procedural action to clamp down on the crime of human trafficking and blocking its supply chains. In this regard, he affirmed the importance of the role of the private sector as a key partner these efforts.

LMRA Deputy CEO for Enforcement and Protection Noora Isa Mubarak participated in a panel discussion in which she outlined the kingdom's efforts to counter trafficking in persons.

New beginnings

80 institutes ready to train pardon recipients; 2,000 job opportunities available

TDI | Manama

The registration procedures have started to provide various opportunities and benefits to unemployed individuals covered by the royal pardon, including study, training, employment, and other programs, as well as financial benefits.

This was announced by Hussein Al Shami, Director of the Employment Department, during a press conference held at the Ministry of Labour.

The event, convened to address directives from His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, during the Cabinet meeting on April 15 aimed to facilitate the reintegration of pardoned individuals into society with much-needed government support. It was attended by key officials, including Captain Jassim Jabr Al-Dosari from the Ministry of Interior.

This step precedes the disbursement of unemployment benefits, which will amount to BD200 for university students and BD150 for non-university students, along with 60% of the last wage for previously employed individuals, up to a maximum of nine months, as per the Unemployment Insurance Law.

Al Shami highlighted the availability of job applications on the Ministry of Labour's website and ongoing coordination with Tamkeen and business owners to facilitate employment opportunities for pardon ben-



The press conference in progress

eficiaries. Wage support will be provided for the first three years, starting with 70% in the first year, 50% in the second year, and 30% in the third year.

Training programs

Dr. Issam Al Alawi, Director of the Workforce Development Department, revealed that more than 80 training institutes are prepared to offer training programs for amnesty recipients, with over 2,000 job vacancies in partnership with the Ministry of Labour.

Responding to queries, Al Alawi emphasised the employer's discretion regarding simultaneous study and work for pardon beneficiaries, mentioning the vocational apprenticeship program in collaboration with Bahrain Polytechnic as an option.

Shaikh Sabah bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Director of the Identity Card and Population Registry, assured prompt processing of identity update requests



Unemployment benefits amount to BD200 for university students and BD150 for non-university students, along with 60% of the last wage for previously employed individuals, up to a maximum of nine months, as per the Unemployment Insurance Law.

through the Information and e-Government Authority's website or headquarters visit.

ID Cards

Starting yesterday, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labour called on the pardoned individuals to update their ID Cards by booking an appointment through the eGovernment National Portal Bahrain.bh.

They are required to attend in person according to their previously scheduled appointments at the ID Card Centre branch in

Isa Town, with a recent personal photo and address certificate.

If applicable, they would receive their ID cards and a "no objection" certificate that will enable them to benefit from the Ministry of Labour's services.

Bearing in mind that the appointments to register in the Insurance against unemployment programme are scheduled between April 20 and 25 via the Ministry of Labour's official website at www.mlsd.gov.bh. If you prefer in-person registration, you can visit the Ministry from April 21 to May 2.

Bahrain-Korea relations



His Excellency Lieutenant General Abdullah bin Hassan Al Nuaimi, Minister of Defence Affairs, received H.E. Heon Sang Koo, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Bahrain. Lieutenant General Al Nuaimi welcomed Ambassador Heon, noting the strong and longstanding Bahraini-Korean relations. The meeting was attended by a number of Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) senior officers and Yi Ju Lee, Deputy Head of the Diplomatic Mission at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea.

Bahrain-UK ties



His Highness Staff Commander Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, yesterday met with the Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Excellency Alastair Long, and the Deputy Commander of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), UK Royal Navy Commodore Mark Anderson CBE, at Riffa Palace. HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman highlighted the historic Bahrain-UK relations which is based on cooperation and strategic partnership across various sectors, notably in military and defence, affirming the importance of furthering relations to meet mutual aspirations.



H.E. Indian Ambassador Vinod K. Jacob speaks at the event

Karnataka State Tourism, ODOP walls inaugurated

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Ambassador of India, His Excellency Shri Vinod K. Jacob, inaugurated the Karnataka State Tourism and One District One Product (ODOP) walls at the Consular hall of the Embassy in presence of members of Karnataka Community living in Bahrain.

These walls highlight touristic attractions as well as exquisite products identified under ODOP scheme, of the state of Karnataka.

Embassy of India, Bahrain has taken 'focus state/union territory' initiative under which touristic and OPOP products of a particular state are being promoted in Bahrain during a period of around one month. Karnat-

taka is the fourth focus state to be featured at the State/Union Territory Wall in the Consular hall, after Rajasthan, Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh.

With Karnataka, the Embassy has taken a step further by engaging diaspora of the focus state/union territory here in Bahrain. Shri Sharath Kumar, a bike rider from Karnataka who is on a Gulf

tour also visited the Embassy.

A short cultural presentation from the members of Kannada Sangha was organized on this occasion. Several ODOP products of Karnataka were exhibited at the Embassy. The ODOP items will be displayed for a month. The ODOP initiative aims to select brand and promote at least one product from each district of the country.

Father wins custody of child after former wife remarries



Image used for illustrative purposes only

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The High Shariat Court has ruled in favour of a father who sought custody of his child after his ex-wife remarried.

The court found that the mother's new marriage constituted a change in circumstances that warranted a modification of the original custody arrangement.

The father, who was not identified in the court documents, had been divorced from the mother for several years. The couple had one child together, who was living with the mother. However, the father alleged that he had recently discovered that his ex-wife had remarried without informing him.

The father argued that the mother's new marriage created a new family environment for the child, and that it was in the child's best interests to live with him.

Stable home

The court agreed, noting that the mother's new husband was not the child's biological father and that the child would benefit from living in a stable home with his father.

The court also considered the father's ability to provide for the child's needs. The father was employed and had a stable income, while the mother was unemployed and relied on government assistance.

The court found that the father was better able to provide for the child's financial needs.

Lifeline for elders

Proposed legislation aims to enhance financial security for retirees

TDT | Manama

A bill, submitted by the Council of Representatives services committee and scheduled for discussion on Tuesday, aims to bolster the financial stability of retirees.

The centerpiece of this legislation is the introduction of a "Financial Security for Pensioners" card.

Holders of this card will be entitled to a minimum 50% reduction in governmental charges and will also benefit from discounted rates on medical services at healthcare facilities.

The service committee has stated that this bill represents a significant step forward and underscores our commitment to the well-being of our pensioners.

Contribution

The Council's Committee on Financial and Economic Affairs has praised the proposed legislation for its substantial contribution to our esteemed



Image used for illustrative purposes only

pensioners, who have dedicated themselves to the progress of the kingdom. By prioritising their financial well-being, we honor their lifelong commitment and service.

Despite the support garnered from various entities, some concerns have been expressed.

Upon reviewing the proposed legislation, the Supreme Council of Health has concluded that

the intended goals of providing healthcare to all concerned indiscriminately are already being met. This positive assessment underscores the alignment of our efforts with existing initiatives.

Reservations

The Ministry of Finance and National Economy has expressed some reservations,

emphasising that singling out a particular group for funding allocation could impact the kingdom's broader economic plans for financial stability.

However, through fostering dialogue and collaboration, solutions can be found to balance the welfare of retirees and the overall economic health of the Kingdom.

BD5,900 compensation for wrecked vehicle

TDT | Manama

The High Civil Court has ordered an insurance company to pay BD5,900 in compensation to a car owner after her vehicle was completely destroyed in a traffic accident.

The court also ordered the

company to pay the expenses, legal fees, and expert fees.

As per the court records, the claimant filed a lawsuit seeking compensation for the value of her vehicle as a result of the traffic accident she



was involved in on March 8, 2023, which resulted in damage to the car she owned.

A traffic report was issued about the accident, and she submitted a request for compensation for all the damage to the

car to the defendant company, but it did not respond.

The plaintiff was assisted by an expert who stated in his report that the car had total damage to its front, rear, sides, roof, and undercarriage, as well as damage to the chassis. In addition, the frame was warped.

Verdict set for educator over ministry insult

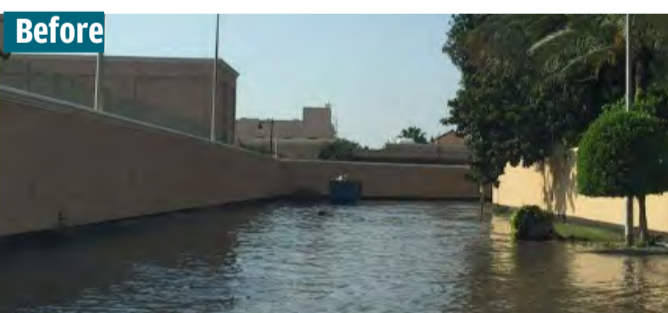
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The Lower Criminal Court will announce its verdict on April 24, 2025, in the case of an educator charged with insulting a public institution, specifically the Ministry of Education.

The accused, who pleaded

not guilty, attended the hearings with both male and female legal representatives. The prosecutor earlier argued that the defendant had insulted the Ministry of Education through a video clip on her public Instagram account. The clip contained derogatory remarks and an attack on the institution.

Before and after rainfall



In response to directives from His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, the Ministry of Works has stepped up damage assessment measures to mitigate the impact of rainwater accumulation and provide compensation to affected individuals. The Damage Assessment Committee, operating under the Ministry of Works, conducted site visits to evaluate the extent of damage in various regions, in collaboration with the Capital Municipality Council and municipal councils across the governorates. Emphasising the Ministry's commitment to comprehensive response efforts, officials reiterated ongoing coordination with government entities to assess damages accurately. The Ministry assured continuous visits to affected areas until all damages are assessed, ensuring swift disbursement of compensation following recent exceptional rainfall in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Raining relief

Northern Municipal Council begins processing 100 flood-affected residents' applications for compensation

TDI | Manama

The Northern Municipal Council has begun processing over 100 applications from citizens affected by recent heavy rainfall, following the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Dr. Sayed Shuber Al Wadaei, Chairman of the Northern Municipal Council, confirmed that the council is actively reviewing applications and ensuring they meet the criteria established by the Damage Assessment Committee.

He stated that the council is working closely with citizens to ensure they complete the forms correctly and provide all necessary documents.

"We are committed to assisting citizens and ensuring they

"We are committed to assisting citizens and ensuring they receive proper compensation for the damage they have incurred"

DR. SAYED SHUBER AL WADAEI,
CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTHERN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



receive proper compensation for the damage they have incurred," said Dr. Al Wadaei. "The council has received over 100 applications today, and we are diligently reviewing them and verifying the damages before submitting them to the Ministry of Works."

He emphasised that the council's role is to register ap-

plications and submit them with the required documents to the Ministry of Works, which will then take necessary action based on the Damage Assessment Committee's decision.

Dr. Al Wadaei reiterated the council's unwavering commitment to supporting citizens and preparing files in their best interests.

Kingdom implements climate action initiatives

Abu Dhabi

Bahrain is committed to implementing initiatives that reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change while encouraging a green economy and providing more opportunities to achieve sustainability in the energy sector.

The Kingdom has also implemented several energy efficiency policies, the most prominent of which is developing a strategy to promote electric vehicles.

This was emphasised by His Excellency Yasser bin Ibrahim Humaidan, Minister of Electricity and Water Affairs, as he participated in the ministerial roundtable titled "Infrastructure for the Energy Transition", during the 14th Session of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Assembly on April 16-18 in the UAE.

The minister commended the UAE's efforts in hosting and organising these international events to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),



H.E. Yasser bin Ibrahim Humaidan at the event

especially in the energy sector.

Humaidan said that Bahrain is studying the feasibility of implementing innovative technologies and creating favourable conditions for expanding renewable energy and improving energy efficiency by providing the necessary infrastructure, redirecting institutional capabilities, increasing renewable energy investment, and unifying international efforts to

enhance sustainability.

Progress

He highlighted the kingdom's progress in achieving the national goals for renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as carbon neutrality by 2060.

He underscored the importance of strengthening partnerships with the private sector to support renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

Bahrain highlights cultural heritage preservation efforts



Dilmun Burial Mounds, near the village of Aali, south of Manama

Marking annual World Monuments and Sites Day

TDI | Manama



Designated by Unesco in 1982, the World Monuments and Sites Day is celebrated annually on April 18, with this year's theme focusing on "Disasters and conflicts through the lens of the Venice Charter."

His Excellency Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA), underscored Bahrain's commitment to cultural heritage preservation, particularly on World Monuments and Sites Day, which was observed yesterday.

He emphasised the Kingdom's role in regional cooperation, hosting the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage in Manama, supporting Arab countries in safeguarding their cultural heritage.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed bin Abdullah was speaking as the Kingdom joined the commemoration of the International Day of Monuments and Sites, emphasising the significance of tangible cultural heritage in

sustainable development and societal progress globally.

Collective action

The event serves as a call for collective action to address challenges facing heritage preservation and achieve further advancements for future generations.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed bin Abdullah praised the Venice Charter's role in fostering international collaboration for heritage preservation, highlighting its relevance in developing innovative solutions amidst evolving challenges and opportunities.

Commitment

He affirmed BACA's commit-

ment to archaeological restoration and preservation, particularly in UNESCO-listed sites and other historical landmarks across Bahrain.

The Venice Charter, issued in 1964, remains a pivotal framework for monument restoration and maintenance, celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. It addresses contemporary challenges such as climate change, guiding efforts to safeguard cultural heritage for future generations.

Shaikh Khalifa underscored Bahrain's rich historical legacy, spanning from the Dilmun civilisation to the modern era, and reiterated BACA's dedication to preserving this heritage for posterity.

Workshops held to enhance housing services

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The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning in Bahrain recently spearheaded two workshops aimed at fostering stronger partnerships between the government and private sectors to bolster housing services for citizens.

Her Excellency Amna bint Ahmed Al Rumaihi, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning, and His Excellency Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, CEO of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA), led the discussions

alongside representatives from the Central Bank of Bahrain, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, the Urban Planning and Development Authority, and the Housing Bank.

Al Rumaihi underscored the successful outcomes of the government's collaborative ventures with the private sector, particularly in delivering thousands of housing services to citizens in a short span.

She highlighted the housing financing program, which has garnered over 9,000 applications since its inception in 2022,

with 60% already addressed, achieving significant program objectives.

The active participation of banks and commercial entities in the housing financing program has expedited housing service provision through government-supported financing options.

Al Rumaihi noted the ministry's decision to cover real estate registration fees for program beneficiaries, fostering equity between bank-provided financing and that offered by the Housing Bank.

Coast Guard inspection campaigns



The Coast Guard has continued its land and sea inspection campaigns to ensure fishermen's compliance with fishing regulatory rules. The campaigns, which included sea and land patrols, were carried out along the northern coastline. They aim to enforce the law, eliminate violations in the territorial waters of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and ensure adherence to the decisions regulating fishing, the validity of vessel licenses, and the availability of marine safety tools.

Youth cooperation



Her Excellency Rawan bint Najeeb Tawfiqi, Minister of Youth Affairs, met with Dennis Francis, President of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The two sides reviewed ways to enhance cooperation in the youth sector and discussed proposals aimed at serving the youth. The minister commended the partnership between the ministry and the United Nations (UN) in implementing the King Hamad Youth Empowerment Award to achieve sustainable development goals and its positive results, including the participation of several young people in the award.

Yemen rebels say attacked 98 vessels since start of campaign

AFP | Sanaa, Yemen

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels said yesterday they have attacked almost 100 vessels in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden in months of strikes that have disrupted global shipping.



In a speech broadcast by the rebels' Al-Masira channel, Houthi leader Abdel Malek al-Huthi announced new attacks

against eight ships, adding that "the total number of enemy-linked vessels targeted... has reached 98".

The attacks on vessels deemed linked to Israel or its allies have had "a massive effect and have been a success", the rebel leader

said. The Houthis began attacking ships in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea in November, a campaign they say is intended as a show of support for Palestinians in the war-battered Gaza Strip.

The Houthi attacks, which have disrupted traffic on the vi-

tal trade route, have been met with retaliatory strikes by US and British forces since January.

Israel's close ally the United States set up a multinational task force late last year to "protect" Red Sea shipping.

But Houthi said "no one can

stop us from carrying out operations in support of Palestinians in Gaza". The rebel leader welcomed Iran's first direct attack on Israel at the weekend, calling it a "forceful response" to a deadly April 1 strike on Tehran's consulate in Damascus.

Google fires 28 workers protesting contract with Israel

New York, United States

Google fired 28 employees following a disruptive sit-down protest over the tech giant's contract with the Israeli government, a Google spokesperson said yesterday.

The Tuesday demonstration was organised by the group "No Tech for Apartheid," which has long opposed "Project Nimbus," Google's joint \$1.2 billion contract with Amazon to provide cloud services to the government of Israel.

Video of the demonstration showed police arresting Google workers in Sunnyvale, California, in the office of Google Cloud CEO Thomas Kurian's.

Kurian's office was occupied for 10 hours.

Workers held signs including "Googlers against Genocide," a reference to accusations surrounding Israel's attacks on Gaza.

"No Tech for Apartheid," which also held protests in New York and Seattle, pointed to an April 12 Time magazine article reporting a draft contract of Google billing the Israeli Ministry of Defense more than \$1 million for consulting services.

"This work is not directed at highly sensitive, classified, or military workloads relevant to weapons or intelligence services," the Google spokesperson said.

Markets rise as traders weigh US rate outlook

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Global stock markets mostly rose yesterday with traders mulling the outlook for US interest rates as Federal Reserve officials questioned the need for a cut anytime soon.

Oil prices were mixed following the previous day's losses on data indicating softer demand in the United States and fading fears of a regional war in the Middle East.

Investors looked past a sell-off on Wall Street Wednesday, when tech firms were hit by worries that borrowing costs would be kept elevated longer than expected, as Netflix later Thursday kicks off a spate of earnings reports by tech firms.

Comments from Fed officials reinforced the view that sticky inflation and a resilient US economy will keep the bank from easing monetary policy anytime soon.

A rally across global markets, which saw some hit record highs this month, has given way to concerns that valuations may be overdone, and analysts said the current earnings season is key to maintaining momentum.

"The stock market has found it increasingly difficult to maintain intraday gains as participants have been in more of a de-risking mode following five straight monthly gains that have stretched valuations to a

Key figures around 1530 GMT

New York - Dow:	▲ 0.7% at 38,028.63 points
New York - S&P 500:	▲ 0.5% at 5,048.86
Nasdaq Composite:	▲ P 0.5 percent at 15,761.70
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.4% at 7,877.05 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ P 0.5% at 7,877.05 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▲ P 0.4% at 17,837.40 (close)
EURO STOXX 50:	▲ 0.5% at 4,936.57 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 0.3% at 38,079.70 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▲ 0.8% at 16,385.87 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▲ 0.1% at 3,074.22 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.0663 from \$1.0676
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.2462 from \$1.2455
Euro/pound:	▼ at 85.54 pence from 85.69 pence
West Texas Intermediate:	■ at \$82.68 per barrel
Brent North Sea Crude:	▼ 0.3% at \$87.01 per barrel

point that have clashed with rising interest rates," said market analyst Patrick O'Hare at Briefing.com.

Expectations for US rate cuts in 2024 have fallen from six predicted at the start of the year to just two, while some analysts have even warned of a possible hike.

"The US central bank remains on track to cut rates twice this year, most likely starting at its September meeting," said Solita Marcelli at UBS Group AG.

Oil prices were mixed after losing more than three percent Wednesday on figures showing a forecast-busting build-up in US stockpiles that raised questions about demand in the

world's top economy.

Relief that Israel had held off any retaliation for the weekend's missile attack by Iran -- soothing fears of a conflict between the Middle East foes -- also weighed on oil prices.

Foreign exchange markets are also being closely followed after the dollar pushed uncomfortably higher against its peers as hopes for quick US rate cuts evaporate.

Particularly in focus are the yen and won after US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen joined her Japanese and South Korean counterparts in saying they were keeping an eye on move-

Bahrain All Share Index marks 2,021.45 points

TDT | Manama

Bahrain All Share Index has closed at 2,021.45 points, marking a decrease of 6.00 points below the previous closing.

This decrease was due to the drop in the financial sector.

Bahrain Islamic Index has closed at 767.42 points, marking a decrease of 8.45 points below the previous closing.

Results indicated that 80 equity transactions took place with a volume of 2,451,281 worth BD 1,011,754.

Results also indicated that 2 bonds transactions took place with a volume of 20,000 worth BD19,873, representing 1.93% of the total value of securities traded. Investors traded mainly in the material sector, representing 74.04% of the total value of securities traded.

Woman arrested for using cadaver to take out loan in Brazil

AFP | Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

Brazilian police have arrested a woman who tried to take out a bank loan for an elderly man she was pushing in a wheelchair -- who turned out to be dead.

Employees at the Rio de Janeiro bank called emergency services on Tuesday after becoming suspicious when the woman wheeled the man in and requested a loan in his name.

When emergency workers arrived, they determined the man was dead, police said in a statement.

Police for the precinct of Bangu, on Rio's west side, booked the woman for attempted theft by fraud and defiling a cadaver, they said.

Investigations are ongoing to determine how and when the man died.

Brazilian media reports said



Image Source : X/@RESTRICTEDVIDS

the woman claimed to be the 68-year-old man's niece and sought to take out a loan of 17,000 reais (about \$3,250) in his name.

"She tried to make it look like he was signing the papers," local investigation chief Fabio Luiz told news site G1.

"But he was already dead when he entered the bank."

The woman's lawyer denied the accusations.

Tesla, Starlink entry on agenda when Musk heads to India

Looking forward to meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India! Musk wrote on X last week

AFP | Mumbai, India

Tech billionaire Elon Musk is set to visit India as his businesses seek new markets in the world's most populous nation, with electric carmaker Tesla -- suffering a sales downturn in the United States -- reportedly scouting factory locations.

Another Musk-owned business, satellite internet operator Starlink, is set to receive initial approvals to operate in India, a government source told AFP.

"Looking forward to meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India!" Musk wrote on X last week without giving a date for the visit.

Indian media reports suggest the trip will begin as soon as Sunday and last two days, com-



A Tesla Model Y car stands in front of the company's plant as Tesla CEO Elon Musk visits the company's electric car plant in Grunheide near Berlin, eastern Germany

ing after months of aggressive courtship between the billionaire and Modi.

The two met last June in New York, after which Musk said

Modi had pushed the entrepreneur to "make significant investments in India" -- something he said his companies intended to do.

Tesla is currently battling increased Chinese competition



and a demand slump in the United States, with reports claiming the company plans to slash its workforce.

Musk, who has described himself as a Modi fan, also said India "has more promise than any large country in the world".

India's steep import taxes for electric vehicles -- Musk once complained that they were among the "highest in the world" -- have prevented Tesla from making inroads in the absence of local manufacturing.

And in 2021, the communications ministry delivered a rare public rebuke to Starlink when it claimed the company had started "pre-selling" its services in India without a license to operate.

Import from Berlin

Indian media has reported that Tesla will first look to import cars from its Berlin factory until it takes a final decision on where to set up a production line.



Musk's present business interest in India is limited to the one he inherited -- the social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

Experts say it's unlikely the Indian market will be an immediate shot-in-the-arm for the company, mostly due to the high price tag of its cars.

Tesla's cheapest model right now is the Model 3 sedan, which retails for around \$39,000 in the United States.

"Cars that are priced more than Rs 20 lakh (\$23,900) have only a five percent market share in India," Soumen Mandal, senior analyst at market research firm Counterpoint, told AFP.



News in brief

◆ **A former deputy** governor of China's central bank has been accused of receiving large bribes during his time as a high-ranking official, state media said Thursday, the latest development in a decade-long crackdown on corruption. Fan Yifei first came under investigation in November 2022 for "suspected violations of discipline and law", a term typically used in cases of alleged graft. Chinese President Xi Jinping has overseen a wide-ranging crackdown on official corruption since coming to power just over a decade ago. Fan is now accused of illegally receiving "property worth more than 386 million yuan (\$53 million)", Chinese state broadcaster CCTV said. The illegal actions allegedly took place between 1993 and 2022, the report said. The court adjourned after an initial public hearing on the bribery case in the central province of Hubei on Thursday and a verdict will be announced later, CCTV said.

◆ **Australian police** have arrested a man they allege was behind a failed drug import plot that resulted in mysterious cocaine bricks washing up on east coast beaches for months. A 36-year-old Queensland man is allegedly the head of a domestic crime network and played a key role in the collection and distribution of tonnes of cocaine across the country, Australian Federal Police said on Thursday. But the man's criminal actions unravelled when 900 kilograms (almost 2,000 pounds) of cocaine was unable to be collected at sea. About 256 kilograms of that product washed up in bricks on the shores of popular beaches from late 2023. The man was arrested on Wednesday and hit with 19 charges. He could face life imprisonment if found guilty. Australian Federal Police Superintendent Adrian Telfer said the origin of the drugs was still under investigation.

◆ **Israel considered carrying out** a strike on Iran in retaliation for last weekend's unprecedented attack but then aborted the plan, according to Israeli and US media reports. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to respond to the attack, prompting global powers, including main ally the United States, to call for restraint to avoid any further escalation or regional spillover from the months-long war in Gaza. Israeli public broadcaster Kan reported that following discussions with US President Joe Biden, Netanyahu decided not to proceed with pre-arranged plans for retaliatory strikes on Iran in the event of an attack.



China central bank's ex-deputy accused of taking bribes



Australian police solve cocaine on beach mystery

Israel considered a retaliatory strike on Iran: reports



CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Michelangelo's scribble sells for \$200,000 at New York auction

AFP | New York, United States
A square scribbled on a yellowed piece of paper by Renaissance genius Michelangelo sold for \$201,600 -- 33 times its estimated value, auction house Christie's said Wednesday.
Found stuck to the back of a frame, the small drawing accompanied by a letter from Michelangelo's last direct descendant was initially expected to sell for between \$6,000 and \$8,000.
But Christie's in New York said the piece went under the hammer for "33.6 times its low estimate," without disclosing any details of the buyer.
The small work depicts a block of marble, with the word "simile," or "similar" in English. It is believed to have been drawn while Michelangelo worked on his famed Sistine Chapel ceiling, a Christie's specialist told AFP in January. The drawing is coupled with a letter written by Cosimo Buonarroti in 1836, in which he offers the piece by his "illustrious forefather Michelangelo" to Sir John Bowring, the future governor of Hong Kong, whose signature appears at the bottom of the sheet.
Christie's specialists found the letter and diagram attached to the back of a different drawing that had been in a private collection for decades, the auction house said in a media statement.
Though unsigned by Michelangelo, Christie's said that research confirmed the great Italian artist was responsible for the small drawing.



A drawing (top) attributed to Italy's Renaissance genius Michelangelo is displayed with a letter written by Cosimo Buonarroti, Michelangelo's last direct descendant, at Christie's in New York

Slow recovery as Dubai airport, roads still plagued by floods

- Some 1,244 flights were cancelled and 41 diverted on Tuesday and Wednesday
- Nearly 200 departures were listed as delayed or cancelled
- Many passengers have been forced to sleep at the airport



Cars are stranded on a flooded street in Dubai following heavy rains



Passengers wait for their flights at the Dubai International Airport in Dubai



Cars drive in a flooded street following heavy rains in Dubai

AFP | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Dubai's airport, one of the world's busiest, witnessed major disruption for the third day in a row yesterday after the heaviest rains on record drenched the desert United Arab Emirates.

Emirates, Dubai's state-owned flagship airline, and sister carrier flydubai resumed check-ins after telling passengers to stay away on Wednesday, when thousands of stranded passengers clogged the airport.

Some 1,244 flights were cancelled and 41 diverted on Tuesday and Wednesday, after torrential rains flooded the Middle East financial centre including its runways and highways.

Traffic congestion remained severe on Thursday, two days after the storms, with at least one major highway completely



Reports suggested that cloud seeding planes were dispatched to exploit promising cloud formations, but an official from the UAE's National Center of Meteorology refuted claims of recent cloud seeding activities preceding the intense storms that triggered flooding, particularly in Dubai.

blocked by water and multiple other junctions and routes also cut off by flooding.

Dubai airport, which carries more international passengers than any other, has witnessed chaotic scenes with thousands of marooned travellers clamouring for information about their flights.

Dubai Airports warned of a "high volume" of people at Terminal 3, which serves Emirates and flydubai, and urged passengers to stay away unless their departure was confirmed.

"There may still be delays to arriving and departing flights," an Emirates statement said, warning that the "airport remains congested".

"Our teams are working hard to restore our scheduled operations as soon as possible," it added.
Nearly 200 departures were listed as delayed or cancelled on Dubai airport's website on Thursday.
Many passengers, unable to take their flights or leave the airport on the flooded roads, have been forced to sleep at the airport, which has been badly understaffed with workers unable to arrive.
One elderly couple's 14-hour flight from Brisbane took 24 hours on Tuesday after it was diverted, and they were then unable to reach their hotel because of the flooding.

"It's just the start of our holiday and I feel like going home -- and I don't know how to do that either," Julie, 72, told AFP through tears, as she tried to navigate the partly suspended metro system to reach her hotel.
"When they landed the plane on this airfield that was deserted, there was no terminal, there were no other planes and I thought we had been hijacked by terrorists," she added, without giving her surname.



Men pose for a "selfie" picture on a phone as they stand by the dam at Wadi Dayqah, about 75 kilometres southeast of Oman's capital Muscat



A man steers his canoe on a flooded street in Dubai

US, UK unveil sweeping sanctions on Iran's drone programme



AFP | Washington, United States

The United States and the United Kingdom announced widespread sanctions against Iran's military drone programme yesterday in response to its weekend attack against Israel.

Washington is targeting "16 individuals and two entities enabling Iran's UAV production, including engine types that power Iran's Shahed variant UAVs, which were used in the April 13 attack," the Treasury Department said in a statement, referring to Iran's unmanned aerial vehicle program.

The United Kingdom is also imposing sanctions "targeting several Iranian military organisations, individuals and entities involved in Iran's UAV and ballistic missile industries," the Treasury Department said. "Today, in coordination with the United Kingdom and in consultation with partners and allies, we are taking swift and

decisive action to respond to Iran's unprecedented attack on Israel," US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said in a statement.
"We're using Treasury's economic tools to degrade and disrupt key aspects of Iran's malign activity, including its UAV program and the revenue the regime generates to support its terrorism," she continued. "We will continue to deploy our sanctions authority to counter Iran with further actions in the days and weeks ahead," she added.

Alongside its sanctions against Iran's UAV program, the US is also sanctioning five companies providing parts for Iran's steel industry.
"Iran's metals sector generates the equivalent of several billion dollars in revenue annually, with the majority coming from steel exports," the Treasury Department said, adding it had also sanctioned an automaker involved in providing "material support" to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Human cases of bird flu 'an enormous concern': WHO

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

The World Health Organization voiced alarm yesterday at the growing spread of H5N1 bird flu to new species, including humans, who face an "extraordinarily high" mortality rate.

"This remains I think an enormous concern," the UN health agency's chief scientist Jeremy Farrar told reporters in Geneva.

The current bird flu outbreak began in 2020 and has led to the deaths of tens of millions of poultry, with wild birds also infected as well as land and marine mammals.
Cows and goats joined the list last month -- a surprising development for experts because they were not thought susceptible to this type of influenza.

The A (H5N1) strain has become "a global zoonotic animal pandemic", Farrar said.
The collection of dresses, shoes and handbags -- some of which are familiar fashion moments from the Princess of Wales -- is part of a 12-day exhibit at a Hong Kong mall which launched Thursday.
They will then be on display in Ireland at another exhibit before going on auction on June 27.
"She made a fashion statement every time she got dressed and went out the door," Martin Nolan, executive director of Californian-based Julien's Auctions, told AFP. The yellow suit, designed by Catherine Walker, is estimated to fetch up to \$50,000 -- a fraction of the \$400,000 that a midnight blue star-embellished tulle gown is expected to bring at the auction block. Diana had worn the showstopping number designed by Murray Arbeid to the 1986 "Phantom of the Opera" premiere in London's West End.



Martin Nolan, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Julien's Auctions, standing next to dresses once worn by Princess Diana

Princess Diana's dresses on display in Hong Kong ahead of auction



Martin Nolan, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Julien's Auctions, standing next to dresses once worn by Princess Diana

AFP | Hong Kong, China

Visitors milled about the small, pop-up space on Thursday, pausing every once in a while to take a closer read of an outfit's history. Other notable items included a Victor Edelstein-designed silk and lace evening dress, as well as a pink floral Catherine Walker dress, which Diana wore in 1991 when she kept bedside vigil beside close friend Adrian Ward-Jackson.

Representative picture

NASA chief warns of Chinese military presence in space



NASA administrator Bill Nelson

AFP | Washington, United States

China is bolstering its space capabilities and is using its civilian program to mask its military objectives, the head of the US space agency NASA said Wednesday, warning that Washington must remain vigilant.
"China has made extraordinary strides especially in the last 10 years, but they are very, very secretive," NASA administrator Bill Nelson told lawmakers on Capitol Hill.
"We believe that a lot of their so-called civilian space program is a military program. And I think, in effect, we are in a race," Nelson added. He said he hoped Beijing would "come to its senses and understand that civilian space is for peaceful uses," but added: "We have not seen that demonstrated by China."

Nelson's comment came as he testified before the House appropriations committee on NASA's budget for fiscal 2025.



Palestinian woman Inas Abu Maamar, 36, embraces the body of her 5-year-old niece Saly, who was killed in an Israeli strike, at Nasser hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, October 17, 2023.

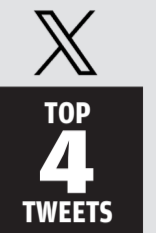
Palestinian woman with dead niece image wins World Press Photo award

AFP | Amsterdam, Netherlands

A haunting image of a grieving Palestinian woman embracing her little niece, killed in an Israeli strike in war-torn Gaza, won the 2024 World Press Photo of the Year Award. The picture taken by Reuters news agency's Mohammed Salem shows Inas Abu Maamar cradling the body of five-year-old Saly, who was killed with her mother and sister when a

missile hit their home in Khan Younis in October.
Salem was in Khan Younis' Nasser hospital on October 17 when he saw Maamar, 36, sobbing and tightly holding the wrapped body of her relative in the hospital's morgue.

The picture was taken 10 days after the start of the conflict started when militants from Gaza's Hamas rulers staged an unprecedented attack on Israel. "It was a powerful and a sad moment and I felt the picture sums up the broader sense of what was happening in the Gaza Strip," World Press Photo quoted Salem as saying.
"It is a really profoundly affecting image," added Fiona Shields, jury chairwoman.
"Once you've seen it, it's kind of seared in your mind," she said. "It works as a kind of literal and metaphorical message really about the horror and futility of conflict."



01
During our G7 meeting today, we discussed continued efforts to secure a ceasefire deal in Gaza that includes the release of hostages. We also made clear we are committed to Israel's security and condemn Iran's unprecedented attack.



02
The Middle East is on a knife-edge. Recent days have seen a dangerous escalation -- in words & deeds. One miscalculation could lead to a full-scale regional conflict that would be devastating for everyone. This moment of maximum peril must be a time for maximum restraint.



03
Today, the Government has approved the Tekuma Plan to rebuild the communities in the Western Negev. We will invest the very large sum of NIS 19 billion in order to move the communities of the Western Negev forward for generations



04
WHO published a global technical consultation report introducing updated terminology for pathogens that transmit through the air: https://bit.ly/3Q8x1t0. My thanks to Dr Yuguo Li and Dr Gagandeep Kang, co-chairs of the technical group; all the advisory members; @AfricaCDC, @CDCgov, @ECDC_EU and Chinese Center for Disease Control for the extensive, multi-year collaboration on the report; and valued WHO colleagues.

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

celebs



Chris Hemsworth

Chris Hemsworth failed to persuade Kevin Costner to hand over movie role

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Chris Hemsworth spent an hour on the phone to Kevin Costner in a bid to convince him to hand over a movie part he really wanted.

The 40-year-old 'Thor' star has confessed he fell in love with a role in a film which Costner plans to direct and star in, so he attempted to persuade the veteran screen star to cast him instead - but his mission failed and Cost-

ner decided to keep the part for himself.

Hemsworth told 'Entertainment Tonight': "There was a movie, a script that I'd read and loved and was like, 'I want to get that,' and then someone said, 'Kevin Costner has that [role].'"

"I'd love [to have] him as a director. I was like, 'Goddamnit!' [I spent] an hour the other day trying to convince him, and he was like, 'I'm doing it, kid.' Didn't work. I didn't get the part."

Hemsworth went on to insist playing a "horse wrangler" was

perfect for him. He added: "My wife read [the script] and loves horses. We have 10 or 11 horses back home, and so she's like, 'You've got to do this.'"

However, Costner, 69, is adamant he wants to do it himself while he's still "young enough" to play the role.

He told the outlet: "It's a love story, but as long as I'm still young enough to play it, I'll play it. Chris will have to wait his turn. [Hemsworth is] so handsome, and he's so good."

"He's going to have to go find

his [own] love story. [But] I'm glad he likes this one. If I reach a moment where I [don't] think I could do that, I would [reach out]. He's certainly one of our great leading men right now."

No further details about the film have been revealed, but it's not believed to be a part of Costner's epic Western film 'Horizon'.

He has already filmed the first two parts of 'Horizon', which land in cinemas in July and August, and he plans to make two more movies in the series if the first two are a success.

Drake dismisses nose job claims



Drake

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Drake has dismissed claims he's had a nose job.

The rumours emerged after rapper Rick Ross used his new track 'Champagne Moments' to slam the star and claim he underwent cosmetic surgery to distance himself from his father, rapping: "You had an operation to make your nose smaller than your father nose."

However, Drake, 37, has rubbished the gossip by sharing a series of text messages between him and his mother Sandi Graham in which she asks him directly whether he had surgery on his nose.

Sandi wrote to her son: "The internet is saying you got a nose job??. You looked the same to me in the kitchen today."

Drew Barrymore thinks of herself as a 'walking cautionary tale' for child stars

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Drew Barrymore likes to think of herself as a "walking cautionary tale" for child stars.

The 49-year-old actress was just seven years old when she found fame starring in 'ET: The Extra Terrestrial' but endured a string of personal problems in the years that followed and hopes that her stint in a rehabilitation clinic at the age of 13 will serve as a conversation starter about "boundaries" for children in Hollywood.

She told People: "When I look at it now, I don't see sadness or tragedy. I love that I was a walking cautionary tale because then when we talk about how we raise our kids in a world where they're all out there in social media, we all have to be almost parents in the mindset of what the Hollywood parents were like, which is: Do I want to protect my child, or what are the boundaries? What should I be teaching them? We're all rowing in that boat!"

The talk show host - who released a memoir in 1990 titled 'Little Girl Lost' - now has Olive, 11, and 10-year-old Frankie with ex-husband Will Kopelman and admitted that she "may never figure it all out" but is "honoured" to be able to steer the conversation as a parent herself.

She said: "I actually feel like this gives me such a beautiful little merit badge, like a scout's honor to get into that conversation and know how to navigate that as a parent myself."

"I may feel lost again at different moments, because you

"I actually feel like this gives me such a beautiful little merit badge, like a scout's honor to get into that conversation and know how to navigate that as a parent myself"

DREW BARRYMORE

never figure it all out and it never all comes together at some point, but you just keep finding things. And if you hold onto those findings, then you have this collection of wisdom."



Drew Barrymore

Selena Gomez denies dating John F Kennedy's only grandson

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Selena Gomez has denied dating John F Kennedy's only grandson.

The singer and actress, 31, who is seeing record producer Benny Blanco, 36, hit out after a fan account said "a few tabloids" had reported she was an item with John Schlossberg, 31, between 2020 and '21.

She said on Instagram about the gossip: "Never met this human sorry."

John has not publicly responded to the rumour and it's unclear if he was dating someone from 2020 to 2021, when Selena was apparently single.

Selena and Benny have been an item since last summer but the singer did not reveal their romance until December 2023.

She announced the news with a string of Instagram comments in which she hailed Benny as her "absolute everything" and "the best thing that's ever happened" to her.

Selena said online at the time: "He has treated me better than any human being on this planet."

She has since regularly filled her social media to share displays of affection with Benny.

One of her most recent sentimental posts showed a photo

of her being cuddled and kissed on the head by Benny.

She marked his birthday in March with the Instagram tribute: "Happy birthday baby! Your emotional endurance, positive disposition, unbelievable talent (that blows me away), undeniable humour and loving, kind heart absolutely kill me." Selena also wrote alongside a carousel of pictures of the producer: "I love you @itsbennyblanco (birthday cake and wide-eyed face emojis.)"

She also recently revealed she was convinced she had found someone who makes her feel "rare".



Selena Gomez

Hilary Duff undergoes acupuncture during pregnancy to 'give baby the eviction notice'

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Hilary Duff has undergone acupuncture in preparation for giving birth.

The 36-year-old actress is pregnant with her fourth child, and she has tried the treatment - which involves fine needles inserted at certain points in the body - to give her baby a nudge.

Alongside a selfie with

needles in her forehead, head and cheekbones, she wrote on Instagram: "Pretty slow week around here. And gently trying to give baby the eviction notice."

The 'Lizzie McGuire' star has daughters Mae James, three, and Banks Violet, five, with her husband Matthew Koma, as well as son Luca Cruz, 12, with ex-husband Mike Comrie.

She recently credited Matthew with giving her all the help and support she needs as they prepare to become parents again, while admitting

having four children is a "wild choice".

She wrote on Instagram: "Four kids is a truly wild choice. And while you rage [sic] the farmers market with the kids after 4 nights of shows and late nights so I can get some sleep and not hear mom mom mama mommy mooooom just know this only works because of you."



Hilary Duff

SUDOKU

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		7						
						5	6	4
	1					7	3	5
7				3				6
5	3	9						8
4	6	8						
								6
9				1	4	8		

Yesterday's solution

4	3	7	2	8	6	9	1	5
6	9	1	4	5	7	3	2	8
5	8	2	3	9	1	4	6	7
3	5	9	1	4	8	2	7	6
2	1	8	7	6	3	5	9	4
7	6	4	5	2	9	8	3	1
1	4	5	9	7	2	6	8	3
9	7	6	8	3	5	1	4	2
8	2	3	6	1	4	7	5	9

How to play

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14												
17												
20												
23												
26												
29												
32												
35												
38												
41												
44												
47												
50												
53												
56												
59												
62												
65												
68												

Across

1- Tel.; 5- Ali; 9- Leaves out; 14- Open infection, painful; 15- Cheese; 16- Charged; 17- Like not; 18- What mind reader?; 19- Foe; 20- Make lurid; 23- Came down to earth; 24- Code-breaking org.; 25- Asian language; 28- I've been framed; 31- Male sheep who may play football for Los Angeles; 34- Take at (try); 36- Canine command; 37- avis; 38- In spite of; 42- Human leg joint; 43- Small battery size; 44- Kind of kitchen; 45- Lingus (Irish carrier); 46- You don't bring me flowers; 49- Beverage commonly drunk in England; 50- Pan-broil; 51- Created; 53- Distinguishing feature; 60- Rub out; 61- Acting part; 62- Pro or con; 63- Components; 64- Like Nash's lama; 65- Pulitzer-winning biographer Leon; 66- This is only; 67- Metropolis; 68- Marine mammal, secure something.


Down

1- Sale condition; 2- Cast a ballot; 3- Wrinkle remover; 4- Vice; 5- Scram!; 6- Lets in; 7- Scott of 'Charles in Charge'; 8- for All Seasons; 9- Ultimatum words; 10- Craze; 11- Don Juan's mother; 12- Domesticated; 13- Hog home; 21- Suspect's story; 22- Singer Baker; 25- Sri; 26- Unified; 27- Sleek swimmer; 29- Indian state; 30- Ignited; 31- Singer Bonnie; 32- Gopher Palmer, informally; 33- Carta; 35- Reverence plus fear; 37- Old vitamin bottle abbr.; 39- Singer Tucker; 40- Cut and dried grass; 41- say more?; 46- Take into custody; 47- Brunch dish; 48- Seldom; 50- Observes Ramadan; 52- Curved letters; 53- Pluto's tail?; 54- Failed loser; 55- Gator's cousin; 56- Author Morrison; 57- Periodic movement of the sea; 58- The very; 59- Red or white, in the blood; 60- Clean air org.

Yesterday's solution

E	R	I	N	G	O	E	S	A	R	P			
R	E	T	A	R	A	N	N	O	T	R	E		
A	D	O	B	E	R	E	E	F	A	L	T	A	
T	O	R	W	I	N	S	T	O	R	E	A	T	
A	T	F	I	R	S	T	A	O					
P	E	R	S	E									
S	E	E	P	A	T	A	L	L	S	T	R	A	M
O	N	E	S	I	D	E	D	A	L	O	H	A	
E	R	R	O	R	S	M	A	R	Y				
S	T	E	L	L	A	P	E	T	E	T	A	N	
L	U	N	E	B	E	L	L	S	T	A	L	E	
A	D	D	S	L	O	O	T	T	I	R	E	D	
M	E	S	S	E	N	T	S	L	A	G	S		

Classifieds



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Real Madrid exact revenge on Man City

Real Madrid defeats Manchester City 4-3 on penalties after a thrilling match, advancing to the Champions League semi-finals

● **Rodrygo scores early goal for Real Madrid**

● **Kevin De Bruyne equalizes for Manchester City**

● **Andriy Lunin saves two penalties in the shootout**

AFP | Manchester

Real Madrid exacted revenge on Manchester City to reach the Champions League semi-finals 4-3 on penalties after withstanding a barrage at the Etihad on Wednesday.

Rodrygo gave the visitors an early lead before Kevin De Bruyne hit back for the holders to leave the match level at 1-1 on the night and 4-4 on aggregate.

However, City's defence of the competition came to an end after Bernardo Silva and Mateo Kovacic saw spot-kicks saved by Madrid's unlikely hero Andriy Lunin.

The Ukrainian, who has deputised this season for the injured Thibaut Courtois, had been at fault for City's early opener in a thrilling first leg but more than made amends.

Madrid will face Bayern Munich in the last four after the German giants beat Arsenal 3-2



Real Madrid's Spanish defender #06 Nacho Fernandez (L) clears the ball from Manchester City's Norwegian striker #09 Erling Haaland

on aggregate.

City had not lost at home in the Champions League since 2018 but the holders were held at bay by a heroic defensive effort by the 14-time European champions despite having 34 attempts on goal.

"It's so difficult. They are continuously probing with the ball and move you around. Most teams would fall apart when City get on top of you but we stood up really well," said Madrid midfielder Jude Bellingham.

"Today it came down to mentality."

Madrid were blown away by an early City blitz in a 4-0 defeat at the Etihad 11 months ago as Pep Guardiola's men went on to win the competition for the first time.

City also edged a semi-final

first leg thriller 4-3 on home soil two years ago only to be stunned by a late Madrid fightback in the return leg.

"In other sports for the stats we would win but football is like this and it's marvellous," said Guardiola.

"Congratulations to Madrid because their capacity to resist and defend till the end, they did so fantastically. We didn't manage to score in the final pass or final shot.

"I don't have any regrets. Always we try to create more and concede less (than the opponent) and we did everything."

Carlo Ancelotti's men flipped the script on Wednesday with an assured start that was rewarded in the opening goal.

Bellingham plucked the ball out of the sky with an immaculate touch to set Real roaming down the right.



Andriy Lunin, the Ukrainian goalkeeper, made amends for his mistake in the first leg by saving two penalties in the shootout, securing Real Madrid's spot in the semi-finals

ulate touch to set Real roaming down the right.

Vinicius Junior picked out the unmarked Rodrygo and he tapped in the rebound after his first effort was parried by Brazilian international teammate Ederson.

Doku makes difference

If City were slow to warm to their task they quickly had Madrid penned against the ropes but failed to land a telling blow for 76 minutes.

Erling Haaland failed to score for a fourth consecutive clash between the sides but has rarely come up closer than when his looping header came back off the crossbar and left Silva no time to adjust to turn in the rebound.

Lunin was forced to turn behind De Bruyne's shot from outside the box and the tenacious



Real Madrid's German defender #22 Antonio Rudiger celebrates with teammates after scoring the winning penalty

It's so difficult. They are continuously probing with the ball and move you around. Most teams would fall apart when City get on top of you but we stood up really well

MADRID MIDFIELDER JUDE BELLINGHAM

cious Antonio Rudiger deflected Jack Grealish's effort into the side-netting.

The Madrid goalkeeper saved two more efforts from Grealish at the start of the second half before Guardiola sacrificed the England international for the extra pace of Jeremy Doku.

That proved an inspired change as Rudiger failed to deal with a Doku cross and presented the ball perfectly for De Bruyne

to smash into the roof of the net 14 minutes from time.

De Bruyne should have turned the tie around single-handedly as he then blazed a glorious chance over.

However, City's threat was blunted during extra-time as both Haaland and De Bruyne had to be replaced.

It was Real who had the best chance of the extra 30 minutes when Rudiger sliced over with a clear sight of goal after staying forward from a rare Madrid corner.

But the German defender was still to have the decisive say as he slotted in the final penalty of the shootout.

Ederson's save from Luka Modric had given City an early lead.

But Lunin calmly collected Silva's attempted chip down the middle and then denied Kovacic low to his right.

Kimich heads Bayern past Arsenal into Champions League semis

● **Bayern Munich defeats Arsenal 1-0, advances to Champions League semi-finals with 3-2 aggregate win**

● **Bayern returns to semi-finals for first time since 2020 title win**

AFP | Munich

A 63rd-minute Joshua Kimmich header gave Bayern Munich a 1-0 win over Arsenal and a place in the Champions League semi-finals on Wednesday.

The 3-2 aggregate quarter-final victory means Bayern return to the last-four for the first time since winning the title in 2020.

Bayern will face either Manchester City or Real Madrid for a place in the final.

The result continues a poor week for Arsenal, who conceded top spot in the Premier League table on Sunday with their first league loss of 2024.

"We can enjoy this one. The first half was cagey and then we upped the tempo," Bayern striker Harry Kane told TNT.

"These games are tough and we had to find our way through them.

"It's going to be a tough semi final whoever we play."

Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta said his side had "wanted it so badly".

"However, you can see with many other clubs that sometimes it takes six or seven years



Bayern Munich's German midfielder #06 Joshua Kimmich (2nd R) scores the opening goal with his head past Arsenal's Spanish goalkeeper #22 David Raya (L)

We can enjoy this one. The first half was cagey and then we upped the tempo. These games are tough and we had to find our way through them. It's going to be a tough semi final whoever we play

JOSHUA KIMMICH

to get to that stage. We were very close, that is the reality."

Unlike last week's four-goal spectacle in London, Wednesday's match was a cagey affair, with few clear chances for either side in a testy opening half.

Midway through the second-half and with extra-time on the horizon, Kimmich burst through the Arsenal box and

headed in a perfect Raphael Guerreiro chip.

Guerreiro, pushed from wing-back to the forwards due to Bayern's injury woes, impressed as a creative presence when freed up from his usual defensive duties.

Six-time Champions League winners Bayern join fellow Bundesliga side Borussia Dortmund, who face Paris Saint-Germain, in the semi-finals.

Hit by injuries to several first-team attackers including former Arsenal winger Serge Gnabry -- who scored along with Kane in the first leg -- and Kingsley Coman, Tuchel pushed Guerreiro into an unfamiliar advanced role.

The move worked early, with the Portuguese finding space down the left flank and linking well with Jamal Musiala in the centre.

Arteta opted for the defensive stability of Takehiro Tom-

iyasu in place of Jakub Kiwior at left-back to neutralise Leroy Sane but the Japanese, who was making his first start since December, notably lacked rhythm.

Tomiyasu completely misjudged a Musiala pass early, allowing Sane to stroll through the Arsenal box and force a corner.

Gabriel Martinelli was the visitors' most dangerous player in the opening half. He scuffed a curling ball just wide of the post after seven minutes and then shot directly at Manuel Neuer with the goal beckoning on the half-hour mark.

Bayern were the better team after the break and went close immediately, Leon Goretzka heading a clever Kimmich cross onto the woodwork.

The pressure began to tell and Bayern broke through after 63 minutes when Kimmich, among the shortest players on the pitch, was allowed to slip through a



Bayern Munich have now reached the Champions League semi-finals for the 12th time in their history, while Arsenal have not made it to the last four since 2009

Arsenal paid for 'big mistake' in Bayern defeat: Arteta

Mikel Arteta admitted Arsenal paid the price for making one big mistake as Bayern Munich's 1-0 victory sent his side crashing out of the Champions League on Wednesday.

It was a painful experience for Arsenal boss Arteta, who bemoaned the defensive slip that proved decisive in the second leg.

"At the moment it is a gutted dressing room. I cannot find the right words to lift them. I wish I had them," Arteta said. "We tried against a team with a lot of experience. Through the tie the margins have been very small.

"In moments we have been better but we gave them two goals. That's a big advantage to give away.

"Today you could see the margin of error was zero. We made a mistake defending the box, a big one, and we conceded a goal.

"Then it was difficult. We tried in many different ways but it's difficult."

Arsenal's defeat capped a brutal four days for Arteta,



Mikel Arteta

whose side lost pole position in the Premier League after a 2-0 home defeat against Aston Villa on Sunday.

But the Spaniard insisted his players deserved credit for their Champions League adventure, claiming it would take time to develop the qualities required to conquer Europe.

"This is a moment to stay next to the players, to give them support. They are the ones who have taken us on this journey," he said.

"The club has been without Champions League for seven years. You want to play in the first year and be in the semi-finals or the final.

"We all wanted that so badly but you can see with many other clubs that sometimes it takes six or seven years to get to that stage."

crowded Arsenal box and head in a Guerreiro chip.

The hosts almost doubled the tally moments after when Kane found an unmarked Sane in the box, but the Germany winger blasted his shot skywards.

Arsenal pushed for an equal-

iser and went close in stoppage time when Kai Havertz and Bukayo Saka lashed at a bouncing ball in the box but could not break through, ending the visitors' hopes of a return to the Champions League semis for the first time since 2009.

Leclerc hopes for closer race

Charles Leclerc expects Ferrari to be closer to Red Bull at Chinese Grand Prix, but still eyes minor podium places

Leclerc targets improved qualifying performance

AFP | Shanghai

Charles Leclerc said yesterday that Ferrari will be closer to Red Bull at this weekend's Chinese Grand Prix, but he still expects his fight to be for the minor podium places.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez secured a dominant one-two in Japan two weeks ago with the Dutch triple world champion more than 10 seconds ahead of his Mexican teammate.

The Ferrari of Carlos Sainz was next, with teammate Leclerc trailing home in fourth, almost half a minute behind the winner.



Ferrari's Charles Leclerc waves as he arrives to take part in the drivers' parade before the start of the Formula One Japanese Grand Prix (file photo)

"I think in the race we will be (closer), yes," Leclerc told reporters in Shanghai. "But let's see. It's been a very long time since we drove here." Formula One is back in China for the first time in five years with a packed programme in-

” I think the track was painted or there's something strange on it so we will have to see how our car behaves with that and what the main limitations are in the race

CHARLES LECLERC

cluding a Saturday sprint race. The Shanghai International Circuit has not been raced upon by the current generation of F1 cars and appears to have had the newly laid tarmac given a coat of paint to improve grip, raising a few eyebrows in the paddock.

"I think the track was painted or there's something strange on it so we will have to see how our car behaves with that and what the main limitations are in the

BETTER YOU KNOW

The Shanghai International Circuit has been resurfaced with a new coat of paint to improve grip, raising eyebrows in the paddock, and will be a key factor in the race

race," said Monaco's Leclerc.

The pecking order was very different at the last Chinese Grand Prix, in April 2019, when the race was won easily by Lewis Hamilton in a Mercedes one-

This time there will be just 60 minutes of free practice on Friday morning ahead of sprint qualifying.

Leclerc has been in the top four in all four races this season, but is keen to nail qualifying better -- especially important on a sprint race weekend.

"I still think Red Bull will have the upper hand this weekend," said Leclerc, who is third in the standings, 18 points behind Verstappen but only five behind Perez.

"We will just have to focus on ourselves because it can be very easy, as we have seen especially in qualifying in Suzuka, to not do a good job on the Saturday and then you don't go from fourth to fifth, you go from fourth to eighth.

"Sprint weekend with two qualifying to extract the maximum out of the car -- it's going to be very important."

Hamilton doesn't need 'vindicating' over Ferrari switch

AFP | Shanghai

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton said yesterday he was shutting out the noise surrounding his move to Ferrari next year, saying he didn't need "vindicating" that it was right for him.

The Formula One veteran, 39, shocked Formula One in February when he said he would leave Mercedes at the end of 2024 after 12 years to join the Italian team.

Hamilton was asked yesterday ahead of this weekend's Chinese Grand Prix if Ferrari's strong start to the season -- they have been consistently closest to the dominant Red Bulls -- meant the decision to switch had been justified.

"I don't feel like I need my decision vindicating," Hamilton told reporters.

"I know what was right for



Mechanics practice pit stops with the car of Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton ahead of the Formula One Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai

me, and that hasn't changed since the moment that I made the decision.

"There's not been a moment where I questioned it. And I'm not swayed by other people's comments."

Hamilton said he had to endure criticism before when he left McLaren to join Mercedes

” I don't feel like I need my decision vindicating. I know what was right for me, and that hasn't changed since the moment that I made the decision. There's not been a moment where I questioned it. And I'm not swayed by other people's comments

LEWIS HAMILTON

in 2012.

"Even today, there's people continuing to talk shit and it will continue on for the rest of the year," he said.

"And I'll have to just do what I did the previous time.

"Only you can know what's right for you and it will be an exciting time for me."

Ramada City Centre, Ritz-Carlton B secure wins at inter-hotel tournament



Victorious The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain team after beating Four Seasons Bahrain by 4 wickets

TDT | Manama

The ninth edition of Ritz-Carlton Bahrain Inter-Hotel Charity Cricket Tournament continued with a thrilling day of matches as teams showcased their talents across multiple venues.

Day 3 of the cricket tournament saw some exciting matches, with Ramada City Centre, Art Hotel Bahrain, Wyndham Garden & Ramada Amwaj, Ritz-Carlton B, and Wyndham Grand emerging as the winners.

In the first match of the day, Ramada City Centre beat Jumeirah Bahrain by 5 wickets. Aboobacker Siddique was the man of the match, scoring a crucial 47 runs to help his team secure the win.

The second match saw Art Hotel Bahrain defeat Trad-

er Vic's Bahrain by 26 runs. Aneesh Anil Kumar was the standout performer, scoring a brilliant 78 runs to help his team win.

In the third match, Wyndham Garden & Ramada Amwaj beat Westin Bahrain by 5 wickets. Amanullah was the man of the match, taking 3 wickets and scoring 34 runs to help his team secure the victory.

The fourth match of the day saw Ritz-Carlton B beat Four Seasons Bahrain by 4 wickets. Balvir Singh was the man of the match, scoring a crucial 51 runs to help his team win.

The final match of the day saw Wyndham Grand beat Majestic Arjaan by 7 runs. Uz-zal Nasar was the man of the match, scoring a brilliant 81 runs to help his team secure the victory.

Bahraini MMA hero Hamza Kooheji begins road back to the world title with fight at BRAVE CF show in Mauritius

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's MMA hero and the Middle East's top Bantamweight fighter, Hamza Kooheji, is gearing up for his return to the cage at BRAVE CF 82 in Mauritius on May 11.

Hamza's last bout was in the main event of BRAVE CF 65 in Bahrain, where he faced off against Eduardo Mora in a Featherweight contest. After a thrilling three-round battle, Hamza emerged victorious with a decision win.

Following this triumph, Hamza took more than a year off from fighting due to various injuries, most notably a lengthy recovery due to a knee surgery. Now, the 'Pride of Bahrain' is preparing to make his comeback at BRAVE CF's historic event in Mauritius.

One of the pioneers of the sport in Bahrain, Hamza got an opportunity to train at KHK MMA early in his career after he



Hamza Kooheji

captured the attention of none other than His Highness Shaikh Khaled bin Hamad Al Khalifa. At KHK MMA, Hamza was able to elevate his skill set by training alongside the biggest names in the world of MMA.

With the newly acquired skills, Hamza was able to establish himself as the biggest

MMA superstar from Bahrain. He rose through the ranks of BRAVE Combat Federation after making his promotional debut at the inaugural event of the organization in 2016.

Over the years that followed, Hamza fought nine times in BRAVE Combat Federation, in turn, inspiring the next gener-

ation of MMA stars from his nation. He currently boasts an impressive record of 8-2 in BRAVE CF and had challenged for the BRAVE CF Bantamweight Title at BRAVE CF 57.

An integral part of the KHK MMA team, Hamza is now set to resume his pursuit of championship glory in BRAVE Combat Federation as he prepares for his return at BRAVE CF 82.

A former title challenger himself, Hamza will be closely watching the main event of BRAVE CF 82, where Bantamweight Champion Nkosi Ndebele will defend his title against Jose 'Shorty' Torres.

BRAVE CF 82 will mark the debut event of BRAVE Combat Federation in Mauritius and the fourth event in the African continent for the organization. The event will be the latest chapter in BRAVE CF's efforts to elevate MMA in Africa as the only international MMA organization to host events on the continent.



Balvir Singh (The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain) receiving "Man of the Match" certificate from Awais Rafiq (Financial Controller, The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain)

Verstappen commits to Red Bull future

Max Verstappen reaffirms long-term commitment to Red Bull, dismissing speculation of a move to Mercedes

● Driver happy with team environment after off-track drama

● Focus on racing with Chinese GP's return after five years

AFP | Shanghai

Max Verstappen again publicly committed his long-term future to Red Bull yesterday, saying that as long as he was happy there was "no reason to leave".

There has been speculation the triple world champion could move to Mercedes to replace Ferrari-bound Lewis Hamilton next year after Red Bull team principal Christian Horner was accused of inappropriate conduct towards a woman col-



Red Bull Racing's Max Verstappen (R) reacts with teammate Sergio Perez after the qualifying session for Japanese Grand Prix (file photo)

league.

Horner was cleared of any wrongdoing ahead of the season-opener in Bahrain but the off-track scandal rumbled on for weeks.

The Dutchman Verstappen is

signed with Red Bull until 2028 but suggested earlier in the season that he would consider leaving if the team parted company with long-time mentor Helmut Marko.

Verstappen's father Jos has



After 2021 I signed a long deal with the team. The only thing I said from the beginning was that I wanted to have a quiet, peaceful environment

MAX VERSTAPPEN

claimed that Red Bull faced being "torn apart" if Horner remained in position.

However, the paddock chatter in Shanghai this week has been firmly back on racing, something that pleased Verstappen.

"After 2021 I signed a long deal with the team. The only thing I said from the beginning was that I wanted to have a quiet, peaceful environment," Verstappen told reporters.



Verstappen's father, Jos, claimed that Red Bull faced being "torn apart" if team principal Christian Horner remained in position, but Max has now reaffirmed his commitment to the team

"Lately we have been talking about the car, so I am very happy about that already.

"That's also how it should be. And of course as long as I am happy with the team, there has

never been a reason to leave."

Verstappen is chasing a fourth victory in five races in 2024 but admitted the weekend's Chinese Grand Prix will be an unknown quantity.

The Formula One circus is back at the Shanghai International Circuit for the first time in five years with a sprint race on Saturday.

"With the new cars of course there will be a little bit of the unknown," said Verstappen. "Of course it is the same for everyone."

There is only one practice session on Friday before sprint qualifying, so Verstappen said it was important for the team to get the set-up nailed early.

"We need to have a good FP1 where we don't have to fine-tune too much on the car. That will really help," he said.

"Time will tell, I'm not too worried about it."

Mumbai hold off Punjab's late surge for nine-run victory

TDT | Agencies

Mumbai Indians narrowly defeated Punjab Kings by nine runs in the IPL yesterday, thanks to Ashutosh Sharma's blistering 61 off 28 balls, which almost turned the game in Punjab's favor.

Despite a precarious start at 17/4, Ashutosh and Shashank Singh (41 off 25) fought back, bringing Punjab close to victory. However, Ashutosh's dismissal in the 18th over shifted the momentum back to Mumbai.

Suryakumar Yadav led Mumbai's batting with 78 runs, helping them reach 192/7. Mumbai's pacers, including Jasprit Bumrah (3/21) and Gerald



asprit Bumrah celebrates a wicket with teammates

Coetzee (3/32), provided key breakthroughs early on. Despite a late resurgence from Punjab's tailenders, Mumbai secured

Scorecard

Mumbai Indians 192 for 7 (Suryakumar 78, Harshal 3-31) beat Punjab Kings 183 all out (Ashutosh 61, Shashank 41, Bumrah 3-21) by nine runs

their third win in seven games, while Punjab suffered their fifth loss.

The match saw stand-out performances from both sides, with notable contributions from Rohit Sharma, Tilak Varma, and Harpreet Brar. Ashutosh's aggressive knock was a highlight, featuring seven sixes and two fours, but it wasn't enough to take his team over the line.

Li and Hend one back of Catlin at top in Saudi Open



Action from the event

TDT | Manama

Haotong Li and Scott Hend made the most of the calm morning conditions to head into the weekend one shot behind pacesetter John Catlin, who leads on 10-under-par after day two of the 2024 Saudi Open presented by PIF.

Catlin birdied the 18th hole as the sun set on a warm day at Riyadh Golf Club to ensure he heads into Friday ahead of Chinese star and DP World Tour member Li, who shot a scintillating 65, and Australian Hend.

Steve Lewton's 64 was the best round of the day and sees him in third place alongside David Puig, who finished his round with a triple bogey on the ninth hole.

Amateur Khalid Walid Attieh looked set to make history as the first Saudi player to make the cut since the tournament was elevated to the Asian Tour, however three bogeys on the back nine saw him miss out by one, with a putt just sliding by at the last.

Moroccan golfers Ayoub Lguirati and Othman Raouzi, who were two of the golfers given special invites to the tournament as part of Golf Saudi's strategic partnership

with the Arab Golf Federation, finished on one-under-par and even par respectively to extend their participation.

Lguirati said: "It was a positive day for me with only one bogey and one birdie. I stuck to my strategy all day and ended with a good result in a tough competition. I am very happy to have made the cut in this tournament and to play over the next two days.

"I usually play on the second tier Asian Development Tour but with the help of the Royal Moroccan Golf Association and Golf Saudi I have been able to reach this level and I continue improving."

Meanwhile, Li is excited to challenge for the 2024 Saudi Open presented by PIF trophy as he looks to put some recent poor form behind him. Four birdies in five holes on his back nine catapulted him up the leaderboard.

Li said: "I played really well and wasted some chances. The course played a lot easier compared to yesterday, because of no wind and easier pin positions.

"I am still struggling a little bit off the tee, but except for that everything's pretty solid overall. I am here to try and get the job done and get the trophy! So hopefully I have a hot start tomorrow."

BIC to welcome fans for exciting weekend with Batelco Fitness on Track and Track Experiences

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) hosts two of its most popular experiences on track this weekend for fans looking to enjoy various exciting activities.

Taking place today at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East" is Batelco Fitness on Track, to be followed tomorrow by the supremely thrilling Track Experiences featuring three ultra-quick cars.

The events continue BIC's packed, year-round calendar of fantastic offerings for fans of all ages and interests.

Friday's Batelco Fitness on Track will be held from 6am to 10am, giving participants a bright and early start to the weekend. This fun, physical activity offers members of the public the opportunity to exercise within the unique and safe setting of BIC, either on foot or on a bicycle.

Batelco Fitness on Track is a perfect time out for the whole family or a group of friends, or it can even be enjoyed individually, while also getting in a



A car in action at BIC

workout. Runners and walkers will be utilising BIC's 2.550-kilometre Inner Circuit, while cyclists will get to ride their bikes along the 3.543-kilometre Outer Circuit, with another dedicated area for children's cycling.

The cost to take part is BD2 for cyclists and BD1 for runners. Payment must be made upon booking. Children under the age of 12 can participate for free if accompanied by a paying adult.

Meanwhile, Saturday's Track Experience offers participants a chance to get into the hot seat,

either as a driver or passenger, in either a Renault Clio Cup, a Radical SR1, or a Radical SR3. The Track Experiences activities will be held from 8am to 3pm along BIC's 2.55km Inner Track.

Fans can get an awesome introduction into the high-octane world of motor racing in the Clio Cup Experiences. Stepping into a Renault Clio Cup sports car, they will be able to enjoy either a drive or a passenger ride in a 1.6-litre, Turbocharged speedster.

The driving experience takes the participant onto the circuit behind a professional instructor in a lead-follow manner, while the passenger experience requires those taking part to simply buckle up and enjoy the ride!

Supreme thrills can also be enjoyed in the Radical SR1 Driving Experience, which is ideal for amateurs and racers alike as the car's 185bhp engine roars like no other. Interested participants must complete a Clio Cup Drive in order to take part in this activity.

In the Radical SR3 Passenger Experience, fans will be taken from zero to 100kph in about 3.4 seconds, making for a memorable number of laps around the circuit.

The cost to get behind the wheel for the Clio Cup Driver Experience is BD121, while the Clio Cup Passenger Experience is BD27,500. For the Radical SR1 Driver Experience, the cost is BD132, while the Radical SR3 Passenger Experience is BD38,500.