



From left, Tunisia's Kais Saied, Syria's Bashar al-Assad, Egypt's Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, Jordanian King Abdullah II, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, Djibouti's President Ismael Omar Guelleh, Mauritania's Mohammed Ould Ghazouani and Palestinian Authority president Mahmud Abbas prior to the Arab Summit meeting in Jeddah.

# Joint Arab action is the key, HM King tells Arab Summit

HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa welcomes Saudi-Iran ties, truce in Yemen, return of Syria to Arab League

● HM calls for reaching peace between Russia and Ukraine

● Assad caps return to Arab fold

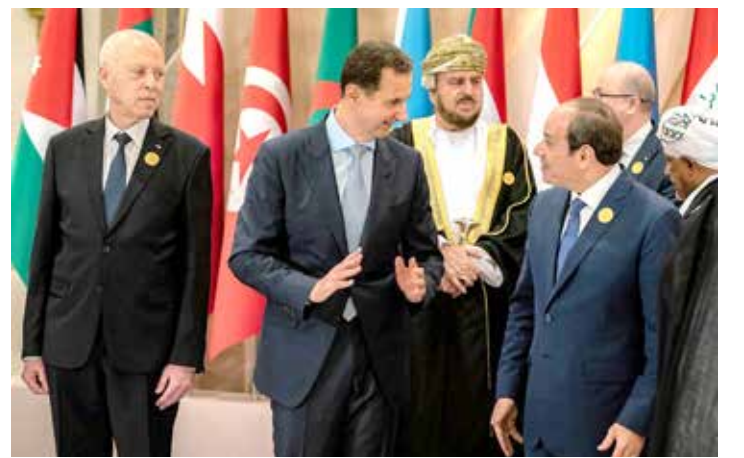
TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday took part in the 32nd Arab Summit in the Red Sea coastal city of Jeddah, alongside Arab leaders who welcomed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad back into the fold.

It was the first time Assad had appeared at the Arab League since Syria was suspended in 2011. The summit also featured a



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman posing for a picture with HM King Hamad and Zelensky



Assad greeting his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (R) as Tunisia's President Kais Saied (L) looks on

**We wholeheartedly welcome the dedicated Arab efforts, in which we find promise to establish a renewed and balanced regional dynamic, as seen in the resumption of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the continuation of the humanitarian truce in Yemen and the serious efforts to resolve its crisis, and the return of Syria to the Arab League**

HM KING HAMAD

surprise appearance by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. His visit was his first to the Middle East since Moscow's invasion in February 2022.

In his address, HM King expressed his commitment to advancing joint Arab action, welcoming the restoration of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the ongoing humanitarian truce in Yemen, and Syria's return to the Arab League.

HM King also lent support to efforts aimed at resolving armed clashes in Sudan, achieving a two-state solution with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, and upholding Egypt's legitimate rights in the waters of the River Nile.

Furthermore, His Majesty reiterated his desire for the success of collective endeavours towards peace between Russia and Ukraine, as well as the recovery of the global economy

and environment from the ravages of war.

King Hamad emphasised that the Arab nations possess the capacity to adapt to the fast-changing times by strengthening Arab unity, revitalising strategic alliances, and implementing a shared vision and more impactful policies to combat terrorism, prevent conflicts, and address the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction.

(Continued on page 2)





His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa with Dr Bashar Al-Assad, President of Syria, on the sidelines of the 32nd session of the Arab Summit currently in Jeddah.



A general view of the Arab League Summit in Jeddah

# Assad’s return would lead to “stability” in Syria: Saudi CP

(Continued from page 1)

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa said these concerted efforts will establish a stable region where humanitarian, religious, and cultural values can flourish.

HM King also expressed hope for the successful outcome of the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28), scheduled to take place in the United Arab Emirates later this year.

Additionally, King Hamad extended his gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for their gracious invitation and hospitality. HM also thanked President Abdelmadjid Tebboune of Algeria for his contributions to joint Arab action during Algeria’s presidency of the 31st Arab Summit.

Earlier, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, welcoming back Assad to the Arab league, said: “We are pleased today by the attendance of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in this summit.”

Prince Mohammed said he hoped the return would lead to “stability” in Syria.

Assad told the gathering that he hopes the return “marks the beginning of a new phase of Arab action for solidarity among us, for peace in our region, development and prosperity instead of war and destruction.”

“I would like to loudly welcome Syria back to its seat among its brothers,” Algerian Prime Minister Ayman Benabderrahmane said in the opening speech of the summit.

In his speech, Assad thanked Prince Mohammed “for the great role he played and the intense efforts he exerted to promote reconciliation in our region”.

Syrian state media reported on Friday that Assad chatted and shook hands with Qatari

## Arab League adopts Jeddah Declaration, reaffirms the need for unity

● Reiterated Palestine’s right “to absolute authority over all territories occupied in 1967

● Rejected “foreign interferences” in Sudan

● Called for “activating the Arab Peace Initiative

● Rejected “foreign interferences” in Arab countries’ internal affairs

● Saudi pledges to strengthen joint Arab action

TTD | agencies

The Arab League concluded its 32nd summit with the adoption of the Jeddah Declaration, reaffirming the need for unity to achieve security and stability.

On the Palestinian-Israeli cause, the declaration reaffirmed the centrality of the Palestinian cause and reiterated Palestine’s right “to absolute authority over all territories occupied in 1967, including east Jerusalem.”

emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani before entering the summit hall.

Zelensky said his priorities for



Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit (L) and Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan (R) attend a press conference held at the end of the Arab League Summit in Jeddah

It also voiced the importance of “activating the Arab Peace Initiative” which the kingdom proposed and the League endorsed in 2002.

Regarding Syria, the bloc welcomed its return to the bloc following years of isolation and voiced hope that this move will contribute “to Syria’s stability and unity.”

“[We] must intensify Arab efforts to help Syria resolve its crisis,” the declaration said.

During a press conference at the end of the summit, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said the kingdom would hold discussions with its Western partners regarding ties with Syria.

Regarding the situation in Sudan, where fighting has raged between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) since April 15, the declaration rejected “foreign interferences that inflame the conflict and threaten regional security and stability,”

the visit would be “the presentation of our peace formula whose implementation should involve as many states as possible”.

and urged dialogue and unity among the warring sides.

Prince Faisal, during the press conference, said Riyadh and Washington were continuing to work together to get the warring sides to halt the violence. The top Saudi diplomat called on all sides to immediately stop the fighting and resume dialogue; however, he noted that it was too early to talk about a breakthrough.

For Yemen, the declaration reaffirmed support for all international and regional efforts to reach a political solution to the crisis.

For Lebanon, it urged authorities to resume efforts to elect a president, form a cabinet “as soon as possible,” and carry out economic reforms to overcome the current crisis.

The bloc also rejected “foreign interferences” in Arab countries’ internal affairs.

“[We] completely reject supporting the formation of armed militias... [and warn] that inter-

Another priority, he wrote on social media, was “the protection of Ukraine’s Muslim community” in the Crimean Pen-

insula, which was annexed by Russia in 2014.

The declaration also said that during Saudi Arabia’s presidency of the Arab Summit – which was handed over earlier by Algeria – the Kingdom will strengthen joint Arab action in various cultural, economic, social and environmental sectors.

These initiatives include teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers, which targets the children of second and third-generation Arab immigrants to enhance communication between Arab countries and the rest of the world.

Another initiative aims to sustain the supply chains of basic food commodities for Arab countries. It will be implemented using several measures, which include providing investment opportunities with economic and financial feasibility and contributing to achieving food security for the Arab world.

AFP quoting an Arab League official later reported that



HM King delivers speech in 32nd Arab Summit

Zelenky’s invitation came from Saudi Arabia, not the bloc.

### Putin ready to resolve conflicts

Meanwhile, Russia’s President Vladimir Putin confirmed in a letter to the Arab League summit that Russia is “willing to participate in resolving conflicts in the region.”

“We will continue to offer any help possible to settle the Palestinian-Israeli conflict,” Putin said, adding that Russia intends to expand multifaceted cooperation with Arab countries.

“We are keen on supporting efforts to resolve conflicts in Sudan, Libya and Yemen,” an Al Arabia report quoting Putin said.

The president of the United Arab Emirates, was a notable no-show, sending his brother and vice president instead.

### HM attends banquet

Following the summit, His Majesty attended a lunch banquet hosted by Saudi Crown Prince and Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, in honour of the Arab leaders, marking their participation in the 32nd Arab Summit.

After the banquet, HM King Hamad bid farewell to the Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister, as well as Arab leaders.



## Bahrain experiences thunderstorms as depression hits Arabian Gulf

TTD | Manama

Bahrain yesterday encountered thunderstorms in the northwestern areas, accompanied by strong gusts of wind.

The General Directorate of Traffic Department issued a warning, urging all drivers to exercise extreme caution on the roads.

The inclement

weather was attributed to a depression impacting the Arabian Gulf.

Meteorological officials predict that these weather conditions will persist until today.





# Lower Criminal Court fines two BD 500 for renting CR

TDT | Manama

The Lower Criminal Court has imposed fines on two individuals, a Bahrain and an Asian national, for violating Commercial Registration (CR) laws.

Both the men were fined BD500 each for their involvement in breaching CR regulations by renting the document.

A Commercial Registration certificate (CR) is a legal document issued to investors upon registering their establishment in the Kingdom of Bahrain with the Ministry of Industry & Commerce.

Case files say the Bahraini man allowed the Asian national to utilise his CR in exchange for a monthly fee, thereby contravening commercial laws in the country.

Upon investigation, it was discovered that the Asian national had been using the CR details of the Bahraini man to operate a business under a lease agreement.

Prior to taking legal action, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce had issued a warn-



Representative picture

he was responsible for settling the EWA bills and other associated fees.

As a result, the Lower Criminal Court imposed fines on both individuals and mandated them to bear the expenses of publishing the judgment.

In Bahrain, it is against the law for a business owner registered in the commercial register to engage in commercial concealment, which involves selling or renting out the commercial registration (CR) or leasing a commercial shop to a non-Bahraini individual.

Commercial concealment refers to the act of enabling a non-Bahraini to carry out a commercial activity that is prohibited for them, such as using the personal data, license, or commercial registry of a Bahraini or someone of similar status. These actions, which lead to commercial concealment, are considered criminal offences due to the fact that the government of Bahrain has granted the right to conduct commercial business exclusively to the registered business owner and not to be extended to others.



A Commercial Registration certificate (CR) is a legal document issued to investors upon registering their establishment in the Kingdom of Bahrain with the Ministry of Industry & Commerce.

ing and a one-week deadline to the Bahraini man, urging him to rectify the violation. However, he failed to comply with the authorities' instructions.

During interrogation, the Asian national admitted to paying BD50 as monthly fee to the Bahraini man for operating the business. He also confirmed that

# High Shariat Court grants equal rights to wives in bitter dispute over social Housing Unit

TDT | Manama

A heated legal dispute over the ownership of a social housing unit between the two wives of a deceased man has ended with the High Shariat Court granting equal ownership to both women.

The conflict originated when the man's first wife received a house from the Ministry of Housing after his passing, but she refused to allow entry to the second wife.

According to court documents, the first wife had previously agreed in writing with



Representative picture

the Ministry of Housing to grant access to the second wife and her children, but she failed to honour this agreement.

Consequently, the second wife sought justice by approaching the court. Her lawyer argued that she had every right to benefit from the house, pointing to the commitment made by the first wife to the Ministry of Housing.

The Court ruled in favour of the second wife, acknowledging her right to occupy the property as she was raising her two children who were fathered by the deceased man.

# Bahrain aims to set new record for most hearing tests in 12-Hour

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is embarking on a ground-breaking attempt to break the record for the highest number of hearing tests conducted within a span of 12 hours, under the patronage of Lt. General HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The event, titled "Hear the World," aims to screen a maximum number of individuals in the time frame and shed light on Bahrain's commitment to staying at the forefront of medical technology.

The initiative seeks to raise awareness about hearing problems, stressing the importance of regular check-ups and early diagnosis.

Highness Shaikh Nasser, who serves as the Secretary General of the Supreme Defence Council, National Security Advisor, and Commander of the Royal Guard,



HH Shaikh Nasser

said that by undertaking this record-breaking endeavour, Bahrain is demonstrating its dedication to promoting public health and advancing medical practices.

HH Shaikh Nasser further expressed Bahrain's strong determination to enhance its international reputation and actively contribute to the development of the medical field.

# High Criminal Court adjourns verdict in corruption Case

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court adjourned a corruption case involving two senior government employees to the 31st of this month to pronounce its verdict.

Standing accused in the dock are a department head and supervisor at the Ministry of Municipalities.

The pair stand accused of forging official documents to approve building permits, misusing their authority.

These discrepancies emerged during an annual audit conducted by the National Audit Office (NAO) to assess the performance of various government entities and bodies.

Investigators allege that the department head instructed the supervisor to falsify a report, enabling the company to obtain the necessary documents for electricity and water connections in a building that deviated from the approved blueprint.

# Coast Guard rescues man after Jet Ski overturns in Muharraq Marine area

TDT | Manama

A 39-year-old man was successfully rescued by Coast Guard patrols after his jet ski overturned in the marine area near Muharraq.

The Ministry of Interior an-



Representative picture

nounced through a tweet that the Coast Guard Marine Patrols quickly came to the man's aid, rescuing him and safely transporting him to shore.

According to the tweet, the individual is now out of danger and in good health.

# Top AI expert expresses concerns over Bahrain's limited presence in TED talks

Zahra Ayaz

TDT | Manama

A prominent Artificial Intelligence Expert in Bahrain has expressed concerns over the lack of Bahraini participation in internationally-led TED talks, which have gained popularity for their viral impact, reaching millions of viewers and sparking discussions across diverse communities.

Dr Eshaa Al Khalifa, the CEO of SayG and a well-known figure in academia and the women's TED community, highlighted the importance of raising awareness among Bahraini citizens about the significance of attending international TED talks.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Tribune, Dr Eshaa emphasised the importance of TED conferences that bring together experts, scientists, technologists, and business professionals to share ideas and create societal awareness.

"TED" stands for Technolo-



gy, Entertainment, and Design, which were the initial focus areas when the conference was first established in 1984. However, TED Talks now cover a wide range of topics, including science, business, psychology, education, art, and more.

Dr Eshaa pointed out that Bahrain was the sole representative from the Arab region at a recent international TED

talk held in Vancouver, Canada. "Unfortunately, I was the only participant from the Arab world

and the only representative of Bahrain," she said.

Dr Eshaa encouraged Bah-



TED Talks follow a format of short, powerful speeches typically lasting around 18 minutes or less. Speakers are invited to share their ideas, experiences, and insights with the goal of spreading knowledge and fostering meaningful conversations. The talks are known for their engaging storytelling, thought-provoking content, and ability to present complex ideas in a concise and accessible manner.



# Upgrading bus network: Salmaniya Interchange project attracts four cos

Project to improve overall quality of bus network, passenger service: ministry

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications has received proposals from four companies in response to a tender seeking construction of the Salmaniya Bus Interchange.

The primary objective of the project, according to the Ministry, is to improve the bus network in the Kingdom and provide passengers with a better experience and service.

Based on the received proposals, the project is estimated to cost the government between BHD 60,214,046 and BHD 396,900,000.

The bidding companies are Alkhunaizi Insulation Systems Al Khunaizi companies group, Awal Plastics, Sayed Kadhem Al Durazi & Son, and Inter Lock Maintenance Construction.

The Tender Board has accepted all bids, except for two which were subject to certain



Representative picture (Courtesy of Bahrain Public Transport Company)

conditions.

The selected contractor will

be responsible for both the manufacturing and construction of

the Salmaniya Bus Interchange at both ends. Additionally, the contractor will be accountable for the maintenance and licensing of the interchange for a period of one year.

The Ministry has specified that it will only consider bidders who have successfully completed two projects worth BD 300,000 or more within the past three years. In a previous tender for the project's design, it was mentioned that the interchange would include a taxi rank, a yellow disk, and public bus services.

In addition to the ongoing tender for the Salmaniya Bus Interchange, there are further developments in the transportation sector of Bahrain.

The Ministry's actions coincide with plans to commence the construction of Bahrain Metro Phase-1, which has been awarded to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC).

According to a press release by the DMRC, a Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) has been established, outlining the responsibilities of the various parties involved.

The manufacturing and supply of Rolling Stock for the Bahrain Metro Project will be overseen by BEM Limited, formerly known as Bharat Earth Movers Limited.

BEM Limited is a prominent "Schedule A" company specializing in the production of mining equipment, train coaches, and spare parts for defence, rail, electricity, and infrastructure industries. It operates under the Ministry of Defence of the Government of India.

As part of the MoU, the Delhi Metro will provide its expertise in project development, budgeting, and facilitate the establishment of contractual obligations for the Bahrain Metro Project. The agreement, valued at \$2 billion, has been officially signed, indicating a significant step forward in the development of the Bahrain Metro system.



As per reports, the longest line from the Bahrain Public Transport Company is: A2. This Bus route starts from University Of Bahrain (Zallaq) and ends at Bahrain New Airport (Muharraq). It covers over 38 km and has 34 stops. The shortest line is: A2.



## Avenue 41-Isa Town set for dual carriageway expansion

● Bidders are required to submit their proposals along with a BD4,000 bond

● Tender available for download from [www.tenderboard.gov.bh](http://www.tenderboard.gov.bh)

● Closing date of tender is 14 June 2023

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Works is forging ahead with an ambitious plan to expand a crucial stretch of Avenue 41-Isa Town, transforming it into a two-lane dual carriageway along the Sheikh Salman Highway.

The project targets a 750-meter section from Road 4013 to the 16th December Highway, which currently operates as a single carriageway. Notably, the portion of Avenue 41-Isa Town between Sh. Salman Highway and Road 4013 presently accommodates dual carriageway traffic.

Aside from increasing capacity,



Representative picture. (Courtesy of Works Ministry)

ity, the project entails various enhancements to the single carriageway section.

These encompass the refinement of service roads and parking facilities, the establishment of block paved footpaths, measures for utility protection and diversions, and the installation of a storm drainage network.

The Ministry of Works has underlined that the development of Avenue 41 forms part of a comprehensive government initiative to enhance roads within the Educational District.

The Ministry's official website highlights the significance

of this undertaking, stressing that it will greatly facilitate traffic flow in the Educational District, a zone prone to bottlenecks during peak hours.

The project aims to improve connectivity for incoming traffic between Bahrain Polytechnic College (BP) and Bahrain Training Institute (BTI), regulate entry from the main gates overseeing the Ministry of Information, and streamline traffic between Avenue 16 December and Sheikh Salman Highway.

According to the ministry, these objectives will be achieved by transforming the street into a

two-directional road, enhancing key intersections, and expanding roundabouts.

Furthermore, this initiative aligns with the comprehensive development plan implemented by the Ministry to bolster Bahrain's transport network. The road works, with an estimated worth of 1.2 billion USD, are funded through the GCC Development Programme. These substantial investments are poised to further develop Bahrain's road infrastructure, support ongoing urbanisation efforts, facilitate residential development projects, and accommodate the country's rapid population growth.

In light of this significant project, the Ministry has issued a tender inviting qualified contractors to participate.

Interested contractors must possess a valid Pre-qualification License registered under the Road category, with grades AA, A, B, or C from the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning.

Bidders are required to submit their proposals along with a BD4,000 bond, valid for 180 days, before the closing date of June 14, 2023.

## Sewer connection for 260 properties in Block 246, 241



Representative picture

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Works has initiated a project to establish sewer connections for 260 properties located in Block 246 and 241.

The project is currently open for tender, and interested companies are requested to submit their bids before the deadline of June 18, 2023.

The main pipeline of the net-

work will span a total length of 1,468 meters, while the lateral pipeline will cover a distance of 2,334 meters.

Additionally, the project involves the construction of 478 manholes and a lift station.

The ministry advises that the execution of the project may impact existing utility services in the vicinity due to narrow road corridors within the project area.

## BTEA invites proposals for New Year 2024, Bahrain Festival City 2023

TDT | Manama

Preparations are underway to create an "exceptional experience" for citizens, expatriates, and tourists during the upcoming New Year's Eve celebrations and the highly anticipated Bahrain Festival City in 2023.

The Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) said it aims to elevate the event to a higher level of entertainment and success compared to its previous edition. In line with this objective, BTEA has launched a tender, inviting experienced companies to submit their proposals.

The authority, according to a tender launched, places significant emphasis on the

importance of utilising the highest quality equipment, venue setups, and logistical attributes to ensure the event's success. It aims to attract tourists from the GCC and the wider region, while fostering a sense of positivity within the community.

Bidders are required to adhere to the terms, regulations, and safety measures set by governmental entities, including the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Interior (MOI).

Interested parties must submit their bids to the tender board before the deadline of July 5, 2023, accompanied by a BD5,000 bond that remains valid for 90 days.

## BTEA seeks social media experts to manage Bahrain's tourism brand

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) has invited companies specialising in social media and digital campaign management to take charge of managing Bahrain's tourism brand.

A successful bidder should



Representative picture

be able to provide services such as strategic planning, creative development, social media account management, digital campaign management, analysis services, and reporting.

A tender launched by BTEA says these service should align with its marketing and outreach goals over a period of three

years.

If interested, agencies should bid before the 4th of June 2023 with a BD2,500 bond valid for 90 days.

BTEA, established in 2015, aspires to boost the tourism sector's contribution to the national economy, in line with the Bahrain Economic vision 2030.



# UK unveils £1 billion semiconductor strategy

AFP | London

The British government on Friday unveiled a new £1 billion semiconductor strategy to invest in infrastructure, research and security as the UK tries to diversify its chip supply chain.

The plan would “safeguard supply chains from disruption and protect tech against national security risks”, the UK government’s department for business, energy and industrial strategy said in a statement.

The investment over the next decade would include up to £200 million (\$215 m) between now and 2025.



A worker at the silicon semiconductor manufacturer Nexperia at the Newport plant in south Wales

The new 20-year strategy would “boost the UK’s strengths and skills in design, R&D and compound semiconductors, while helping to grow domestic chip firms across the UK”, the department added.

It comes as European carmaker Stellantis has warned it could close some UK factories should the British government fail to tweak Brexit trade rules to ease the supply of batteries for electric vehicles, for which semiconductor technology is a key part.

Visiting Tokyo Thursday, British Prime Minister Rishi

Sunak announced Japanese investment of more than \$22 billion into the UK, but accepted carmakers’ concern about Brexit trade rules as he confirmed talks with the European Union.

“Semiconductors underpin the devices we use every day and will be crucial to advancing the technologies of tomorrow,” Sunak was quoted as saying in the statement.

“Our new strategy focuses our efforts on where our strengths lie, in areas like research and design, so we can build our competitive edge on the global stage,” he added

# Lebanon gets Interpol red notice for central bank chief

● Salameh, 72, has been the target of a series of judicial investigations both at home and abroad

● Lebanon does not extradite its nationals

● An Interpol red notice is not an international arrest warrant



Riad Salameh

Salameh, 72, has been the target of a series of judicial investigations both at home and abroad on allegations including fraud, money laundering and illicit enrichment.

French investigators suspect that during some three decades as central bank boss, Salameh misused public funds to accumulate real estate and banking assets concealed through a complex and fraudulent financial network.

“On Thursday evening, Lebanon’s Interpol office received... the red notice requesting Salameh be arrested and handed over to French judicial authorities,” the official said, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

An Interpol red notice is not an international arrest warrant but asks authorities worldwide to provisionally detain people pending possible extradition or other legal actions.

A similar notice was issued after France sought the arrest of former Nissan chief Carlos Ghosn, who made an audacious 2019 escape from Japan while on bail and remains an international fugitive living in Lebanon.

Lebanon does not extradite its nationals.

In March 2022, France, Germany and Luxembourg froze

assets worth 120 million euros (\$130 m) believed to belong to Salameh.

On Tuesday, Salameh failed to appear for questioning by French investigators who want to know how he amassed sizeable assets across Europe.

Salameh would be “put on trial in Lebanon” if the local judicial authorities decide that the accusations of money laundering and illicit enrichment are founded, the official said.

Lebanon’s top prosecutor, Ghassan Oueidat, is expected to summon the central bank governor next week to examine whether “the evidence against him is sufficient to charge and try him”, the official added.

Salameh, who has been under investigation in France since July 2021, rejects the accusations and continues to serve as central bank governor.

# ChatGPT is coming to smartphones

San Francisco

ChatGPT, the artificial intelligence bot that became a global sensation for its powers to churn out human-like content and provide answers on all subjects, is now available in the Apple app store.

OpenAI, the Microsoft-backed company behind ChatGPT, on Thursday said the release came after it heard from users that they “love using ChatGPT on the go.”

By moving to smartphones, OpenAI continues its encroachment on the search market, massively dominated by Google, which has been put under pressure by the rise of generative AI.

Offered free of charge, the app will allow users to “get precise information without sifting through ads or multiple results,” OpenAI said on its website, in a subtle dig at Google’s search engine.

The app can also give “guidance on cooking, travel plans, or crafting thoughtful messages,” the company added.

OpenAI said it was starting the rollout in the United States and will expand to additional countries in the coming weeks. ChatGPT would be available on Android devices “soon,” it added. ChatGPT’s powers are already available on smartphones, through Microsoft’s Bing search app, which uses technology from OpenAI.

# Twitter says Microsoft broke its rules for developers

San Francisco

Twitter on Thursday accused Microsoft of breaking the social network’s rules for developers who access the platform’s data, according to a copy of a letter seen by AFP.

“Microsoft may have been in violation of multiple provisions of the Agreement for an extended period of time,” read the letter signed by Musk attorney Alex Spiro and sent to Microsoft chief executive

Satya Nadella.

Microsoft stopped accessing Twitter data in April, opting not to pay fees Musk demanded developers pay for APIs (application programming interfaces) that engage with the platform, according to the letter. Twitter called on Microsoft to identify all Twitter content that has been in its control during the past two years; how it is stored and what has been done with it, according to the letter sent to Nadella.

# Russian economy pressured as hundreds more added to US blacklist

Washington, United States

The United States added hundreds more companies and individuals to its sanctions blacklist yesterday as it broadened efforts to choke off Russia’s global supply chains and starve its economy over its war on Ukraine.

The new sanctions took particular aim at the firms and research institutes involved in Moscow’s investments into future energy production including plans for exploiting Arctic resources.

They also sought to shut down networks for acquiring restricted technologies that operated surreptitiously out of Liechtenstein, India, Finland,

Estonia, and the Netherlands, and Russian financial networks operating out of Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates.

And they targeted companies supplying components that Russia needs to produce its Orlan reconnaissance drone, including a Chinese firm.

In all about 300 individuals, companies, institutes, ships and

aircraft involved in alleged sanctions-violating activities were added to US Treasury and State Department blacklists. The announcement came in parallel with the G7 summit in Hiroshima, Japan, where leaders vowed to increase global economic pressure on Moscow to end its unprovoked 15-month-old invasion of Ukraine.

# Founder of iSpooof fraud site jailed in UK for 13 years

● Law enforcement agencies nabbed suspects in Australia, France, Ireland and the Netherlands

● Victims around the world lost at least £100 million (\$125 million)

AFP | London

The British mastermind behind a website used in a global fraud operation to steal tens of millions of pounds from thousands of victims was jailed Friday for more than 13 years.



Tejay Fletcher

Tejay Fletcher, 35, the founder and leading administrator of the iSpooof.cc site, was among scores arrested last November following an 18-month worldwide probe led by London’s Metropolitan police.

Investigators from Europol, the FBI and other law enforcement agencies nabbed suspects in Australia, France, Ireland and the Netherlands, and shuttered servers in the Netherlands and Ukraine utilised by an international criminal network.

The online fraud shop offered tools that allowed them to disguise phone calls so they appeared to be from a trusted organisation, such as a bank, so they could empty their targets’ accounts.

Victims around the world lost at least £100 million (\$125 million), including a minimum of £43 million from people in the UK, London’s Southwark Crown Court was told during Fletcher’s sentencing. He bought a

BETTER  
YOU  
KNOW

Tejay Fletcher bought a £230,000 Lamborghini, two Range Rovers worth £110,000 and an £11,000 Rolex watch after making around £2 million from the site’s illegal offerings

£230,000 Lamborghini, two Range Rovers worth £110,000 and an £11,000 Rolex watch after making around £2 million from the site’s illegal offerings.

One person lost £3 million, while the 4,785 people who reported being targeted in Britain lost an average of £10,000, according to police.

“For all the victims it was a harrowing experience,” judge Sally Cahill said as she jailed

Fletcher for a total of 13 years and four months.

Last month he pleaded guilty to four charges, including making or supplying an article for use in fraud, encouraging or assisting the commission of an offence, possession of criminal property and transferring criminal property.

But the judge said his “late expression of remorse is regret for being caught rather than

empathy for your victims”, adding Fletcher “didn’t care” about them.

Fletcher has 18 previous convictions for 36 offences.

His lawyer, Simon Baker, had told the court his client had no idea of the scale of the eventual fraud when he set up iSpooof in December 2020.

At its peak, the site had 59,000 users, with up to 20 people per minute targeted at one point by callers using technology bought from it. The Metropolitan police lifted the lid on its biggest ever counter-fraud operation last November, with Commissioner Mark Rowley saying it signalled “a different approach” to cracking down on criminals exploiting technology.







1498

Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrives at Calicut, India becoming the first European to reach India by sea



1609

Shakespeare's Sonnets are first published in London, perhaps illicitly, by publisher Thomas Thorpe

1927

Treaty of Jeddah is signed between the United Kingdom and Ibn Saud recognizing the independence of the Kingdom of Hejaz and Nejd, the forerunner of Saudi Arabia

1990

Hubble Space Telescope sends its 1st photographs from space

# rise G7 visit

ia 'war machine'

"Russian diamonds are not forever," said EU Council President Charles Michel. "We will restrict trade."

EU member state Belgium is among the largest wholesale buyers of Russian diamonds, along with India and the United Arab Emirates. The United States is a major end-market for the finished product.

The G7 also said they would step up efforts to prevent circumvention of their existing sanctions regime, "including targeting entities transporting material to the front".

The group held talks yesterday evening on nuclear disarmament and warned of Beijing's rapidly growing nuclear weapons stockpile.

"China's accelerating build-up of its nuclear arsenal without transparency nor meaningful dialogue poses a concern to global and regional stability," they said in a statement that also condemned Russia's "irresponsible nuclear rhetoric".

## US sanctions

Earlier yesterday, the United States and other members announced their own new sanctions on Russia, with a senior US administration official saying an-

other 70 entities from Russia and "other countries" would be placed on a US blacklist.

"There will be upwards of 300 new sanctions against individuals, entities, vessels and aircraft," the official said.

London, meanwhile, took aim at Russian copper, aluminium and nickel -- as well as diamonds.

Moscow's invasion of Ukraine 15 months ago has prompted waves of sanctions that have helped plunge Russia into recession and drained the Kremlin's war chest.

The Russian economy contracted 2.1 percent in 2022, a trend that continued early this year.

But Moscow has adapted quickly, introducing strict capital controls, diverting trade to allies like China and reportedly borrowing evasion techniques from much-sanctioned countries like Cuba, Iran and North Korea.

The International Monetary Fund has projected a modest 0.7 percent economic rebound in 2023.

G7 leaders began the day visiting Hiroshima's peace park memorials and museum, where they saw evidence of the suffering and devastation caused by the 1945 atomic bombing of the city.

## One billion threatened by cholera: UN

AFP | Geneva

A billion people in 43 countries are at risk of cholera, the United Nations warned yesterday, and though the outbreaks could be stopped, the United Nations said resources were desperately lacking.

The UN health agency said the outlook was bleak, as it seeks \$640 million to fight the infectious disease, but said the longer it takes to ramp up the battle, the worse the situation will get.

The World Health Organization said vaccination campaigns had been severely hampered.

"WHO estimates that a billion people across 43 countries are at risk of cholera," said Henry Gray, the agency's incident manager for the global cholera response.

So far this year, 24 countries have reported cholera outbreaks, compared to 15 by mid-May last year.

Countries that are not usually affected by cholera are being struck, and case fatality rates are far exceeding the typical one in 100.

Gray blamed the rise in cases on poverty, conflict and climate change, and the population displacement they trigger.

"With the increase in the number of countries affected by cholera, the resources that were available for prevention and response are more thinly spread," he said.



A health worker tends to a patient at a temporary cholera centre in Malawi



**Cholera is contracted from a bacterium that is generally transmitted through contaminated food or water**

**With the increase in the number of countries affected by cholera, the resources that were available for prevention and response are more thinly spread**

HENRY GRAY, HEALTH EMERGENCY OFFICER, WHO

WHO wants \$160 million for more than 40 countries over the next 12 months. It is working in coordination with the UN children's agency UNICEF, which wants \$480 million.

Jerome Pfaffmann Zambruni, UNICEF's public health emergency unit chief, noted that back in November, the agency had asked for \$150 million for cholera response -- a figure now eclipsed as the situation has worsened.

## illions of life years lost to pandemic: WHO



person walks by tributes in art made in Brooklyn, New York City

le, with the true figure believed to be closer to 20 million.

The WHO report lays bare how the virus itself and the broader impact of the crisis abruptly cut short the lives of millions of people.

While the WHO officially reg-

istered 5.4 million Covid deaths in 2020 and 2021, its excess mortality data shows around 14.9 million people actually likely died due to the crisis over that period.

Even more striking, perhaps, it said the statistics show that

**The statistics show that during 2020 and 2021, Covid resulted in the loss globally of 336.8 million years that otherwise would have been lived**

during those two years alone, Covid resulted in the loss globally of 336.8 million years that otherwise would have been lived.

## lifted after 7.7-magnitude Pacific quake



People look out toward the seafront from the Vierge du Pacifique in Noumea after an earthquake hit the island

warnings for coastal areas within 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) of the epicentre, which lay east of the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia.

Vanuatu had been identified as the island threatened with the largest waves from the quake.

Benie Simo, a local tour oper-

**Earthquakes are common along the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of intense seismic activity that stretches through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin**

ator on Mystery Island in Vanuatu, said he received a government warning via text message to evacuate and moved to higher ground.

The waves, he said, were coming up "really high", describing them as being about one to two metres (three to six feet) tall and noting that so far there were no reports of damage.

## Xi says China, Central Asia must 'fully unleash' potential



Chinese President Xi Jinping pose with other leaders for a group photo

AFP | Beijing

Xi Jinping called on China and Central Asia to "fully unleash" their potential in trade, economic and infrastructure cooperation yesterday, as he wrapped up a landmark summit with heads of state from the strategically vital region.

The Chinese leader is hosting the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan at a summit in Xi'an in northern China this week -- a meeting Beijing has said is of "milestone" significance.

Beijing says trade with Central Asia reached \$70 billion in 2022 and expanded 22 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2023.

The region is also a crucial link in China's trillion-dollar global infrastructure project, the Belt and Road Initiative.

Speaking to regional leaders, Xi said the countries must "fully unleash the potential of traditional cooperation in economy, trade, industrial capacity, energy and transport," according to a state media readout.

**China and Central Asian countries should deepen strategic mutual trust, and always offer clear and strong support for each other on issues of core interests**

XI JINPING

He also stressed the need to develop "new growth drivers... such as finance, agriculture, poverty reduction, low carbon, health, and digital innovation".

"China and Central Asian countries should deepen strategic mutual trust, and always offer clear and strong support for each other on issues of core interests."

Belt and Road is a defining geopolitical project for Xi, with Beijing keen to restart cooperation and fill the vacuum left in former Soviet states by Russia's war in Ukraine.

Yesterday, Xi said the region and China must "take the lead" in that project and "deepen strategic mutual trust".



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



In coordination with the @G7, Australia, and other partners, the United States is imposing new sanctions on Russia. These sanctions will increase pressure on Russia and degrade Russia's military, its economy, and its ability to fuel its illegal aggression against Ukraine. @SecBlinken

02



Delighted to be in Hiroshima to participate in the @G7 Leaders' Summit. We have an important agenda that includes scaling up support for low-income and emerging economies in addition to coordinating action to tackle climate change and mitigate its effects. @KGeorgieva

03



Seven countries, one mission. We meet this year at a time of enormous economic challenge and global instability. We must stand united in the face of threats to global prosperity, security and sovereignty. @RishiSunak

04



The EU and @G7 will defend the fundamental principles of the UN Charter. For greater peace. And for greater prosperity. #G7 #G7HiroshimaSummit @CharlesMichel

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



## campus

## ISB honours middle section students for academic achievements



**TDT | Manama**

The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) organized the Academic Award Ceremony on Thursday to felicitate students from class VI to VIII for their academic achievements.

Around 275 toppers and high achievers were honoured with certificates for their excellent performance in the academic year 2022-2023.

The programme was held at the Jashanmal auditorium in Isa Town campus.

Indian Embassy Second Secretary Ravi Kumar Jain was the chief guest of the ceremony.

ISB Chairman Prince S Natarajan, Vice-Chairman Jayafar Maidani, Executive Committee Members Binu Mannil Varughese, Rajesh Nambiar, Ajaykrishnan V, Mohammad Nayaz Ullah, Principal VR Palaniswamy,

Riffa Campus Principal Pamela Xavier, Vice-Principals and Head Teachers attended the ceremony.

In his inaugural address, Indian Embassy Second Secretary Ravi Kumar Jain appreciated the excellent performance of the Indian School students in academics and conveyed his best wishes appreciating the hard work and dedication of students and staff. Ravi Kumar Jain congratulated

the Indian School for their tireless efforts for imparting quality education in an exemplary manner.

He also appreciated the extra-curricular activities with reference to the performance of the school band.

ISB Chairman Prince S Natarajan in his presidential address congratulated the AI achievers and said that the concerted efforts of the teachers with the

wholehearted support of the parents resulted in the brilliant performance of the students.

The Indian School faculty have quickly adapted to the online and offline teaching platforms during the pandemic days.

“Every subject and field has its own possibilities or potentials and parents should identify the student’s interest and guide them accordingly,” he said.

Prince Natarajan presented a

memento to the chief guest.

Principal VR Palaniswamy appreciated the hard work of the students, commitment of the teachers, cooperation of the parents and the support and guidance of the Executive Committee during the challenging times.

“Parents and teachers have put in their best efforts to mentor and monitor the children in the formation of their character,” he said.

### Indian School celebrates Technofest 2023



The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) celebrated the 19th annual Technofest to commemorate the Indian National Science and Technology Day in Isa Town campus on May 11. Students from grade 6 to 12 took part in the various inter and intra school activities to showcase their talents and creativity. Seven CBSE curriculum schools including the host school participated in this event. The valedictory function was attended by Principal VR Palaniswamy, vice-principals along with HoDs, Head Teachers of senior sections in the presence of teachers in-charge from participating schools. The ISB students were in the forefront of managing the entire function guided by science faculty members

### Bhavans-Bahrain Indian School shines at Inter-School Maths Day 2023

Students of Bhavans-Bahrain Indian School (BIS) bagged the First and Second positions at the Inter-school Math Symposium organized by The Indian School, for students of classes X - XII on Wednesday. Darwina Manoj Amarnath of Grade X got the First Position and Adesh Deepthi Shaiju of Grade XI got Second Position in Math Symposium on the topic Math Matters in Everyday Life. Twelve Students from six CBSE schools in Bahrain participated in the Math Symposium. Directors Himanshu Verma and Ritu Verma, and Principal Saji Jacob congratulated the winners and the teachers for the outstanding achievement



### Indian School to hold fourth edition of science quiz



Winners are awarded the trophy in a previous edition of the event (file photo)

**TDT | Manama**

The Indian School Riffa campus is gearing up to host the annual Mothercare ISB APJ Inter-Junior School Science Quiz, Season 4 in the upcoming weeks.

The event is scheduled to be held in three phases. The preliminary round of the quiz will be held today.

The top scorers of this round, one from each school, will move

on to the semi-final round which will be held on May 27.

The top six teams will contest the final round on June 2, 2023.

The Quiz Masters are Dr. Babu Ramachandran (American Mission Hospital) and Bonny Joseph (Director, Bonny’s Educational Services).

Around 31 teams of young quiz takers from twelve schools are all set to dive into the thrilling quizzing contests.

“This flagship initiative was launched in 2017 to grow in educational partnership, share ideas and strategies, and to promote the best practices of scientific investigation, reasoning, and logic among students of the primary schools”, said Riffa campus Principal Pamela Xavier.

The purpose of the event is largely to promote young students’ scientific curiosity and interest in current events.



# Classifieds



**Call us on +973 36458394**  
**email : [advt@newsfobahrain.com](mailto:advt@newsfobahrain.com)**

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## Howe ready for Euro challenge as Newcastle eye Champions League



Newcastle United's head coach Eddie Howe reacts during a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Eddie Howe says Newcastle will need more quality and depth in their squad next season if they are to cope with the demands of a potential Champions League campaign.

Howe's side are guaranteed to at least reach the Europa League after thrashing Brighton 4-1 on Thursday.

But the third placed Magpies have a lucrative Champions League berth within their grasp.

They will be certain of qualifying if they win one of their last two games against Leicester on Monday or Chelsea on May 28.

Newcastle boss Howe has spent over £250 million (\$310 million) to revitalise his squad since taking charge in 2021 and he knows further investment in new signings will be required to compete in the Premier League and Europe next term.

"We need to figure that out.

**We need to figure that out. If you have a strong squad, rotation will be important. Rotation is going to be important, utilising the whole squad is going to be important**

EDDIE HOWE

If you have a strong squad, rotation will be important. Rotation is going to be important, utilising the whole squad is going to be important," he told reporters yesterday.

"We haven't felt the necessity to necessarily do that on a consistent basis because we've been in one competition - of course, we had the League Cup run. We have rotated to a degree, but maybe not in the numbers that we might need to next year.

"If you're going to do that, then the squad needs to be strong enough, so if you put out two XIs, they're of equal strength."

The strength of Howe's current squad could be put to the test on Monday evening with his midfield resources stretched severely in the aftermath of an energy-sapping clash with the Seagulls.

Joe Willock was helped from the pitch in some discomfort with a hamstring injury which the Magpies fear will end his season with two games to go, while Bruno Guimaraes has been nursing a persistent ankle problem in recent months.

"Today I'll be going straight to the physio room, to be honest, after this to see how everybody is. We've got a few concerns," Howe said.

## 'Amazing' Murray leads Nuggets rally in 108-103 win over Lakers

AFP | Los Angeles

Jamal Murray scored 23 of his 37 points in the fourth quarter as a furious finale carried the Denver Nuggets to a 108-103 win over the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday and a 2-0 lead in their NBA Western Conference final series.

Two-time NBA Most Valuable Player Nikola Jokic racked up another triple-double with 23 points, 17 rebounds and 12 assists for the Nuggets, but it was Murray who starred when it mattered most.

He made six of seven shots, including four of five from three-point range, playing all 12 minutes of a final period in which Jokic and fellow starters Kentavious Caldwell-Pope and Aaron Gordon went scoreless.

Murray's exploits were enough for a Nuggets team that had kept it close but couldn't find a way past LeBron James and the Lakers through the first three periods at Denver's Ball Arena.

"The game would've been a lot easier if I made them the first



Jamal Murray (27) of the Denver Nuggets drives against LeBron James (6) of the Los Angeles Lakers

half," said Murray, adding he was able to refocus after missing some open shots and was encouraged by his teammates to keep shooting.

"Just come out focused and knock them down," he said of his second-half goal. "Don't lose any confidence or anything like that. Just play my game and know they're going to fall if I keep shooting them."

James and Austin Reaves scored 22 points apiece for the

Lakers and Japanese reserve forward Rui Hachimura delivered a brilliant 21 points off the bench, but the Lakers couldn't stem the tide once Murray got going.

Two days after the Nuggets used a dominant first quarter to take control on the way to a game-one victory, it was all tied up at the end of one period.

The Lakers pushed their lead to as many as 11 in the second quarter before coming up empty

**"The game would've been a lot easier if I made them the first half. Just come out focused and knock them down. Don't lose any confidence or anything like that. Just play my game and know they're going to fall if I keep shooting them**

JAMAL MURRAY

on 10 straight attempts -- a dry spell ended by James's driving finger-roll layup.

James, who also had nine rebounds and 10 assists, then found Hachimura for an alley-oop dunk that put the Lakers up 53-48 at halftime.

Anthony Davis made just four of 15 shots on the way to 18 points and 14 rebounds for the Lakers, who nevertheless pushed the lead back to 11 midway through the third as James came up with a steal and raced for a dunk.

## Labuschagne warns Smith as good as when he dominated 2019 Ashes

AFP | Sydney

Marnus Labuschagne warned England that tweaks "freakish" Australian teammate Steve Smith has made to his batting mean he is as dangerous as when he dominated the 2019 Ashes.

Smith hit a phenomenal 774 from seven innings in England four years ago at an average of more than 110 in the drawn series, starting with twin hundreds in the first Test at Edgbaston.

Since then the veteran has made technical changes to his



Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith during training (file photo)

game which Labuschagne told The Sydney Morning Herald should worry hosts England ahead of the start of the Ashes next month.

"If you look at how he batted this summer against the West Indies and South Africa, compared to how he batted in the Ashes in 2019, they're two polar opposite methods of batting," the top-ranked Test batsman said in comments published yesterday.

"He has that freakish ability that he can find ways to have success regardless of how he

plays."

Labuschagne, who is preparing for the Ashes with a stint at county club Glamorgan, said the key difference was Smith's stance, which had gone from "really open" to "a lot more side on".

"You can see why his Twenty20 game has gone through the roof with some of those technical changes. It's certainly helped him with his power and his swing. He took the mickey this summer in the white-ball stuff," he added.

"It just shows he can bat both

**"If you look at how he batted this summer against the West Indies and South Africa, compared to how he batted in the Ashes in 2019, they're two polar opposite methods of batting. He has that freakish ability that he can find ways to have success regardless of how he plays**

MARNUS LABUSCHAGNE

those ways and have ample success. And knowing Steve he's made sure he works out what he feels is the best method to score runs here in England."

Smith, who averages nearly 60 in his 16 Tests in England, is warming up for the five-match series with Sussex. He was 68 not out overnight against Labuschagne's Glamorgan.

Smith said this month that winning a series in England was high on his "bucket list", admitting that it could be his last chance.

"Potentially. I mean, I'm 34 in just under a month. I'm not sure I'll be back. We'll see," he said.



**Newcastle boss Howe has spent over £250 million (\$310 million) to revitalise his squad since taking charge in 2021 and he knows further investment in new signings will be required to compete in the Premier League and Europe next term**



**Smith, who averages nearly 60 in his 16 Tests in England, is warming up for the five-match series with Sussex. He was 68 not out overnight against Labuschagne's Glamorgan**



West Ham boss  
Moyes reveals  
family concern  
after violence at  
AZ Alkmaar



David Moyes  
AFP | London

West Ham manager David Moyes admitted he was concerned for the safety of his family after AZ Alkmaar hooligans attacked Hammers fans following Thursday's Europa Conference League semi-final in the Netherlands.

Pablo Fornals' stoppage-time goal sealed a 1-0 victory that booked West Ham's first European final appearance for 47 years.

But the semi-final second leg was marred by ugly scenes when a gang of black-shirted, hooded AZ fans attempted to storm into the area reserved for friends and family of the West Ham players and management.

West Ham stars including Michail Antonio, Said Benrahma, Aaron Cresswell and Flynn Downes climbed over the advertising hoardings in a bid to stop the trouble.

Moyes, whose 87-year-old father was at the match, said: "I can't explain what happened and why it happened.

# Arteta hits back at criticism of Arsenal's title collapse

Mikel Arteta insists Arsenal 'will not bottle' Premier League title despite losing lead

● Arteta says Arsenal have made strong steps no matter how title race ends

AFP | London

Mikel Arteta insists Arsenal deserve respect for their unexpected Premier League title challenge despite the collapse that allowed Manchester City to move into pole position.

City will be crowned champions if second placed Arsenal lose at Nottingham Forest on Saturday or if the leaders beat Chelsea on Sunday.

One win from their final three games is enough for City to take the title for a fifth time in six seasons.

It is a bitter pill to swallow for Arteta after his team led the title race for much of the season.

The Gunners have endured criticism of their failure to hold off City, with last weekend's dismal 3-0 defeat against Brighton sparking questions about the character of Arteta's squad.

But, in a thinly-veiled dig at their detractors, Arsenal boss Arteta said his team had surpassed expectations by pushing



Manchester City's Spanish manager Pep Guardiola (L) and Arsenal's Spanish manager Mikel Arteta watch the players from the touchline (file photo)

treble-chasers City so hard.

"We have shown this season," Arteta replied when asked if Arsenal can be title contenders again next season.

"We're still there, with two games to go (City have three as they have a game in hand) we can still be champions against probably the best team in Premier League history.

"For 10 months we're still there. There's two games still to go and we're not going to bottle that for sure.

”

We're still there, with two games to go (City have three as they have a game in hand) we can still be champions against probably the best team in Premier League history. For 10 months we're still there. There's two games still to go and we're not going to bottle that for sure

MIKEL ARTETA

YOU KNOW WHAT

The Gunners have endured criticism of their failure to hold off City, with last weekend's dismal 3-0 defeat against Brighton sparking questions about the character of Arteta's squad

tion," he said.

"We want to be better and the rest will be better, then the margins will be higher and we have to start to live with those standards and improve and be smarter."

Meanwhile, Arteta said discussions over the future of Granit Xhaka will wait until the end of the season.

Xhaka is approaching the final 12 months of his contract and has been linked with a move to Bayer Leverkusen.

The Switzerland midfielder played for four years with Borussia Monchengladbach

before he moved to Arsenal in 2016.

"The clarity is there. He is a player that has played I think every minute since I have been the manager," Arteta said.

"He is an incredibly respected figure at the club. Whatever happens is something we will discuss, certainly not now."

Arsenal duo Oleksandr Zinchenko (calf) and Gabriel Martinelli (ankle) will not feature again this season.

"Gabi's is a pretty nasty injury, we need to assess in the next week how long he'll be out for," Arteta said.

## Leeds boss Allardyce hopes Hammers' eyes are on European final

AFP | London

Sam Allardyce hopes West Ham, having reached the Europa Conference League final, will play safe when they face his relegation-threatened Leeds side on Sunday.

The 68-year-old veteran manager, brought in as a last-ditch effort for Leeds to avoid the drop due to reputation for keeping sides up, desperately needs three points this weekend.

Victory over West Ham, who



Sam Allardyce

in contrast to their European campaign have struggled in the Premier League this season, would keep Leeds's hopes alive of saving their Premier League status for a second successive season on the final day.

Leeds are third from bottom and involved in a four team dogfight battling to avoid being one of the two teams to join already relegated Southampton in the Championship next term.

Allardyce's side are a point adrift of Everton and three shy

of Nottingham Forest with two matches remaining.

Leicester are second from bottom, four points off safety.

Leeds face a Hammers side -- one of innumerable clubs Allardyce has managed in the past -- who are on a high after beating Dutch side AZ Alkmaar on Thursday to reach their first major final since 1976. Allardyce was in no doubt when asked at his pre-match press conference yesterday what result had suited him the most.

## Marquinhos extends PSG contract to 2028

AFP | London

Paris Saint-Germain captain and Brazil defender Marquinhos has extended his contract until 2028, the club announced yesterday.

"The 29-year-old Brazilian defender and the Red and Blue will continue their adventure together until June 30, 2028," Qatari-owned PSG said yesterday in a statement.

Marquinhos joined the club from Roma in 2013 when he was just 19. He has become an indispensable part of the PSG set-up and was a member of the side that reached the 2020 Champions League final.

"I am very happy to announce this contract extension but also very proud," said Marquinhos.



Marquinhos

"This is a very special moment for me," he added, saying he was "convinced that we will continue to achieve great things together in the years to come".

With Lionel Messi on the point of leaving and speculation surrounding the futures of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe, the decision of Marquinhos to throw his weight behind PSG has been welcomed by the club.

## Injury-cursed Jones to leave Man Utd after 12 years

AFP | London

Injury-plagued defender Phil Jones will leave Manchester United at the end of the season after 12 years with the Old Trafford club.

United announced yesterday Jones' troubled time in Manchester will end when his contract expires in June.

The 31-year-old, who joined from Blackburn in 2011, played 229 times, scoring six goals for



Manchester United's Phil Jones reacts during a match (file photo)

United and helping them win one Premier League title, an FA Cup and the Europa League.

Jones, who is yet to decide whether he will carry on playing, wrote on Twitter: "It's not a time to be sad. It's a time to look back, for me and my family, and be happy that I managed to live

a dream at United.

"I can always say to my family and friends that not many people get to play for this club, to always be in its history and to be able to look back with such happy memories."

Jones has not played in over a year and managed only 13 ap-

pearances since the start of the 2019-20 season.

"I wish I could have played more. I wish I could have given more to the many squads I played alongside," he said.

"I will say, from the bottom of my heart, I did everything I could. I've said before that I found it hard to even speak to my team-mates because I was hurt that I couldn't help them

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13 appearances could only be managed by Jones since the start of the 2019-20 season and has not played in over a year

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# Sunbirds, Police lead the way!

Japanese, Qatari clubs stay undefeated and headline semi-finalists in 2023 Asian Men’s Club Volleyball Championship in Bahrain

● **Japan’s Suntory Sunbirds to face Shahdab Yazd of Iran in semi-finals**

● **Qatar’s Police Sports Team to play Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi of Indonesia**

TDT | Manama

Japan’s Suntory Sunbirds and Qatar’s Police Sports Team headline today’s semi-finalists in the 2023 Asian Men’s Club Volleyball Championship, currently being hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Sunbirds and Police both won their respective quarter-final pools yesterday and head into the knockouts as the only unbeaten teams remaining in the competition.

The Sunbirds will take on Shahdab Yazd of Iran in a mouth-watering final four encounter, while Police will face Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi of Indonesia in the other game.

Both contests highlight today’s exciting programme at Isa Sports City in Riffa. The day’s action is scheduled to begin from 11.30am and continue until the night, with the last fixtures set for 7pm starts. Entrance is free to all games.

The Sunbirds secured first place in quarter-final Pool E after taking care of business against Bhayangkara. Russian Dmitriy Muserskiy had a game-high 17 points for the Japanese while Cuban Alain Junior de Armas chipped in with 15.

“This was a great victory,” said de Armas. “We are doing a great



Al Ahli's Mohammed Yaqoob looks to score against the Thais

### Semi-Finals and Classification Brackets

**SEMI-FINALS:** Suntory Sunbirds (Japan), Shahdab Yazd (Iran), Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi (Indonesia), Police Sports Team (Qatar)

**5th-8th:** Korean Air Jumbos Pro-Volleyball Club (Korea), Kuwait Sports Club (Kuwait), Bayankhongor Crownd Geo VC (Mongolia), South Gas Sports Club (Iraq)

**9th-12th:** Al Ahli (Bahrain), Canberra Heat (Australia), Atyrau VC (Kazakhstan), Taichung Bank (Chinese Taipei)

**13th-16th:** Diamond Food Fine Chef-Air Force (Thailand), Khaypil Sports Club (Yemen), Kam Air (Afghanistan), Aspiring Volleyball Team (Hong Kong, China)

job. I hope we keep this up until the finals. We are in great shape but I think that we can do better and everyone is giving their best on the court.

“Whoever we face in the semi-finals is strong. But we have come to play and to win. We respect everyone, but we expect to win.”

Daudi Okello from Uganda scored 14 points to pace the Indonesians in the setback, while Farhan Halim finished with nine markers.

“We lost today to a stronger team and a more composed team than us,” said Okello. “We hope that tomorrow we play our A game. We need to work on our

serve and receive, and even our blocking is still shaky.

“All of us in the semi-finals are good teams. We’ve fought so hard to be in the top four. It doesn’t matter who comes our way, we are ready to flex.”

Qatar’s Police won their Pool F fixture against Shahdab in a five-set thriller that went nearly two-and-a-half hours. The Qataris won the opening set but then conceded the next two, before roaring back for a scintillating 3-2 (25-20, 22-25, 22-25, 25-23, 15-12) result.

Croatian Petar Dirlic had 26 points to lead Police, while Nikola Vasic added 17 and Youssef Oughlaf 12. For the Shahdab,

”  
All of us in the semi-finals are good teams. We’ve fought so hard to be in the top four. It doesn’t matter who comes our way, we are ready to flex

DAUDI OKELLO

Amir Ghafour scored 18 and Meisam Salehi chipped in with 14.

Dirlic said post-game: “Even though we’ve already qualified for the semi-finals, we knew it was a really important game for us and we wanted to continue our winning streak.

“We believe that whoever we have to play against in the semi-finals, we are the better team, and we’re trying to show this in each match.”

In yesterday’s other quarter-final Pool E clash, Korean Air Jumbos Pro-Volleyball Club defeated Mongolia’s Bayankhongor Crownd Geo VC 3-1 (25-21, 22-25, 25-16, 25-19). Hanyong Jeong scored 22 points while Jun Lee added 14. For the Mongolians, Khangal Tamiraa was the top scorer with 19 points, while Bayarsaikhan Batsukh contributed 13 in the loss.

South Gas Sports Club of Iraq followed suit in Pool F with a 3-0 (25-21, 25-21, 25-19) victory over Kuwait Sports Club. Serbian Nikola Meljanac top scored with 18 points while Bulgarian Todor Skrimov finished with 15 for the Iraqis. For Kuwait, Russian Roman Danilov had 16 points and Iranian Saber Kazemi and Omar Abdulrahman Alenezi both finished with six.

Jumbos are set to take on Kuwait while Bayankhongor face



Japan's Suntory Sunbirds team celebrate their win

South Gas today in fifth-to-eighth placement games.

### Consolation pools

Bahrain’s Al Ahli Club completed their consolation Pool G campaign with a resounding 3-0 (25-19, 25-23, 25-20) victory.

Mohammed Anan impressed with a game-high 23 points while Mohammed Yaqoob added 16. Chaiwat Thungkham paced the Thais with 14 and Brazilian Evandro Dias de Souza contributed 13 markers.

The Bahrainis wrapped up this stage with the full nine points from three games and are now headed for the ninth-to-12th placement bracket in their final two assignments of the championship.

There, they will be joined by Australia’s Canberra Heat, who defeated Khaypil Sports Club of Yemen 3-1 (25-18, 16-25, 25-16, 25-23) in today’s other Pool G affair. Matthew Aubrey scored 23 points while Trent O’Dea had 17. Gamal Khairalah finished with 26 points for the Yemenis while Egyptian Essa Mohamed Elhossiny scored 15.

The Yemenis will contend for places 13 to 16, along with the Thais.

Also in the ninth-to-12th placement bracket are Atyrau VC of Kazakhstan Taichung Bank from Chinese Taipei.

The Kazakhs defeated their Taichung rivals 3-1 (35-33, 20-25, 25-20, 31-29) in a tightly contested consolation Pool H clash last night. Zhaxsylyk Tleulin had 23 points and Vitaliy Vorivodin chipped in with 23 in the victory. Yu-Sheng Chang had a fine performance of 35 points in the losing effort, while Rayshon Jackman had 12. With the result, the Kazakhs topped Pool H.

In the group’s other match yesterday, Kam Air of Afghanistan defeated Aspiring Volleyball Team from Hong Kong, China 3-0 (25-23, 25-17, 25-12). Ghulam Rasool Hidari scored 15 points while Sayed Habib Yousufi had 12 for the Afghans. Yin Chun Lee was the top scorer for Aspiring with 11, while Chi Leung Poon added 10 markers.

Despite their win, Kam Air are set to compete for 13th through 16th places, along with Aspiring.



Qatar Sports Team after their victory

### Today’s Schedule

#### COURT 1

11.30am: Korean Air Jumbos Pro-Volleyball Club (Korea) vs Kuwait Sports Club (Kuwait)

2pm: Bayankhongor Crownd Geo VC (Mongolia) vs South Gas Sports Club (Iraq)

4.30pm: Suntory Sunbirds (Japan) vs Shahdab Yazd (Iran)

7pm: Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi (Indonesia) vs Police Sports Team (Qatar)

#### COURT 2

11.30am: Khaypil Sports Club (Yemen) vs Kam Air (Afghanistan)

2pm: Diamond Food Fine Chef-Air Force (Thailand) vs Aspiring Volleyball Team (Hong Kong, China)

4.30pm: Al Ahli (Bahrain) vs Taichung Bank (Chinese Taipei)

7pm: Canberra Heat (Australia) vs Atyrau VC (Kazakhstan)



Canberra Heat’s Kevin Phang hits a spike against Yemen’s Khaypil

## Lampard told Chelsea to sign Haaland before Man City star’s rise

AFP | London

Frank Lampard tried to persuade Chelsea to sign Erling Haaland before the Manchester City star established himself as the world’s most feared striker.

Haaland can fire City to the Premier League title when the leaders host Chelsea on Sunday.

The 22-year-old has enjoyed an incredible season with 52 goals in all competitions, including a record 36 in the Premier League.

Lampard got a glimpse of

Haaland’s potential during his first spell in charge of Chelsea when he came up against the young Norwegian in a pre-season friendly while he was playing for RB Salzburg in 2019.

Haaland scored 28 goals in 22 matches that season, but stiff competition for his signature, combined with the fact not everybody at Chelsea was convinced about him, meant Lampard was left frustrated.

He eventually signed for Borussia Dortmund in 2020 and

”  
I was really keen to get him here but obviously that couldn’t happen. His level at that point was very clear, we played against him in a pre-season game for Salzburg. I think he’s special, I thought he’d adapt straight away just because of his level

FRANK LAMPARD

moved to City two years later after shining in the Bundesliga.

“I’ve got huge respect for him as a player, he’s a player I tried to bring to Chelsea the first time I was here,” Lampard told reporters yesterday.

“I was really keen to get him here but obviously that couldn’t happen. His level at that point was very clear, we played against him in a pre-season game for Salzburg.

“I think he’s special, I thought he’d adapt straight away just because of his level.”



Manchester City’s Norwegian striker Erling Haaland (C) headers the ball clear during a match against Chelsea (file photo)