

Muharrag Clinch Khalifa bin Salman Cup

Red Wolves roar into history to tie Manama and Al Ahli with 3 titles | P16

TUESDAY
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THE DAILY **tribune**

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Al Salam Bank resumes full operations across all branches

Alert: Brace for unstable weather until Friday

TDT | Manama

Bahrain is expected to experience unstable weather conditions through Friday, according to the Meteorological Directorate at the Ministry of Transportation and Communications.

The forecast includes scattered to thundery rain affecting various parts of the Kingdom.

Early yesterday, most areas were affected by thunderstorms accompanied by strong to very high wind gusts.

Authorities have urged residents and motorists to exercise caution.

Drivers are advised to follow traffic rules, while citizens should secure loose objects, avoid flooded roads, stay clear of trees and billboards, and call 999 for emergency assistance.

Palestine backs Bahrain security and stability



H.E. Dr. Al Zayani

TDT | Manama

Bahrain and the State of Palestine discussed regional developments, including the ongoing Iranian attacks targeting the Kingdom and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states.

They also examined the implications of these developments for regional security, stability, and Arab national security.

The Palestinian side reaffirmed its solidarity with Bahrain and expressed support for measures undertaken to safeguard the Kingdom's sovereignty, security, and stability.

This discussion took place during a phone call between His Excellency Dr. Abdulatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Hussein Al Sheikh, Vice President of Palestine.



Frontline heroes

Cabinet commends security forces for safeguarding Kingdom against Iranian aggression

TDT | Manama

The Cabinet has praised Bahrain's "frontliners" for their crucial role in safeguarding the Kingdom and preserving its security and stability amid ongoing Iranian aggression.

An extraordinary Cabinet meeting was chaired yesterday by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

The Cabinet extended its appreciation to the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), the National Guard, the Ministry of Interior, and other military, security, and civil authorities for their efficiency, high level of readiness, and decisive actions.

It also reiterated its condemnation of hostile Iranian acts, emphasising adherence to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2817, which calls for an immediate end to attacks on Arabian Gulf states and Jordan, and affirms their inherent right to defend their territories.

In addition to recognising the armed and civil forces, the Cabinet also commended the national workforce within Team Bahrain across various sectors, and their dedicated efforts in serving the Kingdom and addressing diverse challenges with professionalism and efficiency.

The Cabinet also highlighted the unity and solidarity of citizens and residents under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. It commended the outcomes of HM King Hamad's meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, highlighting the importance of the Jordanian Monarch's visit in further advancing the long-standing relations and joint efforts between the two countries. The Cabinet also welcomed the outcomes of HM the King's meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi, underscoring the significance of his visit in strengthening the deep-rooted ties, as well as enhancing cooperation and joint efforts between the two countries.



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister chairs the extraordinary Cabinet meeting

dressing diverse challenges with professionalism and efficiency.

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It commended the outcomes of HM King Hamad's meeting

with His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, highlighting the importance of the Jordanian Monarch's visit in further advancing the long-standing relations and joint efforts between the two countries. The Cabinet also welcomed

the outcomes of HM the King's meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi, underscoring the significance of his visit in strengthening the deep-rooted ties, as well as enhancing cooperation and joint efforts between the two countries.



The Cabinet reiterated its condemnation of hostile Iranian acts, emphasising adherence to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2817, which calls for an immediate end to attacks on Arabian Gulf states and Jordan.

The Cabinet expressed its sincere appreciation to GCC states and allied countries for their cooperation during this time, underscoring the importance of these relations in light of current developments.

It also commended their solidarity and international diplomatic engagement in support of Bahrain in confronting the hostile Iranian aggression, which constitutes a violation of international law.

UN weighs resolution

Protecting navigation in Hormuz

AFP | United Nations

The UN Security Council is negotiating on a draft resolution to authorise states to use "all necessary means" to ensure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, diplomatic sources said yesterday.

The draft text, seen by AFP, also demands that Iran "immediately cease all attacks against merchant and commercial vessels and any attempt to impede lawful transit passage or freedom of navigation" in and around the Strait.

Just a trickle of cargo ships and tankers, most of them Iranian, have made it through the

About a fifth of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas pass through the Strait.

Strait since Iran effectively blocked it in response to US-Israeli attacks on the country that began three weeks ago. Normally, about a fifth of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas pass through the Strait.

The draft resolution proposes allowing member states "to use all necessary means" - including within the territorial waters of littoral states within or

bordering the Strait - "to secure transit passage and to repress, neutralize and deter attempts to close, obstruct or otherwise interfere with international navigation" there.

The draft also threatens targeted sanctions against those who "undermine navigational rights and freedoms" in the Strait.

The resolution text could be modified during the negotiations among member states in the 15-member council, the UN's highest decision-making body.

Its chances of approval by the council, where the five permanent members have veto power, remain unclear.

Kingdom advancing weather services for public safety

TDT | Manama

On World Meteorological Day, observed annually on March 23, His Excellency Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, said that the Kingdom of Bahrain continues to enhance meteorological services and strengthen monitoring capabilities to support public safety and preparedness.

He noted that Bahrain is developing early warning systems and advancing monitoring capabilities in line with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030, adding that investment in observation systems sup-



H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla

ports long term safety and sustainability.

He said meteorological services support key sectors, including aviation and maritime navigation, by providing data to support decision making under different weather conditions.

Kanoo experience, diverse team 'key' to Chamber future

TDI | Manama

Yousuf Salahuddin, a candidate representing the Sustainability Bloc in the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), has highlighted the bloc's confidence in its leadership and its commitment to advancing the Kingdom's business environment through experience, inclusivity and innovation.

He said the bloc takes pride in being led by Nabeel Khalid Kanoo, citing his extensive track

record within the Chamber and his roots in a prominent merchant family that has played a significant role in Bahrain's economic development.

Salahuddin noted that Kanoo began his career at the Chamber on August 1, 1979, as an economic researcher, before rising through the ranks over 27 years to become Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

Expertise

He described the Chamber as a "professional school" that



Yousuf Salahuddin

helped shape Kanoo's expertise and economic vision.

The candidate added that the Sustainability Bloc brings together seasoned professionals and young talent, creating a balance between experience and fresh ideas.

This combination, he said, strengthens the bloc's ability to address future challenges while promoting sustainable growth.

Enterprises

The bloc, he explained, represents a broad cross-section of

the business community, with a strong presence from small, medium and micro enterprises.

This diversity reflects its commitment to ensuring that the voices of merchants across all sectors are heard within the Chamber and at the government level, contributing to the development of a more inclusive business environment.

Influence

On women's participation, Salahuddin underscored their growing influence within the

Chamber, noting that women account for approximately 42.5 per cent of total membership.

He described this as a testament to ongoing national efforts to empower Bahraini women, enabling them to assume leadership roles and actively contribute to economic development.

Salahuddin also acknowledged the institutional support provided by the Supreme Council of Women and the leadership of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa in advancing this progress.

Modern vision for Muharraq

Alalawi proposes digital transformation to boost historic market

BCCI elections

TDI | Manama

Nayef Tawfeeq Ismaeel Mahmood Alalawi, a candidate for the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), has outlined an ambitious vision to modernise the historic Muharraq Market through digital transformation, following a field visit to the site.

During the visit, Alalawi met with prominent businessman Fouad Shuwaier to discuss strategies for enhancing the market's future amid rapid technological advancements in the commercial sector, both locally and globally.



Nayef Alalawi, centre

Alalawi emphasised the need to strike a balance between preserving heritage and embracing innovation, noting that supporting Muharraq's merchants requires a comprehensive plan centred on digital adoption.

Tools

He stressed that equipping Bahraini traders with modern technological tools is no longer

optional, but essential to maintaining competitiveness and attracting today's consumers.

Among the key proposals presented was the development of an integrated digital payment system, encouraging the widespread use of electronic payment solutions and digital wallets across all shops in the market.

The move aims to streamline

transactions and enhance convenience for both residents and tourists.

Alalawi also proposed the launch of a "Digital Muharraq" platform – an online marketplace that would enable vendors to showcase and sell their products beyond the physical boundaries of the historic souq, opening new commercial opportunities.

انتخابات
غرفة البحرين
BAHRAIN CHAMBER
ELECTIONS
2026



قائمة المترشحين Candidates List

غرفة البحرين
BAHRAIN CHAMBER

<p>بقوانداس جيلارام تيكامداس ثاكر BHAGWAN DAS CHELLARAM TIKAMDAS THAKER</p> <p>4</p>	<p>السيد سلمان محمد مصطفى العلوي SAYED SALMAN MOHAMED MUSTAFA ALALAWI</p> <p>3</p>	<p>احمد صباح سلمان السلوم AHMED SABAH SALMAN ALSALLOOM</p> <p>2</p>	<p>ابراهيم عبدعلي عيسى الدعيسي EBRAHIM ABDALI ISA ALDAAYSI</p> <p>1</p>
<p>خالد عبدالرحمن محمد جمعه KHALID ABDULRAHMAN MOHAMED JUMA</p> <p>8</p>	<p>حمد جاسم ابراهيم حربى HAMAD JASIM EBRAHIM HARBI</p> <p>7</p>	<p>حسن بدر احمد سلمان كيكسو HASAN BADER AHMED SALMAN KAIKSOW</p> <p>6</p>	<p>جميل يوسف احمد الغناه JAMEEL YUSUF AHMED ALGHANAH</p> <p>5</p>
<p>سوسن ابوالحسن محمد ابراهيم SAWSAN ABUALHASAN MOHAMED EBRAHIM</p> <p>12</p>	<p>رشاد ابراهيم محمد علي زينل RASHAD EBRAHIM MOHAMED ALI ZAINAL</p> <p>11</p>	<p>دنيا عبدالكريم حسين ميرزا فخروري DONYA ABDULKARIM HUSAIN MERZA FAKHRAWI</p> <p>10</p>	<p>خالد علي يوسف عبدالرحمن KHALID ALI YUSUF ABDULRAHMAN</p> <p>9</p>
<p>عبير طارق عبدالرحمن المؤيد ABEER TAREQ ABDULRAHMAN ALMOAYED</p> <p>16</p>	<p>عبدالوهاب يوسف عبدالوهاب الحواج ABDULWAHAB YUSUF ABDULWAHAB ALHAWAJ</p> <p>15</p>	<p>شاكر ميرزا يوسف احمد الحلي SHAKER MERZA YUSUF AHMED ALHELHI</p> <p>14</p>	<p>سونيا محمد محمد عبدالله جناحي SONYA MOHAMED MOHAMED ABDULLA JANAH</p> <p>13</p>
<p>محمد نادر محمد حسن دواني MOHAMED NADER MOHAMED HASAN DAWANI</p> <p>20</p>	<p>محمد عبدالجبار محمود الكوهجي MOHAMED ABDULJABBAR MAHMOOD ALKOHEJI</p> <p>19</p>	<p>محمد عادل عبدالله فخروري MOHAMED ADEL ABDULLA FAKHRO</p> <p>18</p>	<p>علي جعفر علي عبدالله العصفور ALI JAAFAR ALI ABDULLA ALASFOOR</p> <p>17</p>
<p>نواف خالد راشد الشيخ عبدالرحمن الزياتي NAWAF KHALID RASHID SH.ABDULRAHMAN ALZAYANI</p> <p>24</p>	<p>نبيل خالد محمد كانو NABEEL KHALED MOHAMED KANOO</p> <p>23</p>	<p>نايف توفيق اسماعيل محمود العلوي NAYEF TAWFEEQ ISMAEEL MAHMOOD ALALAWI</p> <p>22</p>	<p>نادية عبدالرحمن قمبر محمد العمر NADIA ABDULRAHMAN QAMBER MOHAMED ALOMAR</p> <p>21</p>
<p>يوسف صلاح الدين ابراهيم صلاح الدين YOUSUF SALAHUDDIN EBRAHIM SALAHUDDIN</p> <p>27</p>	<p>ياسر حمزه علي ال رحمة YASER HAMZA ALI ALRAHMA</p> <p>26</p>	<p>وهيب احمد محمد امين الخاجة WAHEEB AHMED MOHAMED AMEEN ALKHAJA</p> <p>25</p>	

Reposting fake content 'punishable' under law

Freedom of opinion and expression protected but not absolute: Cybercrime Prosecution head

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Sharing or reposting false, hateful or fabricated material online can leave users open to prosecution in Bahrain, with each repost treated as a separate publication offence, Zahra Murad, Head of the Cybercrime Prosecution, said during an appearance on Bahrain TV.

Murad said freedom of opinion and expression is protected under Article 23 of Bahrain's Constitution and recognised in international instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

But she said the right is not absolute and must be exercised within limits laid down by the Constitution and the law, with-

out infringing the foundations of the Islamic faith, the unity of the people, national security or public order.

Information

Before posting or sharing material, users should check that the information is true, verify its source and make sure the content does not carry hate speech or any form of incitement, she said.

Freedom of expression ends, she added, when harm begins to public security or civil peace.

Murad said Bahrain's Penal Code punishes the publication of false news that harms public security, along with the making and circulation of fake images that damage the public interest.

Stirring hatred against, or contempt for, a given sect is also a crime, she said, because it can

harm civil peace, with penalties reaching up to two years in prison.

She said the law draws no line between the person who creates unlawful content and the person who republishes it.

Anyone who posts or reposts a video, audio clip, image or text is taken to have adopted its content and can be treated as a principal offender if the material harms public order, public morals or public security.

Each act of publication, she said, stands as its own offence.

Murad said Bahrain's criminal law contains a full section dealing with crimes against internal security, adding that offences linked to false news carry added weight under the current exceptional circumstances.

In such conditions, she said, care in publishing and sharing



“Freedom of expression ends when harm begins to public security or civil peace.”

— ZAHRA MURAD

material is both a legal duty and a national one.

She said the Cybercrime Prosecution was created in November 2022 by decision of Attorney General Dr Ali bin Fadhel Al Buainain to deal with new forms of digital crime, including cases tied to social media, which often draw wide public interest.

Cases

Prosecutors handling such cases act independently and are governed by the law alone, she said, not by the noise of social media. When the legal elements of an offence are made out, the law is applied.

When they are absent, no crime arises and innocence remains the starting point.

Murad said the Public Prosecution is dealing firmly with cases affecting public order, na-

tional security and internal security, adding that this stems from its duty to protect society under the powers granted to it by law.

She also pointed to crimes linked to artificial intelligence, including deepfake videos and images falsely attributed to real people.

The Cybercrime Prosecution handles such cases through a method that includes examining the facts, giving the act its legal character, questioning suspects and witnesses, and working with specialist technical bodies, she said.

She referred in particular to the Ministry of Interior's Cybercrime Directorate and its technical laboratory, which examines fabricated clips and prepares reports to determine if the material can be linked to those accused of making or circulating it.

Lawmaker calls for curb on misleading online accounts

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Online accounts are not beyond the law, MP Jalal Kadhem said.

He urged people to stay clear of baiting posts and take news on regional and world affairs from state media and approved newspapers.

He said some accounts, in Bahrain and abroad, post misleading material under headings that do not match what follows, or push claims that do not come from approved state sources.

Their aim, he said, is to stir rows, draw comments and pull people into exchanges that can do them harm.

“There is no immunity for online accounts from the law,” he said. “Official national media is the reference point.”

Warning

Kadhem warned against rushed, emotional replies to online provocation, saying they can hand such accounts exactly what they seek.

A careless word, he said, can inflame disputes and drive deeper splits in society.

He said good sense lies in knowing what deserves an answer and what should be ignored.

Holding back, and dealing with such material in a calm way, shows awareness and a sense of duty, he said.

Kadhem also said some account holders try to dodge blame with lines such as, “The account is not responsible for comments.”



Image used for illustrative purposes only



“Keeping the country safe and stable is a shared duty that calls for public awareness and people pulling together.”

— MP JALAL KADHEM

That, he said, does not remove legal liability.

Those who run such platforms still bear responsibility for what appears on them, above all where posts stir discord or harm the public.

He said Parliament had agreed the Press and Digital Media Law, and called for it to

be enforced on all without exception, so rights are kept and the media and online sphere are brought under clear rules that serve the public good.

Hope

Kadhem also voiced hope that the state bodies concerned would act against unofficial accounts that waded into news coverage of regional and international matters, saying they have a direct effect on public opinion.

He urged people to rely on official sources, approved newspapers and national media so that false or misleading reports do not spread further.

The lawmaker said comments and posts on social media do not sit outside legal scrutiny, and warned that a word or remark can leave its writer facing legal action under the laws and rules in force, chiefly where it includes abuse, oversteps the mark, or harms others or social peace.

Kadhem called for anyone who helps spread discord or push misleading content to be held to account.



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Lawmakers back Government, expand diplomatic efforts

MP Al Salloom: We're starting to see many countries support Bahrain's stance and the wider region

Bahraini MPs use links with other parliaments to explain events in the Kingdom

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Parliament has stood with the government over the steps taken during the exceptional conditions facing the Kingdom of Bahrain and the wider region, Ahmed Al Salloom said.

He added that the chamber has also used its ties with foreign legislatures to press Bahrain's case abroad.

Al Salloom, chairman of the Financial and Economic Affairs

Committee, said Parliament's work in this period had gone beyond passing the laws needed for the stage now facing Bahrain.

The lawmaker said it had also turned to parliamentary diplomacy, using its links with other parliaments to explain events in the Kingdom and make clear what kind of support was being sought.

Decision

"In Parliament we support every measure and every decision the government has taken in these exceptional circumstances facing Bahrain and the region as a whole," he said. "Our role is to support them through the laws they need and through shaping the decisions required at this stage."



"Today, Parliament is the pulse of the street and the voice of the people."

— MP AHMED AL SALLOOM

He said those efforts abroad had begun to show results.

"These parliaments help shape decision-making and help win support from other states," he said.

"We have seen that the work we carried out through this parliamentary diplomacy has begun to bear fruit, and we are starting to see many countries support Bahrain's stance and the wider region as well."

Force

Al Salloom said Parliament drew its weight from speaking for the public, with its statements and positions carrying force beyond the chamber itself.

"Today, Parliament is the pulse of the street and the voice of the people," he said. "Every decision it takes, every statement it

issues and every show of support it gives counts as support for Bahrain as a whole, because MPs represent the people and represent the government."

He said that when Parliament spoke, explained its view or took a stand, other countries and friendly legislatures treated that as a public view rather than a personal one.

Membership

"These positions are respected by other states, by friendly parliaments and by the parliaments in which we hold membership," he said.

"They take these decisions into account and pass them on to their governments, and they then become shared decisions from which all sides benefit and which all sides support."

Businessman jailed and fined over tax evasion case

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court sentenced a businessman

to five years in prison and fined him BD247,559,551, in addition to requiring him to pay the equivalent value-added tax (VAT) he evaded. It also ordered his deportation following the completion of his sentence.

Bahraini Youth Day media initiatives set for launch

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Youth Affairs, in cooperation with Bahrain Commercial Facilities Company, will launch media initiatives to mark Bahraini Youth Day on March 25, 2026, highlighting the role of Bahraini youth in development.

The initiatives include video content showcasing youth contributions across sectors, with a focus on frontline workers and themes of national cohesion and collective responsibility, as well as a social experiment reflecting values of inclusion and belonging, and content presenting youth experiences and their engagement in national development.

Her Excellency Rawan bint Najeeb Tawfiqi, Minister of Youth Affairs, said the initia-



"The initiatives aim to strengthen youth participation in development and highlight their role in supporting national stability and social cohesion."

— H.E. RAWAN BINT NAJEEB TAWFIQI,
MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

tives aim to strengthen youth participation in development and highlight their role in supporting national stability and social cohesion.

Abdulla Abdulrazaq Bukhawa, Chief Executive of Bahrain Commercial Facilities Company,

said the initiatives contribute to highlighting youth capabilities and their role in development and community stability.

The initiatives aim to utilise media to highlight youth contributions and strengthen their role in development.

'Thief and fraudster of electronic devices'

MP urges victims in sales case to come forward

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

MP Hamad Al Doy said a formal complaint will be filed with the Public Prosecution next week over an electronics instalment sales case he says is still harming people, and urged those affected to contact him at once.

In a social media post yesterday, Al Doy said the file concerning what he called the "thief and fraudster of electronic devices" had not been closed.

He said some people had lost their full salary, while others had seen debts pile up and had



"Some people had lost their full salary, while others had seen debts pile up and had even lost their homes."

— MP HAMAD AL DOY

even lost their homes. His remarks came after he

and four other MPs tabled an urgent proposal calling for stronger oversight of instalment selling, especially in electronics shops, and for legal action against those found to be in breach.

Al Doy said complaints had also risen over unclear contracts, poor disclosure of the real cash price against the instalment price, and a lack of clarity over profit rates, admin fees and late-payment fines.

He said electronic devices are now basic consumer goods, and that weak regulation of instalment sales could leave buyers with debts beyond their means, harming the financial stability of individuals and families.

Poor disclosure and unclear contract wording, he added, could also lead to legal disputes and weaken trust in the market.



BEYON B.S.C. Annual General Assembly Meeting Reminder

Respected Shareholders,

We would like to remind you that the Company's Annual General Assembly Meeting will take place on Tuesday, 31 March 2026 at 10 AM virtually via eAGM Portal.

(<https://eagm.bahrainclear.com/en/>)

Important notes:

- Shareholders must register or submit the proxy form electronically at least 24 hours prior to the meeting through the same portal.
- Approved shareholders and proxy holders will receive their login credentials via SMS and email prior to the meeting.
- Please note that the registration is open on the eAGM Portal.
- Any proxies that have already been submitted prior to this announcement should follow the instructions available on the eAGM Portal.

For assistance with registration or accessing the meeting, shareholders may contact the support team using the contact details available on the eAGM platform.

For inquiries, please contact: +973 32101109 or via email: GBS@beyon.com



Hands helping hands

Filipino community delivers meals, essentials, and hope to fellow workers in need

TDT | Manama

In the face of uncertainty, Filipinos in Bahrain are rallying together, embodying the enduring spirit of unity and collective action during times of need.

Through volunteerism, generosity, and coordinated grassroots efforts, members of the community are delivering not just food and essentials, but also hope to fellow Filipinos grappling with financial and employment challenges.

From the preparation of daily meals to the distribution of essential goods, these initiatives have become a lifeline for many affected by disrupted work conditions.

Across the Kingdom, individuals, community groups, and small businesses have stepped forward, ensuring that no one is left behind during this period of instability.

Responders

Among the earliest responders were Indian-Filipino couple King and Gab, who mobilized quickly to assist “no work, no pay” employees impacted by the ongoing crisis.

Beginning on the first day, the pair led efforts to cook and distribute freshly prepared lunch packs to displaced workers. Their initiative soon expanded to include grocery distributions for Filipinos staying in evacuation shelters or unable to work.

Each relief package contains staple items such as 10 kilograms of rice, a tray of eggs, canned goods, and other necessities designed to sustain recipients through difficult days.

Motivation

Speaking about the effort, Gab emphasized the deeply personal



motivation behind their work, noting that empathy and shared experience continue to drive their commitment

Supporting them is a team of dedicated volunteers, including Reggie Gaguete, Yasmin Galope, Rubie D. Belandres, and Cecil Ancheta, who have worked tire-

lessly to prepare and deliver aid. Community organizations have also played a vital role.

Relief

Pinay Ikaw Na (PIN), under the leadership of President Dinah E. Sta. Ana, organized relief distributions across Gudaibiya,



Cooking, packing, and distributing food and groceries to help those in need

Manama, Juffair, and Budaiya, targeting members and homebound individuals unable to earn an income.

Meanwhile, United with Christ (UWC) Bahrain, led by Pastor Virgilio Fernandez, carried out a separate initiative, distributing 100 grocery packs to church members facing financial strain due to limited work opportunities.

These efforts reflect a broader culture of mutual support within

the Filipino diaspora.

Families

Volunteers ensured that aid reached families most in need, reinforcing the importance of solidarity in times of crisis.

Local businesses have likewise stepped up to support the cause. Atarah Eatery and Pastries, led by owner Pilgreg Allaga Baod, collaborated with volunteers to prepare and distribute meals to struggling Filipinos.



Pinay Ikaw Na (PIN), under the leadership of President Dinah E. Sta. Ana, organized relief distributions across Gudaibiya, Manama, Juffair, and Budaiya.

Difference

The initiative demonstrated how even small enterprises can make a meaningful difference when communities come together.

Other establishments, including Nonald's Restaurant, Cyclone Grill, and Shais Restaurant, contributed by providing meals during Iftar, further extending assistance to those in need.

Rare shelf cloud spotted

TDT | Manama

A rare “shelf cloud” formation was observed over Bahrain shortly after midnight, coinciding with the thunderstorm that swept across the Kingdom. This was according to Professor Dr. Wahib Issa Al-Nasser, Professor of Applied Physics.

Speaking to Al-Ayyam, Dr. Al-Nasser said the appearance of the shelf cloud is closely associated with active storm systems and typically signals unstable weather conditions.

He explained that a shelf cloud is a low, dense, arch-shaped formation that stretches horizontally across the sky, resembling a suspended ledge.

Thunderstorms

It usually forms along the leading edge of strong thunderstorms, created by the interaction between warm rising air and cooler descending winds at the storm front.

The cloud remains attached to the base of a cumulonimbus cloud.

Dr. Al-Nasser noted that the presence of such clouds often indicates the imminent arriv-



Dr. Al-Nasser

al of an intense storm front, bringing the likelihood of sudden weather changes, including stronger winds, a drop in temperatures, and heavy rainfall—conditions that were observed across Bahrain.

He added that the phenomenon follows the recent sighting of “mammatus” clouds in the Kingdom’s skies, which form when cold air descends from upper cloud layers.

Unlike shelf clouds, however, mammatus formations do not necessarily signal heavy rainfall, whereas shelf clouds are typically linked to more active and severe thunderstorms.

Thunderstorm brings rain, strong winds across Kingdom

● Kingdom issues safety warnings

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain was hit by a powerful thunderstorm in the early hours of yesterday, bringing heavy rainfall and strong wind gusts that affected most parts of the country.

The conditions, which began around 2am, reflected a broader spell of atmospheric instability that has gripped the Kingdom since dawn.

According to meteorological data, the rain developed as dense cumulonimbus clouds moved across the skies, triggering intense downpours and active winds. The severity of the system gradually eased later in the morning.

The Meteorology Directorate at the Ministry of Transportation and Communications



Early morning rain wets roads, reducing visibility for drivers

confirmed that thunderstorms were recorded across much of the Kingdom.

Visibility

The weather was marked by heightened wind activity and intermittent drops in horizontal visibility, particularly during periods of heavy rain.

Forecasts indicate that scattered showers were likely to continue throughout yesterday

at varying intervals.

Unstable weather conditions are expected to persist until Friday, with the possibility of renewed cloud formation and occasional rainfall.

Authorities have urged caution in response to the adverse conditions.

Call

The General Directorate of Traffic called on motorists to

adhere to speed limits, remain in designated lanes, maintain safe distances, and avoid distractions while driving on wet roads.

Meanwhile, the General Directorate of Civil Defense advised residents to take preventive measures, including securing loose objects, keeping a safe distance from trees and large billboards, and avoiding flooded roads.

Al Salam Bank resumes **full** operations across all branches

Starting tomorrow

Manama

Al Salam Bank has announced that full operations will resume across all its branches, effective Wednesday, following improved conditions. This step reflects the Bank's continued focus on providing seamless and dependable banking experience across all its channels.

All branches will operate during regular working hours, with teams fully prepared to welcome clients and provide support tailored to their financial needs with efficiency and flexibility. This reinforces the Bank's focus on maintaining uninterrupted services while ensuring accessibility and high standards of delivery service.



As part of its ongoing digital transformation, the Bank continues to enhance its digital capabilities, enabling clients to

complete their banking transactions at any time through the Al Salam Bank App or via the Virtual Branch. These channels



offer a convenient and secure way to manage their banking needs without visiting a physical branch.

On this occasion, Mr. Mohamed Buhijji – Chief Executive Officer of Retail Banking at Al Salam Bank, commented:

“At Al Salam Bank, the safety of our clients and employees remains a priority, alongside ensuring uninterrupted access to our banking services.

The return to full operations across all our branches reflects our readiness to serve clients through an integrated banking experience that combines physical presence with advanced digital capabilities, delivering a high-quality and flexible experience aligned with their evolving financial requirements.”

The Bank invites clients to visit its branches or benefit from its digital services available around the clock via the mobile application. For inquiries, clients may contact the Bank via WhatsApp at 17005500.

Two more India-bound tankers **cross** Strait of Hormuz: shipping ministry

AFP | New Delhi, India

Two more Indian-flagged tankers carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) passed through the Strait of Hormuz yesterday, India's shipping ministry said, marking a fresh set of exceptions in the chokepoint disrupted by the Middle East war.

Tehran, following US-Israel military strikes, has all but halted maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, through which about a fifth of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) normally pass.

Jag Vasant and Pine Gas, carrying LPG about 92,000 metric tonnes combined, are likely to reach Indian ports between March 26 and 28, the ministry said in a statement.

Two other Indian LPG tankers had earlier transited through



Picture for representation only

the strait.

India is the world's

fourth-largest buyer of LNG and second-largest buyer of LPG,

which is used for cooking and predominantly sourced from the

Middle East.

As supplies dwindle, New

Delhi has ordered tighter controls over natural and cooking gas following import disruptions.

Earlier Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said New Delhi was in close contact with allies to safeguard supply chains hit by the war.

India maintains strong relations with Tehran but has steadily expanded cooperation with Israel across the defence, agriculture, technology and cybersecurity sectors.

“Our effort is to ensure that ships carrying oil, gas, fertilisers and other essential supplies reach India safely,” Modi told parliament.

“India has opposed attacks on civilian energy transport infrastructure. Attacks on commercial ships and waterways like the Strait of Hormuz are unacceptable.”

Russia, Vietnam advance plans for first nuclear power plant

● Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh was visiting energy-rich Russia as Vietnam seeks to shore up its fuel reserves



A single nuclear fuel pellet—about the size of a fingertip—can produce as much energy as roughly one tonne of coal, 150 gallons of oil, or 17,000 cubic feet of natural gas, thanks to the process of nuclear fission.

AFP | Moscow, Russia

Russia and Vietnam yesterday signed a cooperation agreement on the construction of Vietnam's first nuclear power plant, Russia's Rosatom nuclear agency said on Monday.

Prime Minister Pham Minh

Chinh was visiting energy-rich Russia as Vietnam seeks to shore up its fuel reserves at a time of disruption to energy supplies caused by the war in the Middle East, sparking fears of fuel shortages around the world.

Since the US-Israeli war

against Iran began in late February, the cost of 95-octane petrol and diesel in Vietnam, a manufacturing hub, has soared by 50 percent and 70 percent respectively.

The agreement lays out the legal framework for the construc-

tion of two reactors with a total output of 2400 MW at Vietnam's proposed Ninh Thuan nuclear power plant, Rostam said.

Rosatom head Alexey Likhachev said the agreement would be the “foundation for a long-term industrial partner-

ship, which will strengthen Vietnam's energy independence and open up new opportunities for economic growth”.

No timeline was given for when construction would start or when the plant might come online. Moscow and Hanoi had initially agreed to build the Ninh Thuan 1 atomic power station back in 2010, but later decided to suspend construction.

Another agreement between Russia's top liquefied natural gas (LNG) producer Novatek and a Vietnamese buyer was also signed recently, Novatek's CEO Leonid Mikhelson said on Mon-

day. “We have been in negotiations with potential buyers for over five years, and have very recently signed a preliminary supply agreement with one of them. We are ready to commence deliveries at the earliest opportunity,” he told state broadcaster Rossiya 24, without naming the customer.

Russia and Vietnam have also signed a deal on oil and gas production in both countries, the TASS state news agency reported, citing Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, without giving details.

Oil prices slide, European stocks rebound on Trump's Iran remarks

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Oil prices tumbled and European stock markets rebounded Monday in volatile trading as US President Donald Trump suddenly ordered a halt to strikes on Iranian energy infrastructure after claiming "very good" talks with Tehran.

Crude futures plunged more than 14 percent after Trump's comments on his Truth Social platform, a sharp contrast to his threatening talk over the weekend.

However they later pulled back to trade down around eight percent as Iran denied negotiations had taken place.

"We need to wait for more clarity," UBS commodities analyst Giovanni Staunovo told AFP, as European gas prices declined four percent.

Asian and European stock markets had kicked off the new week with sharp losses. However following Asia's close and Trump's update, European equities rallied. All three of Wall Street's major indices jumped higher at the opening bell and were trading up more than one percent.

Key figures at around 1330 GMT

Brent North Sea Crude:	▼ 8.7% at \$102.42 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▼ 7.8% at \$90.60 per barrel
New York - Dow:	▲ 1.6% at 46,317.10 points
New York - S&P 500:	▲ 1.3% at 6,592.95
Nasdaq Composite:	▲ 1.5% at 21,964.56
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.2% at 9,934.82
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 1.1% at 7,752.37
Frankfurt - DAX:	▲ 1.6% at 22,727.28
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 3.5% at 51,515.49 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▼ 3.5% to 24,382.47 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 3.6% at 3,813.28 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1586 from \$1.1550 on Friday
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3394 from \$1.3323
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 158.67 yen from 159.30 yen
Euro/pound:	▼ at 86.51 pence from 86.68 pence



A cargo ship is moved to a berth at the container terminal at the port in Qingdao, in China's eastern Shandong province

The rebound lost some steam after Iranian media said there had been no talks between Tehran and Washington.

"It's incredibly difficult to trade these markets when Trump is swinging between massive escalation and declaring peace/victory... but the market is happy for now that we do not enter a new phase of danger,"

said Saxo UK investor strategist, Neil Wilson.

Analyst Patrick O'Hare at Briefing.com said the stock market "is reading between the lines of everything and is sensing an off-ramp moment, sooner rather than later."

Ahead of Trump's update, the International Energy Agency warned of the worst global en-

ergy crisis in decades.

Trump on Saturday gave Iran 48 hours to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to shipping or face the destruction of its energy infrastructure.

The ultimatum came as the waterway -- through which a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas flows -- remained effectively closed.

Iran warned Hormuz "will be completely closed" should Trump act on his threat.

Observers have raised the prospect of surging inflation as oil prices remain far above pre-war levels despite Monday's plunge.

This in turn could see central banks hike interest rates, potentially triggering a fresh cost-of-

living crisis.

Disruption to fertiliser shipments has fanned concerns about global food security.

The prospect of higher borrowing costs has hammered the price of non-yielding gold but the precious metal recovered some of its losses after Trump's latest comments, which also reversed the direction of the dollar.

As Wall Street opened for trade, the greenback dropped against the euro, British pound and yen, having earlier risen.

Yields on 10-year government bonds, which have been surging on inflation concerns, pulled back slightly.

"As government bonds... see yields rise, it makes gold less attractive given that gold pays no interest," said Susannah Streeter, chief investment strategist at Wealth Club.

"Investors who have made losses elsewhere in volatile markets are selling to cover positions."

Israel has said the Middle East war could last several more weeks, with its military expanding ground operations in Lebanon against Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah.

What cargo ships are passing Hormuz strait?

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Just a trickle of cargo ships and tankers -- most of them Iranian -- have made it through the Strait of Hormuz since Iranian forces effectively blocked the crucial trade route in the Middle East war.

Here are facts and figures about vessels that have passed through the 167-kilometre (104-mile) long strait since the war broke out with US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28.

95% shipping drop

From March 1 to 0400 GMT on March 23, commodities carriers made just 138 crossings, according to analytics firm Kpler -- a 95% decrease from peacetime.

Of these, 87 crossings were by oil and gas tankers and more than half were loaded, Kpler data showed, with most travelling east out of the strait.

"Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz continues to be severely disrupted," shipping intelligence journal Lloyd's List said in its latest update Monday.

Its editor Richard Meade has noted bulk carriers, tankers and container ships make up most of the traffic.

He said the week to last Thursday saw an "uptick in gas carriers moving" through the maritime chokepoint.

New approved route?

On Monday, three further vessels -- two Indian-flagged tankers carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and a China-bound oil carrier -- became the latest to navigate the strait, according to Kpler's monitoring service MarineTraffic.

The Jag Vasant and Pine Gas,

Countries act to limit fuel price rise, cut consumption

Paris, France

The surge in fuel prices triggered by the war in the Middle East has prompted countries to take measures to limit the financial impact on consumers and businesses.

Countries have also moved to reduce consumption, especially when they have limited reserves.

Here are some of the measures that have been adopted:

Tax cuts and aid

Some countries are targeting the price of fuel in order to limit the impact of the rise of crude oil prices on consumers and businesses.

Spain has launched a five-billion-euro (\$5.8-billion) plan that reduces the value added tax (VAT) on fuel which should result in a reduction of 30 euro cents per litre.

A similar measure is in place in Portugal and has been announced in Sweden.

Since US-Israeli attacks on Iran set off the war on February 28 a number of countries such as Croatia, Hungary, South Korea and Thailand have set price

limits on fuel.

Vietnam has waived customs duties on fuel imports through the month of April.

Japan is using subsidies to refiners to ensure the pump price of petrol stays around 170 yen (\$1.07) per litre, having hit a record 190.8 yen in the middle of the month.

Taiwan uses a mechanism that absorbs 60 percent of increases.

China on Monday limited the amount that fuel prices may rise at the pump.

Greece has earmarked 300 million euros (\$347 million) in relief for households and farmers in April and May to help them cope with rising fuel prices.

Morocco has put in place a special direct subsidy for road transport firms.

Brazil has announced temporary measures to limit fuel price increases, including suspending taxes on diesel fuel.

Germany has banned service stations from raising prices more than once per day.

Stocks, rationing, restrictions The war is also forcing countries to dip into their strategic stocks and take other measures

to avoid shortages, including rationing and reducing travel.

The 32 member countries of the International Energy Agency (which includes the G7 nations) have released a record amount from their strategic reserves.

Bangladesh has imposed rationing

Egypt has limited non-essential travel by government employees.

The Philippines has reduced ferry services and prices of local public transport have risen.

India, the world's number two importer of liquefied petroleum gas which is used to produce cooking gas, has prioritised supplies for households.

South Korea's ruling party said the country will lift a cap on coal-powered generation capacity set at 80 percent and boost the use of nuclear power to about the same level.

Reducing energy consumption

Other countries are introducing measures to reduce fuel consumption.

Thailand is encouraging government employees to work

from home, while Vietnam is encouraging employers to do so.

Indonesia is looking at imposing one day of working from home for government employees, while the Philippines has gone further, introducing a four-day work week for government employees.

In Thailand, the temperature in public buildings has been raised to 26 degrees Celsius (79F) to reduce electricity consumption for air conditioning.

Vietnam is encouraging people to ride bicycles, share rides and use public transport.

Bangladesh shut universities and brought forward the Eid holidays, the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, to limit electricity consumption.

It also cancelled decorative light displays on government buildings on Eid and those scheduled for Independence Day celebrations on March 26 and asked shopping malls to do the same.

Countries are also looking at importing Russian crude after the United States temporarily suspended sanctions in mid-March.

the strait are owned or flagged in Iran, followed by Greek and Chinese carriers, Bridget Diakun, an analyst at Lloyd's List Intelligence, said last week.

"Although Iran is continuing to control the Strait and exit its own oil, everything else is largely still at a standstill," Meade previously noted.

51 sanctioned ships

Overall since the war started, more than 40% of the ships transiting the strait have been under US, EU or UK sanctions, according to an AFP analysis of passage data.

Of the oil and gas tankers, nearly 59 percent were under sanctions.

Since March 16 "anything heading westbound has been shadow fleet, gas carriers or tankers... they absolutely dominate the traffic going through," Diakun told the Lloyds briefing.

Oil to China

Commodities analysts at JPMorgan bank have noted that most of the oil passing through the strait was headed for Asia, principally China.

Cichen Shen, Asia Pacific editor at Lloyd's List, said there were indications online that Chinese authorities were working on "some sort of exit plan" for their big tankers stuck in the region.

1.3 mn barrels of Iran oil

The JPMorgan analysts said overall 98% of the observable oil traffic through the strait was Iranian, averaging 1.3 million barrels a day "in early March".

A fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas passes through the strait in peacetime.%

both Indian flagged, were each carrying around 45,000 metric tonnes of LPG when they left the waterway, having loaded up in the UAE and Kuwait respectively in late February, according to Bloomberg and MarineTraffic.

The Panama-flagged Bright Gold left the strait carrying around 40,000 metric tonnes of methane, and was due to arrive in China on April 13.

The trio -- not included in Kpler's overall tally update -- appeared to have used a purported Tehran-approved route around Larak Island just off the Iranian coast.

Meade has said that governments including China, India,

Pakistan, Iraq and Malaysia seemed to have been in direct talks with Tehran, "coordinating vessel transits" with its Revolutionary Guards.

Lloyd's List noted last week that at least nine ships had by that time passed through the apparent Iranian-approved "corridor" for vetting by its author-

ities. Two of the vessels navigating it Monday -- the Bright Gold and the Indian tanker Pine Gas -- kept their AIS transponders on, a rare occurrence for a non-Iranian vessel in the current climate.

Iranian, Greek, Chinese ships The biggest proportion of ships to have passed through

QUOTE OF THE DAY

WAR IS AN INSTRUMENT ENTIRELY INEFFICIENT TOWARD REDRESSING WRONG; AND MULTIPLIES, INSTEAD OF INDEMNIFYING LOSSES.
THOMAS JEFFERSON

Trump wrote on social media that Washington and Tehran have had "VERY GOOD AND PRODUCTIVE CONVERSATIONS REGARDING A COMPLETE AND TOTAL RESOLUTION OF OUR HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST" over the past several days, adding that the contacts would continue during the week.

Trump's comments sparked a sharp reversal on markets, with crude prices sinking as much as 14 percent after rising around one percent earlier in the day.



Children move a part of an Iranian missile remnant that fell in a school courtyard in the Israeli settlement of Peduel, in the occupied West Bank

The United States and Iran were holding talks on a nuclear accord through Omani mediation days before the attacks

'Very good' talks: Trump

Trump offered no immediate details on the purported new talks

UK summons Iran envoy

Britain's foreign ministry summoned Iran's ambassador to London, Seyed Ali Mousavi, criticising what it called Tehran's "reckless and destabilising actions" in the UK and overseas. "The summons follows the recent charging of two individuals, one Iranian national and one British-Iranian dual national, under the National Security Act, on suspicion of providing assistance to a foreign intelligence service," a Foreign Office spokesperson said.

Palm Beach, United States

US President Donald Trump said Monday he will hold off on attacking Iranian power plants for five days after "very good" talks with Tehran, an abrupt shift that immediately eased pressure on rattled markets.

Hours before the expiration of his two-day ultimatum -- in which he threatened to "obliterate" Iran's power infrastructure if it did not reopen the strategic Strait of Hormuz -- Trump suddenly reported with little detail that diplomacy was underway, after he earlier shunned talks.

In a social media post characteristically in all capital letters

and containing typographical errors, Trump said the United States and Iran "have had, over the last two days, very good and productive conversations regarding a complete and total resolution of our hostilities in the Middle East."

"Based on the tenor and tone" of the talks, "witch (sic) will continue throughout the week, I have instructed the Department of War to postpone any and all military strikes against Iranian power plants and energy infrastructure for a five day period, subject to the success of the ongoing meetings and discussions," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

The post came just hours before Wall Street was set to open

after brutal selloffs on European and Asian markets and a further climb in the price of oil.

Market pressure immediately eased after Trump's post, including in the price of oil which has posed an increasing political headache for Trump as Americans complain of higher prices at the pump.

Trump had initially issued through social media a deadline of 2344 GMT Monday -- early Tuesday in Tehran -- for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow passageway into the Gulf through which one-fifth of the world's oil transits. He has earlier insisted that Iran was asking to talk -- which Tehran denied -- but that he refused.



We've wiped out the leadership phase one, phase two, and largely phase three. But we're dealing with the man who I believe is the most respected and the leader. We want no enrichment, but we also want the enriched uranium."

DONALD TRUMP

'Major points of agreement:' Trump

Palm Beach, United States

President Donald Trump said yesterday that there are "major points of agreement" in US-Iran talks which he said must result in Tehran giving up its nuclear ambitions

and enriched uranium stockpile.

Trump said the talks -- which Iran denies are taking place -- were being conducted with a "top person" but not the country's supreme leader.

US to 'just keep bombing' if Iran talks fail: Trump



A man stands near the crater the day after an Israeli airstrike targeted the Qasmiyah Bridge, located on a main highway linking villages in the Tyre district with others farther north, after Israel said the bridge was being used by Hezbollah, in southern Lebanon

Friendly fire

The Israeli military confirmed that its own artillery fire had killed an Israeli civilian on the northern border on Sunday, where Hezbollah had claimed an attack and that "several severe issues and operational errors took place during the incident, including both the planning and execution of the fire".

Israeli emergency workers had initially said that a man was killed in a "direct hit" on his car by a rocket from Lebanon, making him the first fatality in the country's north since the latest round of fighting with Hezbollah broke out.

S. Korea FM urges safe Hormuz transit in call with Iranian counterpart

Trump says 'regime change' underway in Iran

AFP | Palm Beach, United States

President Donald Trump said yesterday that "regime change" was effectively underway in Iran, while warning that if talks with Iranian figures contacted by the United States do not succeed then bombing will continue.

Trump made clear talks were not with Iran's new supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei but with people he described as "very reasonable," while so many top officials had already been killed in the conflict that "there's automatically a regime

change."

If talks fail, he told reporters, "we'll just keep bombing our little hearts out."

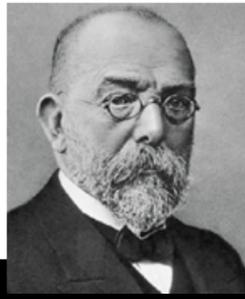


1882

German scientist Robert Koch discovers and describes the tubercle bacillus, which causes tuberculosis (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*), establishing germ theory

1976

Argentine President Isabel Martínez de Perón is deposed in a military coup headed by Jorge Rafael Videla



1999

NATO commences an air bombardment against Yugoslavia during the Kosovo War, the first attack by NATO on a sovereign country

2020

Indian PM Narendra Modi orders a 21-day lockdown for the country's 1.3 billion people to address COVID-19

Men gather around a destroyed Palestinian police jeep that was targeted by an Israeli air strike in Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip



Iran's defence council said in a statement that it would mine "all access routes and communications lines in the Persian Gulf and coastal areas" -- including deploying "drifting mines deployable from the coasts" if its coastlines or islands were attacked.

Iranian media **denies**

Iranian media said yesterday there were no negotiations between Tehran and Washington after US President Donald Trump announced talks towards ending the war. "There are no talks between Tehran and Washington," said Mehr news agency citing Iran's foreign ministry, adding that Trump's statements were part of a push "to reduce energy prices".

USS Gerald Ford back at Crete naval base: AFP

AFP | Soæda, Greece

The USS Gerald R. Ford, the world's largest aircraft carrier that has been part of Middle East war operations, yesterday returned to a naval base in Crete, an AFP photographer said.

The vessel, which took on food, fuel and ammunition at Souda Bay in February, reported a laundry fire on March 12 which injured two crew members.

The United States and Israel launched a massive air campaign against Iran in late February following a major US military buildup in the Middle East that included the Ford and another aircraft carrier, the Abraham Lincoln.

Both ships -- which have air wings made up of dozens of aircraft -- have played key roles in Iran operations, and the with-

drawal of the Ford leaves a gap for US forces in the region.

"Taking the Ford off the board for any significant length of time means less US support to war efforts," said Daniel Schneiderman, director of global policy programs at Penn Washington.

"The Ford's role in the defence of Israel is significant," he said, while noting that if some of the ships accompanying it -- which have key air defence capabilities -- remain near Israel, then "the immediate term operational impact of its departure is somewhat mitigated."

The Ford has been at sea for nearly nine months-- a deployment that has already seen it take part in US operations in the Caribbean, where Washington's forces have carried out strikes on alleged drug-smuggling boats, interdicted sanctioned tankers and seized Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro.

A fire broke out in a laundry

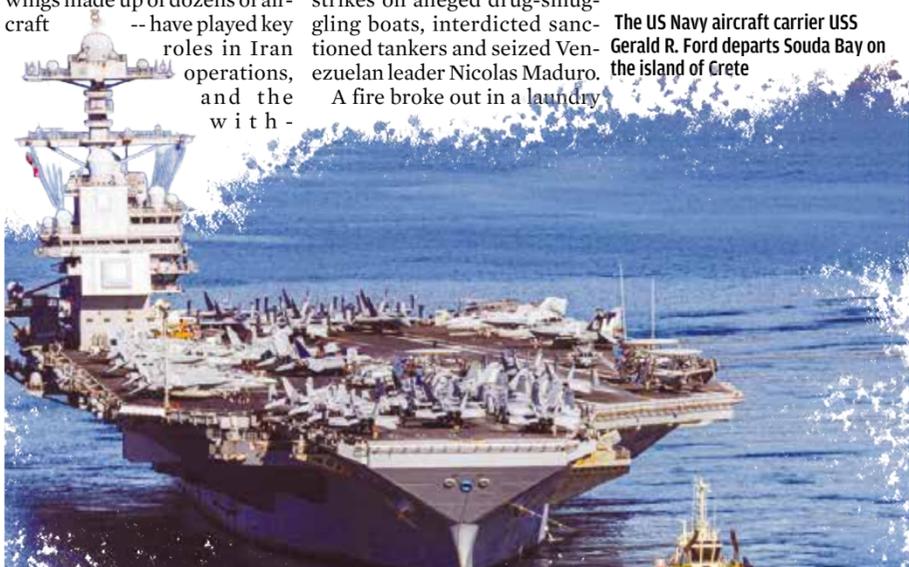
room aboard the carrier on March 12, injuring two sailors and causing major damage to some 100 beds, according to the US military.

The carrier has also reportedly suffered significant problems with its toilet system while at sea, with US media reporting clogs and long lines for restrooms on the ship.

Senator Mark Warner, the vice chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, has sharply criticised the extended deployment of the ship.

"The Ford and its crew have been pushed to the brink after nearly a year at sea, and they have been paying the price for President Donald Trump's reckless military decisions," he said.

The US Navy aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford departs Souda Bay on the island of Crete



BY INVITATION

India is against obstruction of Strait of Hormuz

H.E. MR. VINOD K JACOB



Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi addressed the situation in West Asia in a speech at the Lok Sabha or House of the People on 23 March 2026. One of the main highlights of this speech was the emphatic assertion that attacks on commercial ships and obstruction of international waterways like the Strait of Hormuz are wholly unacceptable. He stressed that large quantities of crude oil, gas, fertilizers, and other essentials reach India through the Strait of Hormuz. Unfortunately, shipping through the Strait has become highly challenging since the war began on 28 February.

It is worth recalling that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a very fruitful discussion with His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr on 20 March. Prime Minister condemned the attacks on the energy and civilian infrastructure in the region. This was having an adverse impact on global food, fuel and fertilizer security. He also reiterated the importance of ensuring freedom of navigation and keeping shipping lines open and secure.

Energy is the backbone of the modern economy. The GCC region is a major source for global energy needs, making the current crisis a challenge for economies worldwide. India's stand has been clear from the very beginning of the war. We have been expressing deep concern, advocating de-escalation, and opposing attacks on civilians and on energy and transport infrastructure. India was among the large list of co-sponsors of UN Security Council Resolution 2817 which was led by the Kingdom of Bahrain.

India has also advocated that dialogue and diplomacy remain the only path to resolution. Our efforts are to encourage all parties to reach a peaceful resolution as soon as possible.

The author is the Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bahrain since August 2023. Views expressed are personal.)

Our efforts are to encourage all parties to reach a peaceful resolution as soon as possible.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



In this age of war our addiction to fossil fuels is destabilizing the climate, global economy & global security. Now more than ever, we must accelerate a just transition to renewable energy. Renewables deliver climate security, energy security & national security.

@antonioguterres

02



Another hospital hit. Dozens killed -- including children and health workers. This is a pattern. Medical care is protected under international humanitarian law -- yet this is being ignored. Civilians must be protected. This war must stop.

@UNReliefChief

03



Chaired a meeting of the GCCS to review the mitigating measures in the wake of the ongoing conflict in West Asia. We had extensive discussions on short, medium and long term measures, including ensuring continued availability of fertilisers for farmers, diversifying import sources for key sectors, promoting exports to new destinations and more. We are committed to safeguarding our citizens from the impact of the conflict.

@narendramodi

04



Continue to follow the situation in the Middle East with dismay. Like other regions of the world, it is torn apart by war and violence. We cannot remain silent in the face of the suffering of so many defenseless victims of these conflicts. What wounds them wounds all of humanity.

@Pontifex

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

UK sending air defence systems to Gulf: PM

WIDE ANGLE

The Whys and Wherefores of Wars



JOEL INDRUPATI

● **The UK now has more military jets in the region “than at any time in the last 15 years”**

● **Deploying Rapid Sentry anti-drone system to Kuwait**

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Britain is sending short-range air defence systems to the Gulf to help counter Iranian missile attacks, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Monday.

“We’re deploying short range air defence systems to Bahrain at speed,” Starmer told a parliamentary committee, adding the UK was “doing the same with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia”.

The UK is working with industry to “distribute air defence missiles to Gulf partners”, which have faced waves

of Iranian barrages in retaliation for US-Israeli strikes, and has embedded airspace specialists there, Starmer said.

Defence minister John Healey told parliament the country would be deploying its Rapid Sentry anti-drone system to Kuwait.

He called this a “battle-tested ground-based air defence missile system that has already proved highly effective for UK forces taking down drones in the region”.

A British warship, HMS Dragon, has also arrived in the eastern Mediterranean to defend Cyprus, Healey said.

Britain deployed the vessel following criticism over a perceived slow response to a drone attack on Britain’s Akrotiri base in southern Cyprus after the United States and Israel launched their war against Iran on February 28.

The UK now has more military jets in the region “than at any time in the last 15 years” and has boosted air defence personnel

in Cyprus by 500, Healey said.

He added that UK pilots had now spent nearly 900 hours flying in the region “in defence of Cyprus, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates” as Iran has unleashed volleys of drones at countries in the region.

‘Keeping UK safe’

Britain is determined to play a “leading role in securing the strait so commercial ships can move freely and confidently again”, its defence minister said, referring to the strategic choke-point through which much of the world’s crude oil and natural gas passes.

Iran on Friday launched two missiles towards the Diego Garcia base, Healey said, but neither reached their target and “normal operations continue”.

“I totally condemn Iran’s reckless attacks. Iran must stop, it must de-escalate. We want to see this war end now,” the minister said.

But he offered assurances,

saying: “There is no assessment that we are being targeted in the UK”.

“We have the resources, we have the alliances in place in order to keep the United Kingdom safe from any kind of attacks.”



The UK government is allowing Washington to use its bases in Diego Garcia in the Chagos Islands and Fairford in southwest England to fly US bombing missions targeting Iranian “missile sites and capabilities being used to attack ships in the Strait of Hormuz”.

‘Point of no return’ looming in Middle East war: Red Cross

● **In response to Trump’s initial threat, Iran had threatened to deploy naval mines in the Gulf and target power plants across the region**

● **Energy infrastructure has been repeatedly hit since the start of the war on February 28**

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

The International Committee of the Red Cross demanded Monday a halt to the “war on essential infrastructure” in the Middle East, warning of potential “irreversible consequences” including harm to nuclear facilities.

“What we have seen in recent days in the Middle East risks reaching a point of no return,” ICRC president Mirjana Spoljaric warned in a statement.

“Most alarming is the potential harm to nuclear facilities, whether deliberate or incidental,” she said.

Energy infrastructure has been repeatedly hit since the start of the war on February 28, when the United States and Israel began their attacks on Iran. Tehran has responded by striking targets in Israel and Gulf states.

Over the weekend, an Iranian strike hit the southern Israeli town of Dimona, home to a nuclear facility, in what Tehran said was in response to an ear-

Iran foreign ministry says got messages from ‘friendly countries’ about US request for talks

Tehran, Iran

Iran’s foreign ministry said Monday that it had received messages through “friendly countries” about a request from the United States for talks, but denied any such negotiations had taken place since the start of the war.

“Over the past few days,

messages were received through some friendly countries indicating a US request for negotiations aimed at ending the war,” said foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei, according to the official IRNA news agency.

However, he “denied any negotiations or talks with the United States during the past 24 days of the imposed war”.

lier attack on its nuclear site at Natanz.

“Damage to these sites could trigger irreversible consequences, which is why they are afforded heightened protections under the rules of war,” Spoljaric said.

She cautioned that “war on essential infrastructure is war on civilians”.

“Deliberate attacks on essential services and civilian infrastructure can amount to war crimes.”

Her comments came as US President Donald Trump suddenly backtracked on a threat to “obliterate” Iran’s power infrastructure if it did not reopen the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

In response to Trump’s initial threat, Iran had threatened to deploy naval mines in the Gulf and target power plants across the region.

On Monday, Trump said he was putting his ultimatum on hold after “very good” talks with unidentified Iranian officials, while Iranian media outlets quoted the foreign ministry in Tehran denying any negotiations and suggesting Trump was angling to bring down energy prices.

“Attacks on essential infrastructure have already punished millions of civilians both near and far from the front lines,” Spoljaric said in her statement.

“This pattern, combined with an escalatory rhetoric that disregards the limits imposed by international humanitarian law, normalises a style of warfare that strips away our shared humanity.”



Power plants in Iran

Electricity plants by fuel type

- Nuclear
- Gas
- Oil
- Hydro
- Solar



Source: World Resources Institute, data as of Oct 6, 2025

Map data: OSM, NASA

AFP

Some say that wars never actually end—they merely subside and then reignite, mainly because hostilities are never effectively addressed. Hatred toward one another grows out of fear and distrust, pride and prejudice

War leaves no victors. This weighty truth is often ignored by nations.

Time and again, leaders abandon diplomacy and negotiation, choosing brute military force because they believe it safeguards their interests—whether national or personal.

In an essay titled “The Peace of the World,” published in The New York Times on February 21, 1915, H. G. Wells made a powerful appeal:

“Probably there have never been so many people convinced of the dreadfulness of war, nor so large a proportion anxious to end war... so that this huge hideousness of hardship, suffering, destruction, and killing that continues in Europe may never again be repeated.”

Wells wrote this when World War I had just begun. But sadly, that war had gone on for four more years, until 1919. Even though he hoped, in a positive way, that it “would end all war,” World War II (1939-1945) had followed.

These two wars brought immense destruction to life and property, costing millions of lives and trillions of dollars. The widespread misery they caused is still not fully quantifiable, and many nations have yet to fully recover.

Yet humanity seems determined not to learn. We cling to the belief that military might is the ultimate guarantee of strength and security. But is it?

Some say that wars never actually end—they merely subside and then reignite, mainly because hostilities are never effectively addressed. Hatred toward one another grows out of fear and distrust, pride and prejudice. And several leaders use constant vilification of others to win the support of their own people. Political narratives are framed as ‘our good’ against ‘their evil’. It’s “us” against “them.”

Let us ask ourselves: why are wars generally fought? Most arise from disputes over territory, resources, and security—the control of oil, water, or borders, and the pursuit of power. Ideological differences and ethnic tensions further inflame these conflicts.

But must these differences lead us to war? That is the challenge before us—to engage in dialogue and resolve our disagreements constructively, without resorting to needless destruction.

Let us also consider the philosophy of war, where three perspectives dominate: Realism, Pacifism, and Just War Theory.

Realists like Thomas Hobbes argued that war is inevitable, rooted in human nature. Pacifists such as Leo Tolstoy and Bertrand Russell rejected war as irrational and destructive, insisting that it can be avoided.

Between these two schools of thought stand the Just War theorists, like Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas, who believe that war may be justified only under strict moral conditions—if it meets criteria such as just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, and proportional conduct.

Yet the question persists: can any war truly be just?

No. Perhaps not. Because “only the dead have seen the end of war,” said the philosopher, George Santayana.

Perhaps the real answer lies not in theory, but in action. Each of us possesses a conscience—a moral compass that we can use to guide our actions.

This right of conscience is a fundamental human right, protecting an individual’s freedom to act upon deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs.

It is safeguarded under international law, including Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and it guarantees the freedom to think, believe, and act according to one’s conscience without state coercion.

We can and we must engage with our leaders, insist on dialogue over destruction, wisdom over impulse, and humanity over hatred. If war begins in the minds of people, then peace must be forged there too—and it must begin with us, now, before history repeats its cost once again.

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

Lebanon says one killed near Beirut, as Israel says struck Iran Guards member

Israeli military said it had “struck an IRGC Quds Force terrorist in Beirut”

● The Israeli military also renewed its call for residents of Beirut’s southern suburbs, where Hezbollah holds sway, to evacuate

AFP | Hazmieh, Lebanon

An Israeli strike on Hazmieh, near Beirut, killed at least one person, Lebanon’s health ministry said, while the Israeli military said it had targeted an Iranian Revolutionary Guards member.

The Israeli military also renewed its call for residents of Beirut’s southern suburbs, where Hezbollah holds sway, to evacuate. The area has not been hit since Friday night.

The Lebanese health ministry reported in a preliminary toll that “the Israeli enemy’s raid on an apartment in Hazmieh resulted in the martyrdom of one person”.



Lebanese soldiers secure the site of an Israeli strike that targeted an apartment in Hazmieh, on the eastern outskirts of Beirut

The Israeli military said it had “struck an IRGC Quds Force terrorist in Beirut”, referring to the foreign operations arm of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards.

The upscale Hazmieh area, overlooking Beirut and adjacent

to the presidential palace, includes diplomatic missions, government offices and luxurious residential buildings.

Mayor Jean Asmar told journalists at the scene, including an AFP photographer, that the

strike targeted a room inside an apartment rented by a displaced family.

“What happened today is a sample of what can happen. The rental agreement is in one person’s name, but the target is

someone else,” Asmar said.

Asmar said the attack forces the municipality to take new measures in regards to hosting people displaced from the war, “so that this incident is not repeated”.

There has been considerable unease in Lebanon about hosting displaced southerners, who are often Shia Muslims, for fear that they might be linked to Hezbollah and targeted by Israel.

Israel struck a hotel in the area on March 5, though it was not clear who the target was.

It hit a hotel room in central Beirut’s coastal Raouche area days later, claiming to have killed five people including three Quds Force members.

Iran accused Israel of killing four of its diplomats in the attack.

Lebanon was pulled into the Middle East war when Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel on March 2 to avenge the killing of Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in an Israeli-US strike.

Israel has since launched strikes across Lebanon, killing at least 1,039 people, and sent ground troops into the country’s south.

One of its strikes on Monday targeted a bridge linking areas in southern Lebanon to the Bekaa Valley in the east of the country, a day after a major bridge in the Tyre region was targeted.



Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said on Sunday he and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had instructed the military “to immediately destroy all the bridges over the Litani River that are used for terrorist activity, in order to prevent Hezbollah terrorists and weapons from moving south”.

Blow to Italy’s Meloni as she suffers referendum defeat

AFP | Rome, Italy

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni conceded defeat on Monday in a referendum on justice reform, but despite the major blow to her far-right leadership, she insisted she was going nowhere.

With almost all ballots counted from the Sunday-Monday vote, the “No” camp was at almost 54 percent, compared to just over 46 percent for “Yes”, according to official figures.

During the campaign, Meloni had insisted the referendum, which concerned the role and oversight of judges and prosecutors, was not about her own leadership of the government.

And she repeated this Monday, saying “the Italians have decided”, but adding that “this does not change our commitment to continue”.

Yet she had forcefully campaigned for the proposals, alongside her coalition partners in the hard-right government, while the opposition parties had fought for a “No”.

Daniele Albertazzi, a professor of politics at the UK’s University of Surrey told AFP it was a “bad, bad result” for Meloni.

“It means she has lost the Italian electorate on a major issue in her manifesto, and one of the key proposals of the right... for the past 30 years,” he said.

It is the first such setback for Meloni, who has led an uncharacteristically stable coalition government since October 2022 and faces parliamentary elections next year.

“If the centre-left gets its act together, this is going to help them. Because it means that her



People prepare to cast their ballot in a polling station on the first day to vote for the Italian constitutional referendum on justice reform, in Milan

image as unbeatable is not there any more,” Albertazzi said.

Turnout was relatively high for a referendum, at almost 59 percent.

‘Eviction notice’

The referendum, voted Sunday and Monday, sought to separate the role of judges and prosecutors and change their oversight body in what the government cast as necessary measures to ensure impartiality in the courts.

But critics said it was an attempt to exert more control over independent judges, whose decisions Meloni’s ministers have often attacked in public.

They also argued the reform failed to address the real challenges facing Italy’s dysfunctional justice system, from

years-long trials and huge case backlogs to prison overcrowding.

Political analysts said the reform’s complexity, not easily understood by many Italians, and the rhetoric surrounding it meant the vote ultimately became a referendum on the Italian leader herself.

“Meloni is certainly weakened,” Lorenzo Castellani, professor of politics at Rome’s Luiss university, told AFP.

Former prime minister Giuseppe Conte, the leader of the Five Star Movement, who had campaigned against the referendum, said it was time for a new government.

“It’s an eviction notice for this government after four years,” he told a press conference.

Colombia military says transport plane crashes on takeoff

AFP | Bogotá, Colombia

Colombia’s defense minister said a large transport plane crashed on takeoff Monday, with many feared dead.

Minister Pedro Sanchez said with “deep sorrow” that an Air Force Hercules had crashed on

takeoff from Puerto Leguizamo, near the southern border with Ecuador. State broadcaster RCN broadcast images of a badly damaged fuselage aflame in a forest clearing.

The aircraft can typically carry about 100 troops.

“Military units are already at

the scene. However, the number of victims and the causes of the crash have not yet been confirmed,” Sanchez posted on social media.

“It is a deeply painful event for the country. May our prayers bring some measure of comfort,” said Sanchez.

London police probe attack on Jewish ambulances as hate crime

AFP | London, United Kingdom

London’s police said they are investigating an “arson attack” as an antisemitic hate crime after volunteer ambulances run by a Jewish organisation were set on fire yesterday.

The London Fire Brigade said it was alerted to vehicles on fire at Highfield Court in Golders Green at 1:40 am.

Firefighters called to the scene found that multiple cylinders on the vehicles had exploded, breaking windows in an adjacent block.

London’s Metropolitan Police said the burnt vehicles were four Hatzalah ambulances belonging to the Jewish Community Ambulance service.

“Officers remain on scene and the arson attack is being treated as an antisemitic hate crime,” police said in a statement.

No injuries have been reported and all the fires have been put out, police added.

“We are in the process of examining CCTV and are aware of online footage. We believe we



Police forensic officers stand by as a police photographer works in a street near to the scene of an antisemitic arson attack in the Golders Green neighbourhood of north London

are looking for three suspects at this early stage,” superintendent Sarah Jackson said, adding that no arrest has been made.

Nearby houses were evacuated as a precaution and road closures remained in place.

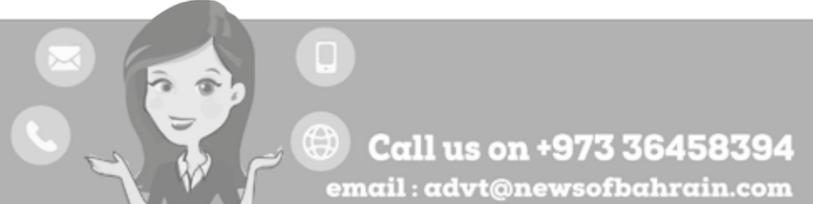
London Fire Brigade said the cause of the fire is under investigation.

Shomrim North West London, a charity and volunteer neighbourhood watch group,

condemned the arson branding it a “targeted and deeply concerning incident affecting a vital emergency service serving the local Jewish community”.

“An attack on these ambulances is an attack on the safety, wellbeing, and resilience of our community... There is no place for antisemitism or hate in our society,” the group wrote on Facebook.

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Wolves rally past Celtics, Nuggets sink Blazers



Minnesota's Bones Hyland celebrates a three-pointer in the Timberwolves win over the Boston Celtics

AFP | London

The Minnesota Timberwolves shrugged off the injury absence of Anthony Edwards to complete a come-from-behind 102-92 road victory over the Boston Celtics on Sunday.

Minnesota trailed by 15 points early in the second quarter but rallied decisively in the fourth with a 16-0 run to outscore the Celtics 26-15 and silence a 19,156 crowd at Boston's TD Garden.

With Edwards missing due to right knee inflammation, Bones Hyland led Minnesota with 23 points off the bench, while Jaden McDaniels had 19 points and Ayo Dosunmu 17.

Minnesota improved to 44-28 and remain in sixth place in the Western Conference.

The New York Knicks improved to 47-25 to remain hard on the heels of the Celtics in the East with a 145-113 demolition of the Washington Wizards.

Karl-Anthony Towns finished with 26 points, 16 rebounds and three assists while Jalen Brunson added 23 points as the Knicks cruised to a wire-to-wire victory over a Wizards team who have lost 16 games straight.

Washington are one place off the bottom of the Eastern Conference at 16-55 and are vying with the Indiana Pacers (15-56) for the worst record in the league.

In the Western Conference, Nikola Jokic's 35th triple-double of the season powered the Denver Nuggets to a 128-112 defeat of the Portland Trail Blazers.

Man City's League Cup glory adds **twist** to title race

City boss tempers expectations as Arsenal remain firm favourites for Premier League

● **Guardiola wins fifth League Cup**

● **Arsenal lead Premier League by nine points**

● **Guardiola downplays title race impact**

● **Arteta vows strong response**

AFP | London

As Pep Guardiola wiped away the sting of the Champagne sprayed by his jubilant players after Sunday's League Cup final triumph against Arsenal, the Manchester City boss was confronted with a burning question.

Nico O'Reilly's second-half double had just sealed a 2-0 win in the Wembley showpiece, handing City a psychological boost at the expense of their Premier League title rivals.

But will Guardiola's record fifth League Cup serve as a catalyst to catch Arsenal in the title race?

The City boss, who hadn't masterminded a victory over his old assistant Mikel Arteta since 2023, knows beating Arsenal in a one-off showpiece occasion is difficult enough.

Finding a way to overhaul Premier League leaders Arsenal, who hold a nine-point advantage over second-placed City, is an even more daunting proposition.

"I would like to have nine points in front of Arsenal," Guardiola said.

"I said to the players: 'Today, we are going to see what our level is'. They are the best so far, no doubt about that, so let's prove ourselves and in the second half, I could not believe we could do it against Arsenal."

"But this win will have no impact (on the title race). It is a different competition."

City have a game in hand on



Manchester City's English midfielder #33 Nico O'Reilly poses with the trophy as City players celebrate

Arsenal and host the Gunners at the Etihad Stadium in April.

Yet Guardiola acknowledged even winning those two matches won't be enough for City unless Arsenal slip up elsewhere.

"They will be more controlled when they come to the Etihad. Maybe for that game it will help us, but the Premier League is in their hands," he said.

"Is that team going to drop points? We will try to win our games and then see what happens."

After recent damaging draws in the league against lowly West Ham and Nottingham Forest, as well as a limp Champions League last-16 exit against Real Madrid, City badly needed a trophy to lift the mood at the Etihad.

'Fire in the belly'

They went without silverware last term, but Guardiola believes this can be the start of a new era

BETTER YOU KNOW

Guardiola ended a three-year winless streak against former assistant Arteta, but stressed City's game in hand and Etihad clash won't suffice without Arsenal dropping points elsewhere

for a club with 19 trophies in all competitions since he arrived a decade ago.

"When you start to win and the generation is young you can continue that. I need to know how they behave in certain moments," Guardiola said of a team

expensively revamped in the last 18 months.

"I can smell something that can flourish. Winning helps to anticipate the process.

"We are much better than last season but still we are not the team we should be. That requires time. Hopefully by the end of next season we will be."

Arsenal went into the final as firm favourites as they chased a first trophy in six years.

But they departed still waiting for the second major prize of the Arteta era, assailed with questions about their manager's selections and tactics, as well as a recurring habit of choking on the big stage.

Runners-up in the Premier League for the last three seasons, Arsenal cannot afford to let the Wembley defeat impact the rest of their treble-chasing campaign.

Arteta's decision to pick Kepa Arrizabalaga instead of regular

goalkeeper David Raya backfired when the understudy fumbled Rayan Cherki's cross as O'Reilly bagged City's first goal.

Arteta's conservative game-plan also came under fire, but the Arsenal boss vowed his team would use the pain as fuel to win the Premier League for the first time since 2004.

"We need to have some perspective on it. We are going to use this disappointment and this fire in the belly to have the most amazing two months that we have ever had together," said Arteta, whose side are in the Champions League and FA Cup quarter-finals.

"That's on us and we'll manage that energy in the right way. Now we have to go through that pain and disappointment."

"The good thing is that we have a very recent history with reacting in these moments, and I'm sure that we're going to do it again."

Arteta defends Kepa selection after blunder

AFP | London

Mikel Arteta defended his decision to select Kepa Arrizabalaga in the League Cup final after the Arsenal goalkeeper's costly mistake sparked a 2-0 defeat against Manchester City on Sunday.

Kepa was guilty of a horrendous blunder in the second half at Wembley when he let Rayan Cherki's cross slip through his fingers, gifting Nico O'Reilly the chance to head in City's opener.

Arsenal never recovered and O'Reilly struck again four minutes later to leave the Gunners still waiting for their first major trophy since 2020.

Arteta had opted to keep faith with Kepa instead of picking first-choice stopper David Raya because the former Chelsea star has been a regular in the League Cup this season.

The gamble backfired as Kepa endured another League Cup final moment to forget after his 2019 refusal to be substituted by Chelsea boss Maurizio Sarri prior to a penalty shoot-out defeat against Manchester City in which he failed to save a kick.

Kepa also missed a penalty in a shoot-out loss to Liverpool three years later.

Asked about the criticism of his decision, Arteta said: "I understand but I have to do what is right and fair."

"Kepa had played all the competition, I think it would have been unfair to him and the team to do something different."

"He had gone all the way through this competition. Errors are part of football and unfortunately it happened today at a crucial moment."

Sitting nine points clear at



Arsenal's Spanish goalkeeper #13 Kepa Arrizabalaga fails to gather the ball leading to the first City goal

the top of the Premier League, Arsenal were favoured to beat City but they failed to rise to the occasion.

Far too conservative for long periods at Wembley, Arsenal remain without a trophy since the 2020 FA Cup after their quadruple bid came to a painful end.

"Very sad, very hard one to take. We know how much it means and how much we wanted it. The fact we haven't delivered that is disappointing and leaves a bad taste," Arteta said.

"First half we were the better team and had the biggest chance of the game, if we scored that it would have changed the game."

"In the first 20 minutes of the second half we weren't at our best. We struggled to get out of our block and conceded the goal in an unexpected manner obviously."

Korda sends Alcaraz to another **early exit** in Miami, Sabalenka advances

Alcaraz suffers second straight early Miami exit after 16-0 start to 2026

● Sebastian Korda beats Carlos Alcaraz 6-3, 5-7, 6-4

● Sabalenka continued her "Sunshine Double" title pursuit

● Rybakina, Zheng Qinwen also through

● Qualifier Martin Landaluce upset Karen Khachanov to advance

AFP | Miami

Sebastian Korda stared down Carlos Alcaraz on Sunday, sending the world number one crashing out of the Miami Open third round 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

Korda, ranked 36th in the world, notched his first victory over a world number one, sending Alcaraz to his second straight early exit in Miami following defeat to 55th-ranked Belgian David Goffin in the second round last year.

Since that defeat, Alcaraz had built a remarkable 73-6 record, including a 16-0 start to 2026 that included an Australian Open triumph to complete a career Grand Slam and a title in Doha.

It looked like Korda had



Sebastian Korda of the United States returns a shot against Carlos Alcaraz of Spain

missed his chance to spring the upset when he served for the match at 5-4 in the second set and was broken at love.

Alcaraz won the next two games to force a third set, part of a run of five straight games for the Spaniard.

But Korda didn't buckle, and it was the American who seized a break for 4-3 in the third when Alcaraz sailed a forehand wide.

He held his next service game with confidence, slamming

down an overhead winner on game point and after Alcaraz held serve Korda served for the match again, this time making no mistake.

"It feels great," said Korda, who has been ranked as high as 15th in the world but has endured two seasons disrupted by injuries.

"I took the scenic route, that's for sure -- a little more stress than I would want but happy with how I played, happy with

how I stayed with it."

Alcaraz said Korda played an "incredible" match.

"A lot of tight, tight moments that I just didn't make the most of it," Alcaraz said. "I think he was better on those points, on those moments. I would say that was the key of the match."

Korda will face Spanish qualifier Martin Landaluce for a place in the quarter-finals after Landaluce ousted 14th-seeded Russian Karen Khachanov 6-3, 7-6 (7/2).



Alcaraz had built a remarkable 73-6 record since his second-round Miami exit last year, including a 16-0 start to 2026, before Korda handed him another early defeat at the same tournament

Sabalenka marches on

World number one Aryna Sabalenka kept her title defense on track with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over 72nd-ranked American Caty McNally that was tougher than the score indicated.

They were on serve after exchanging four breaks in the opening set when Sabalenka gained the decisive break in the final game.

The Belarusian star, trying to complete the "Sunshine Double" after capturing her first Indian Wells title last week, wasted one chance to break in the second set before ramping up her return pressure to break McNally's on her last two service games.

"She played really great tennis," Sabalenka said, adding that



It feels great. I took the scenic route, that's for sure -- a little more stress than I would want but happy with how I played, happy with how I stayed with it

SEBASTIAN KORDA

her hold for 5-4 in the opening set, in a game that went to deuce five times, was key.

"(I'm) super happy to close this match in straight sets," said Sabalenka, who booked a meeting with China's Olympic gold medalist Zheng Qinwen a 6-2, 6-4 winner over Madison Keys.

It was Zheng's first win over a top-20 player since elbow surgery last July.

World number two Elena Rybakina, who beat Sabalenka in the Australian Open final but fell to her in the Indian Wells title match, moved smoothly into the last 16 with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk.

Rybakina next faces Australian qualifier Talia Gibson, who knocked off another seed with a 6-2, 6-2 victory over 18-year-old 18th seed Iva Jovic.

Gibson, who reached the quarter-finals at Indian Wells, had ousted former world number one Naomi Osaka in the second round.



Carlos Alcaraz of Spain lunges for a ball

Alcaraz eyes clay court season after early exit

World number one Carlos Alcaraz remained confident his game is improving despite a third-round exit at the Miami Open, and after a few days to reset he'll be turning his attention to the clay court season.

"Probably I'm going to go back home," Alcaraz said after falling in three sets to 36th-ranked American Sebastian Korda on Sunday.

"Chilling with my family, with my friends a couple of days. I don't know how much my team are going to allow me to have rest and a day off.

"The clay season is around the corner. My mind right now is to take some days off, to reset my mind, reset the batteries, be ready and in good shape for the clay season."

The loss to Korda, a free-swinging American outside the top 30, was another reminder that even as world number one Alcaraz remains a marked man in every tournament he enters.

That status brings a different kind of challenge, with rivals able to swing without expectation while Alcaraz tries to treat each setback as another step in a longer-term process of sharpening his game for the rest of the season. "Obviously when you're winning tournaments and you have great record win/lose, everything is easier in the way of pressure to the opponents," he said. "I'm feeling they have more to win than to lose in those matches ... they're playing without pressure."

Alcaraz is trying to make sure he doesn't respond by piling pressure on himself.

"I'm not thinking about my pressure," he said. "I don't feel it at all. I'm trying to play my best."

That includes constant work to improve his game, and despite Sunday's result he's confident he's on the right track.

"I would say what I was practicing, you know, I think I just did it really well," he said. "Some couple things in previous tournaments that I just didn't feel comfortable, I think in this tournament, I started to feel better and better."

"I think the process has been good. Besides the loss today, I think I'm still in the right way."

Vinicius double helps Real Madrid edge Atletico thriller

AFP | Madrid

Vinicius Junior struck twice as Real Madrid shaded Atletico Madrid 3-2 in a thrilling derby clash on Sunday to stay on leaders Barcelona's tail at the top of La Liga.

After the Catalan giants edged Rayo Vallecano 1-0 earlier on, Madrid ensured the gap to the champions stayed at four points by beating Diego Simeone's side at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Ademola Lookman put At-

letico ahead in the first half but Vinicius and Federico Valverde's strikes gave the hosts the lead soon after the interval.

Nahuel Molina equalised for Atletico, fourth, with a spectacular effort from distance but Vinicius netted again to claim the three points for Los Blancos.

Valverde was sent off for hacking Alex Baena in the final stages but his side held on to win in Alvaro Arbeloa's first derby clash with Atletico since taking over in January.

Messi scores for Miami in 3-2 MLS victory at NYCFC

AFP | Miami

Lionel Messi scored his 901st career goal and Inter Miami delivered New York City's first loss of the Major League Soccer season on Sunday with a 3-2 triumph.

Argentine superstar Messi netted the equalizer off a free kick in the 61st minute and Brazilian defender Micael headed home the game winner in the 74th.

Visiting Miami was still smarting after being ousted from the CONCACAF Champions Cup following a draw with Nashville



Lionel Messi #10 of Inter Miami CF shoots the ball

on Wednesday, the same night Messi scored the 900th goal of his legendary career.

Argentine defender Gonzalo Lujan opened the scoring for Inter Miami in the fourth minute on a right-foot shot into the lower right corner.

Nicolas Fernandez answered for NYCFC in the 17th minute off a free kick, smashing a left-foot blast into the upper left corner.

Messi had his chances in the first half, missing right in the 27th minute on a fast break and being denied in the 36th minute by New York goalkeeper Matt Freese.

Man City's O'Reilly savours 'unbelievable' double in League Cup final win

Defender's two headers punish Arsenal errors to give City ninth League Cup

● Manchester City won their ninth League Cup title

● Kepa Arrizabalaga's mistake led to the opening goal

AFP | London

Nico O'Reilly savoured a weekend to remember after the Manchester City defender's double sealed a 2-0 win over Arsenal in the League Cup final on Sunday -- just 24 hours after his birthday.

O'Reilly turned 21 on Saturday and followed his birthday celebration with a man of the match performance at Wembley.

The left-back punished a mistake from Arsenal goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga to open the scoring with a close-range header on the hour.

And O'Reilly struck again with another header four minutes later to give City their ninth League Cup triumph.



Manchester City's English midfielder #33 Nico O'Reilly (C) heads in from close range to score the opening goal

"Unbelievable feeling. To win a final, to beat this team we know how good they are. We need to

build on it, it will give us good momentum. Buzzing with today," O'Reilly said.

"Bit of disbelief seeing all the fans cheering like that when I scored those goals. Really a

Unbelievable feeling. To win a final, to beat this team we know how good they are. We need to build on it, it will give us good momentum. Buzzing with today. Bit of disbelief seeing all the fans cheering like that when I scored those goals. Really a good feeling and a great birthday weekend

NICO O'REILLY

good feeling and a great birthday weekend.

"My whole family came down today. They are all in the stand and I know they will be buzzing. I can't wait to celebrate with them."

O'Reilly has been converted from a midfielder to a defender by Pep Guardiola since breaking into the City team.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Converted from midfielder to defender, O'Reilly's attacking instincts paid off -- both goals came from classic box arrivals honed earlier in his career

The England international said that familiarity with being in attacking positions allowed him to capitalise on Arsenal's mistakes.

"Since I was a kid I always played in midfield, I was always arriving in the box and scoring goals," he said.

"To bring it in at senior level and the highest level, it's good for me and adds goals to my game. A great feeling."

Bezzecchi wins second race of the season at Brazil MotoGP

AFP | Goiania

Italy's Marco Bezzecchi of Aprilia won the Brazil MotoGP Grand Prix on Sunday at the Autodromo Ayrton Senna in Goiania.

Bezzecchi also won the season's opening GP in Thailand three weeks ago and repeated the feat here by finishing ahead of his Spanish team-mate Jorge Martin and Italian pole-sitter Fabio Di Giannantonio of Ducati.

"Honestly, I didn't expect to leave Brazil with a win," Bezzecchi said, adding he was "super happy" with his performance, especially following Friday's poor practice showing in which he was 20th fastest on the grid.

"We worked super hard in the box with my guys to try to adjust everything, including my riding the bike -- we tried to make the perfect combination," he added.

It was a milestone moment for the 27-year-old as it marked the first time in his career he had won four Grands Prix in a row, and was also the first time an Aprilia rider had done so.

Aprilia's one-two in Brazil also means they lead the constructors championship with 64 points.

Spanish reigning world champion Marc Marquez of Ducati, who had won Saturday's sprint race on the Brazilian circuit, had to settle for fourth place.

His compatriot Pedro Acosta (KTM), who had arrived in Brazil at the top of the championship standings, lost his lead to



Aprilia Racing's Italian rider Marco Bezzecchi (L), Ducati Lenovo's Spanish rider Marc Marquez (C) and Pertamina Enduro VR46 Racing Team's Italian rider Fabio Di Giannantonio compete

Bezzecchi after finishing seventh on Sunday.

Bezzecchi now boasts 56 points, 11 more than Martin in second, with Acosta a further three points adrift.

"Every day I'm closer to the top guys," Martin said, but he nonetheless insisted his chances for a title run over the 22-race season were very slim "at the moment".

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Muharraq Clinch Khalifa bin Salman Cup

Red Wolves roar into history to tie Manama and Al Ahli with 3 titles



Muharraq squad rejoices after capturing coveted season trophy

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Muharraq clinched back-to-back Khalifa bin Salman Cup titles with an 80-73 win over Manama last night at Khalifa Sports City. Played behind closed doors due to regional conflicts, the victory completed a clean sweep of their rivals this season and brought Muharraq level with the league's most decorated sides on three titles.

In a final that rarely allowed either side to settle, Muharraq seized control in key stretches, particularly in the third quarter, where they began to pull away after a tight first half. Mohamed Ameer's dominant

presence in the paint and crucial three-pointers earned him tournament MVP honors, underlining his pivotal role in the Red Wolves' success.

Manama, guided by coach Salman Ramadhan, showed early resilience. Ali Jaber and Ahmed Salman briefly pushed them ahead in the second quarter, keeping the scoreboard ticking with sharp shooting and drives. Muharraq, under German coach Peter Schomers, responded through Michael Warren, who finished as the game's top scorer with 20 points, and Ameer to take a slim 41-38 lead at half-time.

After the interval, the game swung in Muharraq's favor. They tightened defensively and

capitalized on Manama's turnovers. Warren and captain Bader Abdulla extended the lead, while Ameer's three-pointer and Wayne Chism's rebounding pushed the advantage into double digits heading into the fourth quarter.

Manama mounted a fightback midway through the final period. Ahmed Salman sparked a rally with free throws and a three-pointer, and Hasan Nowrooz added long-range points to cut the deficit to five. But Muharraq stayed composed. Warren's late free throws, Chism's boards, and timely contributions from Mahmood Abbas Isa sealed the victory.

Manama, missing injured forward Subah Hussain, were

led by Ahmed Salman's 20 points and Romeo Enan's 14 points with 13 rebounds, but they struggled to sustain momentum when it mattered most.

The result caps a dominant campaign for the Red Wolves, who added the Khalifa bin Salman Cup to their Super Cup triumph earlier this season. It also sees them draw level with Manama and Al Ahli as the most decorated teams in the competition's history. Attention now turns to the Zain Basketball League semi-finals later this week, where Muharraq face Al Ahli and Manama take on Al Najma, with the rivalry set to continue in a best-of-five series format.

England coach McCullum survives review into Ashes drubbing



England's managing director of men's cricket Rob Key (right) and head coach Brendon McCullum (file photo)

AFP | London

England coach Brendon McCullum will keep his job despite the team's Ashes debacle, with cricket chief Richard Gould insisting he can "adapt and evolve".

Ben Stokes's men were hammered 4-1 on their five-Test tour of Australia, which started in November and ended in January.

In addition to their poor performances there were reports of excessive drinking by players while they were on a break, raising concerns about the dressing-room culture.

Revelations followed that vice-captain Harry Brook had been involved in an altercation with a nightclub bouncer on the pre-Ashes visit to New Zealand.

But Stokes, McCullum, and England managing director Rob Key will all keep their jobs following a review of the Ashes campaign by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

McCullum, at the helm since 2022, has been responsible for England's aggressive "Bazball" approach to red-ball cricket.

But his methods have failed to yield a series win against India or Australia -- England's main rivals.

"There was a lot of consideration as to what is the right mix of leadership and who do we want and who do we need?" ECB chief executive Richard Gould told a briefing at Lord's.

"I think what we've seen is a determination from all those involved to adapt and evolve, to understand that there are different ways of doing things and through the disappointment and difficulties of the Ashes to learn from that.

"And so, you know, we've got a lot of people, yes, hurt by what went on during the Ashes, but equally determined to now put things right and looking forward to seeking revenge in 2027 (when Australia tour England)."

Arsenal's White gets first England call-up since 2022



Arsenal's Ben White (C) arrives ahead of a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Arsenal defender Ben White has been called up to the England squad for the first time since the 2022 World Cup.

The 28-year-old right-back has not featured for the national team since leaving the camp in Qatar for personal reasons.

He subsequently made himself unavailable for selection for the remainder of Gareth Southgate's spell in charge.

But he is back in the fold for friendlies against Uruguay and Japan, after Bayer Leverkusen's Jarell Quansah withdrew from Thomas Tuchel's 35-man

squad with an injury.

White has won four England caps, last featuring in a 3-0 win against Ivory Coast in March 2022.

There is still no place in the squad for Real Madrid defender Trent Alexander-Arnold, who is also a right-back.

White's Gunners teammate Eberechi Eze is also out of the camp and has been replaced by Newcastle winger Harvey Barnes, 28, who won his only previous cap six years ago.

England host Uruguay at Wembley on Friday, with a match to follow against Japan on March 31.

Griezmann given go-ahead to talk with Orlando City

AFP | Madrid

France's World Cup-winning striker Antoine Griezmann is to hold talks with Major League Soccer's Orlando City, having been permitted by his present side Atletico Madrid to go to the US during the international break, a source close to the player told AFP.

Should both parties agree a deal, the 35-year-old would move to Orlando this summer after seeing out the present campaign with the La Liga outfit.

Griezmann "has been authorised by his club to travel to Orlando during his days off in order to make progress in the discussions linked to his future," said the source yesterday.

A move to the MLS has been rumoured for years, with the 2018 World Cup winner known to be an admirer of other American sports leagues such as the NBA and NFL.

Atletico had shut the door on their all-time record goalscorer -- he has scored 211 goals over two spells -- moving this season with the MLS transfer window opening on March 26.

Griezmann, who also played in the 2022 World Cup final defeat by Argentina, retired from



Real Madrid's Spanish defender #20 Francisco Garcia (L) and Atletico Madrid's French forward #07 Antoine Griezmann fight for the ball

the French national side in 2024 having made 137 appearances, scoring 44 goals.

Griezmann signed an extension last year to his present contract, taking him up to June 2027, but is no longer an automatic first choice for Atletico.

Despite falling down the pecking order he has scored 13 times this season and can

entertain hopes of ending his time with Atletico with one last hurrah.

They play Real Sociedad, the club he began his professional career with, in the final of the Copa del Rey on April 18, just after facing Barcelona in their two-legged Champions League quarter-final.

Griezmann inspired Atletico

in his first spell to 2018 Europa League glory, but missed out on the biggest prizes, losing in the 2016 Champions League final and finishing runners-up in the title race in 2018 and 2019.

Orlando are badly in need of a cutting edge up front as in the present MLS campaign they have won just one of their five matches, losing the other four.