

Bairstow stars as Punjab pull off record T20 chase

Punjab Kings achieve highest successful run chase in T20 history against Kolkata Knight Riders | P12

WORLD **6** Team from Gaza mediator Egypt heads to Israel

THE DAILY **tribune**



Kirsten Dunst thinks assassinated president in Civil War is any 'fascist' leader

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US stock market rebound on tech earnings, London hits new record

His Majesty returns after visit to UAE



TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa returned to Bahrain yesterday after a visit to the United Arab Emirates, where he met with His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates. Discussions covered the robust ties, cooperation, and close coordination between the two countries, as well as regional and international developments.

Both sides expressed their hopes for positive outcomes and constructive decisions from the upcoming 33rd Arab Summit, hosted by Bahrain on May 16 under the presidency of His Majesty King Hamad.

His Majesty and the UAE President called for de-escalation in the Middle East, along with settling all disputes through dialogue and negotiation.

Both sides urged the international community to fulfil its responsibilities in implementing immediate ceasefire resolutions in the Gaza Strip, to safeguard civilian lives and provide necessary humanitarian aid without obstacles.

Bahrain, Russian Foreign Ministers hold phone call on regional developments, ties

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The foreign ministers of Bahrain and Russia engaged in a telephone discussion, focusing on regional developments and exploring avenues for bolstering bilateral cooperation.

Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, shared that he and Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, exchanged perspectives on current international affairs and matters of mutual interest.

Dr. Al Zayani highlighted that the conversation centred on strategies to further enhance cooperation between Bahrain and Russia.

A slippery slope

'Travel ban on expats violates rights, will worsen economy'

- 'Travel ban violates international conventions'
- 'Implementing travel ban worsens economy'
- 'Govt action needed to avoid salary delays, resulting debts'

Mahir Haneef

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TDT | Manama

Implementing the recent calls made by parliamentarians for imposing restrictions on expatriates with debts from traveling outside of the Kingdom could have drastic economic consequences and violate international conventions, warn experts.

Proposals recently made by the MPs include requiring expatriates to produce 'financial obligation clearance certificates' to travel, amending the penal code to hold expatriates in indefinite detention until their debts are cleared and to then deport them, and changing the law to allow renewal of travel bans on expats until their debts are paid or guarantors are arranged.

'Violation of Rights'

Asked whether the implementation of the travel ban on expats with debts amount to injustice or violation of rights, Devin Kenney, Researcher at Amnesty International's London office, said, "Yes if the implementation means potential incarceration. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Bahrain has signed, forbids imprisonment for failure to fulfil a contract - such as failing to pay a debt on time - without any exceptions. In addition, the right to be free to leave any country requires that any restrictions



Charles Kamasaki



Ilya Somin



Kareem El-Assal




MP Maryam Al Dhaen

must be narrowly tailored and specific. Therefore, it's fair to say that under international human rights law any broad and general debt-based travel ban should be considered a violation of human rights."

Ilya Somin is a law professor at George Mason University, B. Kenneth Simon Chair in Constitutional Studies at the Washington-based think tank Cato Institute, an author, and regularly writes on the topic at The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, and several distinguished law journals.

Mr. Somin also agreed with the view of the Amnesty International researcher. He said, "Restricting exit merely because someone contracted a perfectly legal debt is indeed a human rights violation. Foreign workers surely have a right to enter and exit, and cannot be required to remain by force, if they have not committed any crime. In addition, Article 12, Section 2 of the International Covenant on Civil



In 2012 and 2015, the government of Bahrain extended lifelines for expats with travel bans to regularize their CPRs so as to get jobs and pay off their debts. The applications were considered on a case-by-case basis and those with criminal cases were not eligible.

and Political Rights - to which Bahrain is a signatory - states that 'Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.' This proposal strikes me as a pretty clear violation."

'Slippery Slope'

Shai Zamanian, who holds a doctorate in law from the University of Miami School of Law is a US-licensed immigration attorney with over 10 years of experience. Specialized in US investor immigration, he is based in Dubai and is presently the Legal Director of The American Legal Center.

Talking about the potential effects of a travel ban on expats, Shai said, "Understanding the difficult battle with embassies that would take place, the fallout would be that expats simply would not be afforded debt instruments such as credit cards, car loans, and home mortgages any longer. Moreover, there is a slippery slope when

because neither thing should be happening: the government shouldn't be banning indebted migrants from leaving the country without strong cause, and companies also shouldn't be failing to pay migrants on time for the labour they do," he stated.

Shai of The American Legal Center agrees. "There should be sanctions on companies that do not pay salaries. Short of bankruptcy, there is no excuse. Yet, even if your employer pays your salary on time, this does not negate your freedom of travel."

He further explained that banks take in the risk of default while providing loans and the proposals for a regulation would affect the autonomy of banks. "When banks provide a loan, there is a degree of profit and the calculation of risks when they extend that loan. Perhaps, the free market needs to adjust in accordance with lending practices to protect the bank's assets. Such a regulation would strip the banks of autonomy in providing reliable financial tools that residents require," Shai stated.

MP Maryam Al Dhaen, who was the proponent of the proposal for incarceration until payment of debts, said, "We need strict laws and legislation to address the problem, and expatriates must not be allowed to travel unless they are sure that they are not in debt."

She added, "Mechanisms must be put in place to verify the absence of debts before allowing expatriates to leave, and to address the problem of transferring permits from tourists or visitors to workers and then

to investors." She explained that there is a large segment that exploits this loophole to obtain financial loans easily and then escape with the money, which would cause major damage and result in instability in the financial market in the Kingdom of Bahrain.



Shai Zamanian

it comes to this type of regulation as apartment leases are, in a sense, contractual obligations of future payment. Would then any tenant not be able to travel either? Immigration would be near non-existent as every industry relies upon debt facilities to function. There would be mass layoffs, without signs of new employment opportunities as businesses would incorporate elsewhere."

'A Vicious Cycle'

While the proposals in parliament are to impose travel restrictions on expats with debts, expats say many companies and firms are not paying salaries regularly or are delaying salaries, pushing them into debts.

Devin of Amnesty International says this is where the government should step in. "Business owners should be paying salaries on time, with government enforcement where necessary, as a basic matter of law and justice, independent of other considerations. These two issues shouldn't be linked

Travel ban not common place p2

Gaza Tragedy

Gaza baby saved from dying mother's womb dies

AFP | undefined, undefined

A baby saved from her dying mother's womb in the war-battered Gaza Strip Gaza Strip has died, her uncle said yesterday.

Sabreen al-Ruh was the only surviving member of her immediate family after she was deliv-



Sabreen al-Ruh

ered by Caesarean section while her mother lay fatally wounded from an Israeli air strike at the weekend.

The Emirati hospital in the southern Gaza city of Rafah said the premature baby died on Thursday "despite efforts by the neonatal unit staff" to keep her alive.

Her uncle Rami al-Sheikh told AFP the hospital had called to say "her condition had worsened and they couldn't save her".

"She passed away to join her family," he said. "I went and completed all the procedures at the hospital today, and brought the girl's body home."



BD200 monthly support for differently abled individuals

The comprehensive support system for disabilities goes beyond financial aid

TDI | Manama

Bahrain has in place a monthly support system to assist individuals facing severe disabilities, with BD200 allotted, while those with minor disabilities receive BD100.

But that's not all – the Ministry of Social Development, in collaboration with various agencies and civil society organizations, offers a range of facilities beyond financial aid.

In response to a query posed by MP Maryam Al Dhaen, Minister Osama Al Asfoor unveiled the comprehensive support system.

Among the offerings are vocational training programmes and access to rehabilitation initiatives. These efforts aren't just about financial assistance; they aim to equip individuals with disabilities with skills necessary for employment and independent living. Moreover, the Ministry operates mobile units that extend essential services to remote areas. For specialised rehabilitation, the Al Matrouk Centre for Guidance Rehabilitation plays a vital role.

Driving license, accommodation

The focus extends to mobility as well. A driver's license training programme enables individuals with disabilities to obtain licenses, promoting their autonomy. Accommodation services are tailored to individual needs, determined through thorough health, psychological, and social evaluations.

Prosthetic devices and aids

The support doesn't end there.



Osama bin Ahmed Khalaf Al Asfoor, Minister of Social Development,



Maryam Saleh Al Dhaen, Southern Governorate- Second Constituency

Individuals diagnosed with autism receive a monthly financial assistance of 200 Bahraini dinars, in accordance with Decree No. 25 of 2023, which has doubled the disability allowance for severe cases. Similarly, individuals with Down syndrome also receive a monthly support of 200 Bahraini dinars.

BD1.2 million annually for rehabilitation centres

● Extends care to 1,579 Bahraini individuals with autism and 615 nationals with Down syndrome.

TDI | Manama

The Ministry of Social Development allocates an annual support fund of 1.2 million Bahraini dinars to centres dedicated to rehabilitating individuals with disabilities, encompassing those diagnosed with autism and Down syndrome.

Presently, the ministry oversees 12 such centers throughout the Kingdom, extending care to 1,579 Bahraini individuals with autism and 615 nationals with Down syndrome.

The Minister of Social Development, Osama Al Asfoor, disclosed these figures in response



Mohamed Husain Janahi, Capital Governorate - First Constituency

to a parliamentary inquiry by MP Hussein Janahi.

The ministry, he said, relies on psychiatric assessments from government hospitals to accurately categorize autism cases and ensure tailored sup-

port. Revealing further, the minister said they are providing a monthly financial assistance of 200 Bahraini dinars to individuals diagnosed with autism, effectively doubling the disability allowance for severe cases, as Decree No. 25 of 2023. Similarly, individuals with Down syndrome also receive a monthly support of 200 Bahraini dinars.

"Financial aid serves as a cornerstone in empowering individuals with autism and Down syndrome," remarked the Minister.

Moreover, individuals with disabilities, including those with autism and Down syndrome, are eligible for various additional support services such as social assistance, financial aid, and electricity discounts, contingent upon meeting specific eligibility criteria.

Disability Complex in Aali

"Presently, efforts are underway to finalise the maintenance and equipping of the Comprehensive Disability Complex in Aali, slated for imminent inauguration. Additionally, collaborative endeavours with the Ministry of Education involve the integration of individuals with disabilities into government schools post-receiving essential support and training," he emphasised.

"Undoubtedly, the Ministry of Social Development remains steadfast in its mission to empower individuals with autism and Down syndrome," affirmed Minister Al Asfoor. "Our ongoing commitment involves continual expansion of services and programmes to ensure they access the resources and support necessary for a thriving and fulfilling life."

Prosthetic devices and aids are provided, and the Ministry licenses centres working in the disability field. Currently, Bahrain boasts 49 such centres, including both private and government-affiliated ones.

"Currently, there are 49 centres in Bahrain dedicated to the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, including 43 private centres and 6 government-affiliated centres," he said, adding: "The Ministry is committed to providing comprehensive support to people with disabilities, empowering them to live independent and fulfilling lives."

Al Asfoor further stressed that the ministry is working to expand its services and programmes, ensuring equitable access for all. "We are constantly working to expand our services and programmes to ensure that all individuals with disabilities have access to the resources they need to thrive," he said.

Travel ban not common place

Most of the developed world don't restrict travel of expats with debts

Mahir Haneef
TDI | Manama

A travel ban on expats with debts is not a practice that is non-existent in most of the developed world, say experts.

The United States, which hosts the most number of immigrants in the world, and Canada, a popular immigration destination, do not have such a practice, they added.

'Not in Dubai'

Asked whether a travel ban similar to the ones proposed in Bahrain exist in Dubai, Shai Zamanian of Dubai-based immigration consultancy The American Legal Center said, "For mere travels, no such laws exist in the UAE. The introduction of which would have a severe political backlash as it would become a political matter to withhold citizens of foreign countries to



not travel home."

He further explained, "The question is of default. So long as persons are servicing their loans, meaning they are paying on time, then they have met their contractual obligation and in no such breach of contract with the debt issuer. Thus, it would be unreasonable to penalize someone for exercising simple tools of capitalism that our societies rely upon. In the modern world, I know of no free-market nation that practices such policies," he said.

In unprecedented situations

where there is a global shakeup of financial markets and where there is a reasonable expectation that mass default on loans could occur, there could be new policies in place to curb that affect. Yet, with robust economies with substantial liquidity such as the case with Bahrain, the policy would not align with the reality of market factors, Shai explained. "If there are no indicators of an insurmountable risk, what controversies does the proposed rule attempt to alleviate? This is the crux of the issue and should be assessed before market regulations are considered," he stated.

'Absent in largest immigration destinations'

Washington, DC-based Charles Kamasaki, a Distinguished Immigration Scholar at Cornell Law School, is a Senior Cabinet

Advisor at UnidosUS, the largest Hispanic civil rights organization in the US, and Fellow at the Migration Policy Institute. The lobbying force behind US' first major revision of immigration law in 1986, Mr. Kamasaki is an author and celebrated speaker on immigration reforms in the US.

Talking about the proposals for a travel ban on expats with debts, Mr. Kamasaki said such a policy is not there in the US, which hosts the highest number of immigrants in the world. "Unlike many other countries, the US does NOT have travel restrictions on people leaving the country. There is no 'exit visa' requirement here, so something like this simply would not come up," he stated.

US law expert Ilya Somin agrees with Mr. Kamasaki that a travel ban on expats with debts

is non-existent in the US. "So far as I know, the US does not restrict travel by expatriate's or others here on work visas merely because they have debt. The big law in our policy is not that we make it difficult for foreign workers to leave, but that it is - for many - too hard to gain entry in the first place," Mr. Somin said.

No travel ban in Canada

Kareem El-Assal, Canadian immigration policy analyst and Founder of Section95.com, confirmed that a travel ban on expats with debts is absent in Canada also.

"Expats possessing debt in Canada is common and they can travel freely outside of the country while holding loans. In addition to small debts such as credit card loans, it is common for expats here to have other

debts related to the likes of cell phones, cars, and homes. Building a Canadian credit history is important for expats for various reasons, such as being able to qualify for a mortgage to buy a home here," Kareem stated.

'Fairness is key'

While travel ban on expats with debts is common in the GCC region, such restrictions should be non-discriminatory and non-arbitrary, says Devin Kenney of Amnesty International. "Other Arab Gulf states do restrict non-nationals' exit from the country if they have debt, so Bahrain would not be unique in the subregion if it imposed such a rule. Regardless of which states do it, however, such restrictions on the right to leave a country based on economic considerations must be neither discriminatory nor arbitrary," he said.

Play it safe: The heat is on

Outdoor play and workouts now riskier than ever, says renowned pediatrician

- Install shaded areas with fans in parks, schools, and other public spaces

- Create clean, free drinking water in public areas

- Stay hydrated and wear light-coloured clothing

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

Playing and exercising outdoors is known to have numerous benefits for children's health, but according to a prominent paediatrician, high temperatures and extreme heat can pose serious health risks to children.

Dr. Jofrelyn Bistoyong, a specialist paediatrician at Bahrain Specialist Hospital, highlighted the dangers of heat-related illnesses and emphasised the need for heat protection resources for children.

Dr. Bistoyong pointed out three key reasons why heat can cause more health problems for children. Firstly, children tend to spend more time outdoors, engaging in physical activities and games, especially during the summer months. While outdoor time is beneficial, it also increases their vulnerability to heat-related illnesses.

"Children are growing and developing, and their respiratory systems are not as efficient as

adults'," explained Dr. Bistoyong. "They breathe faster and inhale a larger amount of air relative to their body weight. Additionally, they breathe closer to the ground, where pollutants often settle, further exacerbating their risk."

Furthermore, children rely on others to control their environment and take necessary precautions. Unlike adults, they may not have the ability to change their surroundings or clothing

to avoid extreme heat. Infants, in particular, are at a heightened risk as they are unable to regulate their environment or stay hydrated without assistance.

Heat-related illnesses can manifest in various ways, including dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and heat stroke, which can be a medical emergency. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can also lead to irritability and emotional distress, commonly referred

to as "eco-anxiety," especially with the increasing prevalence of extreme heat due to climate change.

Dr. Bistoyong suggested that local communities should provide more resources for heat protection, particularly for children.

"This could include the installation of shaded areas equipped with fans in parks, schools, and other public spaces. Additionally, accessible sources of clean, free drinking water in public areas such as schools, healthcare institutions, malls, and parks

during the summer season would help combat heat-related injuries and illnesses," she added.

Act fast, if these symptoms arise

Recognising the common symptoms experienced by children during the summer, Dr. Bistoyong highlighted faintness, extreme tiredness, headaches, fever, intense thirst, decreased urine output, nausea, and vomiting.

Stay hydrated

To mitigate these risks, she advised children to stay hydrated and wear light-coloured clothing to prevent excessive heat absorption. Loose-fitting clothing that provides ventilation and protection against direct sun exposure is recommended.

Wash faces regularly

Dr. Bistoyong also encouraged children to cool off with water, suggesting that they wash their faces regularly during breaks and outdoor activities.



Local communities should provide more resources for heat protection, particularly for children. This could include the installation of shaded areas equipped with fans in parks, schools, and other public spaces. Additionally, accessible sources of clean, free drinking water in public areas such as schools, healthcare institutions, malls, and parks during the summer season would help combat heat-related injuries and illnesses

DR. JOFRELYN BISTOYONG, A SPECIALIST PAEDIATRICIAN AT BAHRAIN SPECIALIST HOSPITAL

High Criminal Court verdict imminent in multi-million-dinar money laundering scandal

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court is set to deliver its verdict in a money laundering saga that has rocked the nation. Two individuals stand accused of orchestrating a scheme that fleeced unsuspecting victims of a staggering 10 million dinars. A hearing is set for May 13th to deliver the sentence.

According to court documents, the defendants cunningly lured in their prey under the guise of promising investment opportunities. The also engaged in a web of illegal financial manoeuvres to launder ill-gotten gains.

The Public Prosecution brought forth multiple charges against the perpetrators. Their alleged transgressions spanned from 2016 to 2022, during which they purportedly amassed over 10 million dinars from a dozen victims. Shockingly, the first defendant is accused of pocketing an additional 6 million dinars, further deepening the gravity of their offences.

Money laundering

The defendants also find themselves facing accusations



of money laundering. Their activities reportedly included a labyrinth of transfers, cash withdrawals, international transactions, and penalty payments, all amounting to a staggering 10 million dinars.

Prosecutors said they embarked on a relentless investigation, fuelled by a damning report from the Financial Crimes and Money Laundering Prosecution via the National Centre for Financial Investigations.

It is alleged that the suspects masterfully manipulated their victims through their respective institutions, reeling in funds from approximately 500 individuals.

Investigators unearthed a

harrowing trail of deceit, revealing how the defendants meticulously laundered their criminal proceeds. Funds were recycled between victims and perpetrators, laundered through intricate financial transfers, both domestic and international, and clandestine cash withdrawals.

As the case unfolded, the perpetrators attempted to evade justice, prompting authorities to issue an international arrest warrant. However, their flight from justice was short-lived, as they were apprehended in a neighbouring GCC state, though not before leaving a trail of financial devastation in their wake.



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Missing Thai model's body found in morgue, family demands answers

TDT | agencies

The body of Kaikan Kaennakam, a 31-year-old Thai model, was discovered in a morgue in Bahrain, over a year after she went missing. Her family is demanding an investigation into the circumstances surrounding her death. Kaikan had transitioned from modelling to working in a restaurant in the Middle East after facing a decline in job opportunities. She made efforts to support her family back in northeast Thailand. Keeping her loved ones informed, she frequently shared updates via social media, revealing that she had formed a relationship and moved in with her Bahraini boyfriend.

In April 2023, Kaikan abruptly ceased her online activity, causing concern among her relatives who were unable to reach her via phone. Despite their efforts to locate her, including seeking assistance from the Thai embassy in January of the following year and receiving support from the Thai community in Bahrain, Kaikan was unable to be located.

Tragically, on April 18, the Thai embassy in Bahrain con-



Kaikan Kaennakam

veyed the devastating news to Kaikan's family that the body of an unidentified Southeast Asian woman had been discovered in the Salmaniya medical complex morgue since the previous year. A tattoo on the woman's leg provided a crucial clue identifying her as the missing Thai worker. The stated cause of death was said to be acute lung and heart failure due to alcohol poisoning.

Suthida Ngernthaworn, Kaikan's sister, harbours suspicions regarding the circumstances

surrounding Kaikan's death. She asserts that photographs of Kaikan's body exhibit indications of bruising, prompting her concerns. Additionally, Suthida reveals that before her disappearance, Kaikan had shared images and videos on social media depicting her body adorned with marks and cuts, further fuelling suspicion. Now the family is busy trying to get the woman's mortal remains back to Thailand, which, without travel insurance, can be a very expensive task.

When their books get muddy

Economic watchdogs' struggle for Clarity

● Ministry identifies 85 violations within 163 audit and bookkeeping firms

TDT | Manama

It seems like the keepers of the book in the Kingdom are themselves struggling to keep their acts clean

For the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said it detected 85 violations among 163 audit and bookkeeping firms since the start of the current legislative term.

In response, the ministry has also tightened its noose by installing a 17-member crack team for scrutinizing their moves.

Within the economic landscape of the Kingdom, there exists a bustling cohort of 163 audit and bookkeeping firms.



Minister of Industry and Commerce, Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro



JALILA ALAWI SAYED HASAN, Capital Governorate - 8th Constituency

Of these, according to Minister Abdullah Fakhro, 50 are external audit firms and 113 are bookkeeping counterparts.

The ministry disclosed these figures in its reply to a parliamentary inquiry by MP Jaleela Sayed Alawi.

Among the external audit entities, six hail from foreign soils, while 18 stand as solo institutions and 26 form formidable partnerships.

On the flip side, the bookkeeping realm boasts 63 solo endeavours, two dynamic partnerships, and a staggering 48 entities operating under the banner of WLL. Remarkably, not a single foreign-born bookkeeping entity graces the scene.

But, that is not all. The ministry also revealed granting five more fresh licenses to external audit firms and a whopping 22 licenses to bookkeeping brethren

since the legislative turnover in December 2022.

How are the firms monitored?

The ministry said it employs a stringent inspection regimen rooted in factors stratified by priority and risk, especially concerning anti-money laundering protocols. "Our mission is crystal clear: to ensure unwavering compliance with laws and regulations," he affirmed.

What happens when the line is crossed?

The ministry said it has a wide range of arsenal against violators, encompassing written reprimands, punitive fines, registry infractions, referral to the Disciplinary Board of Auditors, legal recourse via the Public Prosecution, and, in extreme cases, the revocation of registration. "This plan aims to ensure that these firms comply with laws and regulations," he stressed.

MPs mull revocation law for national orders

TDT | Manama

Come Tuesday, parliamentarians will vote on a proposed amendment that would permit the revocation of national orders under specific circumstances.

The amendment, introducing a new Article 16 bis to Decree Law No. 19 of 1976 regarding decorations, aims to address gaps in current legislation.

Recipients of national orders may have their honours revoked, particularly if their actions are deemed inconsistent with the values and principles associated with the bestowed order.

Outlined in the proposal are scenarios where recipients of national orders may have their honours revoked,

particularly if their actions are deemed inconsistent with the values and principles associated with the bestowed

order.

The draft law has undergone scrutiny and approval by the Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence, and National Security.

According to the committee's executive summary, the Ministry of Defence has verified the proposed amendment's compatibility with existing laws in various Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab countries.



Governor Ali bin Abdul Hussein Al-Asfour of the Northern Governorate yesterday toured farms in the Horra Aalia area to assess the aftermath of flood damage on crops. Accompanying him were President Hussain Jaffar of the Bahrain Agricultural Cooperative Society, numerous farmers, members of the Security Committee, and representatives from various ministries. The primary objective of the visit was to gauge the extent of losses and damages incurred by the farms. Additionally, plans were made to establish a system for submitting damage inventory forms to the Ministry of Works. This initiative aims to facilitate the compilation of a comprehensive compensation report by verification teams, which will be presented to the appropriate authorities. Throughout the tour, the team surveyed the damage sustained by farmers and their crops. Subsequently, reports detailing the impact on food, environmental, agricultural, and economic security in the region will be forwarded to the Minister of the Interior for further action.



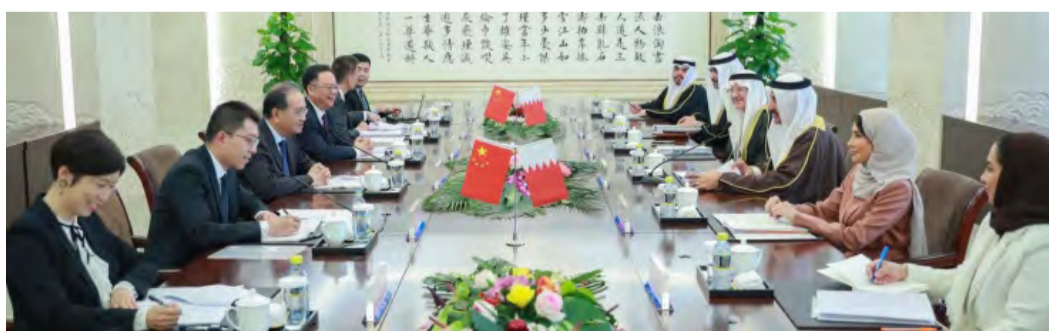
Bahrain, China initiate political consultations to strengthen ties

TDT | Manama

Yesterday marked the inaugural round of political consultations between Bahrain and the People's Republic of China.

Chaired by Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Political Affairs Undersecretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Deng Li, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, the session delved into avenues to fortify and broaden cooperation between the two nations across various domains including politics, economics, science, culture, and technology, all in the pursuit of mutual benefit.

Dr. Shaikh Abdulla underscored Bahrain's dedication to enhancing ties with China,



Officials during the meeting yesterday

emphasising the importance of collaboration in advancing shared interests.

The discussions encompassed a spectrum of regional and global topics, including efforts towards an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, humanitarian aid delivery, de-escalation of

military tensions, and the pursuit of just and comprehensive peace both regionally and globally. Additionally, the delegates focused on fostering peaceful coexistence among cultures and civilisations.

Deng Li reiterated China's commitment to deepening po-

litical and economic cooperation with Bahrain, emphasising the potential for such collaboration to bolster regional and international security and peace. He extended his best wishes for continued progress and prosperity to the Kingdom and its people.

Bahrain Comic Con 2024 kicks off



TDT | Manama

Under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Chairman of the General Sports Authority, and President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, the fifth edition of the Bahrain Comic Con kicked off today at the Bahrain International Circuit.

HH Shaikh Khalid's sons, HH Shaikh Faisal bin Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and HH Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa opened the Bahrain Comic Con 2024, in the presence of senior guests and invitees.

Bahrain Comic Con 2024 offers the attendees the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities, including exploring the designated shopping area, viewing the artists' exhibition, competing in the e-gaming hall, enjoying shows in the cinema hall, indulging in delicious food at the food festival, and engaging in Q&A sessions and autograph signings with all celebrities, providing fans the chance to meet their favourite stars.

The two-day Bahrain Comic Con is a major event that promotes the kingdom globally, as it attracts an elite of celebrities, offers a variety of activities, and draws a large number of visitors.

BTEA plans guided tours at major tourist areas



Representative picture

TDT | Manama

To spotlight Bahrain's rich cultural legacy and historic sites, the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) is gearing up to offer guided tours in three prominent tourist destinations across the Kingdom.

BTEA is planning to get this done through qualified Destination Management Companies (DMCs), for which it has also launched a tender inviting proposal.

The selected DMCs will be tasked with contracting licensed Bahraini tour guides who will conduct informative and engaging tours for visitors. These tours will take place in designated visitor center areas within the three locations, where tourists will receive informative materials detailing their itinerary.

However, it's crucial to note that only bidders with relevant Commercial Registration

(CR) activity will be considered for evaluation. Activities such as arranging and assembling tours are deemed acceptable for this tender, ensuring that qualified entities with the necessary expertise are given the opportunity to participate.

Through these guided tours, tourists will have the opportunity to explore and appreciate the beauty and history of Bahrain's major tourist areas, contributing to the overall growth and promotion of tourism in the kingdom.

If interested in being a part, make sure to submit bids with a BD500 bond before the 8th of May 2024.

BTEA will award a three-month contract to a successful candidate.

The initial bond should be in the form of a Certified Cheque, Bank Guarantee, Insurance Policy or Cash (or as specified in the Tender Documents) valid for the duration specified.

US stock market rebound on tech earnings, London hits new record

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Bouyant big tech earnings lifted US stocks yesterday while London scaled another peak as investors tracked a series of takeover bids for UK companies.

The tech heavy Nasdaq led the way mid-session on Wall Street, adding two% two hours into trading as traders shrugged off official data showing that a key measure of inflation favoured by the US Federal Reserve had accelerated in March.

The broader-based S&P added 1.1% while the Dow was 0.4% in the green while major European indices also rose.

The markets had fallen on Thursday over concerns about spending at Facebook owner Meta and slower-than-expected US economic growth in the first quarter.

But the mood changed after Microsoft and Google owner Alphabet released forecast-beating earnings after markets closed on Thursday, soothing worries that a tech-fuelled global markets rally might have been overdone.

Shares in Alphabet, which had announced a dividend and the authorisation of \$70 billion in share buybacks, charged 10% higher when markets reopened on Friday.

Microsoft rose 2.7% after re-

Key figures around 1545 GMT

New York - Dow:	▲ 0.4% at 38,227.37 points
New York - S&P 500:	▲ 1.1% at 5,104.77
New York - Nasdaq:	▲ 2.1% at 15,938.31
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.8% at 8,139.83 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 0.9% at 8,088.24 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▲ 1.4% at 18,161.01 (close)
EURO STOXX 50:	▲ 1.4% at 5,007.73
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 0.8% at 37,934.76 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▲ 2.1% at 17,651.15 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▲ 1.2% at 3,088.64 (close)
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 157.42 yen from 155.65 yen on Thursday
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.0680 from \$1.0730
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.2457 from \$1.2514
Euro/pound:	▼ at 85.73 pence from 85.74 pence
Brent North Sea Crude:	▲ 0.5% at \$89.42 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 0.5% at \$83.98 per barrel

porting a 20-percent jump in quarterly profits to \$21.9 billion.

"What a difference a day makes, or even five minutes," said David Morrison, analyst at Trade Nation.

Investors were also digesting the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, which rose more than expected at an annual rate of 2.7% in March after reaching 2.5% in February.

That figure pushes back the chances of interest rate cuts this summer. The Fed holds a policy meeting next week.

"The latest PCE report reiterates that it's too early for a victory lap" in the fight against inflation, said eToro analyst Bret Kenwell.

London record highs

In Europe, London's benchmark FTSE 100 index crowned a week which saw it advance three% with a new record high close of 8,139.83 points. A 0.8 advance for the day left it just off a fresh intraday record of 8,146.79.

Frankfurt added 1.4% and Paris 0.9%.

Shares in British multinational mining company Anglo Amer-

ican rose more than two% after falling earlier in the day following the company's rejection of a nearly \$39 billion offer from Australian rival BHP.

Anglo American on Friday dismissed the bid as "highly unattractive" and "opportunistic".

Cybersecurity firm Darktrace said it had accepted a \$5.3-billion takeover offer from US private equity firm Thoma Bravo, sending its share price shooting higher.

"What a fantastic week for the FTSE 100. We've had new record highs, yet more takeover action, and everyone is talking about UK stocks in a positive way," said Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

"The bidding bonanza for UK-listed firms goes on, and this is acting as a constant reminder to global investors that, even with the FTSE 100 at a record high, UK stocks look cheap compared to their US cousins," said IG chief market analyst Chris Beauchamp.

In Asia, major equity markets rose, while the yen hit a fresh 34-year low after the Bank of Japan stood pat on interest rates, a month after raising them for the first time in 17 years.

The unit broke 157 to the dollar on Friday, fuelling fresh speculation of an intervention after several officials suggested readiness to support it.

Copper price tops \$10,000 for first time in two years

London, United Kingdom

Copper prices rallied yesterday above \$10,000 per tonne for the first time in two years, propelled by soaring global demand and tight supplies.

In early morning trade on the London Metal Exchange, the price of copper breaching the key level for the first time since April 2022 to peak at just over \$10,028. It later stood at \$9,992.50 per tonne.

The base metal is in the spotlight after mining giant BHP launched Thursday a \$38.8-billion takeover bid for British rival Anglo American, in an audacious move to create the world's biggest listed

copper producer.

However, Anglo American on Friday rejected the offer as too low, slamming it as "highly unattractive" and "opportunistic".

Copper is currently experiencing a demand boom on the back of its diverse uses in the renewable energy transition, from electric vehicles to solar panels and wind turbines.

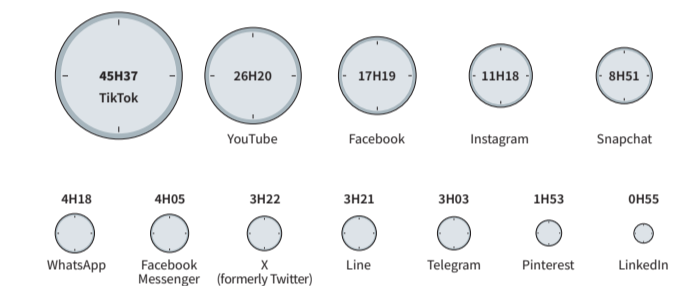
The metal faces additional upward pressure from other factors including strikes, geopolitical tensions and increasing regulation.

Back in March 2022, copper had scored a record high of \$10,845 per tonne in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

ByteDance says 'no plans' to sell TikTok after US ban law

US: time spent using social media apps

Average time per month that active social media users in the US spent on each platform, in hours per month



Source: Datareportal, Digital report 2024, data for July, August and September 2023 for Android apps

AFP

Beijing, China

TikTok parent ByteDance has said it has no intention of selling it, after the US Congress passed a law forcing it to sell the hugely popular video platform or get banned in the United States.

ByteDance's comment came after the tech business-focused news site The Information reported that the Chinese tech giant was looking at potential scenarios for selling TikTok without the coveted recommendation algorithm that powers it.

"Foreign media reports

about ByteDance exploring the sale of TikTok are untrue," the company posted late Thursday on its official account on Toutiao, a social media platform it owns.

"ByteDance does not have any plans to sell TikTok."

US Congress members and government officials have said TikTok presents a national security threat as long as it is controlled by or connected to ByteDance.

They have alleged it could be used to collect data and spy on Americans, and also serve as a powerful channel for Chinese propaganda.

Ship attacked by missiles off Yemen coast: UK agency

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

A ship was damaged when it was attacked twice by at least two missiles while travelling off Yemen's coast on Friday, British maritime security agency UKMTO reported.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks, which the United King-

dom Maritime Trade Operations said took place southwest of the Yemeni port of Mokha.

In the first attack "the vessel experienced an explosion in close proximity to the vessel which was felt by the crew on board", UKMTO said on X, formerly Twitter.

"The second attack on the vessel consisted of what is be-

lieved to be two missiles, which resulted in damage," it added.

Hours earlier, the British maritime security firm Ambrey had also reported an attack off the port of Mokha.

"Three missiles were sighted," in that incident, Ambrey said.

"A Panama-flagged tanker was the closest vessel to these.

The tanker was formerly UK-owned (but)... the ownership changed in November 2023," according to Ambrey.

Currently, it said, the vessel is registered in the Seychelles and "engaged in Russia-linked trade".

"The tanker was en route from Primorsk, Russia, to Vadinar, India," it added.

Parliament gears up for crucial review of government finances

● To review annual reports of Audit Office for fiscal years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023

● Consolidated final accounts and performance report on state's general budget for fiscal year ending December 31, 2022

● Aims at ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficient use of public funds in government finances.

TDI | Manama

In its upcoming session on Tuesday, Parliamentarians will subject the government's financial landscape to review, as

In addition to the Audit Office's reports, the committee will also unveil its findings on the consolidated final accounts of the state for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022, along with the performance report on the implementation of the state's general budget for the same fiscal year, prepared by the Ministry of Finance and National Economy.

With transparency and accountability at the forefront, the committee's scrutiny of these reports is paramount. Their insights and recommendations will inform parliamentary discussions and decisions on budget allocation and financial oversight, ensuring that public funds are utilised efficiently and responsibly.

Ultimately, the reports presented by the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee will serve as invaluable guides for identifying areas for improvement and fostering the judicious use of public funds.



Yesterday, Abdulla Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Trade, hosted Ni Ruchi, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Bahrain, in his office. During their meeting, Minister Fakhro emphasized the robustness of bilateral relations, highlighting the need to enhance cooperation across various sectors, particularly in industry, commerce, and investment. A range of mutual interests were deliberated upon during the discussions. In response, Ambassador Ni Ruchi expressed China's commitment to bolstering and advancing friendly relations with Bahrain, aiming for broader and deeper collaboration.

Gulf Madhyamam begins silver jubilee celebrations

TDI | Manama

The 25th anniversary celebrations of 'Gulf Madhyamam', the pioneering Indian international newspaper born in the Pearl Islands of the Persian Gulf, have commenced. This milestone occasion marks a quarter-century since the newspaper's establishment at

Al Ayam Press in Bahrain.

Nabeel bin Yaqub Al Hamar, HM King Hamad's Media Adviser, unveiled the silver jubilee logo, commemorating a significant chapter in its history.

Notable figures from Gulf Madhyamam, including Operations Director Salim Ambalan, Global Head of Business Operations Muhammad Rafiq,

Executive Committee Chairman Jamal Iringal, Regional Manager Jalil Abdullah, and Marketing Manager Saqib Vali-apeethikakal, graced the unveiling ceremony.

Gulf Madhyamam embarked on its journey in India in 1987 and expanded its horizons beyond borders with its inaugural edition in Bahrain in 1999.

Defending champions Alcaraz and Sabalenka through in Madrid Open

● Alcaraz returns from injury with a commanding win over Shevchenko

● Sabalenka edges past Linette in a tense three-set battle

AFP | Madrid

Defending Madrid Open champions Carlos Alcaraz and Aryna Sabalenka both triumphed in their opening clashes in the Spanish capital yesterday to reach the third round.

Alcaraz returned after a month out to begin his double defence with a convincing 6-2, 6-1 win over Alexander Shevchenko, while Sabalenka survived a tense three-set tussle against the in-form Magda Linette.

Men's world number three Alcaraz shone on home clay after a forearm problem led to his withdrawals from the Monte Carlo Masters and Barcelona Open.



Aryna Sabalenka serves the ball to Poland's Magda Linette

"It's been quite a tough month for me, with the uncertainty over when I'd be back," said Alcaraz. "The priority today was to see how I felt, in a difficult match.

"The feelings were very good, and I think I played at a very good level despite coming without rhythm... I am very happy and it's a pleasure to play here in Madrid again."

Wearing a protective sleeve on his right arm, two-time Grand

Slam winner Alcaraz quickly dispelled any doubts after his time out by flying out of the blocks in the first set with a break.

The 20-year-old Spaniard was as exciting as ever, frequently on the attack, and secured a second break in the fifth game for a 4-1 lead.

Indian Wells winner Alcaraz hit the net with a drop shot to let the Kazakhstani back in but

"I think in that second set she just put a little extra pressure on my serve, and I just didn't handle my emotions well. We went to a third set, and I'm just happy that I was able to close this match with a win

ARYNA SABALENKA

broke again himself for a 5-2 advantage which he served out.

Alcaraz pulled off two second set breaks for a 3-0 lead but again allowed his 23-year-old opponent to cut the deficit before striking back with a third break, which he consolidated for 5-1.

The 2022 and 2023 Madrid winner and second seed wrapped up his victory in little over an hour with another break when Shevchenko sent a forehand long.

Alcaraz will face Thiago Seyboth Wild in the third round after the Brazilian surprised Lorenzo Musetti 6-4, 6-4.

Andrey Rublev ended a four-match losing streak with a straightforward 6-1, 6-4 win over Facundo Bagnis.

"It feels really great after a while to start with a win and I'm happy with my performance," said Rublev, who lost his temper and obliterated his racquet after a first round exit in Barcelona.

Poland's Hubert Hurkacz hit nine aces as he powered past Briton Jack Draper 6-1, 7-5.

In the women's draw Sabalenka edged the wily Linette 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

The Australian Open winner has struggled since her triumph in Melbourne and her Polish opponent fought well in the two-hour nine minute contest.

Big-hitter Sabalenka, ranked second in the world, edged the first set but struggled in the second as Linette broke to love and then consolidated for a 4-1 lead.

The 32-year-old then carved out three break points in the sixth game but although she could not take them, eventually steered the match to a deciding third set.

Two-time Grand Slam champion Sabalenka saved three

break points to stay on serve and then found a net cord winner to break herself for a 5-3 lead.

Sabalenka, 25, wrapped up her narrow victory over the world number 48 by smashing down an ace and will face Katie Boulter or Robin Montgomery in the third round.

"I think in that second set she just put a little extra pressure on my serve, and I just didn't handle my emotions well," said Sabalenka.

"We went to a third set, and I'm just happy that I was able to close this match with a win."

Elena Rybakina eased past Lucia Bronzetti 6-4, 6-3.

The Kazakhstani, ranked fourth in the world and with a tour-leading three titles this season, continued her good form after triumphing in Stuttgart last week.

Rybakina faces Egyptian Mayar Sherif in the next round after she surprised Stuttgart runner-up Marta Kostyuk 6-2, 7-5.

Chinese fifth seed Zheng Qinwen retired with a thigh injury from her match against Yulia Putintseva, who had taken a 7-5, 2-0 lead.

Dominant wins steal the show on day 10 of Inter-Hotel Cricket Tournament



Adnan Rasool (Lagoona Beach Resort) receiving "Man of the Match" certificate from Bernard de Villele (General Manager, The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain)

TDT | Manama

The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain Inter-Hotel Charity Cricket Tournament witnessed another day of exciting action on Day 10, with five matches played on April 25.

In the first match, Lagoona Resort A secured a 24-run win over Royal Ambassador. Adnan Rasool from Lagoona Beach Re-

sort was adjudged the Man of the Match for his outstanding all-round display.

The second encounter saw Vida Beach Resort emerge victorious against Westin Bahrain by a margin of 37 runs. Amir Sohail of Vida Beach Resort was awarded the Man of the Match for his match-winning contribution.

In the third match, Down-



Mohammed Waqas (Lagoona Beach Resort) receiving "Man of the Match" certificate from Adeen Awais (Organizing Committee, The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain)

town Rotana dominated Four-Seasons Bahrain, registering a comprehensive 50-run victory. Kaleem Ur Rahman from Downtown Rotana was named the Man of the Match for his crucial role in his team's win.

The fourth match witnessed another dominant performance, with Lagoona Resort B thrashing Grand Swiss Belhotel by a massive 79-run margin. Mo-

ammed Waqas from Lagoona Beach Resort was adjudged the Man of the Match for his exceptional display.

In the final match of the day, Intercontinental Bahrain secured a six-wicket victory over Ramada Manama City Centre. Adnan Yousef from Intercontinental Bahrain was the star performer and claimed the Man of the Match award.

Chelsea's Fernandez to miss rest of season after groin surgery

AFP | London

Chelsea midfielder Enzo Fernandez will miss the rest of the season after surgery on a groin injury on Thursday.

Fernandez has been suffering for several weeks with a hernia and struggled to make an impact during Tuesday's 5-0 thrashing at Arsenal.

The 23-year-old Argentina star will be absent for Chelsea's last six league games and it remains to be seen if he can recover in time for the Copa America in June.

Fernandez, a World Cup



Chelsea midfielder Enzo Fernandez in action (file photo)

winner in 2022, is the latest Chelsea player to be hit with an injury setback in a dismal season for the Premier League club.

At times, Chelsea boss Mauricio Pochettino has had as many as 12 players unavailable, with his team languishing in ninth place as a result of their fitness and form issues.

Their thrashing against Arsenal followed Saturday's 1-0 FA Cup semi-final loss to Manchester City at Wembley as the pressure mounts on Pochettino. Fernandez, signed from

Benfica for £107 million (\$133 million) in January 2023, has made 28 league appearances this term, scoring three goals.

"Enzo Fernandez has today undergone successful surgery on a groin issue and will now begin a period of rehabilitation, sidelining him for the remainder of Chelsea's 2023/24 season," a club statement said.

"The 23-year-old midfielder will work with the club's medical department on his rehabilitation at Cobham."

Indonesia one step from Olympics after beating S. Korea

AFP | Jakarta

Indonesians celebrated yesterday after their spirited men's team beat South Korea in the Under-23 Asian Cup quarter-finals in a dramatic penalty shootout, leaving them one step from qualifying for the Olympics for only the second time in history.

They defeated their Asian rivals 11-10 on penalties after a 2-2 draw in Doha on Thursday night.

The top three teams will qualify for this summer's Olympic Games in Paris while the fourth place side will face an Asian-African playoff with Guinea in May.

"Praise God, semifinal! An incredible win against South Korea, the Asian Giant," wrote Indonesian football association president Erick Thohir on Instagram.

"Playing with bravery, discipline in defence, and effec-

tiveness in the frontline made the Red and White's hope for the Olympics wide open. Proud!"


Rafael Struick, winger for Dutch club ADO Den Haag, scored twice for Indonesia who were pegged back twice by a Komang Teguh own goal and a Jeong Sang-bin strike.

South Korea, one of the favourites to win the tournament, went down to 10 men in the 70th minute but held on for penalties.

Indonesia's Pratama Arhan scored the decisive penalty after Lee Kang-hee's spot-kick was saved.

South Korea's loss leaves them without an Olympic spot for the first time since the 1980s.

Remarkably a South Korean coach, Shin Tae-yong, led Indonesia to victory to prevent his home country from qualifying. His name was trending on social media site X early yesterday.



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Bairstow stars as Punjab pull off record T20 chase

Punjab Kings achieve highest successful run chase in T20 history against Kolkata Knight Riders

● **Jonny Bairstow's explosive 108 off 48 balls propels Punjab to victory**

AFP | Kolkata

Jonny Bairstow smashed an unbeaten century as Punjab Kings recorded the highest successful run chase in T20 cricket with an eight-wicket thrashing of Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League yesterday.

The England star clobbered nine sixes and eight fours in his 48-ball 108 to help Punjab overhaul Kolkata's 261-6 with eight balls to spare in hot and humid conditions at the Eden Gardens. Shashank Singh also impressed with the bat, making 68 not out off 28 balls with eight sixes and two fours.

The previous highest run chase in T20 history was script-



Jonny Bairstow celebrates his century

ed by South Africa who overhauled 258 for 5 made by the West Indies in 2023.

"Both teams played tremendously. You have to go back to the drawing board and see where you went wrong," said

Kolkata skipper Shreyas Iyer.

"Not defending hurts but it's a great lesson for the players."

Punjab registered only their third win from nine games and moved to eighth spot in the 10-team competition.

Kolkata, with five wins from eight games, remain in second

Scorecard

Punjab Kings 262 for 2 (Bairstow 108*, Shashank 68*, Prabhsimran 54, Narine 1-24) beat **Kolkata Knight Riders** 261 for 6 (Salt 75, Narine 71, Arshdeep 2-45) by eight wickets

place.

"From the dugout, I was watching the wicket. I felt the ball was coming on with good bounce," said Shashank.

"This match, the way Jonny batted was a huge positive. It was a great learning for me, we still have five more matches to go."

Opening the Punjab innings, Bairstow put on 93 runs with impact sub Prabhsimran Singh (54) and another 85 runs with South Africa's Rilee Rossouw (26).

Prabhsimran was run out by a direct throw from Sunil Narine who also chipped in with the wicket of Rossouw in the 13th

Both teams played tremendously. You have to go back to the drawing board and see where you went wrong. Not defending hurts but it's a great lesson for the players

KOLKATA SKIPPER SHREYAS IYER

over.

Despite the two dismissals, Shashank continued to unleash big shots, making sure Punjab did not lose their nerve while chasing the big total.

Earlier, Kolkata got off to a blistering start with Phil Salt and Narine sharing 138 runs off just 69 balls for the first wicket after being put in to bat.

Narine, dropped on 16, hammered four sixes and nine fours in his 32-ball 71 before holing

YOU KNOW WHAT

The previous highest successful run chase in T20 history was 258-5, achieved by South Africa against West Indies in 2023

out to Bairstow off leg spinner Rahul Chahar.

England's Sam Curran dismissed Salt who hit a 37-ball 75 studded with six sixes and six fours after being dropped twice by sloppy Punjab fielders.

Venkatesh Iyer chipped in with a cameo 39-run knock as Kolkata posted the highest IPL total ever at the Eden Gardens.

Man City's Guardiola says he does not 'waste time' thinking about refs

AFP | Manchester

Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola says he does not "spend one second" thinking about referees as he prepares to face Nottingham Forest following the relegation-threatened club's stinging criticism of match officials.

Forest were furious not to be awarded three penalties during last weekend's 2-0 Premier League loss at Everton and made headlines by releasing a series of strong statements about the incidents.

But Guardiola, who takes his title-chasing side to the City Ground on Sunday, feels that being preoccupied with refereeing appointments is a waste of his time.

"I go to the game and I never ever know who is the referee," he said. "When I see their face,



Manchester City's manager Pep Guardiola (R) jokes with Phil Foden (file photo)

it's 'oh, I remember that face'. I never in my life talk about the referees before, during or after -- never ever, ever.

"A mistake can be a mistake and we are sad, and when it's in our favour we are lucky.

"But I don't waste my time.

I have to economise, I have to choose with my time exactly what I have to do. I don't spend one second (thinking) about referees, especially when we lose."

Phil Foden inspired City's comfortable 4-0 win at Brighton on Thursday with two goals

between finishes from Kevin De Bruyne and Julian Alvarez.

The win lifted City to second in the table, one point behind leaders Arsenal with a game in hand.

Guardiola hopes the 23-year-old Foden, who has 24 goals for the season in all competitions, can sustain his dazzling form during the title run-in.

"Phil has a sixth gear but he cannot play all the time in sixth gear -- he has to play in second and third," said Guardiola. "I think, with time, he will learn that.

"Everything is so quick. Football has to be sometimes slower (in order) to become quicker after to surprise the opponent.

"He will understand the game through years and years and experiences. But he loves to play and his work ethic is unbelievable."

Man Utd 'have to back' struggling Rashford, says Ten Hag



Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford in action

AFP | Manchester

Erik ten Hag said yesterday he has a "lot of sympathy" for Marcus Rashford as the Manchester United manager demanded support for his misfiring forward.

The 26-year-old scored a career-high 30 goals last season and was rewarded with a new deal until 2028, but his form has since slumped dramatically.

Rashford has managed just eight goals in 40 appearances for his boyhood club during the current campaign and fans booed him in last Sunday's FA Cup semi-final win against Coventry.

The England international, writing in the Players' Tribune in February, said: "If you back me, good. If you doubt me, even better."

But responding to a post on X that called the treatment of Rashford "absolutely disgusting", "cruel" and "abuse", the United forward said: "I appreciate your support! It is abuse and has been for months. Enough is enough."

Ten Hag, speaking at his pre-match press conference, said he empathised with Rashford's plight.

"Last year he had a brilliant season. I think the best season in his career, he scored 30 goals, so there you see where he's capable of," the Dutch coach said.

"This season he didn't give the performances and then people are very critical, and I think we have to back him.

"Everyone should back him and push him to get back to the levels he was last year."

Spurs will be on the attack against Arsenal: Postecoglou

AFP | London

Ange Postecoglou insisted Tottenham will stick to his attacking philosophy in Sunday's crucial north London derby against Premier League leaders Arsenal.

Postecoglou's side cannot afford to lose to their bitter rivals at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium as they try to stay in the race to qualify for the Champions League.

Fifth placed Tottenham are six points behind fourth placed



Ange Postecoglou

Aston Villa, who can extend that advantage to nine if they beat troubled Chelsea on Saturday.

Tottenham will have three games in hand on Villa by the time they kick off against Arsenal, but Postecoglou knows only

victories will do in the battle to finish in the top four.

With that in mind, the Australian has no intention of sending his team into the derby with a defensive mindset, even though Arsenal showed their attacking prowess with a 5-0 rout of Chelsea on Tuesday.

"It's just about making sure you embrace the challenge and try to tackle it in the way that got us into this position in the first place," Postecoglou told reporters yesterday.

"From our perspective we've

had some inconsistencies and challenges this year, but when we've played well we've played a certain way and gone about things in a certain way.

"There's no point now when you get to the most important part of the year to shy away from that or change your approach.

"You've got to double down on it and focus on playing our football. That's a great measure for us because otherwise you'll never know where you're short or whether you can be successful in doing it our way."