

'State of collapse'

U.S. President Donald Trump claimed Iran has told Washington it is in a "state of collapse" and is seeking the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. | P10

What does the UAE's exit mean for global oil prices and supply?

Bahrain teams set for GCC Games basketball challenge in Doha

Total CX, DOO Ink USD 2m Deal to Boost AI Customer Experience in Bahrain

Collective Defence Pact

TDT | Manama

HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa attended the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consultative summit in Jeddah on Monday, where leaders of the six-member bloc discussed regional security, infrastructure integration and coordination amid escalating regional tensions.

The meeting, chaired by Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman, brought together GCC heads of state to review developments across the Middle East and the international arena.

GCC Pushes Integration

GCC Secretary-General Jassim Mohammed Al-Budaiwi said leaders focused on strengthening strategic integration, including major

infrastructure and defence projects, amid growing regional instability.

The summit discussed recent security developments, including attacks that GCC states attributed to Iran against member countries and Jordan. Leaders condemned the incidents that targeted civilian infrastructure, describing them as violations of sovereignty and international law.

In a joint position, GCC leaders called for accelerating key regional projects, including a Gulf oil and gas pipeline network, a regional water interconnection system, and the development of strategic stockpile zones. They also urged faster progress on military integration, particularly an early warning system for ballistic missile threats.


The leaders reaffirmed that the security of GCC



states is "indivisible" under the bloc's joint defence framework, stating that any attack on one member is an attack on all. They also reiterated their right to individual and collective self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Al-Budaiwi said the summit also stressed the importance of rebuilding trust, enhancing collective security, and strengthening long-term economic and strategic resilience.





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Firm Loyalty Stance

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The National Unity Gathering, the Islamic National Al-Menbar Society, and the Al-Asalah Islamic Society said they fully support the King's directives calling for a firm approach to issues of loyalty and national affiliation.

In a joint statement, the groups welcomed the decision to revoke Bahraini citizenship from individuals accused of expressing sympathy for or glorifying alleged hostile Iranian actions against Bahrain, or of collaborating with foreign entities, including their dependents.

The statement stressed that loyalty to Bahrain must be absolute and non-divisible, adding that allegiance to any entity other than the nation is "not acceptable nationally, religiously, or legally."

The groups also expressed support for legal measures aimed at strengthening national security and preserving social cohesion, development, and stability.

School Victory

TDT | Manama

Minister of Education Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma congratulated Ahmed Al-Omaran Secondary School for Boys for winning the Khalid bin Hamad Secondary Schools Handball Championship, praising both finalists for their performance and sportsmanship.

The minister also commended Naim Secondary School for Boys, highlighting its strong competitive display and resilience throughout the final match.

Cooperation under C-SIPA framework

TDT | Manama

The Crown Prince and Prime Minister HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa met with the US Ambassador to Bahrain, Her Excellency Stephanie L. Hallett, at Gudai-biya Palace.

During the meeting, the Crown Prince highlighted the continued growth of Bahrain-US relations, describing them as a strategic partnership marked by ongoing development and mutual commitment.

He stressed Bahrain's interest in further strengthening bilateral cooperation, building on existing agreements and memoranda of understanding, including the recent Comprehensive



HRH Prince Salman receives the US Ambassador to Bahrain, H.E. Stephanie L. Hallett.

Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA.)

The Crown Prince also underlined the historical role of the United States alongside Bahrain in addressing regional security challenges, including responses to Iranian attacks.

The two sides also discussed regional and international developments, as well as issues of mutual concern, emphasizing the importance of continued coordination to support security and stability in the region and beyond.

Senior Bahraini officials, including Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa and Minister of Cabinet Affairs Hamad bin Faisal Al Malki, attended the meeting.

Renewed Push for Two-State Solution

Bahrain Calls for Peace in Palestine

TDT | Manama

The UN Security Council on Tuesday convened a high-level meeting focused heavily on the Palestinian issue and wider Middle East tensions, as Bahrain chaired the session during its presidency of the Council for April.

Opening the debate, Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani strongly emphasized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, describing it as a central issue requiring an urgent and just resolution to achieve lasting regional stability.

Reaffirming Bahrain's position, he stressed what he called the "urgent need for a just and

lasting solution" to the Palestinian question.

He reiterated Bahrain's support for the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," including self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in line with international resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Resolutions

The minister underscored the importance of implementing UN Security Council resolutions related to Gaza, calling for sustained efforts to uphold cease-fires, improve humanitarian ac-

cess, and alleviate the suffering of civilians.

Al Zayani also highlighted the need to halt settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank and opposed any forced displacement, warning that unilateral actions undermine prospects for peace.

He stressed the importance of preserving the legal and historical status of Jerusalem and maintaining support for Jordan's custodianship of Islamic and Christian holy sites, as well as the role of the Jerusalem Committee chaired by Morocco's king.

While broader regional issues, including maritime security and tensions involving Iran, were



H.E. Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani speaks at the UN Security Council

also addressed, Al Zayani said remains "at the heart" of achieving stability in the Middle East.



Health Measures



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, chaired the 531st meeting of the Government Executive Committee. The session reviewed updates on the National Health Insurance Program, the efficiency of Bahrain's healthcare sector, and measures to tackle the increased spread of mosquitoes across the Kingdom.

Transport Cooperation



Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa met UK Ambassador Alistair Long in Manama to discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation in transport and telecommunications.

Diplomatic Milestone



Shura Council Chairman Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh receives Dr. Fawzia Al Jeeb's book documenting Bahrain's successful hosting of IPU 146.

Engineers Power Bahrain's Development Vision



TDT | Manama

Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa said the Bahraini engineer is a key partner in turning national visions into tangible development achievements, as he met the newly elected board of the Bahrain Society of Engineers.

He said engineers play an essential role in supporting the kingdom's comprehensive development drive under the leadership of HM King Hamad

bin Isa Al Khalifa and the directives of HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

HH Shaikh Khalid highlighted the importance of professional societies as national knowledge hubs and platforms for expertise, stressing government cooperation with the Bahrain Society of Engineers and its technical input in developing key sectors.

The remarks came during a meeting at Gdaibiya Palace with the society's board, head-

ed by Eng. Abdulnabi Al Sabah, following their election for the 2026-2028 term.

He congratulated the new board, praising the mix of experienced professionals and young talent, as well as the strong representation of Bahraini women in engineering. He also wished them success in serving members' interests.

The Deputy Prime Minister thanked the outgoing board, led by Dr. Raeda Al Alawi, for its contributions and initiatives.

Young Bahraini Envoy Wins Prestigious Diplomacy Award

TDT | Manama

Bahraini diplomat Hajar Al-Amin won the "Young Diplomat of the Year 2026" award from Diplomat Magazine in London for her outstanding contributions to diplomatic work.

Al-Amin, who serves as First Secretary at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the United Kingdom, received the award during the magazine's 15th annual ceremony, which honors members of the diplo-

matic community in London.

The award is considered one of the most prominent recognitions for diplomats in the British capital, celebrating emerging leaders and their role in strengthening international relations. Winners were nominated by their peers across 10 categories.

Speaking after receiving the award, Al-Amin said the honor reflects the growing role of young Bahraini diplomats and the country's balanced foreign policy approach.



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Iron-Firm Justice in National Security Cases

● Courts Hand Down Heavy Sentences

● Up to 10-year sentences in 22 cyber-related cases

● Court rules in cases tied to Iran-linked attacks

TDT | Manama Rehab Mohammad



Bahrain's judiciary has issued a series of major rulings in separate national security-related cases, including prison sentences of up to 10 years for dozens of defendants and life imprisonment in espionage cases involving alleged links to foreign intelligence services, the Public Prosecution said on Tuesday.

10-year sentences

The High Criminal Court sentenced 24 defendants to prison terms ranging from five to 10 years in separate cases involving alleged support for hostile

acts targeting Bahrain.

One additional defendant received a one-year prison sentence and a fine of 2,000 Bahraini dinars. The court also imposed fines in some cases and ordered the confiscation of seized materials.

According to the Public Prosecution, the defendants were accused of supporting hostile activities, sharing restricted and sensitive information, photographing prohibited locations, and spreading false news and rumours through social media platforms during a period of regional tensions.

Authorities said the cases stemmed from cybercrime

investigations into online accounts allegedly used to circulate content deemed harmful to public security and stability.

The prosecution said forensic analysis of electronic devices confirmed the allegations. It also stressed that while freedom of expression is guaranteed, it must be exercised within legal limits and not used to threaten national security.

Life sentences

In a separate set of rulings, the High Criminal Court sentenced five defendants to life imprisonment in two espionage cases involving alleged links to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary

Guard Corps (IRGC), according to prosecutors.

One defendant was acquitted, while Afghan nationals involved in the cases were ordered to be deported after completing their sentences. The court also ordered the confiscation of seized items.

Prosecutors said the first case involved an Afghan defendant allegedly recruited to collect intelligence on sensitive facilities inside Bahrain in exchange for payments, later recruiting another individual to assist.

The second case involved Bahraini defendants allegedly recruited through contacts abroad and tasked with monitoring and photographing vital installations and transmitting information to foreign entities.

Investigations included interrogations, witness testimony, and forensic examination of electronic devices, which prosecutors said confirmed the alleged activities.

The Public Prosecution said espionage for foreign hostile entities represents one of the most serious threats to national security. It added that it is reviewing the acquittal ruling and considering an appeal.

Shura Speaker Backs Citizenship Revocations

Shura Council Speaker Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh said revoking citizenship from individuals who sympathise with hostile acts is a sovereign right aimed at safeguarding national security.

He said such measures reinforce the rule of law and apply to individuals involved in activities that threaten Bahrain's security, including contacts with foreign entities.

Al Saleh praised the leader-



ship's efforts to protect national stability and said citizenship is based on loyalty and responsibility, not only legal status.

Human rights report to include civil society input

TDT | Manama Hasan Barakat



The national human rights report on the impact of Iranian attacks will include input from civil society groups, following a coordination meeting held by the National Institution for Human Rights, officials said.

Representatives from several organisations contributed observations and field insights during the session, which will be included in a dedicated section of the report reflecting community perspectives.

Participants reviewed available data and discussed ways to align monitoring and documentation processes with international

standards to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Officials stressed the importance of cooperation between national bodies and civil society, saying joint efforts in monitoring, verification and analysis would enhance the credibility of the report.

The meeting also discussed the role of a specialised committee responsible for documenting violations, focusing on expanding civil society participation in field reporting.

Training and capacity-building were highlighted as key elements to support the process, alongside continued coordination to ensure comprehensive findings.

Bahrain leads urgent talks on Hormuz crisis at UN



Germany



Singapore



Panama

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani held a series of meetings with counterparts from Germany, Singapore and Panama in New York on Tuesday, on the sidelines of UN Security Council sessions.

In talks with German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul, the two sides reviewed long-standing bilateral relations and explored ways to expand cooperation across various sectors.

Al Zayani also met Singapore's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zaqq Mohamad,

where discussions focused on strengthening ties and advancing cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

In a separate meeting with Panama's Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Arturo Hoyos, both sides discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation and coordination, particularly within the UN Security Council.

Across the meetings, officials exchanged views on regional and international developments, including concerns over Iran's actions and the impact of the Strait of Hormuz closure on global trade, maritime navigation and the world economy.

"Bahrain is reinforcing its diplomatic outreach through active engagement with global partners, underscoring a shared commitment to strengthening cooperation and addressing pressing regional and international challenges."

Army Chief Meets US Marine Commander



Bahrain's Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Dhiab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, met with Lieutenant-General Joseph Clearfield, commander of US Marine Forces at US Central Command. During the meeting, the two sides discussed military cooperation and coordination between Bahrain and the United States.

MPs Demand Answers on 59,000 Unfilled Jobs

TDT | Manama Mohammed Darwish

Parliamentary inquiry called on the Labour Ministry to explain why tens of thousands of job vacancies did not result in actual employment between 2023 and 2025, urging a minimum 70% hiring rate for roles submitted to the authorities.

The committee recommended a full technical review to determine why vacancies remain open, annual assessments of the causes, earlier activation of appeals mechanisms, and stricter monitoring of companies where Bahraini employees leave within their first year. It also proposed issuing warnings after an initial refusal of suitable job offers.

MP Dr Maryam Al Dhaen said the findings highlighted "a clear gap between the vacancies offered and the jobs actually filled," calling for a shift towards measuring "real employment outcomes rather than numerical indicators." She also urged an upgrade of the National Employment Platform using artificial intelligence to improve job matching.

MP Zainab AbdulAmeer described the figures as "deeply concerning," calling for the case to be referred to senior authorities and the Public Prosecution. She questioned whether some reported vacancies were genuine, referring to them as "phantom opportunities," and raised concerns over job stability and companies' use of state employment support schemes. Committee member MP



Zainab AbdulAmeer, MP



Maryam Al Dhaen, MP



Yousuf Khalaf, Minister of Labour



Mahmoud Fardan, MP

Mahmoud Fardan said the ministry was asked to explain the gap but responded that a full scientific and technical analysis of its data systems was required.

Labour Minister Yousuf Khalaf said the ministry cooperated fully within its legal mandate, providing responses to most of the committee's requests, while noting that some information could not be disclosed due to legal restrictions or because other entities held it. He stressed that the ministry does not employ workers directly or compel employers to hire specific candidates, instead, it facilitates job matching through the National Employment Platform and registers successful hires with social insurance.



- 59,177 vacancies remained unfilled (2023-2025).
- In 2025, 33,406 were registered, 14,089 filled, 19,317 unfilled.
- Over 100,000 vacancies received in total, with 41,310 filled.

Historic Sitra spring revival set for first phase

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

A long-forgotten spring in Sitra is set to flow back into public life.

Plans to restore Ain Al Rahah have moved forward after the site was officially included in the first phase of Bahrain's natural springs revival project, marking a step towards preserving the Kingdom's environmental and cultural heritage.

Services and Public Utilities Committee Chairman Eng. Mohammed Tawfiq Al Abbas said that the Capital Trustees Board unanimously approved the proposal and referred it to the relevant authorities under Municipal Law No. 35 of 2001.

He noted that the response from Municipalities Affairs Undersecretary Shaikh Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Khalifa confirmed strong government interest in reviving historic springs in coordination with the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities.

The project aims to transform the site into a heritage



Old and new photos of the site



Eng. Mohammed Tawfiq Al Abbas

and tourism landmark, while also creating a public space for residents.

The initiative is expected to contribute to improving quality of life, while preserving Bah-

rain's natural identity for future generations.

New road use rules reviewed

Proposed legal amendments aimed at streamlining permits for using public roads and pavements were reviewed by the Capital Municipal Council during its latest session.

The draft changes to Legislative Decree No. 2 of 1996 seek to simplify procedures for activities such as installing kiosks, placing signage, and using parts of public walkways for commercial or service purposes.



Urgent upgrades at Budaiya beach park



Mohamed Saad Al Doseri

A municipal council member called for urgent upgrades to public facilities in Budaiya, citing deteriorating infrastructure

at a sports ground and safety concerns along the coastline and public parks.

Mohamed Saad Al Doseri said residents in Budaiya continue to face long-standing issues, including a damaged sports ground in Complex 552 that has remained in poor condition since at least 2022.

The site reportedly suffers from torn artificial turf, broken goal nets, and unusable basketball facilities, despite being included in planned works for 2024 that have yet to be completed.

He said repeated delays have deprived residents of a safe and functional recreational space.

New Millennium School Celebrates Outstanding Performance in JEE Main 2026



Krish Das - 97.08 percentile



Rohan Singhvi - 96.90 percentile



Diya Vivek - 93.1 percentile



Anushka Jaydip Tayde - 90.77 percentile

TDT | Manama

New Millennium School proudly announces its students' exceptional performance in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main 2026 - Session 2, one of the most competitive engineering entrance examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency, Government of India.

Principal Dr Arun Kumar Sharma expressed immense pride in the students' achievements, stating that the outstanding results are a testament to the hard work, discipline, and commitment of students.

He congratulated the achievers and appreciated the relentless efforts of the teachers and the support of parents in guiding the students towards success.

Chairman Dr Ravi Pillai and Managing Director Mrs Geetha Pillai extended their heartfelt congratulations to the students, faculty, and parents for this remarkable accomplishment and also stated that the school remains committed to fostering future leaders and innovators.

New Millennium School continues to uphold its tradition of academic excellence by preparing students not only for board examinations but also for competitive global opportunities.

The school looks forward to many more such achievements in the future.

Summer Heat

Challenge for Animal Rescuers

Neethu V
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's summer heat spares no one - especially the voiceless. Abandoned pets and stray animals struggle for shade, water and survival, while rescue centres across the Kingdom face heightened vigilance, heavier workloads and constant care during the demanding season.

At the Bahrain Animal Rescue Centre (BARC)'s new shelter at the Aamal Al Moayyed Sanctuary for Animals in Sitra, one of the Kingdom's largest animal shelters, volunteer Michelle Smith told TDT that rising electricity bills remain a major challenge as summer consumption increases significantly. The shelter's solar system is still not fully operational due to delays linked to the conflict.

Home to around 251 dogs and 60 cats, and operating at full capacity, the centre adjusts its daily routines during the hotter months to protect animals from heat stress. Water bowls are refilled more often, shaded areas are maintained, and animals are closely monitored during peak heat hours.

Michelle further added, "It's disheartening to see dogs getting abandoned especially at this time of the year. Summer is



Michelle Smith, BARC volunteer, with a rescued dog.

difficult for strays too. But being used to the island's weather, they still cope. Domestic pets, who are used to the comfort of a home, struggle the most when left outside."

She urged the public to help where possible, adding that offering water, seeking veterinary care, neutering, or fostering strays until they find a shelter can make a difference.

Behind every rescue is a detailed process, the BARC team told TDT. Each animal undergoes medical checks, vaccinations and treatment before joining shared spaces. Even healthy animals need preventive care,



From our recent visit to BARC's new animal shelter.

while injured ones often require long recovery periods. The process costs at least BD100 per animal.

Once ready, staff carefully manage behaviour and compatibility as animals are gradually introduced into groups. The aim is not only shelter, but preparation for adoption, though the centre is currently close to full capacity.

Families

Adding on, Michelle said one of the most rewarding moments is seeing animals find families, but noted that adoption numbers have fallen since the conflict.

Local adoptions remain between 5-10%, while international adoptions, facilitated through

partner groups based in the US and Canada, have declined due to recent logistical challenges.

They also welcomed the Ministry's new animal welfare helpline, calling it a positive step forward.

Michelle said, "Volunteers are welcome at the shelter. Sessions are held on Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in winter and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. during summer, with a shift to summer timings expected next weekend. Interested individuals should reach out via Instagram for more details, noting a continued need for greater volunteer participation and community support."

Beyond the shelter, community efforts continue, with many residents treating animal care as



I'm currently caring for around 30 kittens, many just one to two months old, while treatment costs keep rising

EKRAM UZZAMAN

a personal mission.

Speaking to TDT, Ekram Uz-zaman, an animal lover committed to rescuing abandoned and injured cats, said he has saved around 100 cats. "Summer makes it harder for them to find food and water. Many sleep under cars or tyres to escape the heat and often get injured," he said, adding he is currently caring for around 30 kittens.

"Many stray cats search for food in garbage bins, but are sometimes chased away or mistreated. My message is simple: show kindness. They are living beings too."

Awareness Drive

'Jood' Team Promotes Inclusion for Children

TDT | Manama

A volunteer team from Bahrain Islamic Bank's "Jood" initiative, in collaboration with Alia School, has organised a community event aimed at promoting inclusion for children with disabilities and autism spectrum disorders, under the

slogan "Bahrain is fine... with your smile."

The interactive initiative sought to foster genuine integration between children of determination and their peers in a supportive educational environment, reinforcing national belonging and values of diversity and acceptance.



The programme featured a series of sensory and educational activities tailored to different learning and cognitive needs. Bank employees volunteered in hands-on sessions, including a

group colouring activity of the Bahraini flag and awareness stations focused on personal safety, designed to support children's mental well-being and build self-confidence.

The initiative forms part of Bahrain Islamic Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy, which focuses on innovative community engagement through its "Jood" volunteer team.

No Court Challenges

MPs approve decree placing citizenship decisions beyond court review

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

MPs approved a decree-law classifying nationality decisions as sovereign acts, effectively placing them beyond judicial review.

Decree-Law No. 13 of 2024 amends Article 7 of the Judicial Authority Law so that nationality matters fall outside the courts' jurisdiction. It also repeals provisions of the 1963 Bahraini Nationality Law that previously allowed related legal challenges.

Justice, Islamic Affairs and Waqf Minister Nawaf Al

Maawda told lawmakers the legislation was introduced in a specific 2024 context and its discussion at this stage completed the legal process.

He said nationality decisions were sovereign in nature and linked to national security and

“Nationality matters are not punishments in the legal sense. They are sovereign decisions taken by the state based on higher considerations”

H.E. NAWAF AL MAAWDA, MINISTER OF JUSTICE, ISLAMIC AFFAIRS AND WAQF

higher state interests, stressing they were administrative decisions rather than legal penalties.

“Nationality matters are not punishments in the legal sense,” he said, adding that many countries allow governments discretion over granting or with-

drawing citizenship.

During the debate, some MPs backed the move, describing nationality as a matter of loyalty and national belonging, particularly concerning security.

MP Mohammed Al Ma'arfi said nationality was a sensitive



Jameel Mulla Hassan, MP



Mohammed Al Ma'arfi, MP

sovereign issue directly tied to state stability and security, noting that existing law already provides grounds for revocation in cases involving threats to national security.

The approval marks a shift reinforcing executive authority over nationality decisions, offering no judicial avenue for challenge under the amended framework.

Tightens company liability rules

TDT | Manama

Parliament has approved major amendments to the Commercial Companies Law, introducing stricter accountability for company managers and expanding digital business practices, as the kingdom moves to strengthen its regulatory framework ahead of an international review.

The changes were passed on Tuesday through Decree-Law No. 38 of 2025, following approval from the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee.

The government said the reforms aim to modernise company legislation, enhance transparency, and close legal loopholes in preparation for Bahrain's evaluation by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in March 2026.

Industry and Commerce Minister, His Excellency Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, said the

amendments respond to rapid economic and technological developments and are designed to make Bahrain's business environment more competitive and investor-friendly.

A key provision expands liability under Article 18 to include individuals who effectively manage companies, even without holding official positions.

Those involved in gross negligence, misconduct, or legal vi-

olations may now face personal or joint liability.

Meetings

The law also allows companies to hold general meetings and voting sessions electronically, provided identity verification and proper documentation are ensured.

Additional reforms permit the establishment of single-shareholder closed joint-

YOU KNOW WHAT
Reforms allow single-shareholder closed joint-stock companies and give partners 90 days to decide business continuity after major changes.

stock companies and extend the period to 90 working days for partners to decide the future of a business following major structural changes such as death, insolvency, or withdrawal.



H.E. Abdulla Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce



Ahmed Al Salloom, MP

MP calls for review after 6,640 power cuts

TDT | Manama

A Parliament member has urged a review of electricity disconnection policies after 6,640 Bahraini residential accounts were cut off for non-payment, according to figures presented to Parliament.

MP Hassan Ebrahim said the data, provided in a written response by the Electricity and Water Affairs Ministry, showed a wider issue in how overdue bills are handled before supply is disconnected.

According to the ministry, 15,554 electricity accounts across all categories were disconnected between November 2025 and February 2026 due to unpaid bills.

The MP also questioned the effectiveness of current warning systems and payment arrangements, noting that the authority issues up to six notices and allows 53 days before disconnection.

Despite this, arrears and disconnections remain high, he said.

According to ministry figures, overdue electricity and water bills totalled BD84.01 million, with Bahraini households

accounting for a significant share.

The ministry said electricity production, transmission and distribution cost BD550.8 million in 2024, with government support covering around 32 per

cent of the total cost.

MP Ebrahim called for faster rollout of energy-saving initiatives and renewable energy programmes, particularly ahead of peak summer demand.



“Overdue electricity and water bills have reached BD84.01 million”
H.E. YASSER HUMAIDAN, MINISTER OF ELECTRICITY AND WATER AFFAIRS



“The total number of disconnections across all categories is high enough to require a full policy review”
HASSAN EBRAHIM, MP

BETTER YOU KNOW
Electricity generation, transmission, and distribution cost BD550.8 million in 2024, with the government covering about 32% of the total.

MPs back Bahrain-Pakistan inmate transfer agreement



Ahmed Qarata, Parliament's Second Deputy Speaker



Mohammed Salman Al Ahmed, MP

TDT | Manama

A new legal framework will allow Bahrainis and Pakistanis convicted in each other's countries to serve their prison sentences in their home nations, following the ratification of a prisoner transfer agreement between Bahrain and Pakistan.

The agreement, linked to Decree No. 19 of 2026, sets out procedures for transferring sentenced individuals to complete custodial terms closer to their families, while ensuring continued enforcement of judicial rulings.

The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Waqf said the arrangement establishes a structured legal pathway that supports rehabilitation and reintegration into society, without requiring amendments to existing Bahraini legislation.

It added that the receiving country will bear most enforcement costs.

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) expressed support for the measure, saying it is consistent with constitutional principles and Bahrain's international human rights commitments.

Lawmakers described the agreement as a step with both humanitarian and practical benefits, noting that it eases the burden on inmates and families while

helping reduce enforcement costs.

At the same time, MPs called for broader judicial cooperation frameworks, including extradition treaties and mechanisms for enforcing court rulings across borders, particularly with countries hosting large expatriate communities in Bahrain.

“The draft aligns with constitutional principles and Bahrain's international human rights obligations”
NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The agreement comprises 22 articles and allows transfer requests to be submitted by the convicted person or a representative, subject to conditions including final sentencing, consent, and nationality requirements.

It also stipulates that transfers must not affect the national security or legal interests of either country.

Under the terms, sentences will continue to be enforced according to the laws of the receiving country, while preserving their legal effect. Once completed, the sentence is considered served in the country where the conviction was originally issued.

Total CX signs USD 2 Million exclusive partnership with DOO

To deliver AI-Driven customer experience solutions in Bahrain

● Partnership expands access to advanced end-to-end CX solutions for enterprises across Bahrain

Manama

Total CX, a leading provider of customer experience and digital engagement solutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain and part of the Beyon Group, has signed an exclusive partnership agreement valued at over USD 2 million with DOO, a company specializing in artificial intelligence and customer experience technologies. Under the agreement, Total CX has secured exclusive distribution rights for DOO's solutions in Bahrain.



The partnership marks a significant step in Total CX's strategy to expand its AI-powered customer experience capabilities, enabling enterprises across the Kingdom of Bahrain to enhance operational resilience, optimize customer engagement, and ensure business continuity in an increasingly dynamic environment.

Through this collaboration, Total CX will introduce DOO's advanced customer experience platform to the Bahraini market, further strengthening its position as an end-to-end CX partner for enterprises across Bahrain. Through its integrated approach, Total CX enables organizations to manage customer interactions seamlessly across multiple digital channels, automate workflows, and improve operational efficiency. Combined with Total CX's broader

service offering, enterprises can benefit from a comprehensive suite of solutions, including culturally aware AI agents across voice, text, and avatar formats, contact center outsourcing (inbound and outbound), customer journey design and optimization, sentiment analysis, and advanced CX analytics and insights, all delivered through a fully managed, scalable model.

Aseel Mattar, Interim CEO of Total CX, commented: "This partnership represents a key milestone in Total CX's growth journey. Through DOO's AI-powered platform, we are enabling organizations to strengthen customer engagement, improve operational agility, and build more resilient business models. Building on our experience in delivering customer experience solutions to leading organiza-

tions, we are well positioned to extend these new capabilities to a broader enterprise market."

From his end, Ali Mohsen, Co-Founder and CEO of DOO, said: "We are proud to partner with Total CX in this strategic collaboration, which marks an important step in expanding our presence in the region. We believe that AI has become a critical enabler of business continuity, helping organizations deliver more efficient and resilient customer experiences."

This agreement reflects a shared commitment by Total CX and DOO to support digital transformation in Bahrain by equipping organizations with innovative, future-ready technologies that address both current challenges and long-term growth objectives.

BAB convenes Annual General Assembly

Manama

The Bahrain Association of Banks (BAB) held its ordinary Annual General Assembly meeting via video conference chaired by Mr. Yaser Alsharifi, Chairman of the Board, in the presence of association members representing banks and financial institutions.

During the meeting, the Assembly approved the annual report and the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 and approved the appointment of the external auditor for the year 2026. The members have reaffirmed their support for the Association's Board of Directors in its efforts to achieve the Association's objectives of representing institutions in the financial and banking sector and supporting national efforts to advance the sector.

During the meeting, Mr. Alsharifi presented the Board's report, highlighting the Association's key milestones over the past year, and stated that 2025 was a year of prioritizing objectives & delivering results for the Association.

Following the appointment of a new Board at the end of 2024, focus was placed on strengthening the foundations that underpin BAB's value proposition as

the unified platform representing Bahrain's financial sector, including clarity of role, sound governance, and disciplined engagement, reflecting the needs of a diverse and evolving sector.

As part of this agenda, BAB reviewed its strategic direction and implemented several structural enhancements. These included the appointment of a new management team, the enhance-

ment of the governance framework, and the reconstitution of specialised committees aligned with sector priorities. Together, these changes established a more coherent structure that strengthened accountability, coordination, and committee-led engagement across the Association's workstreams.

He added "The Association will continue to operate in line

with the directives of the Central Bank of Bahrain while supporting its members in keeping pace with changing priorities across financial services" The Chairman also highlighted the central role played by the specialised committees in presenting the sector's views on strategic issues, including financial market infrastructure, payment systems, Sharia standards, work-

force practices and consumer transparency.

At the international level, the Association had also strengthened its collaboration with peer institutions and global platforms, contributing to knowledge and expertise exchange and highlighting the leadership of Bahrain's financial sector in international forums.



Germany to introduce sugar tax: draft bill

AFP | Berlin, Germany

The German government plans to introduce a sugar tax as part of measures to address its growing budget deficit in the coming years, according to a draft bill seen by AFP yesterday.

Under the scheme, which is expected to be included in the 2027 budget, consumers of sweet drinks like Coca-Cola could be expected to cough up for the public purse.

Some manufacturers of sodas and other sweet drinks have responded to similar taxes in other countries by reducing sugar content and ramping up artificial sweeteners.

Berlin plans to borrow 110 billion euros (\$128 billion) in 2027 for its core budget, compared with 98 billion this year and 66.9 billion in 2025, according to new budget projections.

Google breaks ground on Indian AI megahub

AFP | Bengaluru, India

Tech giant Google yesterday marked the ceremonial start of work on its largest artificial intelligence hub outside of the United States with a groundbreaking ceremony in India.

The firm promised in Octo-

ber 2025 to spend \$15 billion over five years to construct the vast centre in Visakhapatnam, a southeastern port in Andhra Pradesh state of around two million people, popularly known as "Vizag".

"Today marks the first concrete milestone in Google's

largest commitment to India's digital future," Bikash Koley, Google's Vice President for Global Infrastructure, told the ceremony.

"This project represents a \$15 billion blueprint to deliver a full stack AI ecosystem," he added.

"At its core is our gigawatt

scale data centre campus, purpose built for the immense computational demand of the AI era, powering services like Gemini and Google Search."

"By establishing Vizag as an international subsea gateway, we will add vital diversity from the existing landings, in Mum-

bai and Chennai, increasing the resilience of India's digital backbone and improving economic security," Nara Lokesh, information technology minister for Andhra Pradesh state, said. "This is a pivotal moment for India, Vizag, and for Google," Koley added.



Sugar taxes have been shown to cut sugar in soft drinks by over 20% in some countries, as companies reformulate to avoid higher taxes.

Subscription opens in 45th issue of government development bond through Bahrain Bourse

BHD 200 Million size with a return of 6.25%

Manama

Bahrain Bourse (BHB) announced that as of Wednesday, 29th of April 2026, and according to the invitation announced by the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), Bahraini and Non-Bahraini investors can directly subscribe through the primary market of BHB in the Government Development Bond Issue 45 (BHD 200 million) that



has been issued by the CBB on behalf of the Government of

Bahrain by executing their orders through registered brokers at Bahrain Bourse. Thereafter, investors will be able to trade the Bond on the secondary market at BHB once listed, which is expected to be on 19th May 2026.

Bahrain Bourse specified that the subscription period through the registered brokers is effective on Wednesday, 29th of April 2026 until Thursday, 30th of

April 2026. The subscription will be open on Wednesday from 9:30 am until 1:00 pm and on Thursday from 9:30 am until 11:00 am. The minimum subscription size is 500 bond per subscriber.

The BHD 200 million Bond issued at a par value of BHD 1 each on the 5th of May 2026 for a period of 3 years maturing on the 5th of May 2029. The annual fixed return on these securities

500
The minimum subscription size is 500 bonds per subscriber

is 6.25%, and will be paid bi-annually on 5th of May and 5th of November every year throughout the period of this issue, commencing on 5th of November 2026 up to and including the Maturity Date.

The Central Bank of Bahrain issued the Government Development Bond on behalf of the Government of Bahrain. The Government of Bahrain directly guarantees the Bond securities.

NBB offers second opportunity to benefit from instalment deferral

Apply via Innovative Digital Platform

Submit requests seamlessly through the digital platform available on the Bank's website, without the need to visit a branch

Available to eligible customers who did not apply previously, through the Bank's dedicated digital portal from 1 May to 10 May 2026

Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has announced the reopening



of its instalment deferral applications for retail customers, providing another opportunity for customers who were unable to apply during the initial phase to benefit from the initiative.

The option will be available exclusively to eligible customers who did not apply previously, through the Bank's dedicated digital portal from 1 May to 10 May 2026. This will allow them to defer their Personal and Mortgage Finance instalments for a period of three months, from May to July, including interest and insurance charges applied to the deferred instalments, with no additional fees. Customers can submit their requests seamlessly through the digital platform available on the Bank's website, without the need to visit a branch, reflecting NBB's continued focus on de-

As some clients may not have had the opportunity to benefit from this initiative earlier, we have reopened the instalment deferral applications to continue supporting their evolving needs and expectations."

SUBAH ABDULLATIF AL ZAYANI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE - RETAIL BANKING AT NBB

Retail Banking at NBB, said, "As some clients may not have had the opportunity to benefit from this initiative earlier, we have reopened the instalment deferral applications to continue supporting their evolving needs and expectations."

Ahead of that, NBB's credit card skip payment option remains available through the digital platform on the Bank's website until 30th April 2026, offering customers further convenience and flexibility in managing their financial commitments.

As a national institution, NBB remains committed to helping safeguard financial stability across the Kingdom.

For more information, please visit nbbonline.com, call 1721 4433, or visit any NBB branch.

livering simple and accessible solutions.

Commenting on the announcement, Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Chief Executive -

Crude back above \$110 on Strait stalemate fears

Oil prices rallied, with Brent crude for June delivery rising 2.7% to \$111.19 a barrel

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Oil prices jumped yesterday, climbing back above \$110 per barrel, amid a lack of progress in re-opening the key Strait of Hormuz.

Meanwhile, tech stocks took a hit and investors turned their attention to corporate earnings and the outlook for interest rates.

Efforts to end the Middle East war appeared at a standstill on Tuesday, with the United States considering Tehran's latest offer to unblock the strait, and Iran saying Washington could no longer dictate terms.

Iran has blockaded the waterway -- a vital conduit for oil and gas shipments -- since the start of the US-Israeli offensive two

Key figures at 1530 GMT

New York - Dow:	▲ 0.1% at 49,221.82 points
New York - S&P 500:	▼ 0.7% at 7,121.08
Nasdaq Composite:	▼ 1.4% at 24,549.10
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.1% at 10,332.79 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 0.5% at 8,104.09 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 0.3% at 24,293.56 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 1.0% at 59,917.46 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▼ 1.0% at 25,679.78 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.2% at 4,078.64 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.1712 from \$1.1722 on Monday
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.3509 from \$1.3534
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 159.59 yen from 159.39 yen
Euro/pound:	▲ at 86.70 pence from 86.61 pence

months ago, sending shockwaves through the global economy.

CNN, however, reported that US President Donald Trump was unlikely to accept Iran's proposal to restore traffic in the strait, as Qatar warned of the possibility of a "frozen conflict" if a definitive resolution is not found.

Oil prices rallied, with Brent crude for June delivery rising 2.7% to \$111.19 a barrel.

The benchmark US contract, WTI for June delivery, rose 3.4% to \$99.68 per barrel.

Hopes for a deal had been rising going into last weekend but Trump dashed them on Saturday by scrapping a planned trip by his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Islamabad.

"Right now, the market is not optimistic about the chance of a deal to reopen the Strait due

to Iran's request to push discussions about nuclear disarmament into the future," said Kathleen Brooks, research director at XTB trading platform.

Meanwhile, the United Arab Emirates announced it will withdraw from the OPEC and OPEC+ oil cartels on May 1, calling it a strategic decision by the major producer.

Rystad Energy analyst Jorge Leon said the UAE's move is significant as, alongside Saudi Arabia, it is one of the few nations with significant spare production capacity.

"While near-term effects may be muted given ongoing disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, the longer-term implication is a structurally weaker OPEC" and potentially more market volatility.

AI concerns

The tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite fell 1.4%, with shares in companies linked to OpenAI hit by a report in the Wall Street Journal that the ChatGPT maker

had missed targets on the number of users and revenue.

Shares in Oracle, which is building massive data centre capacity for Open AI, fell more than four%.

XTB's Brooks said that if Open AI struggles to meet sales targets, it may be forced to spend on data centres needed to expand the use of AI.

"This news may threaten the AI investment theme that has driven US stock markets to record highs," she warned.

The news also means that AI spending by tech giants Amazon, Google, Meta and Microsoft will come under even closer scrutiny when they report results later this week.

Europe's main equity markets ended mostly lower.

Stock markets mostly fell in Asia, under further pressure after the Bank of Japan sharply raised its inflation forecasts for the current year and halved its growth projections owing to surging oil prices while leaving its key interest rate unchanged.

"This triggered profit-taking. A similar picture could emerge at the meetings of the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank," said analyst Andreas Lipkow at CMC Markets.

The US Federal Reserve begins a two-day meeting Tuesday amid the same growing inflationary concerns over the surge in energy costs.

The European Central Bank meets Thursday.



Nearly one in every five barrels of oil traded globally passes through the Strait of Hormuz.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

WHAT IS RIGHT IS NOT ALWAYS POPULAR AND WHAT IS POPULAR IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT.
ALBERT EINSTEIN

Iran steel export ban

Iran has banned the export of steel products, Iranian media reported customs authorities as saying, after airstrikes targeted the country's steel industry in the war with Israel and the United States.

The Fars news agency reported a directive from the Islamic republic's customs authorities "regarding the prohibition of the export" of steel products, effective from April 26.

Israeli warning

Israel's military warned residents of more than a dozen villages and towns in southern Lebanon to immediately evacuate and head northwards, saying Hezbollah's "violation of the ceasefire" was compelling it to act.

LNG passes Hormuz

A ship fully loaded with liquefied natural gas (LNG) has passed through the Strait of Hormuz for the first time since the Middle East war virtually closed the route in early March, marine tracking firm Kpler said.

The LNG carrier Mubarak, operated by the Emirati national oil company Adnoc, left the Gulf sometime in April with 132,890 cubic metres of LNG on board, having loaded at Das Island in the United Arab Emirates on March 2, according to Kpler data analysed by AFP.

Four dead in Lebanon

Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli strikes on the country's south on Monday killed four people including a woman and wounded 51 others, three of them children, despite a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

Italy PM says priority to control rising prices

Rome, Italy

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Tuesday said her current priority was to restrain inflationary pressures on prices, especially energy, given the impact from the US-Israeli war against Iran.

Israel says has 'no territorial ambitions' in Lebanon

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel yesterday said it was not seeking to take territory in Lebanon, as its military issued a wave of new evacuation warnings for towns and villages in the battle-scarred south.

"Israel has no territorial ambitions in Lebanon. Our presence... serves one purpose: protecting our citizens," Foreign Minister Gideon Saar told a news conference.

"No country would be willing to live in such a way with a gun pointed to its head," he said as the military pressed its operations in Lebanon against Iran-backed Hezbollah.

Shortly after a ceasefire with Hezbollah came into effect on April 17, Israel declared a so-called "Yellow Line" -- a strip of Lebanese territory around 10 kilometres (six miles) deep

along the border within which Israeli troops are operating.

"In a reality where Hezbollah and other terror organisations -- including Palestinian terror groups -- are dismantled, Israel will have no need to maintain its presence in these areas," he added.

Despite the ceasefire, Israel and Hezbollah have both engaged in fighting, trading blame over violations of the fragile truce.

Tuesday's evacuation warning was aimed at residents in more than a dozen villages and towns, urging them to immediately head northwards.

"Out of concern for your safety, you are required to evacuate your homes immediately and move... towards the Sidon District," the military's Arabic-language spokesman Avichay Adraee wrote on X.



A woman flashes the V-sign as she rides in the back of a van laden with mattresses, as civilians flee their homes and head north toward the Lebanese capital, hours after a military escalation that included Israeli airstrikes targeting the south

Israel using water access as 'weapon' in Gaza: MSF

There, water denied

Thirst in Gaza

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Israeli authorities are systematically depriving people in Gaza of the water they need to live, Doctors Without Borders warned yesterday, decrying a campaign of "collective punishment" against Palestinians.

The extensive destruction of civilian water infrastructure in Gaza coupled with obstruction of access constitutes "an integral part of Israel's genocide", said the medical charity, which goes by its French acronym MSF.

In a report entitled "Water as a Weapon", MSF said the "engineered scarcity" was occurring alongside "direct killing

of civilians, the devastation of health facilities, (and) the destruction of homes".

Together, this amounted to "the deliberate infliction of destructive and inhumane conditions of life on the Palestinian population in Gaza", warned the report, based on testimonies and data MSF collected in 2024 and 2025.

"Israeli authorities know that without water, life ends," MSF emergency manager Claire San Filippo said in a statement.

"Yet they have deliberately and systematically obliterated water infrastructure in Gaza, whilst consistently blocking water-related supplies from entering."

'Engineered' scarcity

The MSF report, which was slammed by Israel, pointed to data from the United Nations, European Union and World Bank indicating that Israel had destroyed or damaged nearly 90 percent of water and sanitation infrastructure in Gaza.

"Desalination plants, boreholes, pipelines and sewage systems have been rendered inoperable or inaccessible," it said.

The charity documented several incidents where its clearly identified water trucks and boreholes had been shot at or destroyed.

"Palestinians have been injured and killed simply trying to access water," San Filippo said.

The charity said that besides the local authorities, it was the largest producer and main distributor of drinking water in Gaza.

Last month, it provided more than 5.3 million litres of water each day, which meets the minimum needs of more than 407,000 people, or a fifth of Gaza's population.

Perfect storm

MSF said a third of its requests to bring in critical water and sanitation supplies, including water desalination units, pumps, water tanks, insect repellent, chlorine and other chemicals to treat water, had "been rejected or left unanswered".

San Filippo also cautioned that the deprivation of water, "combined with dire living conditions, extreme overcrowding, and a collapsed health system, create a perfect storm for the spread of diseases".

MSF called on Israel to "immediately restore water for people at the required levels in Gaza".

It urged Israel's allies to "use their leverage to pressure Israel to stop impeding humanitarian access".

Children fetch drinking water at the Bureij camp for Palestinian refugees in the central Gaza Strip



5.3m

Last month, MSF provided more than 5.3 million litres of water each day



Despite an October ceasefire that largely halted the Gaza war that began after Hamas's 2023 attack on Israel, the territory remains gripped by daily violence as Israeli strikes continue and both the Israeli military and Hamas accuse each other of breaking the truce.



1872

Jesse James' gang robs a bank of \$1,500 in Columbia, Kentucky, killing bank employee Robert A.C. Martin during the crime

1916

Irish republicans abandon the post office in Dublin and surrender unconditionally, ending the Easter Rising



1975 1990

US begins to evacuate its citizens from Saigon in Operation Frequent Wind in response to advancing North Vietnamese forces, bringing an end to US involvement in the Vietnam War

Wrecking cranes begin tearing down the Berlin Wall at the Brandenburg Gate

New pirate group behind latest Somali hijacking

AFP | Mogadishu, Somalia

A pirate attack off Somalia is the work of a new group of "opportunistic criminals", security officials said on Tuesday, complicating a threat that costs the shipping industry billions of dollars.

Piracy was rampant off the coast of Somalia in the 2000s, peaking in 2011 with hundreds of attacks, but was significantly reduced by international naval deployments and new tactics by commercial shipping.

Yet the past week has seen oil tanker HONOUR 25 and cement carrier SWARD hijacked in the

first major incidents in months. The SWARD seizure was the work of a group operating from the port town of Garacad in Puntland state of northeastern Somalia, a Puntland security official told AFP.

That is further south than the usual piracy hotbed focused on a cluster of three coastal towns -- Hafun, Bander Beyla and Eyl -- which is where the HONOUR 25 oil tanker has been taken.

The new group is mostly formed of "rural youth" from an area "awash with weapons", motivated by poverty, and anger over illegal fishing by ships from China, Yemen, Iran and

beyond. "Nearly everyone in this region is poor and nearly everyone is armed. Illegal fishing, especially from the trawlers, is making things worse," the official told AFP. "If they are not countered, they will evolve into en-

ties like those at war with the government," he said, referring to Islamist groups like Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State that have been fighting Somalia's federal government for years.



Peace efforts stall as US examines latest Iran proposal

Here, choked off

Stranglehold at Hormuz



The aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (L), the air-defense destroyer HMS Defender and the guided-missile destroyer USS Farragut transit the Strait of Hormuz

Trump had signaled at Monday's meeting that he was reluctant to take Hormuz off the table

● CNN reported that US President Donald Trump was unlikely to accept Iran's proposal to restore traffic in the strait

● Trump met with top security advisors on Monday to discuss the Iranian proposal

AFP | Washington, United States

Efforts to end the Middle East war appeared at a standstill on Tuesday, with the US considering Tehran's latest offer to unblock the Strait of Hormuz, and Iran saying Washington could no longer dictate terms.

CNN reported that US President Donald Trump was unlikely to accept Iran's proposal to restore traffic in the strait.

While a ceasefire has halted the fighting, diplomacy aimed

Qatar: no 'frozen conflict'

Qatar cautioned against the possibility of a "frozen conflict" in the Gulf, as talks between the United States and Iran for a peace deal appeared at an impasse. "We do not want to see a return to hostilities in the re-

gion anytime soon, we do not want to see a frozen conflict that ends up being thawed every time there is a political reason," Qatar's foreign ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari said at a press conference.

Tehran said it would need guarantees that Washington and Israel would not attack again if it was to offer security assurances for the Gulf, Iran's envoy to the UN said.

at permanently ending the war has proven inconclusive.

"We are very keen to see an end to this war that is sustainable," Ansari added.

Trump met with top security advisors on Monday to discuss the Iranian proposal after Tehran passed "written messages" to Washington via Pakistan spelling out its red lines, including on nuclear issues and Hormuz, Iran's Fars news agency

reported.

The proposal was "being discussed," spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt told a White House briefing.

The plan would reportedly see Tehran ease its chokehold on the strait and Washington lift its retaliatory blockade on Iranian ports while broader negotiations continue, including over the thorny question of Iran's nuclear program.

But CNN, citing two sources familiar with the matter, said Trump had signaled at Monday's meeting that he was reluctant to take Hormuz off the table without resolving the nuclear question, though it was unclear what his next steps would be.

Iranian defence ministry spokesman Reza Talei-Nik said: "The United States is no longer in a position to dictate its policy to independent nations," he said, according to state TV.

Asked about Iran's proposal, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told Fox News "it's better than what we thought they were going to submit," but questioned whether it was genuine.

"They're very good negotiators," he said, "and we have to ensure that any deal that is made, any agreement that is made, is one that definitively prevents them from sprinting towards a nuclear weapon at any point."

Trump has said that if Iran wants talks, "they can call us."

BY INVITATION

India and Bahrain have identical positions on the Strait of Hormuz



H.E. MR. VINOD K JACOB, AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

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 since August 2023.

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.)

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.

French FM says Iran must make 'major concessions' to end crisis

United Nations, United States

France said Monday that Iran must be ready to make "major concessions" to end a crisis, as countries piled pressure on Tehran at a UN session on its control of the key Strait of Hormuz.

"There can be no lasting resolution to this crisis unless the Iranian regime agrees to

major concessions and a radical shift in its stance," Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot told the UN Security Council.

Barrot said that Iran must show a way "to peaceful co-existence within its region and for the Iranian people to be able to build freely their own future," months after the cleric-run state ruthlessly repressed mass protests.

Ukraine, Israel in spat over 'stolen' grain shipments

● Israel said that Kyiv had not provided evidence to support its claims

AFP | Kyiv, Ukraine

Ukraine and Israel were yesterday locked in a diplomatic row over allegations Israel had accepted shipments of grain which Kyiv said Russia had "stolen" from parts of occupied Ukraine.

One of the world's largest grain producers, Ukraine has repeatedly accused Russia of illegally exporting agricultural products from territory that Moscow has captured since it invaded in February 2022.

"Another vessel carrying such grain has arrived at a port in Israel and is preparing to unload," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky wrote in a statement on social media.



Representative image. (Courtesy of united24)

"The Israeli authorities cannot be unaware of which ships are arriving at the country's ports and what cargo they are carrying," he added.

Israel said that Kyiv had not provided evidence to support its claims and rejected that the ship had arrived at the port of Haifa.

"The Ukrainian government has not submitted a request for legal assistance... nor has the Ukrainian government provided

evidence for its claims," Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said at a news conference in response to a question.

"The vessel has not entered the port and is yet to submit its documents," he said.

"It's not possible to verify the truth of the Ukrainian claims regarding the forgery of the bill of lading," Saar added, referring to a document showing the details of products being transported.



Hitting out at Ukraine for conducting what he called "Twitter diplomacy", Saar said to Ukraine: "If you have any evidence of theft, submit it through the appropriate channels."

Ukraine alleges Russia stole more than two million tonnes of grain from occupied territory in 2025.

It said it had tracked shipments to Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Kyiv summoned Israel's ambassador on Tuesday to protest over the alleged shipments.

Israeli army says finds huge Hezbollah tunnel network in south Lebanon

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

The Israeli military said on Tuesday it had discovered a large Hezbollah tunnel network used by elite fighters in south Lebanon, near Israel's northern border.

Troops found "two Hez-

bollah terror tunnels, constructed over approximately a decade" that stretched two kilometres (more than one mile) with shafts "connecting to positions with launchers directed toward Israeli territory", an army statement said.

US forces board ship suspected of heading to Iran port

AFP | Washington, United States

US Marines on Tuesday boarded a commercial ship in the Arabian Sea that was suspected of trying to violate the American blockade of Iranian ports, the US military said.

The M/V Blue Star III was released by US forces "af-

ter conducting a search and confirming the ship's voyage would not include an Iranian port call," Central Command, which is responsible for American forces in the Middle East, said in a post on X.

"So far, 39 vessels have been redirected to ensure compliance" with the blockade, the military command added.

US authorities capture alleged Guatemalan drug kingpin

AFP | Guatemala City, Guatemala

US authorities detained a suspected Guatemalan drug kingpin with a \$10 million bounty on his head, the Central American nation's US embassy announced.

Eugenio Molina-Lopez is accused of heading up a gang called Los Huistas, which allegedly trafficked US-bound cocaine from South America to Mexican cartels.

He was arrested in San Die-



go, California, the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California said in a statement, which the embassy in Guatemala City shared on X.

The statement did not specify when the arrest took place.

The 61-year-old known as "Don Dario" pleaded not guilty during a federal court appearance on Friday.

Molina-Lopez is charged with conspiracy to import and distribute cocaine, which carries a possible life sentence.

Indian billionaire's son offers home for Escobar's hippos

● Anant Ambani, the son of tycoon Mukesh Ambani, said he had formally requested the Colombian government to stay a decision to kill the animals

AFP | New Delhi, India

An Indian billionaire's son offered yesterday to take hippos descended from those introduced to Colombia by drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, rather than have the animals killed.

Anant Ambani, the son of tycoon Mukesh Ambani, said he had formally requested the Colombian government to stay a decision to kill the animals, which have wreaked havoc on rivers in the South American nation.

Instead, he has asked

to allow the "safe, scientific-led translocation that would bring the 80 animals to a permanent home" at his Vantara animal centre.

The vast zoo in India's western state of Gujarat bills itself as the "one of the world's largest wildlife rescue, care and conservation centres".

Vantara is already home to hundreds of elephants, as well as 50 bears, 160 tigers, 200

lions, 250 leopards and 900 crocodiles, among other animals, according to India's Central Zoo Authority.

Experts have repeatedly sounded the alarm on Vantara's massive animal intake, including the import of critically endangered and rare species.

Escobar brought hippos -- which are native only to Africa and can weigh up to several tonnes -- to Colombia in the 1980s.

After Escobar's death, hippos from his private zoo made a new life in the lush river banks of the Colombia's Magdalena River -- where they have attacked fishermen, prompting moves to

cull them.

Anant Ambani, son of the billionaire head of the multinational conglomerate Reliance Industries, said he had submitted a detailed plan to give the animals a new home at Vantara.

The animal centre is sited alongside the Reliance Jamnagar Refinery Complex, which the conglomerate says is the world's largest crude oil refinery.

Summers there can get extremely hot, with temperatures soaring above 40C.

Ambani's proposal sets out a veterinary-led capture and transport, as well as the creation of a "purpose-designed naturalistic setting" for the hippos, according to a statement.

"Vantara has the expertise, infrastructure and resolve to support this effort, entirely on Colombia's terms," the statement said.

"These 80 hippos did not choose where they were born, nor did they create the circumstances they now face," Ambani added.



'Unique' 16th century wreck found off Sweden

AFP | Stockholm, Sweden

A 16th century shipwreck providing "unique historical and archaeological information" has been discovered off Sweden's southeastern coast, officials announced on Tuesday.

The ship, which has yet to be identified, is believed to have been built in the late 1500s, which would make it older than Sweden's iconic 17th-century warship "Vasa" on display in Stockholm after being salvaged in the 1960s.

A navy vessel found the wreck during a military exercise in late 2025 in Kalmar Strait, located between Sweden's southeastern mainland and the Baltic Sea island of Oland.

"After dendrochronological



Picture for representation only. (Courtesy of ALL THINGS NORDIC)

analysis of part of the wreck, results indicate that the ship was built in the late 1500s," the County Administrative Board in Kalmar said in a statement, referring to the scientific method of dating wood and trees.

BETTER YOU KNOW
The waters of Sweden hold thousands of remarkably well-preserved shipwrecks, thanks to the cold, low-salinity conditions of the Baltic Sea, which slow down decay and protect wooden vessels.

Trump shooting scare renews 'staged' conspiracy theory

● There is no evidence that the Trump administration orchestrated Saturday's attack.

AFP | Washington, United States

A flood of misinformation exploded online after US President Donald Trump escaped a weekend shooting scare, fueling renewed -- and unfounded -- claims that he has staged assassination attempts to boost his political fortunes.

Trump and his top administration officials were evacuated Saturday from a media gala in Washington after gunfire erupted outside the ballroom, marking the third assassination attempt targeting the Republican in two years.

AFP's fact-checkers identified a series of social media posts from anti-Trump accounts circulating an unsubstantiated theory that the White House staged the shooting to distract attention from unfavourable news, including the unpopular US-Israeli war with Iran.

Posts advancing the claim garnered 80 million views on Elon Musk's platform X alone within two days of the shooting, according to the disinformation watchdog NewsGuard.

Many of the same accounts previously claimed that two assassination attempts on Trump in 2024 -- in Pennsylvania and Florida -- were also staged.

The narrative largely emanated from a left-wing conspiracy movement that researchers call "BlueAnon," a play on the right-wing QAnon cult. "Many of the anti-Trump accounts baselessly claiming that the WHCD (White House Correspondents' Dinner) shooting was staged made identical claims after the 2024 assassination attempts," NewsGuard's Sofia Rubinson told AFP.

"Some viral posts we've seen explicitly cite those earlier incidents as 'evidence' that staging shootings is part of Trump's playbook -- to generate sympathy and distract from unfavourable coverage."



'Crush on Charles'

Trump hails British 'friends' as king visits

● The 79-year-old president joked about how his late mother, who was born in Scotland, "had a crush on Charles," who is now 77.

● "Time and again, our two countries have always found ways to come together," Charles is expected to say.

● Trump said that the two countries had a "special relationship, and we hope it will always remain that way."

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump said yesterday that the United States has no closer friend than Britain, as he welcomed King Charles III to the White House on a state visit shadowed by tensions over the Iran war.

Speaking after a pomp-filled welcome on the South Lawn featuring a 21-gun salute, Trump's tone was a world away from his recent jibes at British Prime Minister Keir Starmer for failing to join in against Tehran.

"In the centuries since we won our independence, Americans have had no closer friends than the British," said Trump, referring to the fact that the royal visit marks



US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump welcome Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla during an arrival ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, DC.

the 250th anniversary of the US colonies declaring their freedom from British rule.

Using a phrase prized by British governments since Winston Churchill first used it after

Trump said that the two countries had a "special relationship, and we hope it will always remain that way."

Trump also praised the British military, saying that "nobody fought better together" with the United States -- despite recently deriding Britain's two aircraft carriers as "toys."

Afterward, four US jets roared over the White House in a noisy flypast as Trump, Charles, Queen Camilla and First Lady Melania Trump watched.

On the second day of the four-day royal visit, Charles will later address the US Congress and is expected to call in his speech

for "reconciliation and renewal" amid the recent strains in ties.

'Crush on Charles'

Republican Trump has repeatedly lambasted Britain's Starmer over his Iran war opposition, alongside his own state visit last year -- appeared in a jovial mood on a rainy Washington morning as quipped: "What a beautiful British day this is."

The 79-year-old president even joked about how his late mother, who was born in Scot-

land, "had a crush on Charles," who is now 77.

Cannons rang out while a military band played the British and US national anthems, before Charles shook hands with top Trump administration officials and inspected troops on the lawn with the president.

A band of soldiers dressed in uniforms from the US Revolutionary War then marched past, playing fife and drums.

Trump then held talks with Charles in the Oval Office. But the meeting was held behind closed doors -- an unusual step for the usually garrulous US president, reflecting the sensi-

tivity of the visit.

"It was a really good meeting. He's a fantastic person. They're incredible people and it's a real honor," Trump told reporters afterward.

In the evening the royal couple will return to the White House for a grand state dinner.

Tight security

Security has been tight for the trip, which comes just days after an alleged assassination attempt against Trump at a Washington press gala. Countersniper teams could be seen on the roof of the White House.

Melania Trump told reporters she was "very well" when asked how she was doing after the shooting.

The first day of the trip featured a more informal welcome, with the Trumps treating Charles and Camilla to tea and cakes before showing them the White House beehives.

But the second day will feature Charles's most public-facing moment, when he becomes the first British monarch to address Congress since his mother, late queen Elizabeth, in 1991.

With tensions still high over Iran, Charles is expected to appeal to Trump in guarded terms, saying that defending common democratic ideals is "crucial for liberty and equality."

"Time and again, our two countries have always found ways to come together," he is expected to say.

But in an unwelcome distraction, Britain's new ambassador to Washington, Christian Turner, was quoted by the Financial Times as telling students during a recent visit that America's special relationship is "probably Israel."

German bid to rescue 'Timmy' the whale passes key hurdle

AFP | Insel Poel, Germany

German rescuers on Tuesday hauled a stranded humpback whale into a special boat due to carry it to deeper waters, in the latest attempt to free the cetacean whose ordeal has captured hearts in Germany for weeks.

The whale, dubbed "Timmy" by German media, and its struggle for survival have gripped the country since it beached on a sandbank near the city of Luebeck, far from its natural habitat in late March.

The latest rescue effort -- financed by two entrepreneurs -- involves transporting the sea mammal in a barge, which has a water-filled hold and is usually used to carry other boats, from Germany's Baltic Sea coast to deeper waters.

Starting earlier Tuesday, rescuers attached straps to the whale and heaved the creature down a channel that had been specially dug in the sand to allow it to reach the barge, close to the island of Poel.

After some distance, the whale, with rescuers swimming alongside it, sped up and then swam into the barge, sparking



People are seen close to a stranded humpback whale, guiding the animal to a special barge intended to bring it to the North Sea, in the Wismarer Bucht bay of the Baltic Sea off the island of Poel, northern Germany, close to the village of Faehrdorf-Hof

cheers of delight from the rescue team and others watching from the shore.

"I can't even say how happy I am," Karin Walter-Mommert, one of the entrepreneurs financ-

ing the rescue bid, told the Bild daily.

"You could see that the whale fought and wanted to live. Knowing he's now in the barge is simply wonderful and shows that the

fight for Timmy was worth it."

'Journey northwards'

The plan is now for the barge to be transported to the North Sea, and hopefully for the whale

to be released if it is strong enough.

A piece of green netting will be used to close the entrance to the barge so the mammal does not swim out.

Till Backhaus, environment minister for the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, told reporters that "this evening, when the sea calms down, he will set off on his journey northwards".

"We have worked here day and night, and in the end we have saved this animal," he told reporters.

Backhaus had earlier given the green light for the mission to proceed after vets said the whale was fit to be transported.

The animal was first spotted stuck on a sandbank on March 23 before freeing itself and then becoming stuck again several times.

Several attempts were initially made to free the sea mammal, including by digging channels for

it to swim down, but all failed.

At the start of April, officials gave up on the animal, saying they believed it could not be saved.

But this triggered an outcry and authorities were persuaded to let the entrepreneurs come up with a rescue plan.

Some scientists have strongly criticised the decision to allow further rescue bids, believing they will be too risky for the whale and estimating the chances of success as low.



The humpback whale is famous for its complex songs, which can travel hundreds of kilometres underwater and are shared and changed by entire populations over time.

Gulf Summit Tackles Escalation With Iran



Leaders from Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE arrive at the summit.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman chaired a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consultative summit in Jeddah, bringing together Gulf leaders for the first time since the Iran war outbreak two months ago.

A Gulf official said the meeting aimed to coordinate a response to thousands of Iranian missile and

drone attacks that have struck GCC states since the conflict began following US and Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28.

Saudi state media said leaders discussed regional and international developments and ways to coordinate their positions amid rising tensions.

The war has damaged energy facilities across all six GCC

states, alongside civilian infrastructure, US-linked firms and military sites.

Attacks have eased since a US-Iran ceasefire on April 8, but regional capitals remain on alert as negotiations for a lasting agreement have yet to produce results.

Leaders from Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates attended the summit.

Qatar pushes for ceasefire compliance

Qatar reaffirmed that freedom of navigation in international waterways is a fundamental principle of international law, warning that escalating threats to key maritime routes pose risks to global peace, security and trade.

Speaking at a high-level open debate of the United Nations Security Council on maritime safety, Qatar's Permanent Representative Shaikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif Al-Thani said the world faces a "critical moment" as challenges extend beyond traditional security concerns.

She stressed that vital corridors such as the Strait of Hormuz are increasingly vulnerable, with disruptions threatening international

peace and the global economy. "Freedom of navigation is a core principle of international law," she said, referencing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which guarantees transit rights through international waters.

Al-Thani also highlighted UN Security Council Resolution 552, which underscores the Gulf region's importance to global stability and calls on states to respect the safe passage of vessels not involved in conflicts.

Addressing recent tensions, she pointed to UN Security Council Resolution 2817, submitted by Bahrain on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Jordan. The resolution con-



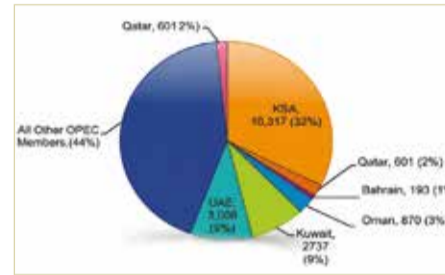
demns attacks attributed to Iran and warns against any attempt to disrupt navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

She said such actions constitute serious violations of international law and pose a direct threat to international peace and security.

UAE to Exit OPEC After More Than 50 Years

The United Arab Emirates has announced it will withdraw from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) after more than five decades of membership, in a move reflecting a strategic shift in its energy policy.

The decision will take effect on May 1, according to a



growth in global energy demand over the medium to long term," report said.

It added that the decision reflects a "policy-driven evolution" aimed at enhancing flexibility in responding to market conditions, while

maintaining a commitment to stability.

The UAE expressed appreciation for OPEC and its allies, noting its "significant contributions and sacrifices" during its membership, but said it would now focus on priorities aligned with its national interests and global energy commitments.

Oil Market Volatility by the Numbers

- 7.88 million bpd – OPEC output loss in March
- 20.79 million bpd – Total OPEC production after rop
- 27% – Monthly decline in output
- Largest disruption in decades
- Surpasses 2020 pandemic cuts (6.28 million bpd)
- Exceeds supply shocks of 1970s oil crisis and 1991 Gulf War
- UAE to exit OPEC; Qatar exited in 2019

statement carried by the state news agency, released as OPEC prepared to meet in Vienna on Wednesday. The UAE will also exit the broader OPEC+ alliance.

The statement said the move followed "a comprehensive review" of the country's production strategy and future capacity, and was driven by national interest.

"While near-term volatility, including disruptions in the Arabian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, continues to affect supply dynamics, underlying trends point to sustained

maintaining a commitment to stability.

The UAE, a founding member of OPEC since 1967, has been a key player in global oil markets alongside major Gulf producers such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Its departure comes as the country accelerates economic diversification, with non-oil sectors now contributing around 75 percent of gross domestic product. At the same time, Abu Dhabi has signaled plans to boost oil production capacity from about 3.4 million

Hormuz closure impact discussed in Kuwait-US talks

Kuwait and the United States held high-level talks focusing on the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and its potential repercussions for global trade and energy security, according to an official statement.

During a phone call with US Vice President JD Vance, Kuwait's Crown Prince Shaikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah discussed recent regional developments, emphasizing the strategic waterway, one of the world's most critical shipping routes for oil and goods.

Both sides warned that any dis-



ruption to navigation through the Strait of Hormuz could lead to serious economic consequences, affecting global supply chains, maritime traffic, and the

stability of international energy markets.

The two leaders also exchanged views on wider regional and international developments,

underscoring the importance of maintaining security and freedom of navigation in key waterways.

The Crown Prince reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to regional stability and highlighted the importance of coordinated international efforts to address emerging security and economic challenges linked to maritime routes.

For his part, Vice President Vance reiterated Washington's support for Kuwait and stressed the importance of protecting global shipping lanes and ensuring the uninterrupted flow of energy supplies.

Prep for Arab-EU ministerial talks



Arab permanent representatives to the

League of Arab States held a coordination meeting at the organisation's General Secretariat headquarters to discuss preparations for the upcoming sixth Arab-European ministerial meeting scheduled for next month in Amman.

The meeting reviewed logistical and substantive arrangements for the ministerial gathering, set for June 22-23, 2026, in the Jordanian capital.

It was chaired by Jordan's ambassador to Egypt and permanent representative to the Arab League, Amjad Al-Adailah, representing the host country of the upcoming min-

isterial session.

The Arab League delegation was headed by Assistant Secretary-General and head of the International Political Affairs sector, Ambassador Khalid bin Mohammed Manzalawi.

According to participants, ambassadors were briefed on the latest developments in the preparatory process and discussed a draft declaration expected to be adopted at the ministerial meeting.

The Arab-European ministerial meetings serve as a key platform for political and strategic dialogue between the two sides on regional and international issues of mutual concern.

Dubai Hosts One of the Region's Largest Creator Gatherings

Dubai hosted one of the region's largest gatherings for content creators yesterday at 8:30 AM, as Creators HQ brought together influencers, speakers, and digital media professionals at Atlantis The Palm.

The event featured a series of panel discussions addressing key topics in the creator space, including "Between Challenge and Success," "Stories of Influential Women," and "Does Authenticity Outperform Cinematic Production?"—highlighting the ongoing shift in how content is created and consumed.

A notable moment came from Omar Farooq, a Bahraini content creator known for his purposeful and reflective storytelling. He focuses on creating meaningful content that goes beyond trends, aiming to inspire, educate, and positively impact his audience.

Referring to a story involving Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Farooq emphasized the importance of initiative among creators, noting a clear difference be-



tween simply reacting to trends and actively creating content that adds value to people's lives.

"There's a big difference between being a reaction and being the action."

The gathering also saw the presence of several prominent creators, including Noor Stars, Anas Bukhash, and Mostafa Agha, reflecting the scale and influence of the event.

As the creator economy continues to grow, such events underline a broader shift: content creation is moving from a hobby to a purpose-driven profession that carries both influence and responsibility.

Jordan Rejects Israeli 'New Facts' in Palestinian Territories



King Abdullah II reaffirmed Jordan's rejection of any Israeli measures that seek to exploit regional tensions to impose "new facts on the ground" in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, stressing the need for coordinated international action to counter such moves.

The remarks came during talks in Amman with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, also attended by Jordan's Crown Prince, Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah II.

According to a statement, King Abdullah underscored that regional stability cannot

be achieved without ensuring Palestinians obtain their full, legitimate rights and establishing an independent Palestinian state based on the two-state solution framework.

The discussions covered the overall situation in the Palestinian territories amid ongoing regional tensions, with both sides reviewing political and humanitarian developments.

Jordan has repeatedly warned against unilateral actions in the occupied territories, calling for renewed international efforts to revive a viable peace process.



Guided-missile destroyer USS Rafael Peralta (DDG 115) enforces the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports against M/T Stream after it attempted to sail to an Iranian port, April 26.

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BRAVE CF opens new frontier with historic Croatia debut at Pula Arena

Manama

A new chapter in European mixed martial arts is about to unfold as BRAVE Combat Federation prepares to make its long-awaited debut in Croatia on September 5.

The organization's latest venture will see it take over the legendary Pula Arena, blending the intensity of modern combat with a venue steeped in centuries of history.

BRAVE CF President Mohammed Shahid emphasized the magnitude of the moment, framing the event as both a milestone and a shared cultural experience.

"Bringing BRAVE CF to Pula Arena is a tremendous honor," he said. "This ancient amphitheater has stood the test of time, and hosting a modern combat sports event inside its walls is a privilege we share with the people of Croatia."

Rather than simply adding another destination to its growing map, BRAVE CF is stepping into uncharted territory with



purpose.

Croatia becomes the newest addition to the promotion's European footprint, further strengthening its presence across the continent and signaling continued momentum in its global rise.

Set against the Adriatic backdrop, the Pula Arena offers more

than visual spectacle. Built during the height of the Roman Empire, the structure once hosted brutal gladiatorial contests and large-scale public gatherings.

Its limestone walls and commanding architecture have endured through time, preserving its identity as one of the most complete amphitheaters from

antiquity.

Now, that same setting will frame a different kind of combat, where elite mixed martial artists compete under modern rules but with echoes of the past surrounding them.

The upcoming event reflects more than just geographical expansion. It highlights BRAVE CF's

strategy of merging sport with culture, selecting venues that carry meaning beyond competition.

From historic landmarks to emerging fight markets, the Bahrain-based promotion continues to redefine how and where MMA can be experienced.

"What awaits this September will elevate our vision even further," Shahid added. "As we continue to expand into new territories in the region, we aim to deliver unforgettable moments for the global MMA community."

In less than a decade, BRAVE CF has surged to the forefront of the sport's global landscape.

The organization now holds the largest share of the European MMA market while extending its reach across 38 nations worldwide.

Its upcoming Croatia showcase represents the 18th European country to host a BRAVE CF extravaganza and the 39th nation overall, underscoring a remarkable reach that few in the industry can rival.

Toyota and Ebrahim K. Kanoo Sponsor Inaugural Khalid bin Hamad Basketball Championship for Secondary Schools

Manama

Toyota, in collaboration with Ebrahim K. Kanoo, sponsored the inaugural Khalid bin Hamad Basketball Championship for Secondary Schools, reinforcing its commitment to supporting youth development and advancing sports initiatives across the Kingdom.

The event was held under the patronage of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports First Deputy Chairman, General Sports Authority Chairman, and Bahrain Olympic Committee BOC President Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The final, held at Shaikh Khalifa Sports City Hall in Isa Town, was attended by BOC Vice President Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, along with Education Minister Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma, as well as representatives from Toyota and Ebrahim K. Kanoo.

Organized by the Ministry of Education, the championship brought together students from across Bahrain, providing a competitive platform that promotes teamwork, discipline, and a strong sporting spirit.



ment experience through giveaways for attendees, in addition to awarding cash prizes to participating players, recognizing performance, encouraging

participation, and celebrating emerging talent.

Through this initiative, Toyota and Ebrahim K. Kanoo continue to support opportunities that

engage and empower the next generation, while contributing to the continued development of sports at the school level in Bahrain.

'I lived all my dreams' - Stones bids farewell to City

TDT | Manama

John Stones has said he has "lived all my dreams out" at Manchester City after confirming he will leave the club at the end of the season.

The England defender, whose contract expires this summer, has made 293 appearances since joining from Everton in 2016 for £47.5m. During his decade at the Etihad Stadium, Stones has won six Premier League titles, the Champions League, two FA Cups, five League Cups, three Community Shields, the Club World Cup and the UEFA Super Cup.

In an emotional social media message, the 31-year-old reflected on his journey with the club. "It has been my home for

the past 10 years and it will be my home for the rest of my life," he said. "I came as a kid and now I'm leaving as a man. I lived all my dreams out and lifted all the things that I came here to achieve."

Stones also paid tribute to manager Pep Guardiola, calling him a major influence on his career. He described himself as "grateful" for their relationship and the success they achieved together, adding that City would not have been as successful without the Spaniard.

Known for his composure on the ball, Signed as Guardiola's second recruit and once the world's second most expensive defender, Stones endured early criticism and injury setbacks before becoming a key figure in City's dominant era.



John Stones lifts the Champions League trophy for Manchester City in 2023

he was even deployed in midfield during the club's 2023 Champions League triumph as part of a historic treble-winning season.

Despite recent injury struggles limiting his appearances, Stones has remained a respected figure in the squad and a favourite among supporters. He has also been an important player for England, earning 87 caps and playing in multiple major tournament finals.

Stones now departs as part of a wider transition at City, with several long-serving players already leaving the club. His next move remains uncertain, with reports linking him to clubs in England and abroad as he prepares for the next chapter of his career.

Bahrain Announces GCC Games Basketball Fixtures



Bahrain's men's national basketball team during training drills

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Basketball Association yesterday announced Bahrain's fixtures for the 4th GCC Games, set to take place in Doha, Qatar from May 15 to 20.

Bahrain's men's national basketball team will open their campaign on May 15 against Saudi Arabia at 4pm, before facing the UAE on May 16 at the same time. They will then

take on hosts Qatar on May 17 at 6pm.

In 3x3 competition, Bahrain's men's team will be in action on May 12, opening against Oman at 3:50pm before facing the UAE later that day at 7:10pm.

Bahrain's women's 3x3 team will also compete on May 12, starting against the UAE at 5:05pm and later facing Saudi Arabia at 6:45pm.

All matches will take place at the Al Gharafah Sports Hall.

Qatar edge Bahrain in Beach handball semi-final

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's men's beach handball team saw their Asian Beach Games campaign end in the semi-finals after a 2-0 defeat (13-8, 20-18) to Qatar yesterday at Tianya Haijiao. The result sends Bahrain into the bronze medal match against Thailand today at 3pm, while Qatar advances to face Iran in the gold medal final at 4pm.

Qatar took early control of the opening period with sharp finishing and quick transitions, driven by Amir Denguir and Abdulrazaq Murad. Bahrain stayed within reach early on, with Bilal Askani opening their account, but struggled to maintain efficiency in attack as the tempo increased. After briefly staying level at 4-4, Bahrain began to lose rhythm; missed opportunities were compounded by several key saves from Qatar goalkeeper Zarko Markovic. Qatar capitalised on the momentum to pull away and closed the period 13-8 ahead.

The second period saw a more composed and aggressive Bahrain side emerge. Askani and Mahdi Ali led the response, repeatedly converting spin shots



Bahrain and Qatar beach handball teams during pre-match introduction

to keep their team in contention, while Komail Mahfoodh provided valuable link-up play in attack. Bahrain's defensive intensity also improved significantly, disrupting Qatar's flow and forcing errors.

Midway through the period, Bahrain clawed their way back to level the score at 14-14 and again at 16-16, turning the contest into an end-to-end battle. Their transition play sharpened, and they briefly looked capable of overturning the deficit.

However, the decisive mo-

ments swung Qatar's way. Crucial saves including a stopped six-metre penalty denied Bahrain the chance to take the lead. Denguir and Murad then stepped up in the closing stages, converting key chances to restore control for Qatar.

Despite Bahrain's strong fightback, Qatar held firm to edge the second period 20-18 and secure a 2-0 victory.

Top performers included Amir Denguir leading Qatar with 13 points, while Abdulrazaq Murad delivered a perfect

scoring display. For Bahrain, Mahdi Mahdi top-scored with 12 points, with Bilal Askani and Komail Mahfoodh also key contributors in a determined team effort.

Even in defeat, coach Hussain Al Qaidoom's side showed consistency and competitiveness. Bahrain opened with three straight wins before losing to unbeaten Iran and beating Hong Kong to finish second in their pool. They will now look to end on a high in tomorrow's bronze medal match.

Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club signs Partnership Agreement with Harve



Manama

In line with the directives and ongoing efforts of the High Committee of the Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC), chaired by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Prime Minister's Court, to establish diverse partnerships with companies and institutions, and as part of the continued development of the equestrian and horseracing sector, REHC has signed a partnership agreement with Harve, a company specializing in the development and operation of world-class food and beverage and hospitality experiences.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Yusuf Osama Buheji, Member of the High Committee of REHC and Acting Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. Abdulaziz Tawfiqi, Managing Director of Harve. Under the agreement, Harve will manage and operate

a new fully integrated restaurant within REHC's facilities, providing high-quality hospitality services to visitors and patrons during the racing season.

On this occasion, Mr. Yusuf Osama Buheji stated that the agreement aligns with the Club's strategy to diversify partnerships across various sectors, including the development of logistics and facilities, as well as the provision of premium hospitality services to visitors and patrons, particularly as REHC continues to host numerous international championships, races, and events. He noted that such initiatives further strengthen the Kingdom of Bahrain's position as a destination for horseracing enthusiasts from around the world.

Mr. Buheji also welcomed Harve as a partner for the upcoming seasons, expressing his appreciation to the company's management for this collaboration. He added that the partner-

ship represents a valuable addition that will enhance the level of services within REHC, with the aim of delivering a comprehensive experience that elevates event standards, meets visitors' expectations, and supports ongoing development efforts in the Kingdom of Bahrain's horseracing sector.

For his part, Mr. Abdulaziz Tawfiqi expressed his pride in signing this partnership with Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club, noting that it represents an important step in Harve's efforts to expand its presence in the hospitality sector. He added that through this collaboration, the company aims to deliver an operational model that reflects its expertise in managing hospitality destinations, contributing to the development of the visitor experience and adding a qualitative dimension to the services offered within the Club.

He further noted that the

company is focused on adopting best operational practices and modern solutions to deliver flexible and diverse services that support the development of events and further strengthen the Club's position as a leading horseracing destination in the region.

This partnership between REHC and Harve reflects the company's commitment to strengthening its position as a key operator in the hospitality sector by developing and managing innovative concepts across a range of destinations. It also supports the growth of this vital industry and keeps pace with evolving audience preferences.

Harve is one of the most prominent entertainment ventures within Infracorp's portfolio, aligning with the Group's vision to elevate regional destinations and drive economic growth through innovation and world-class offerings.

Bahrain bow out of 3x3 tournament in Sanya



Mohamed Kowayed attempts a difficult lay-up

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's run at the sixth Asian Beach Games in Sanya came to an end yesterday after a 15-12 defeat to Mongolia in the play-off round, denying them a place in the quarter-finals.

In a closely contested encounter at the Sanya Sports Centre Gymnasium, Bahrain struggled to replicate the scoring rhythm that had carried them into the knockout stage. Mongolia proved more clinical, edging ahead in the closing stages to seal victory.

Bogdan Dragovic, who starred in Bahrain's win over Kazakhstan, was again among the key contributors with three points. Naser Al Musawi, Kelechi Ajukwa, and Mohamed Kowayed also added three points apiece, with

Al Musawi hitting Bahrain's only two-pointer of the game. Despite contributions from multiple players, the nationals fell short in a balanced but ultimately unsuccessful effort.

The defeat brought the curtain down on a mixed campaign for the Bahrainis. After opening losses to Qatar and India, they kept their hopes alive with an impressive win over Kazakhstan to reach the play-offs. However, they were unable to build on that momentum against a disciplined Mongolian side.

Despite the early exit, coach Ahmed Elias' side showed flashes of promise. Dragovic emerged as a standout performer, while the team demonstrated growing chemistry as the tournament progressed, offering encouragement for future competitions.

Al Malkiya Deal Blow to Al Najma's Relegation Fight

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Matchweek 19 of the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League continued yesterday with Al Malkiya producing a strong second-half display to beat Al Najma 3-0, while Al Shabab secured a 1-0 win over Bahrain Club at Bahrain National Stadium.

Al Malkiya 3-0 Al Najma

Al Najma controlled possession in the opening half and looked the more composed side on the ball, but they struggled to turn dominance into clear chances as the match went into the break level at 0-0. Al Malkiya, however, remained dangerous on the counter and grew into the game.

The deadlock was finally broken in the 61st minute through Ahmed Muslim, finishing off a well-constructed team move. Talal Al Sherooqi sparked the move with a well-weighted pass into Hassan Madan on the byline. Madan reacted quickly to cut the ball back across goal,



Al Malkiya's Madan celebrates after capping the scoring against Al Najma

allowing Ahmed Muslim to take a controlled touch inside the box before finishing calmly to give his side the lead.

Just six minutes later, Al Malkiya doubled their advantage



in spectacular fashion. Hassan Isa intercepted possession in midfield before unleashing a powerful low strike from nearly 30 yards, beating goalkeeper Ammar Mohammed into the bottom corner.

Al Najma's frustration continued, and in the 84th minute Al Malkiya sealed the win. Abdulla Al Hayki delivered a cross from the right side of the box, and Hassan Madan controlled well with his chest before finishing to make it 3-0.

The result strengthens Al Malkiya's hold on fourth place, moving them five points clear of the chasing pack. Al Najma drop to 10th on 19 points and remain in the relegation playoff zone.

Al Shabab 1-0 Bahrain Club

At Bahrain National Stadium, Al Shabab edged a closely contested encounter against Bahrain Club, with both sides showing early intent in a balanced first half that ended goalless.

Al Shabab made the decisive breakthrough almost immediately after the restart, as a corner delivered by Nigerian winger Daniel Etor led to an own goal from Sultan Al Salatneh. He inadvertently headed the ball into his own net while attempting to clear.

Bahrain Club responded with pressure but were unable to find an equaliser, as Al Shabab managed the game well to protect their narrow lead.

The victory keeps Al Shabab in 11th place on 14 points, while Bahrain Club remain bottom of the table in 12th on 7 points and continue to face relegation concerns.

Bruno Fernandes sets sights on Premier League assist record

TDT | Manama

Bruno Fernandes is closing in on Premier League history after moving within one assist of the single-season record in Manchester United's 2-1 win over Brentford.

The Portuguese midfielder registered his 19th assist of the campaign on Monday, leaving him just one short of the all-time mark of 20, jointly held by Thierry Henry (2002-03) and Kevin De Bruyne (2019-20).

Fernandes, who has been in outstanding form, has now recorded assists in six of his last seven matches, underlining his influence as United's main creative force. Against Brentford, he was once again decisive, officially assisting the second goal in a victory that showcased both his vision and consistency in the final third.

He also played a key role in the opening goal. His corner delivery to the far post found Harry Maguire, with Casemiro reacting quickest to finish from close range and score his ninth goal of the season, the highest-scoring campaign of his career.

The match itself was far from straightforward for United. Brentford created several chances after falling behind, while a possible handball incident involving Ayden Heaven was waved away by the referee. United, however, struck decisively on the counterattack.

Fernandes carried the ball



Fernandes in action during Manchester United's latest outing

forward before slipping a precise pass into Benjamin Šeško, who beat Nathan Collins with a sharp feint before finishing clinically to seal the win. The move further highlighted Fernandes' all-round influence, combining progression, vision, and final delivery.

With four matches remaining, Fernandes now has a genuine chance to set a new Premier League assist record. His consistency and creative output have been central to United's season, with his leadership continuing to define their attacking play.

At Old Trafford, there is growing expectation that Fernandes could finish the campaign with a landmark achievement that places him firmly in Premier League history.

Sharipov leads Bahrain beach wrestling run in Sanya

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's beach wrestling campaign at the sixth Asian Beach Games in Sanya got underway yesterday, with strong performances across multiple weight categories, highlighted by Shamil Sharipov's run to the semi-finals in the men's +90KG division.

Sharipov's +90KG campaign began with a difficult opening bout, falling 0-4 to Iran's Amirhossein Kavousi by VFA (victory by fall, meaning the opponent secured a pin) in just 32 seconds. He recovered strongly in his second match, defeating Pakistan's Muhammad Gulzar 1-0 by VPO (victory by points after a full three-minute bout). He then secured another key win over Mongolia's Altangerel Chinbat 1-0 by VPO to progress in the group stage.

He continued his momentum with a 2-0 win over Nepal's Triloki Prasad Yadav by VSU (victory by technical superiority) in 1:04 to complete the group stage. In the quarter-finals, Sharipov delivered one of Bahrain's standout performances of the day, edging India's Jaspooran Singh 1-0 by VPO after a full three-minute contest to book his place in the semi-finals. His run ended there, however, as he was defeated 0-4 by Iran's



Shamil Sharipov in action during the group stage

Seyedamirreza Sahraeimahali by VFA in 1:44.

In the 90KG division, Magomed Sharipov produced a competitive group-stage showing. He opened with a difficult 0-4 loss to Iran's Amirhossein Kavousi by VFA in 32 seconds,

before recovering with a 2-1 win over Singapore's Chow Weng Luen Gary by VSU1 in 1:08. He then secured a 1-0 win over Vietnam's Ngo Van Lam by VPO in a full three-minute bout. In the quarter-finals, however, he was eliminated after a 0-1 defeat to

Pakistan's Muhammad Inam by VPO.

In the 80KG division, Magomedrasul Asluev produced a strong group-stage showing. He opened with a dominant 2-0 win over Qatar's Saad Al Hammadi by VSU in 1:08, before narrowly losing 0-1 to India's Sachin Mor by VPO in a full three-minute bout. He bounced back with another 2-0 win over Sri Lanka's Wijesooriya Mudiasselage M by VSU in 1:37 to advance to the quarter-finals, where he was defeated 0-2 by Iran's Ali Gholami by VSU in 1:53.

Elsewhere, Bahrain's wrestlers faced stiff competition across multiple categories. In the 70KG division, Alibeg Alibegov had a challenging campaign. He opened with a 0-1 loss to Afghanistan's Shahram Mehraban by VPO, followed by another 0-1 defeat to Japan's Yoshiki Yamada by VPO, both full-duration bouts. His final match ended in a 0-1 injury defeat to Saudi Arabia's Abdullatif Albakri (VIN - victory by injury), ending his participation.

Despite mixed results across the squad, Bahrain's campaign has been highlighted by Shamil Sharipov's run to the semi-finals in the +90KG category, alongside competitive performances from Magomedrasul Asluev.