

Extreme Heat

France has reported around 1,000 excess deaths during a record-breaking European heatwave that has shattered temperature records across multiple countries. | **P6-7**

14 killed as Saudi Aramco helicopter crashes in Ras Tanura

THE DAILY **tribune**



Messi strikes again as Argentina seal perfect group stage record

BENEFIT Brings QR Codes to BenefitPay Homepage for Faster, Easier Transactions

Leaders Mourn Crash Victims



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa sent condolences to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud following the Saudi Aramco helicopter crash in Ras Tanura, which claimed the lives of all those on board. His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa also extended condolences to King Salman and Prince Mohammed bin Salman, expressing Bahrain's sympathy and support.

Bahrain Calls for International Action

Iran Launches Missile and Drone Attacks

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain called on the UN Security Council to convene an urgent session after Iran launched a second consecutive wave of ballistic missiles and drones targeting Bahraini territory on Sunday, characterizing the action as a deliberate and systematic pattern of aggression.

Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the renewed strikes in the strongest terms, warning that Tehran's actions indicate calculated hostility rather



than isolated incidents. The ministry noted the attacks represent a direct violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026) and the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding signed on

June 17, 2026, under which Iran committed to a permanent halt of military operations and respect for regional sovereignty.

The Bahrain Defence Force confirmed its air defence systems intercepted and destroyed several incoming threats yesterday. All units and weapon systems remain at the highest operational readiness. Authorities urged citizens and residents to avoid approaching any suspicious debris and report it immediately to relevant authorities.

Gulf states rallied swiftly behind Manama. Kuwait, Qatar,

the UAE, and Saudi Arabia each issued statements condemning the attacks as a flagrant violation of international law and a dangerous escalation threatening regional stability. All four affirmed that Bahrain's security is inseparable from the collective security of GCC member states.

Bahrain invoked the GCC's Joint Defence Agreement, stressing that an attack on any member state is an attack on all, while asserting its full right under international law to defend its sovereignty and the safety of its people.

"Qadha" camp to inspire young generation



His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa directed the launch of the "Qadha" youth training camp, aimed at developing young people's skills and strengthening values of responsibility, discipline and national identity.

The camp, set to run from August 8 to September 3, 2026, at the Bahrain International Exhibition Centre, will welcome boys and girls aged 10 to 17.

The programme combines physical challenges, educational activities and life skills training under the supervision of specialised trainers, providing participants with an experience focused on teamwork, leadership, self-confidence and future preparedness.

Global push for Ukraine's reconstruction

Bahrain participated in the "Ukraine Recovery 2026" conference in Gdansk, Poland, which gathered international governments, organisations and private sector partners to accelerate efforts supporting Ukraine's long-term reconstruction.

The Kingdom was represented by Ahmed Ibrahim Al Qarainees, Bahrain's Ambassador to Germany, at the high-level meeting co-hosted by Poland and Ukraine. More than 160 agreements were signed, totaling over €0 bil-

lion. These included a \$3.39 billion arrangement with the World Bank and €2.2 billion under a new European Union financial mechanism, alongside the launch of a major European reconstruction fund and other international support initiatives.

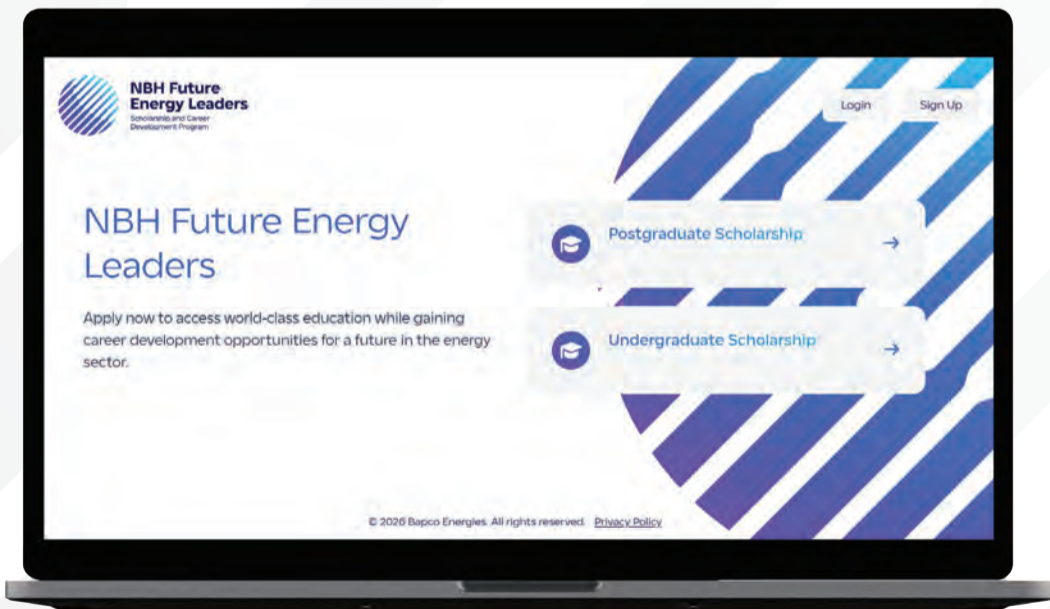


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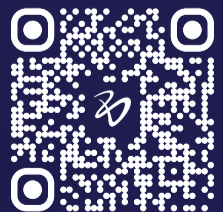


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Budaiya Blaze Highlights Rising Summer Fire Risk

Gas leaks, faulty wiring remain major hazards

TDT | Manama
Neethu V.

A house fire in Budaiya yesterday has once again highlighted the growing risk of residential fires across Bahrain during the summer months. Civil Defence teams swiftly extinguished the blaze, while the National Ambulance treated several people at the scene for minor injuries. Authorities have launched an investigation into the cause of the fire.

The General Directorate of Civil Defence attributes most home fires to preventable negligence, including the unsafe use of electrical appliances, overloaded circuits, and children handling flammable materials. During summer, air conditioners run for longer hours, placing additional strain on household electrical systems and increasing the risk of overheating and electrical faults. Officials stress that regular maintenance, balanced electrical loads, and routine servicing of cooling systems can significantly reduce fire risks. Smoke detectors also play a vital role in providing an early warning.

In a recent discussion with The Daily Tribune, lawyer Afaf



If the fire does not originate from your apartment and is not caused by your own negligence, liability may fall on the other party involved"

- LAWYER AFAF TARADA

Fire Incidents in Bahrain

- 5,900 fires recorded in the first half of 2025
- 1,189 fires recorded in the same period in 2024
- Sharp increase year-on-year in fire incidents
- Trend highlights rising summer fire risks

Tarada said legal responsibility depends on the findings of the Civil Defence investigation. "If the fire does not originate from your apartment and is not caused

by your own negligence, liability may fall on the other party involved," she said, adding that official Civil Defence reports determine responsibility in cases where damage spreads to neighbouring properties.

The National Civil Protection Platform also advises residents to keep gas cylinders upright in shaded, well-ventilated outdoor areas, regularly inspect gas lines and appliances, and close gas cylinder valves before sleeping or leaving home as these are another common source of household fire hazards. Installing gas leak detectors, preferably with automatic shut-off systems, is also recommended.

Authorities add that preven-

tive measures should be matched by knowing how to respond if a leak or fire occurs. If a gas leak is suspected, residents should evacuate immediately, avoid using electrical switches or open flames, ventilate the area, and call emergency services.

The General Directorate of Civil Defence also recommends keeping appropriate fire extinguishers at home, including water-based extinguishers for ordinary fires and CO₂ extinguishers for electrical and gas-related incidents.

Bahrain's First Public IB Pupils Aim Higher

Students say programme boosts confidence and global ambitions

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Bahrain's first cohort of government school students accepted into the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme say the initiative has reshaped their academic outlook and opened clearer pathways to university

and global careers.

The programme, set to begin in September 2026, is being introduced by the Ministry of Education in partnership with the International Baccalaureate Organisation as part of efforts to integrate international education into selected public schools.

Students from schools across Bahrain said the programme has boosted their confidence

and encouraged them to think beyond traditional academic limits. Many described it as a "turning point" that strengthens their ambition to pursue higher education abroad.

Others highlighted that self-confidence, determination, and family support played key roles in their successful admission to the programme.

Unlike conventional education, the IB Middle Years

Programme focuses on inquiry-based learning, research, and critical thinking rather than memorisation. Students said this approach will allow them to explore subjects like science and mathematics in greater depth.

Several pupils also noted that the programme's emphasis on independent learning and communication skills makes it more demanding but more rewarding.



IB in Bahrain

- Starts in 2026 as a candidate programme in public schools.
- Part of a pathway leading to the IB Diploma at the secondary level.
- Introduced by the Ministry of Education in partnership with the International Baccalaureate Organisation.
- Focuses on critical thinking, research, and real-world learning over memorisation.
- Aims to prepare students for university and global opportunities

'Reassured Homes' brings relief to families across Bahrain

Her Highness Shaikha Sheema bint Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Head of Humanitarian Voluntary Initiatives at the Royal Humanitarian Foundation, visited several homes benefiting from the "Reassured Homes" initiative to assess its impact on families in need.

The initiative, implemented by the "Sheyam Al Khair" volunteer team with support from the GFH Foundation, has furnished more than 20 homes for widows, orphans, and underprivileged families across Bahrain's governorates. Over 50 volunteers participated, working in eight



teams to complete the project. During the visit, HH Shaikha Sheema highlighted that the initiative reflects a commitment to spreading generosity, strengthening community solidarity, and promoting volunteerism to improve living conditions for vulnerable families.

India's Maternal and Child Healthcare Hits New Highs



H.E. Vinod K. Jacob, Indian Ambassador to Bahrain, highlights the findings of the NFHS-6 during a media briefing at Indian embassy, Manama.

- 90.6% institutional deliveries, 91.3% skilled birth attendance and 87.1% child immunisation coverage.

- Survey covered 679,000 households, 700,000+ women across 715 districts

TDT | Manama
Neethu V.

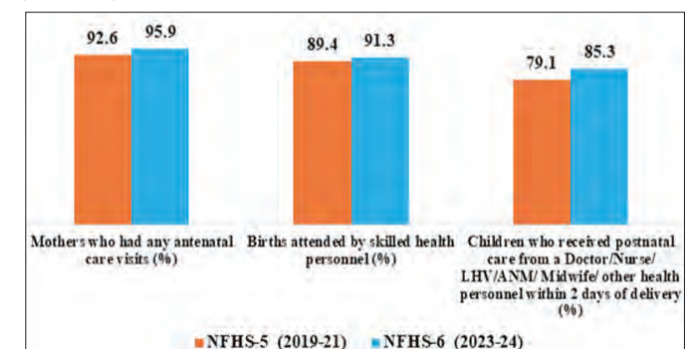
India has made significant strides in health, nutrition and social development, with improvements recorded in maternal and child healthcare, women's empowerment, digital inclusion and access to basic services, according to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6).

FINDINGS

The survey showed maternal and child health indicators reaching their highest levels, with institutional deliveries rising to 90.6% from 88.6%, and births attended by skilled health personnel increasing to 91.3%. Full immunisation coverage among children also climbed to 87.1%.

One of the most notable gains was in digital inclusion. Internet use among women almost doubled from 33.3% in 2019-21 to 64.3% in 2023-24, while usage among men rose from 51.2% to 80.5%.

The survey also assessed the impact of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, the world's largest government-funded health assurance scheme, which provides financial protection and access to tertiary healthcare for millions of beneficiaries.



NFHS-6 highlights significant improvements in maternal and child healthcare services across India

The findings were highlighted by Indian Ambassador to Bahrain Vinod K. Jacob during a media briefing at the Indian Embassy in Manama.

Released in May, the sixth round of the survey covered nearly 679,000 households and more than 700,000 women across 715 districts between 2023 and 2024, making it one of the world's largest health and demographic surveys.

The Indian Ambassador said the results reflected India's steady progress towards universal health coverage and the sustainable development goals, adding that the gains had been inclusive across regions and communities.

CHALLENGES

He further acknowledged that the survey flagged rising lifestyle-related diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, cancer and heart disease. In response, the government has expanded screening and early detection programmes while promoting physical activity and yoga as part of its preventive healthcare strategy.

Referring to India's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, he said the country's ability to rapidly roll out vaccines across its vast and diverse population demonstrated the resilience of its healthcare system.

Beyond the Surface

Four young Bahraini artists reveal the emotions, identity and dreams behind their powerful creations

TDI | Manama
Ghadeer Alkumaish

The Bahrain Arts Society officially opened its Youth Art Exhibition yesterday, bringing together 30 emerging artists and four sculptures in a celebration of Bahrain's next generation of creative talent.

Held at the Bahrain Arts Society Hall in Injaz Bahrain, Umm Al Hassam, the exhibition will continue until 28 July. It will be open to visitors from Sunday to Thursday, 9am to 3pm, starting from 5 July, inviting the public to discover the artistic visions of Bahrain's young talents.

Speaking exclusively to The Daily Tribune, participating artists shared the inspiration behind their works, each exploring themes ranging from hidden emotions and cultural identity to freedom, inner conflict and peace.

Artist Eman Aljar, who has been painting since the age of six, presented her artwork titled On Earth, which compares the human soul to the earth

itself.

"When you look at a person, you may see someone who is happy and glowing," she said. "But when you look deeper into their soul, you may find heartbreak, pain or memories they have never been able to forget."

She explained that just as the earth appears beautiful on the surface with trees and flowers while volcanoes lie beneath, people often hide emotional wounds behind smiling faces. Pink and green symbolise the beauty of nature and life, while brown represents the scars people carry within.

Artist Ahmed Abdulredha showcased two handcrafted wooden artworks inspired by Arabic calligraphy, expressing his concern over the declining use of the Arabic language.

"My second piece reflects how the Arabic language is gradually shrinking in use, even within Arab communities today," he said.

Every wooden letter and design element was cut and



Artist Deena Radhi



Artist Aayat Khalid



Artist Ahmed Abdulredha



Artist Eman Aljar

assembled by hand, with the two artworks taking nearly two weeks to complete. Having studied interior design, he said his choice of colours was influenced by design principles while his passion remains presenting Arabic calligraphy in fresh artistic forms.

"I love highlighting the beauty of Arabic calligraphy through different artistic styles rather than presenting it in its traditional form," he added.

Meanwhile, artist Aayat Khalid presented two paintings exploring dreams and personal struggles.

Her first artwork portrays a woman spreading her dress like wings, creating the impression that she is about to fly alongside the dove above her. Painted using soft oil colours, the piece represents freedom, ambition and hope while creating a dreamy atmosphere.

Her second painting, The Sun and the Moon, is a fantasy artwork symbolising confusion and inner conflict.

"The painting represents

two choices but doesn't know which path to take," she explained.

The work is divided into warm and cool colour palettes, reflecting the contrast between good and evil, desires and reason, and the emotional struggle many people experience when making difficult decisions.

Artist Deena Radhi exhibited a painting titled Peace, inspired by her own emotions and outlook on life.

"I chose colours that represent peace and new beginnings," she said. "It shows a girl drinking coffee during the winter season while thinking positively about the future."

She added that the painting took one week to complete because it reflected her feelings at that moment, allowing her to express them through art.

The exhibition offers visitors an opportunity to experience the diverse perspectives of Bahrain's emerging artists, highlighting how art can transform personal experiences, emotions and cultural values into powerful visual storytelling.

TDI | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Moves to Regulate Shop Signboards

New rules could soon be introduced to standardise shop signs across Bahrain, following approval of a proposal aimed at improving the visual appearance of commercial streets.

The Southern Municipal Council has backed a plan submitted by Fourth Constituency representative Mohammed Daraj to develop unified guidelines for commercial signage.

The proposal targets issues such as oversized boards, conflicting colours, and inconsistent storefront designs, which officials say have contributed to visual clutter in several commercial areas.



Image used for illustrative purposes only.

The plan calls for specific regulations covering the size, design, colour schemes, and placement of shop signs. It aims to balance business visibility with improved urban aesthetics and more organised streetscapes.

Daraj stressed that the proposal is not intended to restrict businesses, but to create a structured

system that ensures consistency while still allowing flexibility based on location and commercial activity.

He added that unregulated signage has negatively affected the appearance of commercial facades and reduced overall street quality.

If implemented, the initiative



Mohammed Daraj
Southern Municipal Council Member

is expected to reduce visual clutter and improve the overall look of commercial districts, making streets more organised and easier for residents and visitors to navigate.

Two years on, illegal posters still cover Budaiya walls



A Northern Municipal Council member has renewed calls for stricter enforcement against illegal wall advertisements in Budaiya, saying the issue remains unresolved two years after it was first formally raised.

Council member Mohammed Saad Al Doseri, representing the Third Constituency, said in a fresh memorandum that walls across parts of his constituency are still covered with random posters, rental notices, and promotional flyers despite earlier assurances that enforcement procedures were already in place.

Al Doseri said he first submitted a query in May 2024 to the Northern Municipality asking how unlicensed advertisers are identified, warned, and penalised under Bahrain's

advertising regulations. He stressed that the continued presence of old and unlicensed posters reflects weak enforcement rather than a lack of legal framework.

He referred to Bahrain's 1973 advertising law, which requires prior approval from the relevant committee before any public advertisement is displayed. He argued that uncontrolled postings contribute to visual pollution and negatively affect the public appearance of the area.

In response to his earlier inquiry, the Northern Municipality outlined a structured enforcement process in October 2024. The procedure includes routine inspections, complaint-based monitoring, issuance of violation notices, and a compliance deadline for offenders.

A'ali Sewerage Project Ends 30-Year Wait for Residents

232 properties to be connected under new sanitation network

Residents of Blocks 730 and 740 in A'ali are set to benefit from a long-awaited sewerage network after more than 30 years of delay.

Northern Municipal Council member Abdulla Abdulhameed Ashoor said residents warmly received the project, particularly families living behind Al Ramli Mall, calling it a major breakthrough for the area.

The planned works will connect 232 properties across the



Abdulla Abdulhameed Ashoor,
Northern Municipal Council member

two blocks through a new sewerage system, including main

pipelines ranging from 200mm to 300mm in diameter with a total length of 5.3 kilometres, along with branch connections serving individual homes.

Ashoor thanked the Ministry of Works, Works Minister, and Works Affairs Under-Secretary Shaikh Mishaal bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, as well as the sanitary engineering teams for advancing the long-delayed project. He also highlighted the role of municipal coordination and previous council members in

pushing the plan forward.

He said the new network would significantly improve infrastructure and reduce reliance on frequent sewage pumping and transport, while also addressing recurring overflow issues and pressure on soakaway systems.

For residents, the project marks the end of a decades-long service gap in a growing residential area, bringing long-awaited relief and improved living conditions.

ISB Bids Farewell to VR Palaniswamy



The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) honoured Principal VR Palaniswamy at a farewell ceremony marking his 25 years of dedicated service, including 15 years as Principal. ISB Chairman praised Palaniswamy's leadership and contributions.

Summer Support Drive for Workers



ICRF Bahrain's "Thirst Quenchers 2026" campaign continued in Galali, distributing refreshments and fresh fruits to around 200 workers at Mohammed Jalal Contracting Company site, reinforcing summer heat safety awareness in line with national labour protection efforts.

Students Learn Financial Skills



Bhavans Bahrain Indian School concluded a three-day workshop series in collaboration with INJAZ Bahrain, introducing Grades II to IV students to financial literacy and entrepreneurship through interactive, activity-based learning. The sessions helped students understand money management, savings, budgeting, and basic economic concepts while encouraging creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving through practical activities and group exercises. The programme also inspired students to develop innovative ideas and improve decision-making skills.

Bahrain EDB Concludes Visit to China and Hong Kong Strengthening Investment Ties

The Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB) has concluded a strategic five-day visit to China and Hong Kong, held from June 22 to June 26, reinforcing the Kingdom's economic ties with one of the world's most dynamic regions. Through a series of high-level engagements with investors, business leaders, and strategic partners, the delegation further highlighted Bahrain as a resilient, forward-looking destination for business. The programme featured a series of meetings and networking opportunities aimed at strengthening bilateral economic cooperation and exploring new avenues for investment and partnership.

Activities commenced in Dalian, China, where Bahrain EDB participated in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Annual



Meeting of the New Champions 2026, which convened leading academics, policymakers, business executives, and civil society leaders from around the world. The forum provided an important platform to exchange insights on the economic outlook across key emerging markets,

with a particular focus on China and the wider Asia-Pacific region. On the sidelines of the meeting, Bahrain EDB hosted a series of strategic meetings with investors and industry stakeholders to showcase investment opportunities across the Kingdom's priority sectors



and explore avenues for future collaboration.

The delegation, led by H.E. Noor bint Ali Alkhulaif, Minister of Sustainable Development and Chief Executive of Bahrain EDB, also participated in the 16th Asia Pacific Family Office Forum in Hong Kong, organised by Camp-

den Wealth. During the forum, Her Excellency participated in a fireside chat titled "Building Resilient Economies in a Fragmented World: Capital, Competitiveness, and the High-Potential GCC-Asia Opportunity," where she highlighted Bahrain's approach to building a compet-

itive economy and the growing opportunities for investment and collaboration between the GCC and Asia. The delegation also met with prominent family offices and investment decision-makers through meetings and networking opportunities.

Building on Bahrain's long-standing economic ties with Asia, the visit reflects Bahrain EDB's continued commitment to strengthening international partnerships and proactively engaging with investors across key global markets. China is Bahrain's third-largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching USD 2.43 billion in 2025, underscoring the depth of the economic relationship and the strong momentum across sectors including technology, financial services, and manufacturing.

BENEFIT Brings QR Codes to BenefitPay Homepage for Faster, Easier Transactions

BENEFIT, the Kingdom's innovator and leading company in Fintech and electronic financial transactions service, has rolled out a new enhancement to BenefitPay app, in line with the directives of the Central Bank of Bahrain, enabling users to view their QR code directly from the app's homepage. The added functionality streamlines transfers and payment collection by giving customers quicker access to an essential feature used in their everyday financial activities.

Each QR code is uniquely associated with the customer's IBAN, with a dedicated code generated for every bank account registered within BenefitPay. This structure helps ensure that payments and transfers are routed accurately to the selected account, while providing customers with a secure and convenient way to share their payment details and receive funds.

Under the latest update, the QR code appears in a prominent position immediately upon opening BenefitPay app, remov-



Mr. Ahmed AlMahri, AGM Business Development and Services at BENEFIT

ing the need to navigate through multiple menus. Customers can now locate and share their code more conveniently, helping them complete routine transactions with greater ease while benefiting from a clearer and more intuitive interface.

This enhancement underscores BENEFIT's commitment to continuously elevating the customer experience by introducing practical features informed by user behavior and everyday transaction needs. It also forms part of the company's broader strategy to ensure that BenefitPay remains agile, relevant and aligned with

the evolving expectations of customers and the continued growth of digital payments.

Mr. Ahmed AlMahri, AGM Business Development and Services at BENEFIT, commented: "We pay close attention to the details that shape the way customers engage with BenefitPay. By placing the QR code in a clear and accessible position on the homepage, users can locate and share it from the moment they open the app, allowing them to carry out their daily transactions more efficiently."

Mr. AlMahri further added, "We remain focused on advancing BenefitPay in line with customers' needs and expectations, while delivering digital solutions that combine simplicity, reliability and efficiency. This latest improvement demonstrates our commitment to creating a more seamless digital experience as we continue to enrich the app with relevant features that keep pace with the rapidly evolving FinTech sector and strengthen its role as Bahrain's comprehensive national platform for digital payments and transfers."

Bahrain Dates Make Up 24pc of Farm Output

● Crop accounts for nearly a quarter of national farm production in 2024

● Farmers cite water stress, costs and labour shortages as key challenges

● Calls grow for better marketing, packaging and value-added production

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

The dates industry remains one of Bahrain's main farm trades, with output holding at 14,000 tonnes a year for the past three years, making up about 24 pc of the kingdom's farm yield in 2024, ministry figures show.

The crop has kept its place despite shrinking farmland, water strain, higher running costs and growers' calls for more workers, better plant care and stronger routes to market.

Bahrain, long known as the 'land of a million palm trees', produced 14,000 tonnes of dates in each of 2022, 2023 and 2024, according to figures from the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture.

The figures point to slow growth, but also show how far dates remain rooted in Bahrain's farm economy, food trade and village life.

People in the trade say Bahrain could draw greater worth from the crop through better sorting, packing, sale points and food manufacturing.

Factories use machines to sort dates by size, separating small, medium and large fruit. Dates that fall short of sale grade can be turned into paste for sweets and other food goods.

Saudi Arabia is seen in the



Bahrain Date Production

- Dates account for nearly a quarter of Bahrain's farm output (2024 total: 58,697 tonnes).
- Production rose from about 13,200 tonnes in 2015 to 14,000 tonnes today.
- Output has stayed mostly stable around 13,500-14,000 tonnes over the past decade.
- Has remained at 14,000 tonnes annually in recent years.

Filipino Workers in Bahrain Send \$86m Home

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Filipino workers in Bahrain sent \$86.06 million home in the first four months of 2026, the smallest total among the six Gulf states, as money flows from the region to the Philippines rose to \$1.97 billion.

The Gulf figure was up from \$1.89bn in the same stretch of 2025, according to figures drawn from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the Philippine central bank.

Saudi Arabia led the Gulf list, with \$726.63m sent by Filipino workers in the first four months



of the year. Bahrain came last among GCC states.

In the first quarter, Filipino workers in Bahrain sent \$63.72m home. Across the GCC, first-quarter remittances rose by 4.19pc year on year and made up 95.8pc of all money sent by Filipino workers from the Middle East.

The UAE posted the fastest growth in the Gulf, at 4.82pc.

The six Gulf states accounted for 96.11pc of the \$2.05bn sent from the Middle East in the first four months of 2026. They also made up 41.50pc of the \$4.74bn sent from Asia over the same stretch.

Filipino workers around the world sent home \$11.40bn, with the GCC making up 17.25pc of that sum.

Such transfers are a key source of hard currency for the Philippines, one of the world's main labour-sending countries. The Gulf remains a major draw for Filipino workers, driven by building work, services and business growth across the region.

made from date pits.

Most sales are still centred on the central market. Traders say Bahrain needs a market for dates alone, giving local produce clearer space for display and sale, while offering farmers, merchants and shoppers a more orderly place to trade.

Date syrup is made by drawing out the fruit's contents through newer methods used in a number of Gulf markets. Date paste, often made from smaller fruit after machine treatment, is used in maamoul and other sweets.

Date-pit coffee is also beginning to reach shop shelves. It is made by grinding and treating the seed to produce a drink with its own taste, giving date makers another way to raise the worth of the crop.

The crop is no longer sold only for eating as fruit. Dates are used in chocolate, nuts, paste, dibs, sweets and coffee

Pakistani news channel apologises after ban over documentary

AFP | Islamabad, Pakistan

A major Pakistani news channel apologised on Sunday after it was handed a 15-day suspension by a regulator for airing a documentary that included "religious visualization".

Geo News aired the clarification and apology over the programme named 'Safar-e-Ishq', and published an article on its website.

"Geo News has acknowledged an editorial error regarding content aired during its 10th Muharram transmission," the article said, referring to the ongoing first month of the Islamic lunar

calendar.

The programme had depicted "certain rituals practised by a limited number of people in Iraq and some other Middle Eastern countries", the channel said, without providing further details.

Geo News said it "never intended to represent, endorse, or promote any broader religious viewpoint".

A statement from the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) on Saturday said the "broadcast of such visual representation, given the religious, cultural and social sensitivities, constitutes a serious regulatory concern".

Skydiving plane crash kills 11 in France



AFP | Tomblaine, France

A skydiving plane crashed Sunday in eastern France, killing all 11 people on board, local authorities said, in one of the country's deadliest ever light aircraft accidents.

The crash in the town of Tomblaine killed five instructors, five students, and the pilot, said Yves Seguy, the prefect of the Meurthe-et-Moselle department.

The students were a group of nurses, according to a source close to the case and confirmed by the head of Meurthe-et-Moselle's nursing council, Thierry Pechey.

"They were colleagues who had decided to go on a first skydiving jump, no doubt to unwind, as we're going through a difficult time with

the heatwave," he said.

The aircraft, registered in Germany, crashed in a grassy area near the runway of the Nancy-Essey aerodrome, close to a residential area and two roads, an AFP journalist reported.

The cause of the incident was not immediately clear and a technical investigation had been opened, said Amaury Lacote, deputy public prosecutor in the eastern city of Nancy.

Police urged people on the social media platform X to "strictly avoid" the area around the airport to allow emergency services access.

French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez and Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot are expected to visit the scene of the accident later this afternoon.

Bangladesh's fugitive ex-PM says will return to Dhaka 'this year'

AFP | New Delhi, India

Bangladesh's fugitive former leader Sheikh Hasina has vowed to return to her country "this year", according to an interview published on Sunday, months after she was sentenced to death in absentia for crimes against humanity.

Hasina, 78, fled to neighbouring India in August 2024 after a student-led uprising ended her 15-year, iron-fisted rule.

She has not been seen in public since, except for a rare speech broadcast to a packed press club in New Delhi in January.

In an interview with Indian



broadcaster NDTV, Hasina said she was not afraid of death and that the verdict against her was "part of an illegal, unconstitutional and politically motivated process".

Venezuela quakes kill 1,400 as time running out to find survivors

AFP | La Guaira, Venezuela

Rescue crews raced Sunday to pull survivors from the rubble of Venezuela's powerful twin earthquakes as the death toll reached 1,430 and hopes dwindled more than three days after the disaster struck.

Tens of thousands of people were reported missing as collapsed buildings dotted cities in a country already enduring an economic crisis and political upheaval after US forces captured former president Nicolas Maduro in January.

Millions of people across the country were also feared to lack sanitation and other basic needs after one of Latin America's most



Rescuers carry a person after being pulled alive from the rubble of a collapsed building in Caraballeda, La Guaira state, Venezuela

devastating earthquakes.

In one of the worst hit areas, the coastal city of La Guaira,

Hector Aguilera came to search for four family members buried in the rubble since the back-to-

back quakes of magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 struck on Wednesday. Two other of his family members were rescued.

Experts say the first 72 hours after natural disasters -- which have now passed -- are the key, narrow window for finding the living. After that the search becomes one of recovering bodies.

In the Caracas neighborhood of Chacao, large electronic screens on a building usually used for advertising were showing the faces of missing people.

On Saturday, National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez reported 1,430 dead and 3,238 people injured -- a toll that was expected to rise.

CENTCOM strikes, Trump warns

US aircraft hit 10 Iranian military targets as tensions rise in the Strait of Hormuz

● According to CENTCOM, US aircraft targeted Iranian missile and drone storage facilities as well as coastal radar installations

TDT | agencies

The United States intensified military pressure on Iran yesterday, with US Central Command (CENTCOM) confirming strikes on 10 Iranian military targets in response to what it described as "continued Iranian aggression against commercial shipping" in the Gulf.

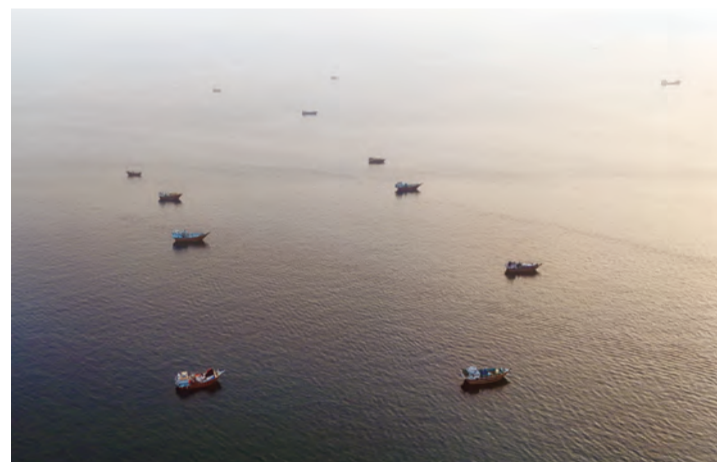
According to CENTCOM, US aircraft targeted Iranian missile and drone storage facilities as well as coastal radar installations after Iran allegedly violated the ceasefire agreement and launched a drone attack on the Panama-flagged oil tanker Kiku.

The latest operation followed similar US strikes carried out on Friday and marked a further escalation in tensions despite a recently signed agreement between Washington and Tehran aimed at preventing renewed conflict.

US President Donald Trump warned that Iran would "no longer exist" if the United States was forced to return to war.

"United States aircraft just struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations, and coastal radar sites, for violating the Cease Fire Agreement, AGAIN!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

The US military action comes amid growing concerns over security in the Strait of Hormuz, the strategic waterway through which around a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas supplies pass under normal conditions.



Boats anchored off Oman's northern Musandam Peninsula near the Strait of Hormuz

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they were implementing measures to control traffic through the strait and warned that vessels violating those measures would face tougher action.

The attacks also followed remarks by Iran's foreign minister that efforts by shipping companies to avoid Tehran's preferred route through Hormuz would only increase tensions in the region.

Despite the ceasefire agreement, which commits both sides to refrain from military action or threats of force, Washington and Tehran have repeatedly accused each other of violations.

Analysts warned that further incidents in the Strait of Hormuz remain likely as tensions continue to simmer between the two countries.

Israel strikes Lebanon

TDT | agencies

in southern Lebanon.

Israel launched strikes in Lebanon as Hezbollah's leader Naim Qassem rejected a deal to end that conflict, which has also threatened to derail the wider US-Iran peace effort.

Iran called them "a blatant violation" of the truce deal.

Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah warned on Sunday of "internal conflict" in Lebanon over the country's agreement with Israel, signed this week, predicting the deal would not be implemented.

The agreement, which aims to pave the way to peace between the neighbours, includes plans to disarm Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah. On Sunday, Lebanese state media reported a new Israeli strike on the country's south, while the Israeli military said a soldier was killed in fighting

soldier killed

The Israeli military said a soldier was killed on Sunday in fighting in southern Lebanon, two days after Israel and Lebanon signed an agreement aimed at ending hostilities.

Captain David Hazutt, 21, a platoon commander "fell in combat" in southern Lebanon, the military said.

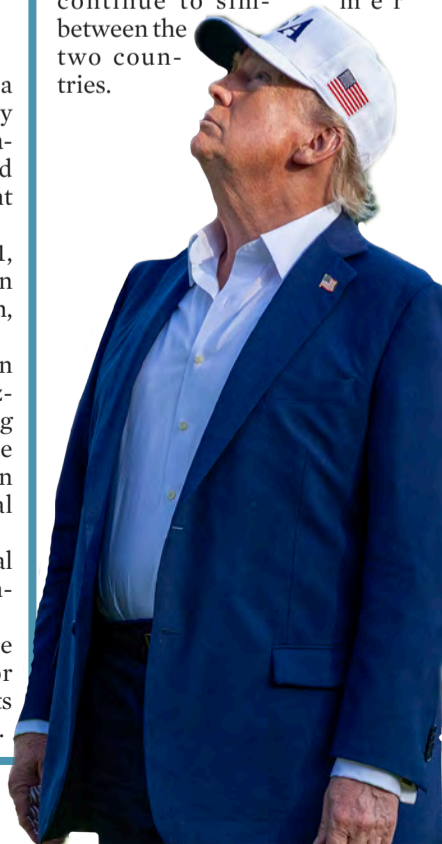
Hazutt was killed when soldiers encountered a "Hezbollah terrorist after entering a suspicious structure in the area of Deir Seryan in southern Lebanon," a military official said in a separate statement.

In the incident an additional Israeli soldier was lightly injured, the official said.

"Following the incident, the soldiers began searching for the terrorist and struck targets in the area," the official added.

Iran has insisted that vessels transiting the strait use a corridor close to its coastline, while

several ships in recent days have instead travelled near the Omani coast.



1613

Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London burns down during a performance of "Henry VIII"

1939

Ford introduces the revolutionary Ford-Ferguson 9N tractor incorporating Harry Ferguson's three-point hitch system



1941

6,000 Jews are murdered in a pogrom in Bucharest, Romania

1966

US planes bomb North Vietnam's capital, Hanoi, and the port city of Haiphong for the first time in the Vietnam War



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Iran signed a ceasefire agreement. We have honored it. If they have disagreements about how the MOU is being applied, they can pick up the phone. But violence will be met with violence.

@VP

02



Nature is our greatest ally - holding the climate steady, cradling life & sustaining millions. Protecting nature is a legal & moral responsibility. Let's honour that duty by investing in nature's recovery & ensuring that people & planet thrive together for generations to come.

@antonioguterres

03



Europe is the fastest-warming continent on Earth, heating at twice the global average. Right now 150 million people are living under extreme heat, hundreds have died, schools are shut, grids are buckling.

@DrTedros

04



Had an excellent meeting with Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, the Prime Minister of Mauritius. We met at the start of the year during the AI Summit and now we have the chance to meet in Seychelles.

@narendramodi

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



Vespa enthusiasts from around the world ride during the parade of the Vespa World Days marking the 80th anniversary of the iconic Italian brand of scooters in Rome



Europe heatwave claims 1,300 lives

A DEADLY TOLL

OVER 1,300 EXCESS DEATHS recorded in Europe since June 21 linked to high temperatures, says WHO

FRANCE 1,000 more deaths than usual since June 24

Many of the extra fatalities are among those aged 65+, with a 40% rise in deaths at home.

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Chief

RECORDS TUMBLE

NEW CZECH MARK 41.1°C recorded at Doksan north of Prague. Second temperature record in two days.

GERMAN NIGHT BREAKS RECORD 29.4°C lowest temperature at night in Kubschuetz in the east. Warmest night since records began almost 150 years ago.

COOLING BY CANNON

Berlin police used water cannon to help residents cool off on Saturday and will repeat the operation on Sunday.

IMPACTS ACROSS EUROPE

BELGIAN STORM DEATH

One person died when a tree fell on his vehicle just outside Brussels after violent storms hit much of the country.

FASHION ROW IN PARIS

A giant artificial wave at the Louis Vuitton show drew criticism for "wasting water". LVMH said the water would be 're-injected into the sewerage system'.

ROCK FESTIVAL CANCELLED

The Garorock festival in Marmande was called off after a thunderstorm warning. Around 100,000 tickets sold; financial hit estimated at over €3 million.

CHARITY SUFFERS

Solidays music festival in Paris was also cancelled, depriving the AIDS charity of around €3 million.

ROMANIA RED WARNING

Romania's weather agency issued a red heatwave warning from Monday to Wednesday, covering almost the whole country.

WHY IT'S GETTING WORSE

Scientists say recurring heatwaves are a clear marker of global warming driven by human activity. **Europe is the fastest-warming continent - heating at twice the global average.**

STAY SAFE

- Drink water regularly
- Stay indoors during peak heat
- Check on the elderly
- Wear light clothes and sunscreen
- Seek medical help if you feel unwell or overheated

Sources: WHO, AFP, CHMI, DWD, National Health Agencies, Media Reports

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Europe's deadly heatwave pushed east Sunday with hundreds of millions still sweltering across the continent despite fleeting relief from overnight storms, notably in France and Belgium.

The heat remained intense across central and eastern Europe, with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland hit hard as temperatures soared and records fell. At least 191 million Europeans were expected to face temperatures above 35C during the day, according to AFP estimates.

The World Health Organization said it had recorded more than 1,300 excess deaths in Europe since June 21. Overall, some 381 million Europeans were set to see temperatures exceed 30C, according to analysis based on forecasts from the German Meteorological Service and population data.

This heatwave is the most severe ever recorded in Europe, and would have been "virtually impossible" in June without climate change, the World Weather Attribution group of scientists said.

All-time temperature records have been broken in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, as well as for the month of June in the UK and in Switzerland.

'Not a fiasco'

"Right now 150 million people are living under extreme heat, hundreds have died, schools are shut, grids are buckling," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on X.

Storms brought some respite overnight, particularly in France after several days of temperatures close to 40C. But they also caused damage, as a man died near Brussels when a tree fell on his car, local media reported.

In France, the highest-level heat alerts were expected to ease on Sunday evening, although millions continued to endure sweltering conditions.

Still marked by the 2003 heatwave -- Europe's worst in centuries, which killed around 15,000 people -- French authorities feared a rising death toll.

The country's national health agency said Sunday it had tallied around 1,000 more deaths than expected from June 24, and warned the figure was likely

to increase further.

Many of those fatalities were among those aged 65 and over, it said.

But Health Minister Stephanie Rist said France would "probably" avoid a repeat of the devastating death toll during the 2003 heatwave, citing better preparation in care homes for the elderly.

Interior Minister Laurent Nunez rejected criticism over the response, insisting: "This is not a fiasco -- we were prepared."

Records tumble

Temperatures soared above 40C in several countries on Sunday as the heatwave shattered records across central and eastern Europe.

Poland recorded a new all-time high of 40.5C in the western town of Slubice, according to the national meteorological institute.

Germany set a new national high of 41.7C at Coschen, near the Polish border, surpassing a high set just a day earlier, while the Czech Republic also broke records for a second consecutive day, with 41.1C recorded in Doksan, north of Prague.

France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) said rising temperatures were clearly affecting marine life and biodiversity.

Speaking from a beach at Wimereux in northern France, CNRS research director Gregory Beaugrand told AFP the warming of the Channel was disrupting the food chain, as "fish that like cold waters are disappearing".

French paleoclimatologist Jean Jouzel told the Tribune newspaper he feared political attention would quickly shift once the heatwave ends.

Urging people to heed scientific warnings, he said: "People are closing their eyes -- but it is extremely serious."



The 2003 European heatwave killed around 70,000 people across the continent.

Iraq arrests 47 officials in anti-corruption campaign

Baghdad, Iraq

Iraqi authorities arrested 47 officials, including members of parliament, on Sunday as part of an anti-graft campaign in the corruption-plagued country, state media reported.

Iraq's new prime minister, Ali al-Zaidi, who recently took office with the blessing of the United States, has made two main vows: to fight corruption and to ensure a state monopoly on weapons.

His anti-graft raids come before an expected visit next month to Washington, where he hopes to attract US investment and is expected to renew his promise to ensure pro-Iran armed groups hand over their weapons.

Iraq's news agency INA quoted senior officials as saying that 47 suspects were "arrested on corruption charges," including members of parliament and other officials, with at least one from the oil ministry.

The round-up began early Sunday when Iraqi security forces, primarily from anti-terrorism units, raided Baghdad's fortified Green Zone and another neighbourhood in the capital.

Israel recognises Armenian genocide in rebuke to Turkey

Jerusalem, Undefined

The Israeli government on Sunday unanimously recognised the massacres of Armenians during World War I as genocide, a move widely seen as a rebuke to Turkey and a stark signal of the deepening rift between the two countries.

Relations between Israel and Turkey have sharply deteriorated since the war in Gaza erupted after Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas's attacks on Israel in October 2023.

"A historic decision: the Israeli government has unanimously approved Foreign Minister Gideon Saar's proposal to recognise the Armenian genocide," the foreign ministry said.

Uganda army chief shuts down leading media group

Nairobi, Kenya

Uganda's army chief said on Sunday that he did not believe in a free press and ordered an independent media group to shut its newspaper, TV station and radio outlets. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, the head of Uganda's military and President Yoweri Museveni's son, has asserted growing control in recent months, ordering the arrests of politicians and activists.

Classifieds



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region

Aramco helicopter crash in Saudi Arabia's Ras Tanura kills 14

Authorities launch investigation

A helicopter belonging to Saudi oil giant Saudi Aramco crashed on Sunday in Ras Tanura on Saudi Arabia's eastern coast, killing 14 people, according to the Saudi state news agency.

The incident occurred yesterday around 6 a.m. local time (03:00 GMT) in the Gulf region, west of the Strait of Hormuz. Authorities have not yet revealed the cause of the crash.

"The relevant authorities have launched a full investigation to determine the cause of the crash," the state news agency reported.

The helicopter crash comes as Aramco resumed crude oil loading operations on Friday at its Ras Tanura terminal, one of the world's largest oil export facilities, after activities were halted for nearly four months.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, has recently increased efforts to move energy shipments as regional producers expanded oil and gas



Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh Speaker of the Shura Council

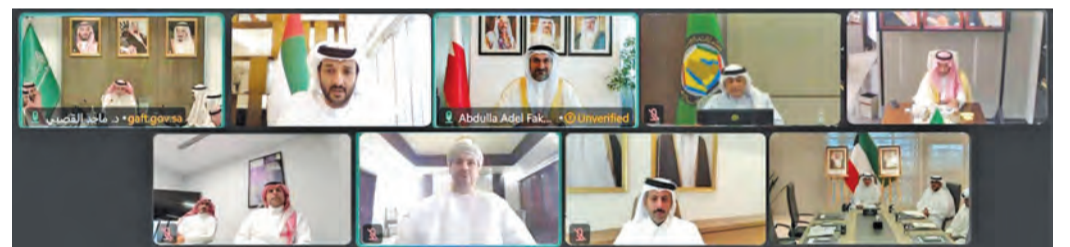
output and exports ahead of an interim agreement aimed at ending the conflict between the United States and Iran.

Meanwhile, His Excellency Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh, Speaker of the Shura Council, sent a cable of condolences and sympathy to His Excellency Shaikh Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Al-Shaikh, Speaker of the Shura Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, expressing deep sorrow and grief over the crash of a helicopter belonging to Saudi Aramco in the Ras Tanura area,

which resulted in the death of all passengers on board, who were Saudi citizens.

GCC Ministers Discuss Economic Integration

Bahrain's Industry Minister leads discussions on advancing Gulf economic integration



Minister of Industry and Commerce, H.E. Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro chaired the joint meeting of the GCC Commercial Cooperation Committee and Industrial Cooperation Committee, held as part of the Kingdom's presidency of the 46th session of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The meeting was attended by GCC Ministers of Commerce and Industry, along with GCC Secretary General H.E. Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, and was conducted via videoconfer-

ence. During the meeting, H.E. Fakhro highlighted that the discussions were held in line with the decisions of the GCC Supreme Council issued during the Jeddah Summit, emphasizing the importance of strengthening coordination among member states to support economic integration and sustainable growth.

He stressed the need to enhance cooperation in the commercial and industrial sectors, while improving the resilience of strategic industries in re-

sponse to evolving regional and global challenges.

The meeting reviewed several key agenda items focused on advancing Gulf economic integration, expanding commercial and industrial cooperation, and enhancing coordination in the logistics sector and other strategic areas.

The discussions reaffirmed the GCC countries' commitment to strengthening economic partnerships and supporting initiatives that contribute to regional development and competitiveness.

GCC-EU ties see steady growth, says GCC chief

The Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Jassim Mohammed Al-Budaiwi, stated that relations between the Gulf states and the European Union are witnessing significant development across various fields.

He also praised the role of the Republic of Cyprus in strengthening dialogue and partnership between the GCC and the European Union during its current presidency of the EU.



The remarks were made during a luncheon hosted by Charis Moritsis, Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and

representative of the current EU presidency, in honour of the GCC Secretary-General. The event took place on Sunday in Riyadh.

Al-Budaiwi noted that both the GCC and the European Union are consistently working to build and expand partnerships in multiple sectors, aiming to achieve shared interests and mutual benefits.

He reaffirmed that cooperation between the two sides continues to grow, reflecting a shared commitment to strengthening strategic relations and enhancing collaboration in various areas.


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Russell holds off Verstappen to win Austrian Grand Prix

AFP | Spielberg

George Russell returned to winning ways after a series of disappointments yesterday when he claimed a measured victory for Mercedes ahead of Red Bull's four-time champion Max Verstappen in a thrilling Austrian Grand Prix.

The 28-year-old Briton, the pre-season favourite for the drivers' title and winner of the opening race, secured his second win of the year and the seventh of his career in a close race, declared to be a 'heat hazard' event, at the Red Bull Ring circuit.

Russell came home 1.611 seconds ahead of a charging Verstappen who in turn resisted championship leader Kimi Antonelli, in the second Mercedes, to finish 0.375 seconds in front of him as they crossed the line.

McLaren's Oscar Piastri was fourth, 20 seconds adrift, ahead of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton of Ferrari, Isack Hadjar in the second Red Bull and world champion Lando Norris in the second McLaren.

Charles Leclerc was eighth in the second Ferrari ahead of the



Mercedes' British driver George Russell competes ahead of Ferrari's British driver Lewis Hamilton

two Red Bulls of Liam Lawson and rookie Arvid Lindblad.

"It's beautiful to be back on the top step," said Russell.

"It's been a while so I'm definitely going to enjoy this one tonight. Max and Red Bull were incredibly quick this weekend, so kudos to them. I had to push every single lap -- and I'm looking forward to a drink now."

Russell's win trimmed Antonelli's advantage ahead of him in the title race by 10 points to 40, the Italian teenager having reeled off five straight wins to establish a clear lead earlier in the season.

Verstappen, who started fifth, made light of the temperatures of 37C (air) and 62C (track). He said: "It was a very good race for us. The first laps were fun and then I managed the tyres."

Antonelli said: "I was a bit too excited in the first laps and I didn't drive well, but after changing tyres, I re-set and the pace was strong. It's a shame I joined the party a bit too late."

Shifting strategies

On an afternoon of searing heat in the Styrian Alps, Russell made a clean start from his 11th career pole to lead while, behind

him, Hamilton passed Leclerc for second and Antonelli, in pure exuberance, ran off twice on the opening lap.

He passed Leclerc on lap two, but had to give the place back, offering Verstappen a chance to sweep through for third.

By this stage, both Cadillacs had retired with overheating and Verstappen closed on Hamilton before diving past him on lap 11, prompting a wheel-to-wheel battle as the Briton hung on to second before pitting.

He returned on hards in 11th, with instructions to push as Russell pulled 5.4 seconds clear of Verstappen and Antonelli rose to third.

Verstappen pitted on lap 19, returning two seconds behind Hamilton before Russell came in and gave Antonelli the lead on lap 20, as Verstappen snatched third with a bruising move on Hamilton.

Antonelli then pitted on lap 24, seconds before a brief Virtual Safety Car when Carlos Sainz stopped on the main straight. He rejoined fifth while Hamilton pitted again for used softs for another spell of spicy racing.

Bahrain women impress at UTR tennis tournament in Saudi



TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Tennis Federation Women's Committee participated in a UTR-sanctioned women's singles tournament hosted by Strategy Academy in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia, in cooperation with the Saudi Tennis Federation, as part of its efforts to provide Bahraini players with greater international competitive exposure.

Led by Women's Committee chair Jamila Al-Nashaba, the Bahraini delegation included Maryam Adel, Gharam Isa, Sharifa Al Ghurair, Aisha Al Fadhel, Samar Khalid and Moudhi Mohammed. The tournament featured players from clubs and academies across Saudi Arabia and the Gulf.

Gharam Isa progressed to the placement qualification

round before losing 6-4 to Saudi Arabia's Aisha Noor Nadira, who advanced to the semi-finals. Isa also recorded a 6-3 victory over Jordan's Dana Mohammed before later losing a closely contested tie-break match to Egypt's Marleen.

Meanwhile, Aisha Al Fadhel and Maryam Adel both reached the quarter-finals. Adel was narrowly beaten 6-4 by Kuwait's Haya Al Hashmi, while Al Fadhel also claimed a victory over Saudi Arabia's Salma Al Ghamdi during the tournament.

Al-Nashaba praised the support of Bahrain Tennis Federation president Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, saying participation in such events helps develop the technical and competitive abilities of Bahraini players and forms part of the federation's strategy to strengthen women's tennis.

Bahrain miss out on AVC Men's Cup bronze after India defeat



Ali Khamis' shot is blocked by India's John Joseph

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's national men's volleyball team narrowly missed out on a podium finish at the AVC Men's Cup after falling 3-1 to hosts India in yesterday's bronze medal match in Ahmedabad.

The Kingdom side battled throughout the contest but were ultimately beaten 25-23, 23-25, 25-21, 25-17 at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, ending their title defence with a fourth-place finish.

Outside hitter Mahmood Abdulwahed led Bahrain with 22 points, while Sayed Hashem Ali added 16 and opposite hitter Ali Khamis contributed nine.

India were inspired by opposite hitter Jerome Vinith, who produced a match-high 24 points, while Joel Jebaraj and Chirag Yadav chipped in with 17 apiece to help the hosts claim the bronze medal in front of their home supporters.

Under head coach Ivan Joksimovic, Bahrain made a strong start and narrowly

dropped the opening set before responding to level the match with a 25-23 win in the second. India regained the upper hand by taking the third set 25-21 before pulling away late in the fourth to seal victory.

Bahrain matched the hosts for long spells, but India proved more efficient in attack, registering 66 successful spikes to Bahrain's 53. The hosts also held the edge at the net with an 11-8 advantage in blocks, although Bahrain finished with more service aces, three to one.

The result capped another encouraging continental campaign for Bahrain, who reached the semi-finals after winning four of their five group-stage matches before falling to South Korea.

Although unable to retain the title they won on home soil last year, Bahrain leave India with another strong showing on the continental stage and valuable momentum ahead of the AVC Men's Continental Championship in Japan this September.

Bellingham, Kane score as England advance

AFP | East Rutherford

Jude Bellingham and Harry Kane struck in the second half as England beat Panama 2-0 at the MetLife Stadium to secure top spot in Group L and book their place in the World Cup knockout stage.

After a sluggish first hour on a soggy afternoon in New Jersey, England finally made the breakthrough in the 62nd minute when Bellingham rose to meet Bukayo Saka's corner. The Real Madrid midfielder then turned provider, crossing for Kane to head home midway through the second half and seal victory.

Kane's third goal of the tournament, following his brace against Croatia, saw the England captain move clear of Gary Lineker as his country's all-time leading World Cup scorer with 11 goals.



England's forward #09 Harry Kane celebrates scoring his team's second goal with England's midfielder #10 Jude Bellingham

Thomas Tuchel's side had struggled to break down Panama's stubborn defence, much as they did in the goalless draw with Ghana. Marcus Rashford,

one of five changes to the starting line-up, tested goalkeeper Orlando Mosquera early, headed over from an Elliot Anderson cross and curled a free-kick just

wide before the break, while Jordan Pickford denied Jose Luis Rodriguez at the other end.

England looked sharper after the restart. Jose Cordoba nearly forced an own goal when his clearance ricocheted off teammate Andres Andrade and flew just over the crossbar, before Mosquera kept out Kane. The pressure finally paid off through Bellingham's close-range finish before his cross set up Kane for the second.

Panama, who exit the tournament without a point or a goal after three straight defeats, thought they had pulled one back late on through Jose Fajardo, only for the effort to be ruled out for offside.

England finish the group with seven points from three games and will face a third-placed team in the next round.

NMS girls emerge champions at ICC Criio Cricket Tournament

Manama

The NMS girls' cricket team brought laurels to the school by emerging as the champions of the ICC Criio Cricket Tournament for Girls, organized by the Bahrain Cricket Federation (BCF), at KHK Academy, Salmabad.

Demonstrating remarkable teamwork, determination, and sportsmanship throughout the tournament, Team NMS secured a convincing victory in the semi-final against the Indian School Bahrain (ISB), earning a well-deserved place in the final. In an exciting championship match, the team defeated Bahrain Indian School (BIS) to lift the tournament trophy.

The outstanding performance of the players reflects their dedi-



cation, discipline, and the excellent guidance provided by their coaches. The achievement is a proud milestone for the school and serves as an inspiration to aspiring young athletes.

Congratulating the players, coaches, and parents for this wonderful achievement, Principal Dr Arun Kumar Sharma said that this remarkable victory is a testament to the students' hard work, perseverance, and team spirit. He further added that the school is immensely

proud of its girls for bringing home the championship and for representing the school with excellence and integrity.

Chairman Dr. Ravi Pillai and Managing Director Mrs. Geetha Pillai extended their heartfelt congratulations to the entire team, the coaching staff, and the proud parents on this outstanding accomplishment. They remarked that the achievement highlighted the school's unwavering commitment to promoting excellence in sports along-

side academics and expressed confidence that the success would inspire many more students to pursue their sporting aspirations with dedication and determination.

The school extends its heartfelt congratulations to the victorious team, their dedicated coaches, and their supportive parents for this memorable achievement and wishes the young cricketers continued success in their future sporting endeavours.

Messi scores **again** as Argentina head into World Cup last 32 on a high

● **Argentina defeat Jordan 3-1**

● **Argentina will play Cape Verde next**

AFP | Arlington

Lionel Messi came off the bench to score his sixth goal of the tournament as Argentina warmed up for their World Cup knockout tie with Cape Verde by beating Jordan 3-1.

The ageless Messi tops the scoring charts in North America as the tournament heads into the last 32.

Cape Verde's players will have been watching closely with the debutants ranked 67 facing the champions on July 3 in Miami.

With qualification already in the bag, Messi started on the bench but came on after an hour

in Texas to huge cheers to get his side's third with a free-kick.

Argentina finished emphatically top of Group J with maximum points after also beating Algeria 3-0 and defeating Austria 2-0, all the goals coming from Messi.

The holders and their 39-year-old talisman look formidable, albeit in one of the weaker groups.

A much-changed Argentina scored in the first half through a Giovanni Lo Celso free-kick and a penalty by Lautaro Martinez.

Mousa Al-Tamari



Argentina's forward #10 Lionel Messi celebrates scoring

pulled one back 10 minutes after half-time for Jordan, whose first World Cup was already over.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni made nine changes, retaining only goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez and forward Lautaro Martinez from the Austria win.

Jordan were already eliminated after defeats to Algeria and Austria, rendering the match inconsequential in terms of the tournament.



6 goals have now been scored by Lionel Messi to top the tournament scoring charts heading into the knockouts

ment.

But competition in the Argentina squad is fierce and Scaloni wanted his side to join France and co-hosts Mexico with nine points.

Argentina also wanted to make a statement ahead of the meeting with surprise packages Cape Verde as they attempt to become the first team since Brazil in 1962 to win back-to-back World Cups.

The home of the Dallas Cowboys was packed with Argentina fans and their team dominated from the off.

Lo Celso got the party started, bending in a free-kick on 19 minutes that goalkeeper Yazeed Abulaila got nowhere near having inexplicably moved in the opposite direction.

A relaxed-looking Messi smiled broadly from the sidelines.

Soon after the champions doubled their lead when Martinez rifled in a penalty following a VAR review when Marcos Senesi appeared to be kicked in the face as he went for a diving header.

Minutes after half-time the crowd began calling for their captain Messi, the leading scorer in World Cup history.

As he stripped off to come on, Tamari stabbed in from close range to pull a goal back and stun much of the stadium.

The match felt like a friendly after that, before Messi bent in a tame free-kick with 10 minutes left to go with his hat-trick against Algeria and brace versus Austria.

Austria, Algeria advance after 3-3 thriller

AFP | Kansas City

Algeria and Austria played out an incredible 3-3 draw in Kansas City that ensured both teams qualified for the World Cup knockout rounds and eliminated Iran.

Veteran forward Marko Arnautovic put the European side in front at Arrowhead Stadium but Rafik Belghali levelled shortly before half-time, benefiting from a huge slice of luck. Marcel Sabitzer restored Austria's lead with a superb strike but minutes later Algeria were all-square again thanks to former Manchester City star Riyad Mahrez.

Both teams appeared to have settled for a mutually beneficial draw in the closing minutes but there was still time for some edge-of-the-seat drama.

Mahrez netted again in the 93rd minute and then, in the final seconds Sasa Kalajdzic, just on as a substitute, headed home -- sparking scenes of wild joy from the Austrian squad.

The result means the two teams both finish Group J on four points behind Lionel Messi's Argentina, who topped the section with nine points.

Austria are in the World Cup knockout round for the first time since 1982 while Algeria have matched their performance at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Algeria will play Switzerland in the next round while Austria, who finished second in the group,

will face European champions Spain.

Conspiracy talk

The build-up to the game was dominated by speculation over whether both teams would try to avoid finishing second in order to swerve Spain, who are one of the favourites to win the World Cup.

Both managers dismissed any suggestion that the match would be rigged at their pre-match press conferences and the nature of the game underlined their case.

The match, played in humid conditions in the American Midwest, burst into life after the first hydration break, which was booed by the largely Algeria-supporting crowd.

Veteran forward Arnautovic broke the deadlock in the 28th minute with the first effort on target.

The 37-year-old controlled a long ball from David Alaba and finished calmly past Oussama Benbot, brought into the team at the expense of Luca Zidane, son of France great Zinedine Zidane.

Algeria were a whisk-

the 40th minute when Fares Chaibi's powerful shot from the edge of the penalty area smashed off an upright.

But Belghali levelled in the 45th minute, dancing past three Austrian defenders before lashing home.

Algeria were fortunate that the chance came their way -- defender Phillipp Mwene tried to shepherd the ball out of play but it ricocheted back off the corner flag and was picked up by Belghali.

The game fell quiet in the early stages of the second half but caught fire again in the 55th minute when Sabitzer finished off a superb team move, striking in home Konrad Laimer's cross from the edge of the box.

There was another twist five minutes later when Mahrez finished powerfully after fine work from Housseem Aouar, who produced a pinpoint cross.

As the clock ticked down, both teams played cagily, cutting out the risks, knowing a point was enough.

But the late, late drama means Iran, who had hoped to progress as one of the best third-placed teams, are out of the World Cup.

Croatia leapfrog Ghana with battling win

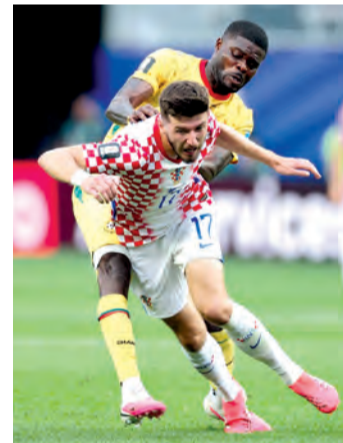
TDT | Manama

Croatia leapfrogged Ghana into second place in Group L after a hard-fought victory that secured their place in the knockout stage of the 2026 World Cup.

Petar Susic and Nikola Vlasic provided the decisive goals as Zlatko Dalic's side produced a determined display to move above the already-qualified Black Stars in the standings.

Although a draw would have been enough for Croatia to progress as one of the best third-placed teams, they showed early intent and came close in the 17th minute when Vlasic struck the outside of the post from distance.

The breakthrough arrived just after the half-hour mark, with Susic unleashing a powerful 30-yard effort that flew



Petar Susic #17 of Croatia is challenged by Thomas Partey #5 of Ghana

through traffic and nestled inside the left-hand post to give Croatia a deserved lead.

Ghana offered little in the opening period, with Antoine Semenyo's effort just before the break their only notable

attacking moment.

The Black Stars improved after half-time and eventually found an equaliser 17 minutes from time, when Derrick Luckassen reacted quickest at a free-kick to side-foot home.

However, parity lasted only 10 minutes. From a Luka Modric corner, Vlasic was left unmarked and made no mistake, heading in off the inside of the post to restore Croatia's lead and secure victory.

Susic's standout performance saw him named Player of the Match, with the 22-year-old midfielder marking his display in style. At 22 years and 245 days, he also became the second-youngest player to score for Croatia at a FIFA World Cup, behind Josko Gvardiol (20 years, 328 days against Morocco in 2022).

Colombia, Portugal share spoils

TDT | Manama

Colombia finished top of World Cup Group K after a goalless draw with Portugal on Sunday morning, with both sides already assured of qualification to the knockout stage before kick-off.

The result confirmed the South Americans as group winners, setting up a round-of-32 meeting with Ghana, while Portugal, who finished second, will face Croatia.

Despite the lack of goals, the match was played at a lively tempo.

Bruno Fernandes went close in the first half but was denied by Camilo Vargas, while Diogo Costa produced six saves for Portugal—more than in their previous two group matches combined. The European side entered



Portugal's forward Cristiano Ronaldo makes a bicycle kick and fails to score

the tournament among the favourites but experienced an uneven group stage.

They opened with a surprise 1-1 draw against Congo DR before responding emphatically with a 5-0 win over Uzbekistan, in which Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice to become the first player to net in six differ-

ent World Cups.

Finishing second in the group places Portugal on the opposite side of the bracket to Argentina, meaning a potential Ronaldo-Messi showdown can only occur in the final.

Colombia, meanwhile, built their group success on earlier wins over Uzbekistan and Congo DR, with James Rodriguez marking his 11th World Cup appearance to become the country's all-time leader in the tournament.

The match, staged at the home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins, was played in front of a sellout crowd of 64,478, with several high-profile figures in attendance including FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

Multiple fan watch parties were also held across South Florida due to high demand for tickets.



Algeria defender Rafik Belghali celebrates his team's first goal



Canada reach World Cup last 16 as late strike sinks South Africa

AFP

Stephen Eustaquio's stoppage-time winner fired Canada to a 1-0 win over South Africa on Sunday in the first match of the World Cup knockout rounds, as the co-hosts advanced to the last 16 for the first time in their history.

With both sides making their first-ever appearance in the knockout phase, the game appeared to be heading for extra time, before Eustaquio broke South African hearts with a clinical hit from just outside the area.

Canada -- playing in Los Angeles despite being co-hosts, after failing to win their group -- will now face the Netherlands or Morocco in Houston in the last 16 on July 4, as South Africa's World Cup adventure ends.

Before the game, coach Jesse Marsch had talked up the "X-factor" of Canada's star Alphonso Davies, who was available again after a hamstring injury.

But the Bayern Munich wing-back, who had yet to appear at this World Cup, remained glaringly absent from the starting line-up.

Still, Canada began on the front foot, racking up chances against South Africa's low block.

In the 22nd minute, a pinpoint Eustaquio free-kick



Canada's Stephen Eustaquio celebrates after scoring his team's opening goal against South Africa

found Derek Cornelius wide open on the six-yard line. The Canada center-back utterly mistimed his headed effort.

South Africa threatened sporadically on the counter. But in a frenetic period just before half-time Canada came agonizingly close.

From a corner, Moise Bombito's header was cleared off the line, before Tajon Buchanan's follow-up shot was blocked by goalkeeper Ronwen Williams.

Moments later Khuliso Mdau crashed into the dangerous Richie Laryea, but his penalty appeals were waved away.

That enraged a heavily Canadian crowd, and the jeers grew louder after half-time as

South Africa were content to exchange deep passes under little pressure while the clock ticked down.

Just past the hour mark, Canada came close again.

Substitute Niko Sigur slid a through ball to Tani Oluwaseyi whose shot was well-saved by the goalkeeper and looped up toward Jonathan David -- but defender Mbekezeli Mbokazi just got there first and cleared brilliantly.

In the 75th minute Davies finally appeared, to a huge roar, and made an immediate impact.

From the left wing, Davies found Jonathan David who laid the ball to fellow striker -- and no relation -- Promise David,

but his shot went wide.

Moments later Davies found Jonathan David again. This time he shot from a tight angle, but was denied by Williams.

In the second minute of stoppage time, Canada finally broke through, from the other flank.

Jacob Shaffelburg raced down the right wing and pinged in a cross which was headed clear to Eustaquio.

The Porto midfielder -- on loan at Los Angeles FC -- chested the ball down and slammed it first-time into the bottom-left corner.

Canada's bench streamed onto the pitch as the stadium erupted, celebrating a historic victory.

Germany look to avoid slip-up against disciplined Paraguay



Julian Nagelsmann, head coach of Germany

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Germany face Paraguay in the round of 32 at the 2026 World Cup tonight, with a place in the last 16 at stake. Kick-off is at 11:30pm Bahrain time at Boston Stadium.

Die Mannschaft topped Group E to progress to the knockout stage, while Paraguay advanced as one of the best third-placed teams from the group phase.

Julian Nagelsmann's side made a strong start to the tournament, scoring nine goals across wins over Curacao and Ivory Coast to secure qualification with a game to spare. However, they arrive at this fixture on the back of a 2-1 defeat to Ecuador, which brought their group campaign to an underwhelming close.

Despite that setback, Germany remain among the most dangerous attacking sides in the competition, although they are still viewed as outsiders in the title race at this stage, with potential heavyweight opponents such as France looming later in the knockout rounds.

The four-time world champions have endured mixed recent World Cup history, exiting at the group stage in both 2018 and 2022. However, they did win their only previous World Cup knockout meeting with Paraguay, claiming a 1-0 victory in the last 16 in 2002 through a late Oliver Neuville goal.

Paraguay are among the third-placed teams to progress to the round of 32 after col-

lecting four points from their three Group D matches, finishing third behind Australia on goal difference.

Their campaign featured a goalless draw with Australia and a narrow 1-0 win over Turkey, built on defensive organisation and discipline. La Albirroja's best World Cup finish came in 2010 when they reached the quarter-finals, although they missed out on qualification in 2014, 2018 and 2022.

It remains a difficult task for the South American side, although they did hold Germany to a 3-3 friendly draw in August 2013 in their most recent meeting.

Team news Germany will be without Nico Schlotterbeck due to a serious ankle injury sustained against Ivory Coast; Antonio Rudiger is expected to continue alongside Jonathan Tah in central defence. Nathaniel Brown missed the defeat to Ecuador with a muscular issue but is expected to return.

Nagelsmann is likely to stick with his established attacking trio, with Kai Havertz, Florian Wirtz and Jamal Musiala set to feature once again.

Paraguay will be without Diego Gómez through suspension after his second booking of the tournament against Australia. Miguel Almirón returns after serving a ban, while Omar Alderete and Ramón Sosa remain doubts.

Gabriel Ávalos, who has scored twice in 25 international appearances, is expected to lead the line.

Brazil seek last-16 place against dangerous Japan



Vini Jr. and Lucas Paqueta join Matheus Cunha in celebrating a Brazil goal



Japan's Daizen Maeda celebrates after scoring against Sweden

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Brazil and Japan will battle for a place in the FIFA World Cup last 16 when they meet at Houston's NRG Stadium tonight, with kick-off scheduled for 8pm Bahrain time.

The encounter pits together two of the tournament's most in-form sides, with five-time world champions Brazil topping Group C and Japan advancing as runners-up from Group F.

Brazil recovered from an opening 1-1 draw against Morocco by recording successive 3-0 victories over Haiti and Scotland to finish top of their group on goal difference. Carlo Ancelotti's side have gathered momentum at the right time,

winning five of their last six matches while keeping consecutive clean sheets.

Vinicius Junior has been Brazil's standout performer, scoring in all three group-stage matches, while Matheus Cunha has also played a key role in attack. However, the Selecao

are expected to remain without winger Raphinha, who is recovering from a hamstring injury sustained during the win over Haiti.

Japan, meanwhile, arrive full of confidence despite finishing second in Group F following a 1-1 draw with Sweden. Hajime

Moriyasu's side have impressed defensively throughout 2026, conceding just three goals in their last six matches, while earning notable results against several of world football's top nations.

The Samurai Blue will hope to build on a memorable 3-2 victory over Brazil in an international friendly last October, the first win over the South Americans in their history.

However, they face injury concerns, with Takefusa Kubo unlikely to feature because of a knee problem, while defender Ko Itakura is expected to be available after recovering from a minor injury.

Victory would see either side advance to the last 16, where Ivory Coast or Norway await.

World Cup Schedule (Round of 32)		
Today		
Time	Match	Venue
08:00 PM	Brazil vs Japan	Houston Stadium
11:30 PM	Germany vs Paraguay	Boston Stadium
Tomorrow		
04:00 AM	Netherlands vs Morocco	Monterrey Stadium
08:00 PM	Ivory Coast vs Norway	Dallas Stadium
<i>(All games in Bahrain time)</i>		

Teams qualified for Round of 32		
Mexico	Germany	Norway
South Africa	Ivory Coast	Senegal
Switzerland	Ecuador	Argentina
Canada	Netherlands	Austria
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Japan	Algeria
Brazil	Sweden	Colombia
Morocco	Belgium	Portugal
USA	Egypt	DR Congo
Australia	Spain	England
Paraguay	Cabo Verde	Ghana
	France	Croatia