

Wawrinka at  
peace with  
retirement plan

Three-time major  
champion says he  
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US pledges \$2 bn for UN aid, with ‘adapt, shrink or die’ warning

# THE DAILY tribune

Root says ‘silly’ to change England management after Ashes loss

Bahrain Islamic Bank signs MoU with University of Technology Bahrain

## HM King hails BDF for protecting unity and achievements



HM the King visits the BDF General Command

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, praised the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) for its continuous dedication to preserving national unity and defending the Kingdom's achievements and gains

and its people.

He commended the brave members of the BDF for their sincere service in all their duty locations, both within the Kingdom and abroad, and for their noble efforts to protect the nation, support its successful civilisational journey, and safeguard

its national unity.

HM the King was speaking as he visited the BDF General Command yesterday.

Upon arrival, His Majesty was received by His Excellency Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the BDF.

Also present to welcome His Majesty were H.E. Lieutenant General Theyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, Chief of Staff, along with senior officers.

During a meeting with senior officers, HM King Hamad expressed his appreciation to the Commander-in-Chief for his ef-

forts in advancing and developing the BDF.

The Armed Forces Supreme Commander expressed his appreciation to all members of the BDF, the National Guard, and the Ministry of Interior for their efforts during the Kingdom's national celebrations, the

26th Anniversary of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne, and the Commemoration Day.

HM the King highlighted their cooperation with other countries in promoting security and peace across the region, wishing all continued success and guidance.



### New edict updates work permit and residency fees

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday issued Edict No. (79) of 2025 amending Article (1) of Decision No. (26) of 2008, which governs fees for the issuance and renewal of work permits, as well as residency permits for the families of foreign workers.

The edict was issued upon the recommendation of the Minister of Labour, Chairman of the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), and following approval by the Cabinet.

Under the amendment, a revised fee structure will be implemented gradually from 1 January 2026 through 1 January 2029.

The updated fees cover the issuance and renewal of work permits and include the work permit, entry visa, no-objection certificate, residency permit, return visa, medical examination, and ID card, in addition to monthly fees payable for each foreign worker.

According to the new schedule, the annual issuance or renewal fee will increase progressively over four years, starting at BD105 in 2026 and reaching BD125 by 2029.

220 fils (includes VAT)



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## ‘Citizens first’ strategy

Government announces new measures to curb spending, raise revenues, and protect key subsidies

### Initiatives to balance welfare of Bahrainis and fiscal discipline

### Cabinet-approved package aims to sustain Bahrain economic growth

TDT | Manama

The Government yesterday unveiled a package of Cabinet-approved measures aimed at curbing public spending, raising new revenues, and safeguarding essential subsidies for citizens.

The announcement was made during a press conference at Gudaibiya Palace, following a Cabinet meeting chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Highlighting the measures, the Cabinet confirmed that electricity and water tariffs will remain unchanged for the first and second bands for citizens' primary residences, including extended families.

Plans to redesign household utility support have been put on hold pending further study, while price adjustments for other user categories are set to take effect from January 2026.

### Achievements

The new measures build on achievements under Bahrain's Fiscal Balance Program, which saw non-oil revenues more

than double between 2018 and 2024, alongside reductions in recurring government spending, supporting steady economic growth.

Over the past two decades, Bahrain's gross domestic product has risen fivefold — from approximately \$9 billion to \$47 billion — average wages for Bahraini workers have more than doubled, and inflation has remained comparatively low relative to major advanced economies.

The announced measures align with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, promoting fiscal discipline, diversifying revenue sources beyond hydrocarbons, and ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability, while shielding households from rising cost-of-living pressures.

Building on this progress, key measures announced yesterday include:

1.Reducing administrative expenses by 20% across all government entities while maintaining the quality of services provided to Bahraini citizens. The Cabinet tasked the Minister of Finance and National Economy with taking the necessary measures.

2.Increase the contributions of government-owned companies to the Kingdom's general budget.

3.Referring a draft law to the Legislative Branch to impose 10% tax on the profits of local companies whose annual revenues exceed BHD 1 million or net annual profits exceed BHD 200,000, based on agreements with the Legislative Branch.



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

The tax will be applied on any amount following the BHD 200,000 benchmark. The move aims to promote the diversification of income sources, with the objective of implementing the draft law in 2027, and tasking the Minister of Finance and National Economy to take the necessary measures.

4.Referring a draft law to the Legislative Branch to increase selective levy on soft drinks, based on coordination with the Legislative Branch. The Cabinet tasked the Minister of Finance and National Economy with taking the necessary measures.

5.Measures to enhance the utilisation of undeveloped investment lands with existing infrastructure services, through the introduction of a monthly

fee of 100 fils per square metre, with the aim of implementation in January 2027. The Cabinet tasked the Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture with taking the necessary measures.

6.The introduction of fees for sewage services, excluding citizens' primary residences, calculated at 20% of water consumption charges, with the aim of implementation in January 2026. The Cabinet tasked the Minister of Works with taking the necessary measures.

7.A review of worker permit and healthcare fees. The revised fees will be implemented gradually over a four-year period starting in January 2026, with domestic workers exempted. In this regard, the Cabinet tasked

the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Legal Affairs, and the Minister of Health with taking the necessary measures.

8.The adjustment of natural gas prices for companies and factories to reflect the actual cost of consumption, to be implemented gradually over four years starting in January 2026. The Cabinet tasked the Minister of Oil and Environment with taking the necessary measures in this regard.

9.The development of a mechanism for determining fuel prices. The Cabinet tasked the Minister of Oil and Environment with taking the necessary measures in this regard.

10.The Cabinet confirmed that electricity and water tariffs for the first and second tariff bands for citizens' primary residences will remain unchanged, taking into account extended families residing in a single household. The Cabinet also agreed to postpone any changes to the mechanisms of electricity and water subsidies for citizens' primary residences until further study is conducted, and agreed to amend the electricity and water consumption tariffs for other categories, with implementation scheduled for January 2026. In this regard, the Minister of Electricity and Water Affairs and the Minister of Social Development were tasked with taking the necessary measures.

11.Streamlining and enhancing the efficiency of government procedures that support investment, to attract foreign investment and strengthen the role of the private sector.



HM King hails Bahrain-Saudi historical ties



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, commended the historical ties between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This came as HM the King received His Excellency Ambassador Naif bin Bandar Al Sudairi, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Bahrain, at the General Command of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF). His Majesty also received the Ambassador's son, Ahmed bin Naif Al Sudairi, on the occasion of his graduation from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) in the United Kingdom. H.E. Ambassador Al Sudairi expressed his sincere thanks to His Majesty for the meeting, wishing him continued health and well-being.



# Focus on progress

## HRH Prince Salman stresses executive-legislative cooperation to serve Bahrain and citizens



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister meets with Council of Representatives Speaker, H.E. Ahmed bin Salman Al-Musallam, and Shura Council Chairman, H.E. Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, emphasised the pivotal role of cooperation between the executive and legislative branches in advancing the Kingdom's development.

HRH Prince Salman underscored that "citizens are the cornerstone of the Kingdom's progress, and their well-being guides all our policies."

He made the remarks during a meeting at Gudaibiya Palace yesterday with the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, His Excellency Ahmed bin Salman Al-Musallam, and the Chairman of the Shura Council, H.E. Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh.

### Collaboration

Highlighting the importance of the executive-legislative partnership, HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister noted: "Advancing this collaboration is essential for the successful implementation of national plans and initiatives that benefit all residents of the Kingdom."

He stressed the prudent management of national resources, stating: "Strengthening social services and optimising national

Advancing this collaboration is essential for the successful implementation of national plans and initiatives that benefit all residents of the Kingdom

HRH PRINCE SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA, THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRIME MINISTER

resources ensures that Bahraini citizens are prioritised in services and entitlements, in line with Royal directives."

The meeting also reviewed key fiscal and social measures.

His Royal Highness noted that, through coordinated efforts with the legislative branch, the Cabinet had decided to maintain existing electricity and water tariffs for the first and second tiers of citizens' primary residences, while deferring development of related support mechanisms pending further study.

He added that ongoing collabora-

tion is essential to "safeguard public funds, prevent misuse of resources, and enhance spending efficiency in service of the public interest and the Kingdom's strategic objectives."

During the discussion, HRH Prince Salman acknowledged several Cabinet initiatives aimed at improving the Kingdom's fiscal position while maintaining citizen support, expressing appreciation for the legislative branch's constructive cooperation in advancing these measures.

### Commitment

H.E. Speaker Al-Musallam, and H.E. Chairman Al Saleh praised His Royal Highness' commitment to strengthening executive-legislative coordination, highlighting its importance in achieving Bahrain's strategic goals and ensuring prosperity for all.

The meeting was attended by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Prime Minister's Court; H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister; H.E. General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior; H.E. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy; and other senior officials.



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# Financial crime

Two men on trial over BD74,000 online fraud money-laundering case

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A pair accused of washing more than BD74,000 stolen in an online scam have gone on trial, with the High Criminal Court keeping the first defendant behind bars while the second remains at large.

Judges fixed 4 January to reserve the second defendant with the case papers, after he failed to appear.

The first defendant stood before the court and denied the accusations. Prosecutors asked for the maximum sentence.

## Account

The case, according to the Public Prosecution, began when a local bank received BD36,830.816 into the first defendant's account through an intermediary bank, because the sum had been sent in a foreign currency.

The intermediary bank was then told the transfer was linked to fraud and was asked to claw the money back and cancel the transaction.

Investigators say the money came from a con aimed at a foreign company.

A caller, whose identity is unknown, rang staff and claimed to be from a bank.

## Link

He warned of "suspicious transactions", said they would be passed to a fraud officer, then

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The charge sheet lists eight outbound transfers outside the Kingdom worth BD26,735.040 in total, along with 12 domestic transfers worth BD10,024.042.

sent a link and asked for account details.

The company entered its banking credentials and the money was moved into the first defendant's account, prosecutors said.

Once the funds arrived, prosecutors say the first defendant began moving them around: cash withdrawals, transfers within Bahrain and transfers overseas.

The charge sheet lists eight outbound transfers outside the Kingdom worth BD26,735.040 in total, along with 12 domestic transfers worth BD10,024.042.

## Money

The second defendant, who lives abroad, is accused of helping to shift the money by providing bank details and allowing his accounts to be used.



Police say a review of the two men's banking records showed accounts linked to the second defendant and transfers going back and forth, leading investigators to contact the banks that received the funds.

A second transfer, worth BD37,330.494, was sent on the same date and in the same way to the bank account of the first defendant's wife, prosecutors said.

That sum was frozen before it could be spent.

## Amount

The intermediary bank deducted an equal amount and returned it to the company said to have been duped.

Bank records show the wife queried the deduction and told staff the money was not hers but her husband's.

She said a friend abroad who buys and sells cars had sent the money so her husband could

purchase vehicles, but prosecutors say she produced no papers to back that claim.

In a phone call with investigators, the first defendant said he had been owed money by the second defendant, and that the transfer included profits.

## Documents

He also said he was later sent documents in English saying the overseas payments were for buying cars, according to the prosecution case.

Prosecutors say the second defendant admitted his financial actions were carried out on the first defendant's instructions, and that he supplied accounts to act as a channel for the scam proceeds.

Investigators also said the first defendant had previously worked for an information-technology company, and pointed to that as evidence of experience in IT and system intrusion.

## Information Ministry mourns composer

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Information expressed its condolences on the passing of composer and former ministry employee Jamal Al Qaed, who passed away after a distinguished career spanning more than 28 years.

Throughout his career, he produced enduring creative works and made significant contributions to enriching the musical output of Radio Bahrain.

The ministry noted that the late composer left a lasting artistic legacy and a distinctive creative imprint on the



Jamal Al Qaed

national cultural landscape, reflecting his refined artistic sensibility and high level of professional dedication.

## Shop fire in Salmabad



Civil Defence teams successfully extinguished a fire that erupted in a shop in the Salmabad area. Relevant authorities took the necessary measures to ensure safety and contain the incident.

## 24 illegal workers held and 212 deported

TDT | Manama

The Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) announced the implementation of 860 inspection campaigns and visits between December 21 and 27, resulting in the detention of 24 violating and irregular workers and the deportation of 212 violators.

These inspection activities also led to the detection of several violations of relevant regulations, particularly the Labour Market Regulatory Authority and residency laws in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Legal measures were taken against all identified violations.

A total of 822 inspection visits were conducted at commercial establishments across all governorates, in addition to 38 joint inspection campaigns.

These included 20 campaigns in the Capital Governorate, four in the Muharraq Governorate, six in the Northern Governorate, and eight in the Southern Governorate.

## Entities

Participating government entities included the Ministry of Interior, represented by the Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs (NPRA), the respective Governorate Police Directorates, the General Directorate of Crime Detection and Forensic Science, the General Directorate of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing, and the



General Directorate of Civil Defense.

Other participating bodies were the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture, the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority, and the National Bureau for Revenue.

## Coordination

LMRA affirmed that joint coordination with government agencies will continue to intensify inspection campaigns

across all governorates, address violations, and curb practices that undermine labour market stability, economic competitiveness, and social security.

The authority also renewed its call on the public to support government efforts in combating illegal labour practices by reporting violations through the electronic form on its website at [www.lmra.gov.bh](http://www.lmra.gov.bh), by calling the LMRA call centre on 17506055, or via the government's Suggestions and Complaints System (Tawasul).

## Ensuring price stability of goods and services in market

### Industry Ministry's Inspection Department will intensify oversight efforts

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce affirmed its commitment to monitoring the implementation of Cabinet decisions related to a package of initiatives aimed at improving the financial situation and ensuring the continuity of support for citizens.

These initiatives include adjusting the price of natural gas for companies and factories, developing a mechanism for determining fuel prices, and other government initiatives supporting economic development.

In this context, the Ministry indicated that the Inspection Department will intensify its oversight efforts by developing comprehensive action plans and conducting extensive inspection campaigns and visits across various markets and regions of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

## Focus

The focus will be on sectors related to the basic needs of

We, at the Inspection Directorate, are glad to assist you through the following means:

inspection@moic.gov.bh

17111268 - 17111263  
17111346 - 17111256  
17574755 - 17111252

17111225

The National Suggestions & Complaints System - (Tawasul)

citizens and residents to ensure that no violations occur, such as price manipulation or unjustified price increases.

The Ministry added that the scope of inspections will extend to various commercial sectors and retail outlets throughout the Kingdom.

It emphasized that national legislation includes deterrent penalties for violators, including fines, closure, administrative deregistration, and referral to the Public Prosecution.

## Regulations

The Ministry called on shop and business owners to adhere

to the regulations and laws governing commercial activity and to refrain from exploiting government amendments or initiatives as a pretext for unjustifiably raising prices or engaging in any illegal practices, in order to avoid legal repercussions.

The Inspection Department also emphasized the crucial role of consumers in supporting oversight by reporting any violations through the National Suggestions and Complaints System (Tawasul), via WhatsApp at 17111225, or by email at [inspection@moic.gov.bh](mailto:inspection@moic.gov.bh).



# Ideas in action

Twelve concepts qualify for seventh Government Innovation Competition

TDT | Manama

A total of 12 concepts have qualified for the seventh edition of the Government Innovation Competition (Fikra).

Fikra aims to foster creativity and innovation across the public sector in support of the Kingdom's development.

By strengthening government workstreams and improving the quality and efficiency of government services, Fikra contributes to meet the aspirations of Bahrain's citizens and residents.

In total, 40 innovative concepts were rigorously evaluated, during which participants presented their ideas to four committees which included experts and specialists.

### Lottery

Teams were assigned to a committee by lottery, with each team allotted three minutes to



Government Innovation Competition

present its proposal, after which the presentations were assessed against a set criteria.

The committees then selected 12 concepts for the final stage of the Fikra competition.

### List

The selected concepts were the following:

Savings and Investment Program by Ahmed Ridha Sanad, Ali Khalil Ebrahim Fadhul, and Abdullah Ali Sultan Alshamlan from the Ministry of Finance and National Economy; Ata'a -

The National Giving Platform by Ahmed Saleh Mejairan from the Labour Fund (Tamkeen); Floating Oases by Bassam Mohammed Alshuwaikh from the Supreme Council for the Environment; Smart Employment Advisor by Jalal Jaafar Maki from the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Rahma by Salamah Hashel Zayed Alkobaisi from the Ministry of Finance and National Economy; Takamul by Captain Abdullah Waheed Almannaei and Alaa Ahmed Albalooshi

from the Ministry of Interior; Secondary Education Curriculum Enhancement by Abdulla Mohamed Abdulla Badow from the Ministry of Education; Tameni by Ali Husain Darwish, Maha Majeed Almaarej, Narjes Yusuf Sabt, Fatema At-eya Alaradi from Government Hospitals.

Annual Leaves Exchange Platform by Mohamed Ebrahim Alhasan, Asma Naser Almosawi, and Noof Ali Fakhro from the Information and e-Government Authority (IGA); Wasalt by Manal Ali Alhashemi from the National Communication Centre; Tawazun by Maha Bader Abdulla Bader Alsada, Ahmed Hasan Abdulrahman Bucheeri from the Social Insurance Organization and Nayla Musaad Matar from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce; and MindForward by Walaa A.Hadi Ahmed Albaqali from Government Hospitals.

## Creativity meets innovation at BYD Bahrain's live painting event



Neethu V  
TDT | Manama

In an evening where creativity powered sustainability, BYD Bahrain partnered with Interaction Art Community to host a dynamic live painting event on December 27 at its Sitra showroom, transforming the space into a canvas for artistic expression and eco-conscious innovation.

The art session encouraged participants to express their creativity through works inspired by Earth's preservation and the harmony between technology and nature.

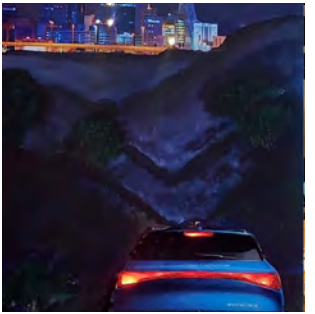
Artists showcased compelling interpretations of nature imagery, sustainability symbols, renewable energy, and BYD's forward-looking innovation, incorporating elements such as vehicle silhouettes, clean energy concepts, and eco-conscious design.

### Atmosphere

The event fostered an engaging and welcoming atmosphere, with attendees enjoying warm beverages, light snacks, and meaningful conversations centered on creativity and environmental responsibility.

A strong emphasis was placed on sustainable practices, encouraging the use of recycled materials and environmentally conscious approaches in both physical and digital artworks.

Adding to the experience, guests had the opportunity to explore BYD's latest vehicles



Expression through art

firsthand, with exclusive test drives allowing attendees to experience the brand's cutting-edge electric mobility solutions and sustainability-driven technology.

### Appreciation

As a token of appreciation, participating artists received exclusive giveaways, reinforcing BYD Bahrain's commitment to supporting local talent and nurturing creative communities alongside Interaction Art Community.

The Live Painting Event reflected BYD's vision of driving innovation while championing environmental responsibility, highlighting how art can serve as a powerful platform for inspiration, dialogue, and positive change.

## Bahrain strives to preserve wildlife and biodiversity

### ● Gulf Wildlife Day

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain attaches great importance to the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity, given their value and sustainability in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals and maintaining ecological balance.

This was emphasised by His Highness Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Personal Representative of His Majesty the King and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE).

His remarks were made on the Gulf Wildlife Day, marked annually on December 30.

### Theme

This year's theme, "A Society in Harmony with Nature for Sustainable Wildlife," reflects a



collective commitment to raising environmental awareness and highlighting ongoing efforts to protect wildlife and its natural habitats.

HH Shaikh Abdullah noted that the occasion supports the promotion of sustainability across all segments of society and contributes to adaptation to climate change.

He emphasised that the Su-

**Bahrain is making sustained efforts to preserve wildlife biodiversity through a comprehensive framework of legislation and programmes**

HH SHAIKH ABDULLAH BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL FOR ENVIRONMENT (SCE)

preme Council for Environment, in cooperation with national partners from ministries, governmental bodies, private institutions, and civil society organisations, plays a prominent role in conserving wildlife and ensuring its sustainability.

### Species

His Highness pointed out that the Kingdom enjoys rich bio-

diversity, ranging from diverse terrestrial and marine ecosystems to a wide variety of distinctive native species.

HH Shaikh Abdullah explained that Bahrain is making sustained efforts to preserve wildlife biodiversity through a comprehensive framework of legislation and programmes.

These include wildlife breeding programmes and initiatives to protect endangered species hosted at the Mohammed bin Zayed Natural Reserve, particularly species native to the Arab region; programmes to control harmful invasive alien species, such as the common myna bird; and ecosystem restoration initiatives to combat desertification.

These restoration efforts include afforestation programmes, the national tree-planting plan, and the achievement of the national goal to double the number of mangrove trees.

## Southern Governor honours distinguished staff



HH Governor Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Khalifa and Deputy Governor, Brigadier Hamad Mohammed Al Khayat, with

TDT | Manama

His Highness Southern Governor, Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Khalifa, honoured Governorate staff during the annual appreciation ceremony, recognising their dedication, excellence, and successful implementation of initiatives and programmes for 2025.

The ceremony was held in

the presence of Deputy Governor, Brigadier Hamad Mohammed Al Khayat, and Governorate employees.

### Achievements

HH Southern Governor praised the strong team spirit and outstanding performance of staff, noting that the Governorate's achievements reflect the wise leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin

Isa Al Khalifa and the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

He also highlighted the role of community partnership and continuous development, supported by the follow-up of His Excellency Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

### Awareness programmes



As part of the Ministry of Interior's efforts to raise security awareness and strengthen community partnership across all segments of society, the Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science Directorate implemented a series of awareness programmes throughout 2025. These included more than 290 lectures, workshops, and awareness exhibitions, benefiting over 30,000 people, as well as 90 press releases as part of the accompanying media coverage.



# Collective kindness

Travelers Tribe Masonic Club Bahrain distributes in-kind gifts to Filipino community during Christmas programme

● **T2 Bahrain partners with Fil-Am and PHAmly groups for holiday assistance**

TDT | Manama

The Travelers Tribe Masonic Club (T2) Bahrain has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Filipinos in the Kingdom, particularly those facing hardship, through a recent Christmas outreach initiative.

The programme involved the distribution of in-kind gifts to needy members of the Filipino community and was organised in coordination with, and supported by, the Filipino American Association of Bahrain and PHAmly Club Bahrain, underscoring the strong spirit of collaboration among Filipino organisations in the country.

Addressing attendees, Mr Orlando Fontanilla shared a moving account of one of the group's previous outreach efforts.

He recalled meeting Bisma, an



Outreach brings relief and cheer to Filipino families in need

eight-year-old girl with mobility challenges, during a Christmas gift-giving activity last year.

**Prosthetic leg**

“Together with my brothers in T2, and the officers and members of Fil-Am Bahrain, we immediately resolved to help her,” Mr Fontanilla said. “We completed all the necessary legal and medical procedures to provide her with a prosthetic leg.”

He added that Bisma is now attending kindergarten and continuing her education. “I sincerely hope that one day she

will become a lawyer and an advocate for the rights of overseas Filipino workers. Her progress is truly inspiring and reminds us why these initiatives matter,” he said.

An active performance by the Philippine Dance Crew set the stage for a heartwarming gift-giving activity that brought joy to the beneficiaries.

**Santa Claus**

Adding to the festive spirit, Mr. Fermin Garcia, former T2 President in 2019 and 2020, delighted both children and adults

as he donned the red suit, white beard, and twinkling eyes of Santa Claus while handing out gifts alongside T2 President Mitch de Guzman.

Beyond the gift-giving, T2 also provided financial support, extending meaningful assistance to Filipinos navigating difficult circumstances abroad.

Likewise, beneficiaries expressed heartfelt gratitude for the gifts and support they received, which brought comfort and renewed hope during the holiday season.



The event was further distinguished by the presence of four former Travelers Tribe (T2) presidents, including Vic Cabali, who served as president in 2011, underscoring the organization's enduring leadership and strong sense of brotherhood.

Health and wellness services were offered through T2's collaboration with the Philippine Bahrain Caregivers Society, which provided free blood pressure checks and random blood sugar testing. Attendees also enjoyed a photo booth courtesy of RJ Events and free back massages

by Solice Spa, creating a warm, welcoming environment that addressed both physical well-being and emotional comfort. To ensure a hospitable, family-like atmosphere free breakfast were served to all the attendees.

The program was further enriched by the El Shaddai Music Ministry soul-stirring Christmas musical performances, fostering a deeper sense of fellowship.

Certificates of recognition were presented to community relation's participants in appreciation of their dedication and support.

## Bahrain affirms strong fraternal ties with UAE

TDT | Manama

Bahrain has affirmed its deep-rooted fraternal relations with the United Arab Emirates, and the ongoing co-operation across various fields, particularly in the security and correctional sectors.

This came as the Director-General of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing, His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Rashid Al Khalifa, received the Acting Director-General of Penal and Correctional Institutions at the UAE Ministry of Interior, Brigadier Saeed Ali Lootah, along with the accompanying delegation.

It was part of a visit aimed at exchanging expertise and reviewing the Kingdom's experience in implementing alternative sentencing and social reintegration programmes.

During the meeting, H.E. Shai-



H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Rashid Al Khalifa with the UAE Ministry of Interior delegation

kh Khalid bin Rashid outlined the key features of Bahrain's reform system, highlighting the Alternative Sentences and Open Prisons Project as one of the national initiatives supporting social reintegration, in line with the Royal Vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

He also noted the continued support of His Royal Highness

Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and the direct supervision of H.E. the Interior Minister, General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, in advancing this national project and strengthening its humanitarian and community-based dimensions.

The UAE delegation visited the

Open Prisons Complex, where they reviewed the educational and training facilities, community-based programmes, and the supportive environment the complex provides to enable beneficiaries to integrate positively into society.

A presentation was also delivered, outlining the phases of the Alternative Sentences and



Open Prisons Project and highlighting its positive outcomes in promoting social reintegration, as well as associated initiatives that enhance family and community stability.

At the conclusion of the visit, the Director-General reiterated his welcome of the delegation, stressing the importance of exchanging expertise and suc-

cessful experiences between the two brotherly countries to further develop relevant systems of work.

The delegation praised the advanced Bahraini experience, expressing aspiration to benefit from this pioneering model in supporting development pathways related to the work of penal and correctional institutions.

### Focus on labour and social security



The Services Committee of the Council of Representatives held its meeting yesterday, chaired by MP Mamdouh Abbas Al-Saleh, with committee members in attendance.

The meeting opened with a discussion on the Shura Council's decision regarding the draft law amending Article 4 of Law No. 19 of 2006 on labour market regulation, originally submitted by the Council of Representatives. The committee decided to submit its report on the matter to the Bureau of the Council of Representatives.

In the session on draft laws, the committee reviewed a draft law amending certain provisions of Law No. 18 of 2006 on social security and approved submitting a report on it to the Bureau. It also considered a draft law amending Article 27 of Law No. 19 of 2006 on labour market regulation but decided to postpone discussion and decision on this draft to upcoming meetings.

### Stage set for wrestling event

TDT | Manama

Wrestling enthusiasts in the Kingdom of Bahrain are eagerly awaiting the “Al-Hidd Storm - Road to Bahrain Minia” event, set to take place on January 9, 2026, at Al-Hidd Sports Club. The event will feature a tag team title competition alongside multiple other championship defenses, all in a single action-packed night. It is organized through a partnership between KBW and Al-Hidd Sports Club.



# NBB Group CEO shares insights on financial sector resilience and expansion at the business year’s Bahrain launch event



**Manama**

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) recently participated as a Gold Sponsor in The Business Year’s Bahrain launch event.

Titled “Bahrain 2026 – The Strategic Gateway for Global Business,” the event brought together key stakeholders from across the public and private sectors to explore the Kingdom’s evolving investment landscape and global positioning.

Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB, joined a high-level panel discussion alongside prominent industry leaders. Moderated by the Bank’s Chief Corporate Communications Officer, Hisham Abu Alfateh, the session centered around the themes critical to Bahrain’s economic trajectory, including strategic expansion, human capital development, regulatory strengths, ease of doing business and Bahrain’s role as an investment gateway.

During the discussion, Usman highlighted the financial sector’s longstanding role as a pillar of national growth, noting that it remains the largest contributor to Bahrain’s GDP. He outlined NBB’s transformational journey, highlighting how through very significant investments in technology over the last few years, the Bank has infused highly innovative and seamless digital experiences with its historical and deep-rooted financial strength, reinforcing customer trust and convenience.

He further elaborated on how the bank’s strategic vision has enhanced its agility in adapting to the rapidly changing global and regional landscape, while delivering the highest return on equity amongst its peers, with a 50% growth in earnings per share over the last 5 years. On future expansion, Usman spoke about the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait (BBK) to explore a potential merger, describing it as an opportunity to create an enhanced national champion, with greater regional relevance that would deliver strong value for its customers, shareholders and employees by bringing together the complementary strengths and network of both institutions.

On Bahrain’s regulatory environment, Usman emphasised Bahrain’s unique advantage of having a single regulator for the financial sector and commended the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB)’s balanced focus on growth and resiliency, adding that regulatory support for digitisation enables banks to innovate confidently and efficiently.

Addressing Bahrain’s human capital, Usman described local talent as one of the Kingdom’s most significant competitive advantages. He affirmed the Bank’s commitment to nurturing the next generation of professionals through close university collaborations, robust internship pathways, and initiatives that bridge academia with industry.

The evening concluded with a networking reception, providing an opportunity for attendees to engage with business leaders and policymakers shaping Bahrain’s strategic future. NBB will also be featured in The Business Year: Bahrain 2026 report, reinforcing its position as a key driver of economic dialogue and thought leadership in the Kingdom.

## Bahrain Islamic Bank signs MoU with University of Technology Bahrain

To Provide Training Opportunities for Students

Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), the leading provider of innovative Islamic financial solutions for simplifying money matters in the Kingdom of Bahrain, has announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Technology Bahrain (UTB).

The MoU was signed by Ms. Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Executive Officer at Bahrain Islamic Bank, and Dr. Hasan Al Mulla, President of the University of Technology in the presence of several officials from both sides,

**Bahrain Islamic Bank will offer training programmes for students of the university to help them meet academic graduation requirements. The programme will also provide students with the opportunity to gain practical experience and essential financial skills by working in one of the bank’s departments under the supervision of bank officials.**

at the bank’s headquarters in the Diplomatic area.

As part of the memorandum, Bahrain Islamic Bank will offer training programmes for students of the university to help them meet academic graduation requirements. The programme will also provide students with

the opportunity to gain practical experience and essential financial skills by working in one of the bank’s departments under the supervision of bank officials.

On this occasion, Ms. Fatema Al Alawi, Chief Executive Officer of BisB, stated “This partnership reflects the bank’s com-

mitment to social responsibility and its dedication to developing the next generation, especially in the field of Islamic banking, which is one of the vital sectors in Bahrain’s economy”.

Dr. Hasan Al Mulla, UTB President said, “We are proud of our partnership with BisB, which provides our students with a real opportunity to benefit from the outstanding national competencies at the bank, helping sharpen their skills and equipping them with the knowledge and experience necessary to venture in the labour market, making them the preferred choice for employment”.

## China says to launch digital currency action plan

AFP | Beijing, China

China will on January 1 launch an “action plan” for boosting management and operations of its digital currency, a deputy governor of the country’s central bank said yesterday.

“The future digital yuan will be a modern digital payment and circulation means issued and circulated within the financial system,” People’s Bank of China (PBoC) Deputy Governor Lu Lei wrote in Financial News, a media outlet under the central bank.

In the next step towards that goal, a “new generation” arrangement for digital yuan will be launched on January 1, Lu said, encompassing a “measurement framework, management system, operating mechanism and ecosystem”.

The “action plan” will see banks pay interest on balances held by clients in digital yuan -- a move to incentivise broader adoption of the currency.

The plan also includes a proposal to establish an international digital yuan operations centre in the eastern financial hub of Shanghai, the report said.

Monetary authorities around the world have in recent years been exploring ways to digitalise currencies, propelled by a boom in online payments during the pandemic and the increased popularity of cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin. The PBoC has been working on a digital currency since 2014 and has been testing the use of a “digital yuan” or “e-CNY” in various pilot programmes.

## Emirates mining company challenges Guinea licence withdrawal

AFP | Dakar, Senegal

Mining company Axis International said Monday it was seeking World Bank arbitration against Guinea for withdrawing its right to operate a major bauxite mine in the west African country.

Guinea, which has been run by a junta since a coup in 2021, has cancelled dozens of licences for international and domestic companies mining bauxite, gold, iron ore or diamonds over recent months.

Axis International, which is headquartered in the United Arab Emirates, had operated Guinea’s second-biggest bauxite



**Representative picture**

mine with estimated reserves of more than 800 million tonnes since 2010.

The company said it has appealed to the International

Centre for the Settlement of Investment Dispute (ICSID), a World Bank organisation based in Washington, DC, seeking compensation of \$28 billion from Guinea’s government.

Axis International said in a statement it had previously made several attempts for an amicable settlement which the junta in Conakry ignored.

The company said it rejected Guinea’s argument that the mine was non-operational and under-exploited.

Mamady Doumbouya, a general who led the junta that seized power four years ago, has made the exploitation of Guinea’s min-

ing reserves a priority for his government.

In November, the government launched the exploitation of one of the world’s biggest iron ore deposits, Simandou in the southeast of the country, with a major ceremony.

Guinea is among the world’s key producers of bauxite, used for the production of aluminium. It also has major deposits of iron ore, diamonds, gold and uranium.

But the distribution of income from their exploitation is seen as inequitable, benefiting mostly the mining companies and not the local population.

Experts put this down to a lack of investment in local economic development and infrastructure, especially roads, as well as to corruption and shortcomings in the legal framework.

Since seizing power, Doumbouya has cracked down on civil liberties, and protests have been banned while opponents have been arrested, put on trial or driven into exile.

He is the frontrunner in a presidential election held Sunday, with the votes still being counted.

More than half of Guinea’s population live in poverty, according to the World Bank.



**Guinea is often called the “water tower of West Africa” because several major rivers – including the Niger, Senegal, and Gambia – all rise in its highlands, supplying water to millions of people across the region**



# Crowning an exceptional year of growth

Al Salam Bank Named Bank of the Year: Bahrain 2025 by The Banker Magazine

- The accolade follows a rigorous five-month evaluation of more than 1,000 applications from leading financial institutions worldwide
- This recognition crowns a year marked by notable achievements for Al Salam Bank

Manama

Al Salam Bank, Bahrain's leading bank and one of the fastest growing banks in the region, has been named Bank of the Year: Bahrain 2025 by The Banker magazine, part of the Financial Times Group and one of the most prestigious global award programs in the financial sector. The accolade follows a rigorous five-month evaluation of more than 1,000 applications from leading financial institutions worldwide, with The Banker selecting only one winner per



country each year, a distinction that underscores the significance and competitiveness of this recognition. This milestone comes as Al Salam Bank closes 2025 on a remarkable upward trajectory. For the nine-month period ended 30 September 2025, the Bank delivered 37.5% growth in net profit attributable to shareholders, marking four consecutive years of robust financial

performance and operational resilience. Over the past four years, the Bank has also nearly tripled its total assets from USD 7.12 billion to USD 21.51 billion, driven by disciplined execution, consistent growth in its core banking operations, and the successful transformation of its business model into a more diversified and regionally competitive financial group. Commenting on the achieve-

ment, Rafik Nayed, Group CEO of Al Salam Bank & MD of ASB Capital, said: "Being named Bank of the Year in Bahrain by The Banker magazine is a testament to the strength of our strategy and the human-first, intelligence-driven philosophy that guides our journey. This recognition reflects the unwavering dedication of our teams and the trust our clients place in us. As we continue to expand re-

gionally and advance our digital and AI-driven capabilities, our commitment remains anchored in sustainable growth and long-term value creation."

This recognition crowns a year marked by notable achievements for Al Salam Bank across regional and international platforms. In 2025, the Bank received several recognitions that reflect the strength of its financial performance, customer-centric approach, and leadership in Islamic banking. These include Best Islamic Bank Bahrain 2025 by International Business Magazine, Best Islamic Bank Bahrain 2025 and Best Islamic Retail Bank in Bahrain 2025 by World Business Outlook Magazine, and Most Customer-Centric Islamic Bank – Bahrain 2025 awarded by Global Business Outlook Magazine.

Forbes Top 100 CEOs

On the leadership front, Rafik Nayed was named among the Forbes Top 100 CEOs in the middle east, reflecting the pivotal role his vision has played in shaping the Bank's strategy and

forward-looking philosophy. He was also recognized as Best Islamic Banking CEO – Bahrain 2025 by both Global Business Outlook Magazine and the International Finance Magazine.

Throughout the year, Al Salam Bank continued to strengthen its financial position and regional stature, delivering sustained growth across assets, profitability, customer deposits and operational efficiency. In parallel, ASB Capital, the asset management and investment banking arm of Al Salam Bank Group has further evolved as a true wealth nexus for clients, creating a bridge between regional capital and global opportunities and building a diversified portfolio with assets under management of around USD 6 billion, in support of the Group's long term growth ambitions.

As Al Salam Bank concludes 2025, the Bank stands at a defining moment in its growth journey entering a new era of scale, innovation, and regional impact, marked by excellence in performance and generational trust.

# National Bank of Bahrain announced as Forum Partner for Sustainability Forum Middle East's 2026 4th Edition

- National Bank of Bahrain named Forum Partner for the 4th Sustainability Forum Middle East, scheduled for 27–28 January 2026 in Bahrain

- The Forum will convene 400+ regional and international leaders to discuss energy transition, climate action, and sustainable finance

- NBB will highlight its ESG and sustainable finance leadership, with Zaina Alzayani speaking on innovative climate finance solutions

Manama

Sustainability Forum Middle East (SFME) has announced National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) as a Forum Partner for its 4th edition, taking place on 27–28 January 2026 at the Four Seasons Hotel in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in the presence of H.E. Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of Oil & Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, and with the support of the Supreme Council for Environment.

As the Kingdom's national bank and a leading driver of Bahrain's financial sector development, NBB once again brings its strong commitment to sustainability and responsible banking to the Forum's fourth edition. To be held under the theme "Ad-



vancing Alignment, Innovation, and Implementation for Energy and Climate Transformation", the Forum will open with a Special Address by H.E. Jasem Mohamed Al Budaiwi, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and will bring together more than 400 leaders across business and government, as well as sustainability and climate experts from across the region and internationally.

ESG

NBB employs a robust Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework aligned with Bahrain's Economic Vision and the Kingdom's broader sustainability and climate commitments. The Bank continues to promote sustainable practices among its customers and is innovating financial products and services to support the transi-

tion to a more sustainable energy future. Earlier this year, NBB introduced its Sustainable Finance Framework, which sets out a clear, transparent structure for evaluating and financing eligible green and social projects in line with international best practice including those across renewable energy, clean transportation, green buildings, and projects that enhance employment and community development.

In addition to NBB's role as Forum Partner, Zaina Alzayani, Group Chief Strategy and Sustainability Officer at National Bank of Bahrain, will participate in the panel "Unlocking Climate Finance: Innovative Pathways for Transition and Resilience". The session will explore how climate finance is evolving beyond traditional models to mobilise catalytic and blended capital for real-world delivery across

the GCC and wider MENA region. Panellists will examine emerging financial instruments, including sustainability-linked loans, sovereign green bonds, debt-for-climate swaps, and other innovative structures, alongside the growing role of transition and adaptation finance in supporting decarbonisation, strengthening climate resilience, and driving sustainable economic growth. Drawing on NBB's experience, the discussion will also consider how banks and financial institutions can help build pipelines of investable projects, de-risk climate investments, and unlock global pools of capital to support national net-zero ambitions and long-term development priorities.

Commenting on the occasion, Zaina Alzayani, Group Chief Strategy and Sustainability Officer at NBB, said, "The conver-

sation around climate finance is increasingly centred on implementation. For banks, this means focusing on structures and instruments that can translate sustainability objectives into measurable outcomes, while managing risk and supporting economic growth. We are proud to partner with platforms such as SFME, which play a valuable role in aligning regional perspectives with global financial frameworks and practical market needs."

Adding, Laila Danesh, Managing Director of FinMark Communication, the Forums Founder and Organiser, said, "We are delighted to welcome National Bank of Bahrain back again as a Forum Partner for our 2026 edition and thank them for their continued partnership and support. NBB has been at the forefront of integrating ESG into its business model and advancing sustainable finance in alignment with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 and net-zero commitments. Their renewed partnership underscores the essential role financial institutions play in financing transition, scaling climate solutions, and embedding sustainability into everyday business and investment decisions."

Strengthened programme

The Forum's fourth edition will feature a strengthened programme, including a high-level National Vision discussion that will bring together ministers and other senior government officials to explore how the region can enhance national competitiveness as it advances towards its net-zero and broader sustainability goals. Additional sessions will convene diplomats, business leaders, financiers, and technology innovators to address tran-

sition finance, climate-aligned business transformation, energy transition, industrial decarbonisation, AI and next-generation technologies, the expanding role of carbon and biodiversity markets, and human capital development and capacity building. NBB's sponsorship of SFME 2026 reflects its position as a national financial institution committed to supporting Bahrain's Vision and the Kingdom's broader transition towards a low-carbon economy, while contributing to regional efforts shaping the future of sustainable finance.

workshops

High-impact workshops will again be a core component of the Forum, with sessions led by KPMG, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Anthesis Group, among others to be announced. These workshops are designed to provide practical guidance and tools for organisations seeking to integrate climate considerations into strategy, reporting, operations, and financing.

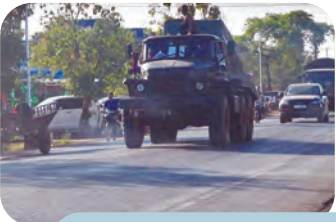
Lead Partner

The 2026 edition of Sustainability Forum Middle East is supported by Lead Partners: SAFA and Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait (BBK); Strategic Partner: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Forum Partners: Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard (ASRY), Bahrain Ship Repairing and Engineering Company (BASREC), Gulf Aluminium Rolling Mill (GARMCO), and the American Chamber of Commerce Bahrain (AmCham Bahrain); Learning Partner: Impact for Learning & Development; Media Partners: Arab News and Al Ayam, and Marketing Partner: The Butterfly Effect.



News in brief

◆ **Thailand's army accused Cambodia yesterday of** violating a newly signed ceasefire agreement, reached after weeks of deadly border clashes, by flying more than 250 drones over its territory. The Southeast Asian neighbours agreed to the "immediate" ceasefire on Saturday, pledging to end renewed border clashes that killed dozens of people and displaced more than a million this month. But the fresh allegation from Bangkok and its threat to reconsider releasing Cambodian soldiers held by Thailand left a sustained truce in doubt, even as their foreign ministers wrapped up two days of talks hosted by China. The Thai army said on Monday "more than 250 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were detected flying from the Cambodian side, intruding into Thailand's sovereign territory" on Sunday night, according to a statement.



**Thai army accuses Cambodia of violating truce with over 250 drones**

◆ **Lebanon said** yesterday it plans to purchase natural gas from Egypt, seeking to reduce its reliance on fuel oil for its ageing power plants in a country hamstrung by regular electricity cuts. The electricity sector has cost Lebanon more than \$40 billion since the end of its 1975-1990 civil war, and successive governments have failed to reduce losses, repair crumbling infrastructure or even guarantee regular power bill collections. Residents rely on expensive private generators and solar panels to supplement the unreliable state supply. Prime Minister Nawaf Salam's office said in a statement that the memorandum of understanding between Lebanon and Egypt sought "to meet Lebanon's needs for natural gas allocated for electricity generation". It was signed by Lebanese Energy Minister Joe Saddi and Egyptian Petroleum Minister Karim Badawi.

**Lebanon signs deal to purchase natural gas from Egypt**

SPOTLIGHT

Afghan farmers taking heavy hit from opium poppy ban: UN



Picture for representation only

AFP | Kabul, Afghanistan

Farmers in northern Afghanistan have yet to make up for lost income since the Taliban government banned poppy production for opium three years ago, the United Nations said yesterday.

The ban has slashed poppy production overall to just 10,200 hectares (25,200 acres) this year, "one of the lowest levels ever recorded" in Afghanistan, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said.

However, it also resulted in a shift from traditional growing areas in the south to northern provinces further from the control of the Taliban authorities.

In Badakhshan on the border with Tajikistan, surveyed in the agency's most recent report, poppy production has jumped since the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

In that province and in nearby Kunduz and Balkh, "on average, 85 percent of families... reported either no replacement or only partial replacement of their poppy income" after abandoning production, the report found.

Many farmers are instead growing wheat and other cereals, but in 2023 "the average per-hectare income from wheat was just \$770, whereas opium poppy yielded around \$10,000 per hectare".

"This income loss goes far beyond households, weakening rural purchasing power, reducing local economic activity, and increasing communities' overall vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity," said Oliver Stolpe, the UNODC's regional representative.

The agency urged more efforts to encourage growing of high-value crops such as saffron, nuts, herbs and fruits such as apricots and grapes, which are better suited to the arid and high-altitude landscapes.

Poppy revenues had long been a major source of Afghanistan's economic output before the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

Output of opium, the core ingredient in heroin, was estimated at 296 tons this year, the agency had reported last month, a 32 percent drop from the year before.

Farmers' income from opium sales fell by nearly half, to \$134 million this year from \$260 million in 2024.

The government's deputy ministry on counter-narcotics welcomed what it called an "important reflection of the realities and genuine challenges of farmers".

In a response included in the UN findings, it said the authorities would pursue policies aimed at "sustainable rural development and reducing dependency on narcotics crop cultivation".

US pledges \$2 bn for UN aid, with 'adapt, shrink or die' warning

United States will funnel its contributions through the UN aid agency OCHA

● **United States remained the top humanitarian aid donor in the world in 2025**

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Washington yesterday pledged an initial \$2 billion for United Nations humanitarian aid in 2026 -- far less than it has provided in recent years -- warning individual UN agencies to "adapt, shrink or die".

With its pledge, announced at the US mission in Geneva alongside the United Nations' aid chief Tom Fletcher, the United States is pursuing a dramatic overhaul of how it funds UN humanitarian work.

Instead of handing funds to individual agencies, the United States will funnel its contributions through the UN aid agency OCHA, headed by Fletcher, which earlier this year launched a so-called Humanitarian Reset to improve efficiency and accountability.

The US funds will then be distributed to more than a dozen



US Under Secretary of State for Foreign Assistance, Humanitarian Affairs and Religious Freedom Jeremy Lewin (L) and United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Tom Fletcher gesture after the signing ceremony of a \$2 billion pledge of United States for United Nations humanitarian aid in 2026, at the US Mission in Geneva.

selected countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar and Sudan.

"It is an initial anchor commitment," Jeremy Lewin, the senior US official for foreign assistance, humanitarian affairs and religious freedom, told reporters.

"There are other countries that we will add, as we continue to get more funding into this mechanism."

He challenged other countries

to match or beat US funding for UN aid.

"This new model will better share the burden of UN humanitarian work with other developed countries and will require the UN to cut bloat, remove duplication, and commit to powerful new impact, accountability and oversight mechanisms," US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on X.

According to UN data, the United States remained the top

humanitarian aid donor in the world in 2025, but that amount fell significantly to \$2.7 billion, down from around \$11 billion in 2023 and 2024, and from over \$14 billion in 2022.

Other key donor countries have also been tightening their belts, triggering major upheaval in the global aid sector.

"Individual UN agencies will need to adapt, shrink, or die," a State Department statement said.



The United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is a major UN humanitarian financing mechanism that provides quick-release funding to help start life-saving operations immediately after crises occur, ensuring rapid support for vulnerable populations before other funds are mobilised.

Trump hints at land strike as Venezuela pressure mounts

AFP | Washington, United States

A throwaway remark last week by President Donald Trump has raised questions about whether US forces may have carried their first land strike against drug cartels in Venezuela.

Trump said the US knocked out a "big facility" for producing trafficking boats, as he was discussing his pressure campaign against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in an interview broadcast Friday.

"They have a big plant or a big facility where they send, you know, where the ships come from," Trump said in an interview with billionaire supporter John Catsimatidis on the WABC radio station in New York.

"Two nights ago we knocked that out. So we hit them very hard."

Trump did not say where the facility was located or give any other details. US forces have carried out numerous strikes in both the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean since September, killing more than 100 people.

The Pentagon referred questions about Trump's remarks to the White House. The White House did not respond to requests for comment from AFP.

There has been no official comment from the Venezuelan government.

Trump has 'positive' call with Putin on Ukraine: White House

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump had a "positive" call with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Monday, the White House said, a day after Trump met Ukrainian

leader Volodymyr Zelensky in Florida.

"President Trump has concluded a positive call with President Putin concerning Ukraine," Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said on X. Trump and Putin had also spoken ahead of Sunday's

Zelensky talks.

Leavitt's statement came shortly after Moscow accused Kyiv of firing drones at Putin's residence and announced that it would "revise" its negotiating position on ending the Ukraine war.



U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky leave a news conference following their meeting at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club

Trump has been saying for weeks that the United States will "soon" start carrying out land strikes targeting drug cartels in Latin America, but there have

been no confirmed attacks to date.

The Trump administration has been ramping up pressure on Maduro, accusing the Vene-

zuelan leader of running a drug cartel himself and imposing an oil tanker blockade.

Maduro has accused Washington of attempting regime change.



All-India Muslim League is founded in Dacca in East Bengal, British India, later lays the foundations for Pakistan

Creation of the USSR is formally proclaimed in Moscow at the Bolshoi Theatre, organized as a union (U) of the Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Transcaucasian Soviet Socialist Republics (SSR)



Astronomer Edwin Hubble formally announces the existence of other galaxies at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society

Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia become independent states within the French Union



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Wonderful to see that INSV Kaundinya is embarking on her maiden voyage from Porbandar to Muscat, Oman. Built using the ancient Indian stitched-ship technique, this ship highlights India's rich maritime traditions

@narendramodi

02



Let's resolve to get our priorities straight in 2026. Let's invest more in fighting poverty & less in fighting wars. Let's heal the planet & secure a future of peace & justice. Let's rise together: For justice, humanity & peace. I wish you all a peaceful #NewYear!

@antonioguterres

03



Russia is at it again, using dangerous statements to undermine all achievements of our shared diplomatic efforts with President Trump's team. We keep working together to bring peace close

@ZelenskyyUa

04



We had a good, one-hour-long call with @POTUS, President @ZelenskyyUa and several European leaders to discuss their meeting today on peace negotiations.

Ursula von der Leyen

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

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Israel previously announced it had killed Abu Obeida

● Video announcing Abu Obeida's death was delivered by a masked man

● He also announced the deaths of four other Hamas commanders

AFP | Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

Hamas's armed wing confirmed yesterday the death of its spokesperson, Abu Obeida, months after Israel announced he had been killed in an air strike in Gaza.

The Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades released a video statement on its Telegram channel, saying: "We pause in reverence before... the masked man loved by millions... the great martyred commander and spokesperson of the Qassam Brigades, Abu Obeida."

Israel previously announced it had killed Abu Obeida in a strike on Gaza on August 30.

During the war, Abu Obeida, whose real name was Hudhayfa Samir al-Kahlout, emerged as a central figure eagerly awaited by Gazans, as well as by Arab and international media, for official statements from Hamas's military wing, particularly those related to prisoner-exchange operations.

Born on February 11, 1985, and raised in the Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza, Abu Obeida joined Hamas at an early age before becoming a member of the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades.

He later became the group's sole spokesman, delivering video statements in military uni-



The tents of displaced Palestinians sheltering them from the harsh winter conditions are set-up on clear land in Gaza City

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Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

Hamas's armed wing reiterated yesterday that it would not surrender its weapons, a key issue expected to feature in talks later in the day between US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu.

"Our people are defending themselves and will not give up their weapons as long as the occupation remains," the new spokesman for the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, who has adopted the name of his late predecessor Abu Obeida, said in a video statement.

form with his face consistently concealed by a red keffiyeh.

He had been the target of multiple Israeli assassination attempts.

According to Hamas officials, Abu Obeida embodied what they describe as "resistance" and was known for fiery and impactful speeches, many of which included threats against Israel or announcements of military operations.

"For many years, only a very small circle of Hamas officials knew his true identity," a Hamas official told AFP.

Israel has decimated Hamas's leadership, saying it seeks to eradicate the group following Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel, which triggered the war.

The video announcing Abu Obeida's death was delivered by a masked man dressed in the former spokesperson's distinctive style, who said he would adopt his predecessor's name for future statements.

In the same video, he also announced the deaths of four other Hamas commanders in Israeli attacks during the war.

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A Chinese ship is seen in waters near Pingtan island, the closest point to Taiwan, in eastern China's Fujian province

AFP | Beijing, China

China made a warning against "external forces" backing Taiwan yesterday after launching live-fire drills around the island that it said would simulate a blockade of its key ports.

Foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a regular news conference that any attempts to stop China's unification of Taiwan with the mainland

were "doomed to fail".

This week's show of force follows a bumper round of arms sales to Taipei by the United States.

"External forces attempting to use Taiwan to contain China and arm Taiwan will only embolden pro-independence arrogance and push the Taiwan Strait into a perilous situation of imminent war," Lin said.

"Any sinister schemes to obstruct China's reunification are doomed to fail."

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AFP | Seoul, South Korea

North Korea test-fired two strategic long-range cruise missiles, state media reported yesterday, hailing the exercise as a show of "combat readiness" against foreign threats.

Leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the drill -- staged Sunday over the Yellow Sea to the west of the Korean peninsula -- and called for "unlimited and sustained" development of his nuclear weapons forces, the state-run Korean Central News Agency said.

The goal of the exercise was to review the "counter-offensive response posture and combat capability of long-range missile sub-units," KCNA said.

The missiles flew for more than two hours, state media



A long-range strategic cruise missile launching drill in the West Sea of North Korea.

said, sharing photos of the missiles being fired and hitting a target.

Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missiles were fired Sunday at 8:00 am (2300 GMT Saturday) from the Sunan area

near the capital Pyongyang.

Kim vowed Pyongyang "would as ever devote all their efforts to the unlimited and sustained development of the state nuclear combat force", KCNA said.



# South Korea's ex-first lady accused of taking over \$200,000 in bribes

Kim Keon Hee, the wife of disgraced ex-president Yoon Suk Yeol, was arrested in August

● Kim allegedly “illegally intervened in state affairs behind the scenes

● She also allegedly received luxury jewellery, a painting by famed South Korean minimalist painter Lee Ufan

● Ex-president Yoon declared martial law last December in a short-lived bid to suspend civilian rule

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

South Korea's former first lady was alleged by prosecutors Monday to have accepted lavish bribes totalling over \$200,000, including fine art, jewellery and a handbag, as well as meddling in state affairs.

Kim Keon Hee, the wife of disgraced ex-president Yoon Suk Yeol, was arrested in August and is under investigation for alleged



Wife of South Korean President Kim Keon-hee (C), wearing a Vietnamese traditional ao dai dress, walks down the stairs at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi

stock manipulation and receiving gifts from the cult-like Unification Church.

She has also been accused of meddling in parliamentary elections.

In an announcement concluding their investigation, prosecutor

Min Joong-ki said South Korea's institutions were “severely undermined by abuses of power” by Kim.

Kim allegedly “illegally intervened in state affairs behind the scenes, beyond the public's view,” said prosecutor Kim

Hyung-geun.

They alleged that bribes from businesses and politicians received by Kim totalled up to 377.25 million won (\$263,000).

Investigators alleged Kim had received two Chanel bags and a Graff necklace from the leader of

the Unification Church.

She also allegedly received luxury jewellery, a painting by famed South Korean minimalist painter Lee Ufan, a Dior handbag and a wristwatch.

Former president Yoon denied that he was aware of these transactions when pressed by investigators, “a claim that many find difficult to accept”, said the prosecutor Kim Hyung-geun.

Prosecutors demanded a 15-year prison term for the former first lady in early December, saying she had “stood above the law” and colluded with the Unification Church to undermine the “constitutionally mandated separation of religion and state”.

They also asked the court to fine her two billion won (\$1.4 million).

The former first lady has denied all the charges.

In her final testimony, she said the allegations were “deeply unjust”.

“Yet when I consider my role and the responsibilities entrusted to me, it seems clear that I have made many mistakes,” she said.

Ex-president Yoon declared martial law last December in a short-lived bid to suspend civilian rule that plunged South



Before becoming first lady, Kim Keon-hee was a prominent figure in the South Korean art world, known for curating and organising high-profile exhibitions through her company, Covana Contents, which has operated many cultural and art events across Asia, making her one of the country's best-known private art promoters.

Korea into political turmoil.

He was removed from office then arrested this year on insurrection charges, which he denies, the first time that a South Korean former president and his wife had both been detained.

A Seoul court is set to sentence Kim on January 28.

# India's navy sails back to the future with historic voyage

● Named Kaundinya, after a legendary Indian mariner, its 20-metre (65-foot) long hull is sewn together with coconut coir rope rather than nailed.

AFP | New Delhi, India

India's navy boasts aircraft carriers, submarines, warships and frontline vessels of steel as it spreads its maritime power worldwide.

But none of its vessels is as unusual as its newest addition that sets sail on its maiden Indian Ocean crossing on Monday -- a wooden stitched ship inspired by a fifth-century design, built not to dominate the seas but to remember how India once traversed them.

Steered by giant oars rather than a rudder, with two fixed square sails to catch seasonal monsoon winds, it heads westward on its first voyage across the seas, a 1,400-kilometre (870-mile) voyage to Oman's capital Muscat.

Named Kaundinya, after a legendary Indian mariner, its



20-metre (65-foot) long hull is sewn together with coconut coir rope rather than nailed.

“This voyage reconnects the past with the present,” Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan said, sending the ship off from Porbandar, in India's western state of Gujarat, on an estimated two-week crossing.

“We are not only retracing ancient pathways of trade, navigation, and cultural exchange, but also reaffirming India's position as a natural maritime bridge across the Indian Ocean.”

The journey evokes a time when Indian sailors were regular traders with the Roman Empire, the Middle East, Africa,

and lands to the east -- today's Thailand, Indonesia, China and as far as Japan.

“This voyage is not just symbolic,” Swaminathan said. “It is of deep strategic and cultural significance to our nation, as we aim to resurrect and revive ancient Indian maritime concepts and capabilities in all their



forms.”

‘A bridge’

The ship's 18-strong crew has already sailed north along India's palm-fringed coast, from Karnataka to Gujarat.

“Our peoples have long looked to the Indian Ocean not as a boundary, but as a bridge carry-

ing commerce and ideas, culture and friendship, across its waters,” said Oman's ambassador to India, Issa Saleh Alshibani.

“The monsoon winds that once guided traditional ships between our ports also carried a shared understanding that prosperity grows when we remain connected, open and cooperative.” The journey is daunting. The ship's builders have refused modern shortcuts, instead relying on traditional shipbuilding methods.

“Life on board is basic -- no cabins, just the deck,” said crew member Sanjeev Sanyal, the 55-year-old historian who conceived the project, who is also Prime Minister Narendra Modi's economic adviser.

“We sleep on hammocks hanging from the mast,” he told AFP before the voyage.

Sanyal, an Oxford-educated scholar and former international banker, drew up the blueprints with traditional shipwrights, basing designs on descriptions from ancient texts, paintings and coins.

“Vasco da Gama is 500 years back,” he said, referring to the Portuguese sailor who reached India in 1498. “This is 6,000-, 7,000-year-old history.”



Northern Governor Reviews New Ahlia University Campus Project



His Excellency Mr. Hassan Abdullah Al Madani, Governor of the Northern Governorate, received a high-level delegation from Ahlia University this morning, including Founding President Professor Abdullah Al Hawaj and President Professor Mansour Al Ali. The meeting focused on strengthening cooperation and supporting educational projects that serve as pillars for Bahrain's sustainable development. Governor Al Madani praised the university's role in advancing higher education and noted that the upcoming Salman City campus aligns with the "Healthy Cities" initiative. The project integrates environmental sustainability and healthy urban planning to enhance the local quality of life. Professor Al Hawaj confirmed the university will move to the new campus by September 2026.

Street Cricket League Launches in Bahrain with Global Vision



The Street Cricket League (SCL) officially launched at the Wyndham Grand Hotel, introducing a bold cricket platform for non-professional players. Founder Khalil Alqaheeri described the SCL as a first-of-its-kind tournament combining international standards with a carnival-style, family-friendly atmosphere. The league plans to expand across the Gulf within three years, utilizing advanced technology and global broadcasting to showcase Bahrain as a premier sports and investment hub. Mohammed Mansoor, Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Bahrain Cricket Federation, pledged full institutional support for the initiative. He highlighted that the SCL aligns with the vision of HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa to position Bahrain as a regional cricket leader.

Bahrain's National Giving Bazaar Empowers Local Families and Celebrates Community Spirit



The Fina Khair Volunteer Team and Abdulrahman Kanoo Parents Care Club successfully hosted the National Giving Bazaar at Fatima Al Shukr Hall from December 25 to 27. Celebrating Bahrain's National Day, the event empowered productive families by providing a professional marketing platform, drawing a massive public audience. The bazaar featured family-oriented activities, including children's entertainment and a traditional Sudanese Ardha performance by the Al-Khawalda Association. Distinguished guests, including MP Dr. Mariam Al-Dhaen and MP Abdulhakim Al-Shanoo, joined prominent voluntary leaders to support the initiative. Key organizers, led by Professor Faisal Al-Abbasi, ensured the event's seamless execution.

Bahrain Charity Association Approves Budget and Reviews New Headquarters Progress



The Bahrain Charity Association's Board of Directors, chaired by Mr. Fawzi Ahmed Kanoo, has officially approved the association's budget, emphasizing a commitment to financial transparency and governance. The board also conducted an extensive review of the association's new building project alongside contractors, engineers, and legal accountants. The meeting focused on implementation phases and timelines to ensure the facility successfully enhances future services for beneficiaries. Secretary-General Dr. Hassan Ibrahim Kamal attributed the association's progress to the vital support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Mar Thoma Youth Movement Hosts 'Christmas Eve' Celebration



The Mar Thoma Youth Movement Bahrain Centre hosted a festive 'Christmas Eve' celebration at St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church, bringing together youth from the Bahrain Mar Thoma and St. Paul's Mar Thoma parishes. Presided over by Rev. Samuel Varghese, the event featured a Christmas message and was attended by vice presidents Rev. Biju John, Rev. Aneesh Samuel John, and Siji Philip, alongside the executive committee. Nearly 100 participants enjoyed a program of cultural performances and traditional carols. The joint gathering aimed to foster unity and friendship among the youth of both parishes.



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BIDDING TO CLEARING GOVERNMENT TRANSACTIONS has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33353444 or hussainmuhammed153@gmail.com

MAUNA BUSINESS CENTER has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33330357 or MIRZAH@MAUNABH.COM

D C C CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39887610 or ABDULLA@MICOSABH.COM

INNOX INTERNATIONAL TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39028602 or rameesagz@gmail.com

SUNDAY INTERNATIONAL GROUP WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17703242 or SUNDAY@BATELCO.COM.BH

BEST LINE TAILORING has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36361966 or HANAN.A.ALHERZ@GMAIL.COM

LOTUS HOTEL has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER (HOTEL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17251444 or NAMALCO@BATELCO.COM.BH

WAAD CAFITARYA has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(JUICE & SANDWICHES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34095924 or HIND.ALTHAWADI@GMAIL.COM

ALYNBOOT CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33223488 or HONEYZAHRAA@YAHOO.COM

SKY ZONE INTERIOR DESIGN W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DECORATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33477665 or IBRAHIMKHAIL3645@GMAIL.COM

NASS MARINE SHIPYARD COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of STEEL FABRICATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

KKC INDUSTRY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39413666 or GARYXU@KCCIND.COM

KENTUCKY has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17262998 or ssaleh@AMERICANA-FOOD.COM

TAMIM HOUSE CONTRACTING AND COMPLETION has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39557333 or SPICYSAUSE@HOTMAIL.COM

MARASHEEN RESTURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33138800 or EBRAHIMISA63@GMAIL.COM

LANDMARK CONSTRUCTION AND TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17295050 or MADEE-HA@LANDMARKBAHRAIN.COM

BUILD EARTH GENERAL TRADING BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66338901 or MRMJANNATUL@GMAIL.COM

HOODA TRYONE SERVICES COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN(MAINTENANCE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33916684 or DANISH-RAZAFFI@GMAIL.COM

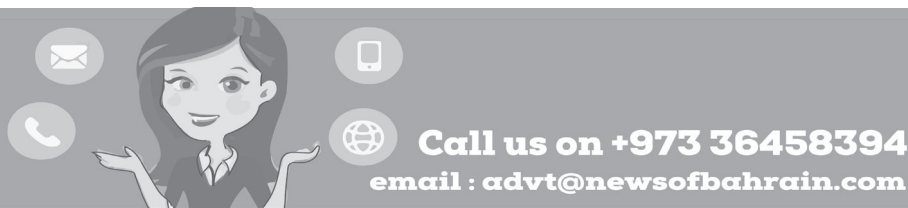
HADEKAT AALI BAKERY has a vacancy for the occupation of BAKER(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39988878 or ZUHAIRAHAMED811@GMAIL.COM

BD MARIAM FASHION CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17270069 or CREDIBLEDOCUMENTS@GMAIL.COM

TOPCRAFT STITCH TAILORING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ASSISTANT TAILOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35384510 or HASAN5334KHAN@GMAIL.COM



# Classifieds



## VACANCIES AVAILABLE CONTINUED

REGAL MAINTENANCE & SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(FORK-LIFT), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17448936 or regal@rmswll.com

AYYAN COMPUTER SERVICES CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COMPUTER OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 32080463 or SD2833358@GMAIL.COM

VASANTHAM SWEETS & SNACKS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of KITCHEN WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17213355 or WSSBAHRAIN@YAHOO.COM

HUDA M. ALHASAN MOHAMED SAEED AL-HAFEZ has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(MAINTENANCE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39456070 or alkhoyool@yahoo.co.uk

LIFELINE TRAVEL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ACCOUNTANTS, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17000197 or SAJTURKEY91@GMAIL.COM

M HASEEB 786 W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33516379 or SAHILDLIDAR57@GMAIL.COM

TK ELEVATOR ALMOAYYED W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN(ELEVATORS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or AMEER@ALMOAYYEDCG.COM

altasameh tower construction has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17414002 or shabanbh@gmail.com

GULF HOTELS GROUP - GULF HOTEL has a vacancy for the occupation of SERVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17713000 or khalid.alawadi@gulfhotehbahrain.com

AHMED ISA CONTRACTING CONSTRUCTION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17552234 or AECONT@HOTMAIL.COM

UNITED GULF CONTRACTING & ASPHALT CO. has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700116 or hr.admin@hajihassan.com

AL FARHAN PLASTIC INDUSTRY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MACHINE OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33482004 or farhanindustry@batelco.com.bh

sponge bob restaurant has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(FALAFEL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 38880656 or ASIMKH14@GMAIL.COM

OM SAQ SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77088490 or INFO28TRAVEL@GMAIL.COM

Zallaq Resort Company Services. Zallaq Laundry has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER (OPERATIONS), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17631660 or SECRETARY.ADMIN@JAZAYANI.COM

NASS CONTRACTING COMPANY (W.L.L) has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17725522 or yousif@aanass.net

DEXOOM DIGITAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33007661 or IJAZAROOMA@GMAIL.COM

BAHRAIN COFFEE BREWERS COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17722171 or ANEESH@FOODVESTHOLDING.COM

YORK ARK COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37505455 or BAHERASTAR2025@GMAIL.COM

THE PALMYARD HOTEL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36552208 or mbusandal@thepalace.com.bh

MIDDLE EAST RESTAURANT 1 has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36112865 or EKHILASMAHD1443@GMAIL.COM

KARAVALI RESTAURANT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(JUICE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33711488 or FAYAZ@SMARTPACKTRADING.COM

MEYRICK STAR SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33351722 or meyrickstarserviceswll@gmail.com

Stiller Agency for the Supply Workers W. L. I has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17717730 or rsuresh@alazzamgroup.com

SHAHI CONTRACTING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38060144 or AMJCONSTRUCTION782@GMAIL.COM

DARMAN FURNITURE WORKSHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33328694 or DARMAN.CARGO@YAHOO.COM

AL SHOAIB MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY

W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35949635 or AYANKHAN359496@GMAIL.COM

FILE CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39053163 or FILECONT@BATELCO.COM.BH

al najee coldstore has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33861155 or MAAZMOHAMEDMR@GMAIL.COM

SANADNAN PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34690477 or SANADNAN.CONTRACTING@GMAIL.COM

NEBRAS STAR CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of PAINTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39290293 or ANWARALKAMIS2@GMAIL.COM

ZOOMY COMBINED FACILITIES SUPPORT CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38473248 or ABDULRAHMAN110511@GMAIL.COM

AL NAHHAM FOR LABOR SUPPLY has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36644889 or ALNAHAM.LABOR.SUPPLY@GMAIL.COM

IK FACILITIES CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35949635 or AYANKHAN359496@GMAIL.COM

ALTHAMEEM ABAYAT BAHRAINI PARTNER-SHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34100500 or NURALA-MINDESIGNS@GMAIL.COM

MAGIC BUBBLES ADS & PUBLICITY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33433664 or PRAVEEN@BUBBLESADS.COM

ALMOAYYED CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17404949 or proffice@almoayyedcg.com

KENZ GENERAL TRADING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17295879 or sameer@kenzfurnishing.com

THE VINTAGE PALACE SALON has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIR DRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39652520 or TUGI.BARBER.SHOP@GMAIL.COM

IK FACILITIES CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35949635 or AYANKHAN359496@GMAIL.COM

NANO CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17272706 or GEEPAASBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

KING HAMAD AMERICAN MISSION HOSPITAL N.P.C has a vacancy for the occupation of PHYSIOTHERAPIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39748885 or CATHERINE@AMH.ORG.BH

AL JAIS TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39880809 or MOKERISREEJITH@GMAIL.COM

ABUOBAID CONTRACTING & TRADING GROUP has a vacancy for the occupation of SAFETY OFFICER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700204 or abuobaidgroup@gmail.com

AIRTECH W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SHEETMETAL WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17675599 or admin@airtech.com.bh

Bawa food trading company W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33154888 or BAIWON@HOTMAIL.COM

BLUEPORT INTERNATIONAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37372907 or TAHIRSHAFIQ705@GMAIL.COM

SEAM MASTERS TAILORING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TAILORING FOREMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34584631 or GHULAMHUSSAIN2916@GMAIL.COM

REGAL MAINTENANCE & SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17448936 or regal@rmswll.com

Life Time Construction Co Partnership has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35191501 or MOSHARAFHOS-SAIN3883@GMAIL.COM

B F G INTERNATIONAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of PROJECTS COORDINATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39651165 or Taghrid.wanous@BFGINTERNATIONAL.COM

GOLDEN GROUP CONTRACTORS has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can con-

tact 17533125 or GOLDENGROUPBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

AL SALEM JOHNSON CONTROLS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77016612 or AQEEL.SHalKh@jci.COM

BAIT ALSAFEE RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 66335821 or JAFFAR\_1987@HOTMAIL.COM

COOK HOUSE FOR DELIVERY has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33324333 or COOK-HOUSE08@GMAIL.COM

AWAL GULF MANUFACTURING CO. (UNDER REORGANIZATION) B.S.C CLOSED has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17738333 or khalid@awalgulf.com.bh

Dian Africana Beauty Salon W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HAIR DRESSER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35131471 or DIAN.DOHERTY@CHIS-EMPIRE.COM

TRIPLE FRIDAYS SALE FOOD & BEVERAGES SIMPLE COMMANDITE COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of ADMINISTRATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 77099116 or FATEMAALAWI81@GMAIL.COM

Arkan Ithad Development Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(FOOD DISTRIBUTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 13300444 or HROFFICER@AIMS-BAHRAIN.COM

Arkan Ithad Development Co. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(FOOD DISTRIBUTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 13300444 or HROFFICER@AIMS-BAHRAIN.COM

BOXMASTER W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ACCOUNTANTS, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17738111 or HR@UNIONGROUP.CC

ALMANHAL BAHRAIN WATER FACTORY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17404435 or AMER.KHALID@BH.NESTLE-WATERS.COM

LAUNDRY POINT has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(LAUNDRY), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36525253 or ABDULLA86.K@GMAIL.COM

MOHAMMED JAWAD ISA ABDULLA ABDULRIDHA has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33141013 or jassimjawad98@gmail.com

IQBAL KHAN 99 SERIVES CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33880076 or IQBAL99BH@GMAIL.COM

ALMOAYYED COMPUTERS MIDDLE EAST W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17705313 or ALIHASSAN@ALMOAYYEDINTL.COM.BH

WHITE HOUSE GATE LAUNDRY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(LAUNDRY), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33023500 or Hesham@whitehouselaundry.com

KICK START GYM W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of RECEPTIONIST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34340672 or VINE-SHVIJAYANTI@YAHOO.COM

LUKY SOHAN CARGO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34213044 or LAKI.BH.IND@GMAIL.COM

OUFIN FOR CARGO AND HANDLING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66675950 or Chkhurram834@gmail.com

ADADA TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17217800 or ASHRAF@SKYINTLBH.COM

GULBERG CONTRACTING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 34621555 or MESHSYNERGIES@GMAIL.COM

TASHYEEED HOSPITALITY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER (HOTEL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729935 or mannai.hr@mannaitrading.com

WA Tech Water Technology W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY VEHICLE DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17720617 or CONTACT@WATECHMENA.COM

FOOD VEST MANPOWER COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COFFEE SERVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17722171 or mail@foodvestholding.com

MUBARAK ALI JABER YUSUF has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33555166 or MUBARKBH@GMAIL.COM

ISMAIL SMART SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COMPUTER TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39609881 or S.KMEHENA28659@GMAIL.COM

THE BROWNIES CAFE W.L.L has a vacancy

for the occupation of CHEF, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35914001 or FAISAL-BHATTI325@GMAIL.COM

FIVE STAR GENTS SALOON W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39456969 or BUZAAL1970@GMAIL.COM

M ASHIR REAL ESTATE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35084082 or ARSALANZB-CI@GMAIL.COM

BOLDBEAM DECORATION CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(PAINT FINISHER), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33768106 or A.SHAKEELI133@GMAIL.COM

ALHISHMA FASHIONS has a vacancy for the occupation of SALES WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39290440 or HUS-SAINAMRALLA9@GMAIL.COM

First Choice Cleaning Services Co. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36491411 or choicefirst82@gmail.com

ALBAYT BAYTUK CAFE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FOOD SERVICE WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17646700 or MOIBRA973@GMAIL.COM

THANJAI SUVAI RESTAURANT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 77091677 or karthighua2010@gmail.com

KGC TRADING AND CONSTRUCTION INSTALLATION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66383031 or thasleenafemi1977@gmail.com

Mohammed AL Shughul Cleaning Houses has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33332411 or mohmda2010@gmail.com

QUICK ZEBRA SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17700211 or hrd@dreamgroup.bh

1980S A NOSTALGIC RESTAURANT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33533149 or INFO@HALAYAGROUPINTL.COM Dhafayer Ladies Beauty Salon has a vacancy for the occupation of BEAUTICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33290001 or DAFAIRSALON@GMAIL.COM

MANNAT GOLD W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66622357 or SAR.NAMMARI@GMAIL.COM

HARWA TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39135961 or WA-JEEH.HASSAN@GMAIL.COM

Hydrapro For Trading & Services Co.W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17623723 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

HONEY SINGH CONSTRUCTION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33228725 or BARRINDERS@GMAIL.COM

STAR MOTION BAKERY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39860760 or CRA66851@HOTMAIL.COM

BAHRAIN SERVICES & MAINTENANCE COMPANY B.S.C. (CLOSED) has a vacancy for the occupation of SERVICEMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17727676 or aqeel@basma.com.bh

DYAR SAIF CONTRACTING has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17779784 or SAIF.0073@YAHOO.COM

D H C CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39849512 or diamondhouse1994@gmail.com

PANORAMA CONTRACTING & ENGINEERING SERVI has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON ASST, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729935 or AHMED@PANORAMABH.COM

SIYANA INDUSTRIAL SERVICES & SIAM SCAFFOLDS- SIMPLE COMMANDITE COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of RIGGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17552722 or SIAM7373@BATELCO.COM.BH

PANORAMA CONTRACTING & ENGINEERING SERVI has a vacancy for the occupation of SCAFFOLDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17729935 or AHMED@PANORAMABH.COM

B F G INTERNATIONAL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of PROJECTS COORDINATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39651165 or Taghrid.wanous@BFGINTERNATIONAL.COM

BEN EID TOWERS CLEANING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250078 or KEHF-2011@HOTMAIL.COM

Darb Shakamba Contracting Co. WLL has a vacancy for the occupation of SCAFFOLDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33847999 or DSHAKMBA@GMAIL.COM

ABDULAZIZ ALSAYED TRADING & CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER(HEAVY TRUCK), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33747598 or AHMED-ALSAYED88@HOTMAIL.COM

ZUBAIR CARGO HANDLING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33321681 or TALHARANA45678@GMAIL.COM

REGAL MAINTENANCE & SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CRANE OPERATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17448936 or regal@rmswll.com

FARHAN AND SABLUB REPAIR OF ELECTRONICS CO BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66991090 or MIRZAMUBEEN1155@GMAIL.COM

WRAP & ROLL W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33857534 or MINDBRIDGE.GCC@GMAIL.COM

NASIR ELECTRONICS has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANIC, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39322182 or SU7695443@GMAIL.COM

BEN EID TOWERS CLEANING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(MAINTENANCEW).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250078 or KEHF-2011@HOTMAIL.COM

Wyndham Garden W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 66316666 or mannai.hr@mannaitrading.com

3lines Restaurant S P C has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17600114 or hrdept@gnj-group.com

BENISH COMBINED FACILITIES SUPPORT ACTIVITES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION).GENERAL, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33823322 or LARAIB.ABID22@GMAIL.COM

MUBARAK ALI JABER YUSUF has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33656333 or MUBARKBH@GMAIL.COM

GULF CITY CLEANING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39641612 or yousif@aanass.net

ALSHROOQ SERVICES STATION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FUEL STATION ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17625552 or ahmedalkaabi320@yahoo.com

Le Meridien Hotel Bahrain City Center has a vacancy for the occupation of CHEF, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38885874 or ccb.government@maf.ae

BLACK ROCK COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of GENERAL MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39440055 or HABIB6280@HOTMAIL.COM

SWEETBERRY CAFE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of COFFEE SERVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17271727 or MOHAMMED7271727@GMAIL.COM

ETISALCOM BAHRAIN COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of MANAGER (MARKETING), suitably qualified applicants can contact 13301100 or accounts@etisalcom.com

GOLDSTIC HUB W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37332129 or samikhalid72@gmail.com

A C C NEW STAR CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36840401 or JVBWSLL@GMAIL.COM

Almoayyed Air Conditioning W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or proffice@almoayyedcg.com

MARALA ADVERTISING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39202314 or MUHAMMADNADEEMAWAN58@GMAIL.COM

COE Business and Management Consulting Company W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38218835 or COECONSULTINGCO@GMAIL.COM

HONEY SINGH CONSTRUCTION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33228725 or BARRINDERS@GMAIL.COM

COYOTE COMPUTER PROGRAMMING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33768106 or A.SHAKEELI133@GMAIL.COM

ABU FARES PAPER INDUSTRIES WORKSHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of TECHNICIAN(MAINTENANCE), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33886420 or HEBA.FARES235@GMAIL.COM

MUKHTAR ABDULLA AHMED ALHAJJ ABDULLA has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33656333 or HG008908@GMAIL.COM

AL SABOOR REFRIGERATION AND AIR CONDI-

TIONING has a vacancy for the occupation of MECHANICAL HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39283343 or EBRAHIMMEHAR@GMAIL.COM

JS POOLS AND TRADING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17410311 or JOSEPOOLSCO@GMAIL.COM

NMG MOON MAINTENANCE & REPAIR W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of ELECTRICIAN(VEHICLES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 39454342 or MARKHORMOONCO@YAHOO.COM

AL KHAWAJA SALON W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39840693 or M.GAMAL2235@GMAIL.COM

AL FAKHOORA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17243490 or ALMANSOURA2@GMAIL.COM

ARDEZEN CAR PPF TRADING has a vacancy for the occupation of AUTOMOBILE POLISHER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36111101 or INFO@ZUGLUJEN.COM

AL MAWATENEEN SPARE PARTS & ACCESSORIES has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66914266 or MAWATNEEFASHION@GMAIL.COM

AL HAFAZ FOR DECORATION COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE BOY / FARRASH, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39930364 or NOORNEWS31@GMAIL.COM

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# Root says ‘silly’ to change England management after Ashes loss

Veteran Joe Root insists changing England’s coaching staff would be a major mistake

- Root supports current leadership
- Calls team’s progress “clear and genuine”
- Victory in Sydney could cement stability

AFP | Melbourne

Veteran England batsman Joe Root has said it would be “silly” to change England’s management team after losing the Ashes, with players “absolutely committed” to the current set-up.

England meekly surrendered the famous urn after just 11 days of play with back-to-back eight-wicket defeats in Perth and Brisbane and an 82-run loss at Adelaide.

Their capitulation was compounded by criticism of their low-key preparations and allegations of excessive drinking during a mid-series beach break in Noosa.

The team restored some pride with a frantic four-wicket win in Melbourne, snapping an 18-match winless streak on Australian soil.

It relieved pressure on coach Brendon McCullum, skipper Ben Stokes and cricket chief Rob Key, who have all indicated they want to stay in their roles.



England’s Joe Root (2nd L) speaks to Ben Stokes (2nd R) before play (file photo)

“In terms of the playing group, we’re absolutely committed to the management,” Root, England’s all-time leading Test run-scorer and a former captain, told English media in Melbourne.

“Yes, we can be better and there are certain areas that we’ll continue to keep working at, but the management work extremely hard.

“They might do things in a slightly different way, but I think we’ve made great strides as a group and a big reason for it is

“You look at the group of players we’ve got and you look at the guys that were involved in the team when I was captain, four years ago, and you look at their records individually, and every single one of them has improved as a player

JOE ROOT

because of the guys we have behind us.”

Management’s case to stay on would be strengthened by another win in the fifth Test in Sydney starting Sunday.

Root was captain on England’s last tour of Australia in 2021-22 when they were crushed 4-0, costing coach Chris Silverwood and cricket director Ashley Giles their jobs.

But Root said a lot of progress had been made since under the current regime.

“You look at the group of play-

YOU KNOW WHAT

Root, who was captain during the 4-0 series loss in 2021-22, pointed out that every player from that squad has individually improved their records under the current management of McCullum and Stokes

ers we’ve got and you look at the guys that were involved in the team when I was captain, four years ago, and you look at their records individually, and every single one of them has improved as a player,” he said.

“This team has improved. I think it would be silly (to consider change) for the amount of hard work and things that have been done.”

Victory in Melbourne was Root’s first in Australia in more than a decade of trying and he said it “would be better if we win next week as well”.

“If we can build on it and do it again next time it’s momentum in the right direction for the next tour here (in 2029-30),” he added.

## Algeria advance to AFCON last-16, Cameroon hold Ivory Coast

- Algeria edge Burkina Faso 1-0 in Rabat
- Ivory Coast, Cameroon draw 1-1 in Marrakesh
- Sudan beat Equatorial Guinea on own goal
- Mozambique clinch first AFCON win in 39 years

AFP | Rabat

Algeria on Sunday became the third country after Egypt and Nigeria to qualify for the knockout stage of the Africa Cup of Nations by edging Burkina Faso 1-0 in Rabat through a Riyad Mahrez penalty.

Defending champions Ivory Coast failed to join the trio after drawing 1-1 with Cameroon in a lively Marrakesh showdown.

Elsewhere, Mozambique ended a 39-year wait for a first AFCON victory by beating Gabon 3-2 while Sudan got back into contention for a last-16 slot by beating Equatorial Guinea 1-0 in Casablanca.

Captain Mahrez converted from the spot midway through the first half and Algeria then held on to win a bruising contest against a determined Burkinabe outfit.

The penalty that decided the game was awarded when Man-



Algeria's forward #7 Riyad Mahrez (L) shoots and scores his team's first goal from the penalty spot

chester City’s Rayan Ait-Nouri was bundled over.

Mahrez made no mistake with his 23rd-minute kick as he followed his brace in the opening 3-0 defeat of Sudan to take his tally at this AFCON to three goals.

The former Leicester City and Manchester City winger now has nine goals at the tournament, an Algerian record.

Algeria, African champions in 1990 and in 2019, have the maximum six points after two games in Group E and are yet to concede a goal, with Vladimir Petkovic’s side living up to their billing as one of the pre-tournament favourites.

France legend Zinedine Zidane was among the 18,522 crowd to watch his son Luca

play in goal for the Desert Foxes -- he was also at the win over Sudan.

“We were expecting a very tough match. We fought very hard and the most important thing is that we won the game. Now we are qualified and that was the main goal,” said Algeria forward Ibrahim Maza, the man of the match.

“We knew before that they would be very tough but we said we would have to fight against it, also be dirty, tackle very hard and we did that well today.”

### Sudan boost

Sudan boosted their chances of qualifying from the same group after a Saul Coco own goal gave them victory over Equato-

rial Guinea in a scrappy affair.

Unlucky Torino centre-back Coco saw the ball come off him and ricochet into the net in the 74th minute when his teammate Luis Asue attempted to clear a free-kick.

Sudan hosted and won the 1970 AFCON, but this was just their second victory in 18 matches across six tournament appearances since.

Sudan are competing in Morocco despite the country having been devastated since a civil war broke out between the army and the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in April 2023.

In Group F, Manchester United winger Amad Diallo scored for AFCON defending champi-

BETTER YOU KNOW

Mozambique’s victory over Gabon was their first-ever AFCON win in 39 years and 17 attempts

ons Ivory Coast in a draw with Cameroon that left them sharing top spot.

Diallo struck after 51 minutes for his second AFCON goal having notched the match-winner against Mozambique four days ago.

But the lead lasted only five minutes before a shot from Junior Tchamadeu took a deflection off Ghislain Konan to bring five-time champions Cameroon level.

Ivory Coast and Cameroon have four points each, one more than Mozambique.

Mozambique ended a long wait for a first AFCON victory by beating Gabon in a thriller in southern coastal city Agadir.

The Mambas began the match having drawn four and lost 12 since making the first of six appearances at the tournament in 1986.

“Today was a historic day. We overcame so many difficulties and obstacles to get here and achieve something no one expected of us,” said Mozambique coach Chiquinho Conde.



# Emery returns to haunt Arsenal

Unai Emery returns to former club Arsenal with Aston Villa’s title charge gathering pace

- Arsenal face title pressure
- Villa on 11-game winning run
- Club is three points behind Arsenal

AFP | London

Unai Emery returns to the scene of one of his few managerial failures on Tuesday, aiming to land a huge blow to former club Arsenal’s ambitions of a first Premier League title for 22 years.

Dismissed by the Gunners in 2019 just over a year after succeeding Arsene Wenger, Emery’s second spell in English football has been a very different story.

The Spaniard has awoken a sleeping giant in Villa, transforming the Birmingham-based club from battling relegation to contending for their first league title since 1981.

An impressive 2-1 win at Chelsea on Saturday extended Villa’s winning run in all competitions to 11 -- their longest streak of victories since 1914.



Aston Villa’s Spanish manager Unai Emery gestures from the touchline (file photo)

That form has taken Emery’s men to within three points of Arsenal at the top of the table despite failing to win any of their opening six matches of the season.

“We are competing very well. We are third in the league be-

hind Arsenal and Manchester City. Wow,” said Emery after he masterminded a second half turnaround at Stamford Bridge on Saturday.

Villa were outclassed by the Blues and trailing 1-0 until a triple substitution on the hour

mark changed the game.

Ollie Watkins came off the bench to score twice and hailed his manager’s change of system as “tactical genius” afterwards.

Few believe Villa will still be able to last the course against the far greater riches and squad

YOU  
KNOW WHAT

Emery has lost just two of his ten meetings with Arsenal across three clubs – including a decisive 2-0 win at the Emirates last year that derailed their title chase

depth of Arsenal and City over the course of 20 more games.

But a title challenge is just the next step on an upward trajectory since Emery took charge just over three years ago.

After a 13-year absence from Europe, including a three-year spell in the second-tier Championship, the Villains have qualified for continental competition for the past three seasons.

Paris Saint-Germain were on the ropes at Villa Park in April but escaped to win a thrilling Champions League quarter-final 5-4 on aggregate before going on

to win the competition for the first time.

Arsenal also left Birmingham beaten earlier this month, their only defeat in their last 24 games in all competitions.

However, Emery getting the upper hand over his former employers is a common occurrence.

The 54-year-old has lost just twice in 10 meetings against Arsenal during spells at Paris Saint-Germain, Villarreal and Villa, including a 2-0 win at the Emirates in April 2024 that ultimately cost Mikel Arteta’s men the title.

Even Emery’s ill-fated 18 months in north London were far from disastrous with the benefit of hindsight.

He inherited a club in decline during Wenger’s final years but only narrowly missed out on Champions League qualification in his sole full season in charge and reached the Europa League final.

Arsenal’s loss has been to Villa’s advantage.

For now Arsenal remain the outsiders in a three-horse race but inflicting another bloody nose to the title favourites will silence any doubters that Emery’s men are serious contenders.

## De Minaur muscles up in bid to be Sinner-Alcaraz ‘disruptor’

AFP | Sydney

Alex de Minaur has muscled up in a bid to bridge the gap on Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz, with the Australian aiming to be a “disruptor” to the pair’s tennis dominance.

The world number seven is yet to beat either player and admits he has to find new weapons to challenge the Spaniard and Italian who have shared the last eight Grand Slam titles.

In contrast, De Minaur is yet to go beyond the last eight at a major.

“I’ve played some very close matches over the years with both of them and you feel like you’re getting closer and closer,” de Minaur told reporters in Sydney ahead of the season-opening United Cup starting Friday.

“You’ve got to work on your game, find new weapons.

“For me, it’s finding different ways to hurt these players and trying to be ready to take more risks and be a little bit more of a disruptor.



Alex de Minaur reacts during a match (file photo)

“There’s a couple of things here and there that we’ve tried to work towards in my team throughout this off-season to try to take the next step, and that’s obviously the next goal.”

One of the things De Minaur has been working on is body strength, employing a new fitness trainer as he prepares for

the Australian Open in Melbourne on January 18.

“I’m ultimately trying to get bigger and stronger and just keep on improving,” he said.

“Over the years I’ve gained a little bit of weight, which has definitely helped me.

“There’s no substitute for hard work, so that’s what we’ll

”

I’ve played some very close matches over the years with both of them and you feel like you’re getting closer and closer. You’ve got to work on your game, find new weapons. For me, it’s finding different ways to hurt these players and trying to be ready to take more risks and be a little bit more of a disruptor

ALEX DE MINAUR

be doing.”

De Minaur secured one title last season in Washington, adding to his nine other career victories.

Australia face the Czech Republic and Norway at the mixed-teams United Cup, which is also being played in Perth.

## Kyrgios beats Sabalenka in ‘Battle of the Sexes’

AFP | Dubai

Nick Kyrgios beat women’s world number one Aryna Sabalenka in the “Battle of the Sexes” on Sunday, in a highly-publicised showdown with modified rules that divided tennis fans.

Former Wimbledon finalist Kyrgios won 6-3, 6-3 in an exhibition match in Dubai bearing little resemblance to the era-defining 1973 encounter between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs.

Back then, there was more at stake with the nascent women’s professional tour, set up by King, fighting for its legitimacy and prize money for female players still far lower than for the men.

King, one of the all-time greats of the women’s game who was at the peak of her powers, saw off the 55-year-old Riggs, a top player in his



Belarus’ Aryna Sabalenka (R) and Australia’s Nick Kyrgios interact during the event

day, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 in Houston.

On Sunday, each player received only one serve and the dimensions of Sabalenka’s side of the court were nine per cent smaller, in an attempt to restrict Kyrgios’ power and speed advantage.

Critics questioned the motive behind the event, organised by the agency that manages the careers of both players, beyond the broadcast ratings and money generated.

## Injured England quick Atkinson out of 5th Ashes Test

AFP | Sydney

England pace spearhead Gus Atkinson was yesterday ruled out of the fifth and final Ashes Test against Australia with a hamstring injury, their third fast bowler to head home early during the series.

The Surrey right-arm hobbled off early on day two of the fourth Test in Melbourne clutching his left leg and took no further part.

“Gus Atkinson has been ruled out for the remainder of the Ashes tour after scans confirmed he has sustained a left



Gus Atkinson in action

hamstring injury,” the England Cricket Board said.

No replacement will be called up, opening the door to either Matthew Potts or Matthew Fisher who are both in the squad but have yet to play.

Atkinson is the third England quick to be sidelined after Mark Wood (knee) and Jofra Archer (side strain), leaving Brydon Carse, Josh Tongue and Ben Stokes to shoulder the attack.

England are 3-1 down ahead of the Sydney Test starting on Sunday.

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# BIC to usher in the new year with double the fun this week in Batelco Fitness on Track

Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), ‘The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East’, keeps the fun in Sakhir going this week as the Kingdom gets set to usher in 2026.

Taking place on either side of New Year’s Day, Batelco Fitness on Track will be giving members of the public the opportunity to work off some of that holiday weight while enjoying a fun physical activity within a safe and unique environment.

Batelco Fitness on Track will be taking place both on Tuesday (Editor’s note: 30 December) from 6pm to 10pm and then again on Friday (Editor’s note: 2 January, 2026) from 6am to 10am, offering twice the chance to continue the festive joy with family and friends.

Interested participants can also choose between joining either the evening event under lights or the early morning workout in the warmth of the sun, or even take part in both!

The activity can be done on



foot or on a bicycle, giving participants the chance to select their preferred exercise programme.

Runners and walkers will be utilising BIC’s 2.550-kilometre Inner Circuit, while cyclists will get to ride their bikes along the

3.543-kilometre Outer Circuit, with another dedicated area for children’s cycling.

The cost to take part is BD2 for cyclists and BD1 for runners. Payment must be made upon booking. Children under the age of 12 can participate for free if

accompanied by a paying adult.

BIC’s Batelco Fitness on Track Season Pass is still also available – ideal for regular participants as it grants access to all Batelco Fitness on Track events throughout the season. At the affordable price of just BD15, the

pass is a great way to save money over the course of the year, with Batelco Fitness on Track being held multiple times each month, all the way through to April of next year. Season Passes can be purchased by contacting the BIC Hotline.

For more information on this week’s Batelco Fitness on Track activities or other events and experiences at BIC, visit bahraingp.com, call the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000, or follow the circuit’s official social media channels.



# Wawrinka at peace with retirement plan

Three-time major champion says he is content with his decision to retire in 2026

● Stan Wawrinka to retire in 2026

● Announces farewell beginning with United Cup

AFP | Sydney

Three-time Grand Slam winner Stan Wawrinka said yesterday he was “at peace” with his decision to make 2026 his last year on tour but insisted there were still goals to meet.

The 40-year-old announced this month that he plans to call it quits, with the United Cup in Perth starting Friday the beginning of the end for the popular Swiss star.

“Of course, I’m still passionate about the game, about the sport I love,” he said.

“What I received from it, the emotion playing in a different country, coming back here with a lot of fans, a lot of support, so I’m going to miss that part, that’s for sure,” he said.

“The last few months, I’ve had time to decide whether it will be my last year or not, and for me, it’s quite clear. I’m happy with the decision, I’m at peace with that.”

Wawrinka won the Australian



Switzerland’s Stan Wawrinka hits a return (file photo)

Open in 2014, the French Open a year later and the US Open in 2016, at a time when Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic were dominating men’s tennis.

A former world number three, he is now ranked 157 after struggling with injuries but said he would work as hard as ever this season.

“I still want to play some good tennis, I still have goals. Hopefully I can come back in the top 100, finish on a good ranking,” he said.

“I want to play the full year, the big tournaments, the main

**Wawrinka achieved the rare feat of winning three different Grand Slams between 2014 and 2016, successfully disrupting the absolute dominance of Federer, Nadal, and Djokovic during their competitive prime**

ones, and let’s see my ranking in the next few months.”

Wawrinka has 16 career ATP titles although the last came in Geneva in 2017.

He won Olympic gold in doubles alongside Federer at Beijing in 2008 and helped deliver a first Davis Cup triumph for Switzerland in 2014.

Wawrinka leads a Swiss team also boasting world number 11 Belinda Bencic at the mixed-teams United Cup where they are grouped with France and Italy.

## Spurs rising star Gray eager to keep learning after first senior goal



Tottenham Hotspur’s English midfielder #14 Archie Gray (C) heads in a goal

AFP | London

Tottenham Hotspur teenager Archie Gray is determined to improve after scoring his first professional goal in a valuable 1-0 win at Crystal Palace.

Gray was at fault when Spurs conceded a goal in a 3-0 loss at Nottingham Forest a fortnight ago after being dispossessed on the edge of his own penalty area, but was backed by Spurs manager Thomas Frank afterwards.

The 19-year-old retained his place in Spurs’ midfield and rewarded that decision at Selhurst Park with a close-range header to score for the first time on his 112th professional appearance.

“It was a difficult game for me at Forest,” said Gray after he helped Tottenham to only a second win in their last nine Premier League matches.

“The mistake was obviously my fault but that game I just tried to get on the ball as much as I could, tried to be positive

and forget about the mistake.

“Obviously (this) still wasn’t the best game, it was a scrappy game but to get a goal is something every child dreams of,” he also told SpursPlay.

“We knew if we could keep a clean sheet, we would get the chances to try and get a goal. Our back four was amazing and everyone to be fair with the mentality.

“I just found myself in the right place at the right time and it was probably Richy’s (Richarlison’s) flick which did all the work. I was stood what, two yards out from goal?”

“I didn’t really have much to do but it’s an incredible feeling.”

Gray comes from a long line of professional footballers, with his relatives including Eddie and Frank Gray, both stars of the celebrated Leeds team of the early 1970s.

But it was advice from his father Andy Gray, the former Nottingham Forest forward, that helped him recover from his recent error.