

Stuck in a war zone!

Bahrain resident tells of ordeal after being trapped in Ukraine city of Kharkiv

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

Courage and persistence remain the vital words for 23-year-old Ashly Prem, a Bahrain resident, who is trapped in one of the war zones of Ukraine.

The Indian national, a former student of Asian School and Indian School Bahrain, told The Daily Tribune that she along with her fellow classmates are being sheltered at the subway station in Kharkiv, which "is considered safe from attacks".

"Initially, I was a bit worried as the loud sounds of explosions rocked Kharkiv. But now if you really ask me, I am not afraid amidst a whole nation facing a huge challenge.

"We have to summon courage when placed in such situations," said the fifth year medical student at Karazin Kharkiv National University.

Ashly said the battlefield in Kharkiv has intensified with the Ukrainian forces putting up a great resistance against the invading Russians.

A picture instantly captured on her mobile showed smoke billowing from a neighboring building after the site was targeted by Russian forces. "These scenes are horrifying and the victims are innocent people, who have nothing to do with politics. We want this fight to end and peace set in soon."

She said Ukrainians are the most gentle people. "We are one and there is no discrimination between the citizens and foreigners."

Ashly thanked the Ukrainian authorities for regularly offering food, water and other requirements to those sheltered at Kharkiv Metro Station.



Smoke billows from a building targeted by Russian forces in Kharkiv



Ukrainian citizens and expatriates sheltered at a subway station in Kharkiv

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- ASHLY PREM, INDIAN NATIONAL AND BAHRAIN RESIDENT

"We are in touch with the Indian Mission here through a weblink. Evacuating us looks

like a hard task for the embassy as this region is located in the eastern side of Ukraine and only has a border with Russia. We are only 40km away from the Russian border."

Ashly's father Preman Kandoth, a long-time resident in the Kingdom, is among the Indian parents having their children in Ukraine, who have sent a letter to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting to bring them home.

Meanwhile, Kharkiv City Governor yesterday claimed that Ukrainian forces have repelled a Russian attempt to seize Kharkiv after fierce fighting and street battles with advancing Russian troops.

According to Oleh Synyehubov, Ukrainian soldiers were

"cleaning up" the eastern city. The governor said Russian soldiers were surrendering in groups of five to 10 and throwing their equipment in the middle of the road.

"Control over Kharkiv is completely ours," Synyehubov posted on Facebook. "A complete cleansing of the city from the enemy is happening. The Russian enemy is absolutely demoralised."

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, another Bahrain resident Razzak Mohammed Sheikh said he was worried about the safety of his grandson and daughter-in-law, both Ukrainian citizens from the city of Poltava. "Last night, they were moved into a bunker following a siren. We are worried about their safety."

Cabinet directs all agencies to cooperate with NAO initiatives

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The Cabinet has stressed the importance of consolidating responsibility and accountability to protect public funds and directed all agencies to cooperate with the National Audit Office (NAO).

This came as the Deputy Prime Minister, His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, yesterday chaired the weekly Cabinet meeting at Gudaibiya Palace.

The Cabinet commended His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's visit to the Royal Bahraini Air Force to commemorate the Bahrain Defence Force's 54th anniversary celebrations.

It noted His Majesty's commitment to supporting the BDF's ongoing development by providing its units with the latest technology and equipment.

During the meeting, the Cabinet also discussed and approved several memorandums such as:

1. A memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs regarding draft MoUs and executive programmes between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Sultanate of Oman aimed at supporting bilateral cooperation across various fields.

2. A memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs on draft MoUs between the King-



HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak

dom of Bahrain and the US related to enhancing cooperation between the two countries.

3. A memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs regarding the government's response to five proposals and two law proposals submitted by the Council of Representatives and a law proposal submitted by the Shura Council.

The Cabinet reviewed the following topics:

1. A memorandum on the electronic transformation of the service of issuing and renewing licenses for real estate professionals at the Real Estate Regulatory Authority, which will contribute to providing a 24-hour service.

The Cabinet also took note of the report by the Minister of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism regarding participation in the 16th Arab International Conference on Mineral Resources.

Environment, climate change cornerstone of Bahrain development

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The Kingdom of Bahrain attaches great importance to the issue of environment and climate change, making it one of the priorities and a cornerstone of its modern development march.

This was emphasised by Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak bin Daina, Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, Vice-President of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE), as he participated in the second segment of the Fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2).

The meeting, held virtually at the UN headquarters in Nairobi, under the theme "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals", started yesterday, and will continue until March 2.

Addressing the session, Dr Bin Daina said the policies adopted by the kingdom in the environment and climate change fields are the outcome of the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the unwavering interest of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, as well as the close



Dr Bin Daina

follow-up of HM the King's Personal Representative and SCE President, His Highness Shaikh Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

He indicated that over the past years, the Supreme Council for the Environment has worked strenuously to develop environment-related laws and legislative rules to make them more effective and comprehensive, commensurate with the sustainable development goals and Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

Dr Bin Daina affirmed the Kingdom's resolve to face the challenges of plastic waste and eliminate their risks, as well as fulfill its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adopting basic natural solutions, such as expanding green spaces, to reach zero neutrality.

World-class roaming performers off the track at Bahrain F1

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Abraham Thill is a professional street- and circus-performer who has been performing since 1999. His is an energy-packed street show that includes clowning, pantomime, comedy, object- and subject-manipulations, improvisations, magic and extraordinary, and mind-blowing Diabolo skills.

Aras Stilt Band is a combination of one of the best groups of percussions and of stilt-walkers. Their colourful outstanding costumes with big wings and beautiful music make them one of the most appreciated in Europe, inspired by the Aras colourful bird from the rainforest.

The Joker group comprises a



Funky Style Band

team of funny and playful interactive clowns. They have travelled across Europe entertaining kids and the young-at-heart with acts that include fantastic circus skills, uni-cycling, jug-

gling and stilt walking.

The Colour Dancers are charming stilt-performers in glowing colours with light-footed dances and comical interaction. They dance through streets, parks and

rooms in ever-changing formations to all kinds of music.

Dr Bubbles is a flamboyant character who comes up with colourful creations through giant soap bubbles come in all shapes and sizes. These unique structures of water reflect the bright lights at BIC, making them shimmer in colours of a rainbow and bringing sparkling joy to all.

Funky Style Band is an innovative and captivating group in the panorama of marching bands. They maintain the effective format of the union between sound and movement, but reinterpret it in a unique way. They have eye-catching uniforms and they play and dance with the grit and enthusiasm typical of a respectable street band, but without forgetting the elegance of the Italian funky style.

COURT STORY

Five get 10-year jail term each for sex trafficking

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The High Criminal Court sentenced five persons to 10 years each in prison for trafficking three Asian women.

The defendants include one Bahraini man, aged 33, and three

Thai women, aged 27, 28 and 38, as well as a 32-year-old Bangladeshi man.

The defendants are said to have locked up the victims in an apartment and forced them to be prostitutes.

The Bahraini man's law-

yer argued that the victims had stated in their statements that they came to Bahrain to practise sex and offer massage services. He also provided the court with a CD that contained a video showing the victims moving around and using their

phones.

The defendants were arrested after the embassy of the three victims' country reported that they were locked up in an apartment and they were compelled to have sex with strangers.