

Cassandre Beaugrand and Alex Yee shine in Olympic triathlon after Seine pollution delays | P16

# THE DAILY **tribune**

# Global call for calm

International community on high alert as Haniyeh killing threatens Mideast peace

TDT | Manama

With the sudden escalation of tensions in the Mideast, following Israel's killing of Hamas' political leader Ismail Haniyeh while in Iran, world leaders yesterday called for cooler heads to prevail and avoid actions that would escalate the conflict.

The Israeli attack occurred at 2am local time while the Hamas leader was in Iran to attend the swearing-in of Iran's new President.

According to AFP reports citing Iranian media, the Israeli strike targeted special residences for war veterans in north Tehran where Haniyeh was staying.

An "official and public" funeral ceremony for Haniyeh will be held in Tehran today before his body is flown to Qatar, his base in recent years, for burial tomorrow, Hamas said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the strike on Tehran, and another one on Tuesday in Beirut that killed a top Hezbollah commander, represented a "dangerous escalation".

All efforts, he said, should be "leading to a ceasefire" in Gaza, and the release of hostages taken there from Israel.

The European Union called for "maximum restraint" in the aftermath of Haniyeh's assassination.



Palestinians attend a protest in Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank following the assassination of Ismail. (AFP)

Calling for restraint in the Mideast, the German government said, "It is essential to avoid further escalation and a regional conflagration." German foreign ministry spokesman Sebastian Fischer said, "We call on all actors to exercise maximum restraint, the logic of tit-for-tat reprisals is the wrong path."

Russia strongly condemned Haniyeh's killing and said it could "significantly destabilize" the region.

"We believe that such actions are directed against attempts to restore peace in the region and could significant destabilise an already tense situation," Kremlin

spokesman Dmitry Peskov stated. "It is a completely unacceptable political assassination, and this will lead to a further escalation of tensions," Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov told the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

China's foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian said, "We

are highly concerned about the incident and firmly oppose and condemn the assassination."

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned what he called the "perfidious assassination" of his "brother" Haniyeh.

## Bahrain warns of escalation in region

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain warned of the danger of escalation operations in the region and its repercussions on the security situation, increasing tension and violence, and fueling conflict in the Middle East.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised Bahrain's position against political violence, calling on the Security Council and the international community to support the efforts of the countries of the region to prevent further escalation and tension and their dangerous repercussions on regional security and stability.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned what he called the "perfidious assassination" of his "brother" Haniyeh.

(Related reports on World Page)

## BCFC reports BD3.3 million H1 profit



P6

220 fils (includes VAT)



6 084010 110021 >

## US downplays 'wider war' fears despite high-profile strikes

AFP | Washington

An Israeli strike that killed a Hezbollah commander in Beirut and the killing of the political leader of Hamas in Tehran "don't help" regional tensions but there are no signs of an imminent wider conflict, the White House said yesterday. "These reports over the last 24, 48 hours certainly don't help with the temperature going down," National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters when asked about the attacks.

"We're obviously concerned about escalation."

Kirby downplayed the risk of an immediate descent into the all-out war that the region has feared since Hamas's October 7 attacks on Israel and the ensuing war in Gaza.

"We don't really think that an escalation is inevitable and there's no signs that an escalation is imminent," he said.

But he said Washington was carefully monitoring developments.

"It's not like we're brushing off concerns at all. We're watching this very, very closely and it's been a chief concern of the president," said Kirby.

The strikes on two of Isra-



US spokesman John Kirby speaks during the daily press briefing. (AFP)

el's arch foes came less than a week after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the White House for talks with

"We don't really think that an escalation is inevitable and there's no signs that an escalation is imminent."

- JOHN KIRBY, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SPOKESMAN

President Joe Biden aimed at pushing a ceasefire in Gaza.

Hamas blamed an Israeli strike for the killing of its po-

litical leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

Israel declined to comment on the attack but Netanyahu on Wednesday said his country had delivered "crushing blows" to its enemies, and explicitly mentioned the killing of Hezbollah leader Fuad Shukur in south Beirut.

Kirby said it was "too soon" to tell what impact the strikes would have on talks for a deal to reach a truce and release hostages held by Hamas.

"That doesn't mean we're going to stop working on it. We have a team in the region right now as we speak," he said.

**SALE** **تنزيلات**  
**25-75% OFF\***

**homesrus**

CITY CENTRE: 17556002  
SEHLA: 17556001

تطبيق الشروط والأحكام  
\*Terms and conditions apply

# IHCL signs deal to establish two Taj hotels in Bahrain

Part of India's largest hospitality company's strategy to expand footprints in Middle East

Mumbai

The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, announced the signing of a luxury hotel and boutique resort in the Kingdom of Bahrain, both under its iconic Taj brand.

These greenfield projects mark a significant milestone as IHCL becomes the first Indian hospitality company to establish a presence in the Kingdom of Bahrain, further cementing its footprint in the Middle East.

Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL, stated, "We are pleased to announce two hotels in the island nation of Bahrain in line with our strategy of growing Taj's presence in key gateway cities of the world. With a portfolio of seven hotels including four under development in the Middle East, these hotels will extend our presence in the MENA region."

He added, "We are delighted to partner with Kingdom Projects to introduce the iconic Taj with its world-class hospitality, elevating Bahrain's tourism landscape."

Nestled amid picturesque surroundings, the Taj resort in Hamala will feature 251 luxurious rooms, each thoughtfully designed to reflect the laid-back serenity of the island.

### Luxury offerings

The resort will offer luxury offerings, including an all-day dining restaurant, two specialty restaurants, alongside a swimming pool and exclusive beach club.

Curated to create an atmosphere of relaxation and rejuvenation, the resort will additionally encompass wellness areas such as a state-of-the-art gym and tranquil spa. The resort's 1,200 sq.mt banquet facilities will cater to grand events and celebrations, making it a key



Mr. Jalal Al Wazzan, Managing Director of Kingdom Projects W.L.L., with Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL

player in Bahrain's emerging leisure sector.

The 200 room Taj hotel in Downtown Seef, Manama, strategically located in the heart of Bahrain's bustling capital, is set to cater to the needs of business travelers and tourists alike.

Coupled with world-class wellness facilities including a modern gym, spa, and swimming pool, the hotel will provide guests with an endless variety of culinary experiences, ranging from all-day dining and specialty restaurants, to an exclusive pool bar.

**"We are delighted to partner with Kingdom Projects to introduce the iconic Taj with its world-class hospitality, elevating Bahrain's tourism landscape."**

- MR. PUNEET CHHATWAL, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, IHCL

The Downtown Seef hotel will additionally feature banquet areas tailored for meetings, corporate events, and weddings.

Mr. Jalal Al Wazzan, Managing Director of Kingdom Projects W.L.L, stated, "We are delighted to welcome the prestigious and world-renowned Taj brand, a first for Bahrain, which will work towards attracting tourists in greater numbers from across the region and around the globe, thereby enhancing the



tourism sector's contribution to GDP. In line with the Economic Vision 2030 driven by the Crown Prince, partnering with leading leisure and hospitality brands exemplifies Kingdom Projects' vested commitment to contribute to the development and growth of the tourism sector and thereby, the diversification of the national economy."

With the addition of these hotels, IHCL will have a presence of 7 hotels with 4 under development in the Middle East.

### Owner

The Kingdom Projects W.L.L, a pioneering company in the real estate sector, is renowned for its innovative approach and commitment to excellence and is driven by the Crown Prince's Vision of 2030.

Kingdom Projects W.L.L stand as one of the most esteemed and significant real estate development firms in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

**Financing Amount**  
BHD 12,500.000

**Financing Duration**  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**Installment Amount**  
BHD 154.000

**Your personal finance has been pre-approved!**

## Personal funding made easy!

Download the App

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Terms and conditions apply.

Licensed by CBB as a conventional Retail Bank.

# Overseas voting procedures for by-election are outlined

TDT | Manama

The Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Waqf, His Excellency Nawaf bin Mohammed Al Maawda, yesterday outlined the procedures for the upcoming by-election for the Council of Representatives, focusing on voters residing outside Bahrain.

Each Bahraini embassy, consulate, or diplomatic mission abroad is to form a committee responsible for overseeing the polling and counting of votes for the vacant seat in the first electoral district of Muharraq Governorate.

These committees will be headed by the ambassador,



HE Nawaf bin Mohammed Al Maawda

consul general, or head of the mission, along with two additional officials, one of whom will serve as the committee's secretary.

These committees will manage the voting process in their respective locations, with the election scheduled for Tuesday, 3 September 2024, and a possible re-election on Tuesday, 10 September 2024, if required. Voting hours are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. local time.

The directive also tasks the committees with publicising the registration and voting procedures on the elections website and social media platforms. Bahraini citizens abroad can register to vote online or at the diplomatic missions between 19 and 21 August 2024, provided they are already listed on Bahrain's electoral roll for the district.

# Over 100,000 visit Housing Ministry website

● 20,000 requests submitted

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Housing's website drew over 100,000 visitors during the first half of this year.

Ahmed Al Thawadi, the Ministry's Director of Information Technology, noted a surge in citizen interaction with the eServices provided through the Virtual Customer Service Centre, which launched last June.

Al Thawadi reported that more than 20,000 requests were submitted via the Ministry's website and the national portal, bahrain.bh.

These requests encompassed a range of services, including financial aid, housing units, residential plots, maintenance of housing units and apartments, disposal rights, and ownership procedures.

He also remarked on the growing popularity of the Virtual Customer Service Centre, crediting its success to the accessible eServices and the support offered.

The Ministry has conducted 507 virtual financial consultations for those seeking financial guidance.

Additionally, 2,453 appointments were scheduled through the eService for visits to the Customer Service Centre, where all queries were addressed and necessary consultations provided.

In another update, the page dedicated to the Muharraq City Development saw over 3,000 visits.

This platform offers services related to property ownership, ownership procedures, frequently asked questions, and information on construction in heritage areas.

Al Thawadi mentioned the Ministry's ongoing efforts to improve its eServices.

# Pardon recipients, minors involved in holding illegal riots

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior has confirmed the arrest of individuals involved in recent illegal riots.

Among those arrested were individuals who had previously benefited from a royal pardon, having been released from convictions in various criminal cases.

Despite the opportunity for rehabilitation, some have reverted to criminal behavior.

Several minors were also arrested, prompting the Ministry to initiate legal procedures under Article 55 of the Law on Restorative Justice for Children and Their Protection from Abuse.

This law holds guardians accountable for any harm caused to minors under their care.



The Ministry will hand the minors over to their guardians, highlighting the importance of parental responsibility.

The Ministry reiterates that actions against riots are conducted in accordance with the law, as such events threaten civil peace and the social fabric.

Maintaining Bahrain's stability is a national duty, and the Ministry remains committed to protecting the country's security and achievements.

# High humidity to continue

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain has experienced humid weather conditions since early yesterday, with relative humidity levels reaching 90% by the evening, accompanied by high temperatures.

According to the Meteorology Directorate at the Ministry of Transportation, this trend is expected to persist until today.

The forecast indicates a maximum relative humidity of 90%, with some clouds in

the morning, followed by hot conditions during the day.

The weather is expected to improve at night, with northerly winds ranging from 5 to 10 knots.

The maximum temperature is forecasted to reach 45°C, while the minimum will be 31°C.

Looking ahead, the humidity is expected to decrease tomorrow, with the maximum relative humidity dropping to 65% and the minimum to 10%, as per meteorological forecasts.

# CID marks World Day against Trafficking

TDT | Manama

To mark the World Day against Trafficking in Persons 2024, the General Directorate of Criminal Investigations and Forensic Science held a workshop on the efforts of the Kingdom of Bahrain to maintain its international status for the seventh year in a

row, according to the US State Department report.

or this occasion, Deputy Director-General of Criminal Investigations and Forensic Science Brigadier Raed Ali Al Meili pointed out in his speech that the Kingdom of Bahrain continued its efforts to combat trafficking in persons, hailing Bahrain's human rights.

# Instant regret

Bahraini man pleads guilty to online hate speech, promises to delete account

TDT | Manama

A Bahraini man appeared in the Lower Criminal Court, pleading guilty to charges of insulting and defaming a religious group through social media.

The defendant admitted to posting offensive content while in a state of anger and impulsiveness, but claimed he deleted the posts within two minutes.

However, another individual had already captured screenshots of the tweets before they were removed.

The defendant expressed remorse for his actions and pledged to delete his social media account, assuring the court that he would not repeat such behaviour.

The court adjourned the case until August 6th for further deliberation.

The Public Prosecution, in a statement, revealed earlier that the investigation was initiated following a report filed by the Electronic Security Directorate of the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic, and Electronic Security.

The accused's tweets,



Image used for illustrative purposes only




The Public Prosecution emphasised that social media platforms, while vast, are subject to legal regulations and boundaries.

which were publicly accessible, contained offensive language and derogatory remarks aimed at a specific religious community.

After being apprehended and questioned, the defendant confessed to posting the tweets with the intention of harming the targeted group, stating that he had been provoked.


The Public Prosecution ordered his detention for seven days pending further investigation and subsequently referred him to the Third Criminal Court of First Instance, where he was held in custody.



北京中国饭店  
**PEKING**  
CHINESE RESTAURANT

المذاق الصيني الأصيل  
احصل عليه بضغطة زر

AUTHENTIC CHINESE TASTE  
GET IT WITH THE CLICK OF A BUTTON

jahez

17722199 | Peking.BH | Water Garden City

# High-tech classrooms

MPs to discuss proposal installing security cameras in schools

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

MPs are expected to discuss the installation of security cameras in classrooms and school facilities when sessions resume.

This move aims to enhance educational quality by improving resources and behavioural assessment methods through advanced observation techniques, recognising the crucial role of effective teaching and classroom management in reducing violence and bullying.

MP Basma Mubarak and several colleagues are advocating for this initiative.

According to the explanatory memorandum, the Ministry of Education is committed to providing top-tier educational services by elevating education quality, building community partnerships, and developing the knowledge, skills, and values of students to improve educational outcomes and support the national economy.

## Personal development

In its ongoing efforts to promote positive behaviour



Image used for illustrative purposes only



MP Basma Mubarak

among students, the Ministry is eager to amplify the role of administrative and educational bodies in supporting the personal development of students at all educational levels.

In collaboration with parents, teachers strive to develop students' skills while promoting positive values and addressing their psychological needs by providing a disciplined and

motivating environment and employing various educational strategies.

The proposal aims to finalise the installation of security cameras in Bahrain's school facilities and classrooms to systematically monitor the school day, offer adequate evidence for student assessment and parental follow-up, and reduce the likelihood of problems arising.



The security cameras aim to enhance educational quality by improving resources and behavioural assessment methods through advanced observation techniques.

# Bahrainis wish to leave Lebanon

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Embassy in Damascus has received calls from Bahraini citizens requesting to leave Lebanon, prompting it to activate its plans to facilitate their return.

This was confirmed by His Excellency Wahid Mubarak Sayyar, the ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Syria.

This comes as fears of an all-out war in the region are growing, fueled by escalating tensions between Israel and Hezbollah.

The embassy has confirmed that it is fully prepared to assist

those wishing to return home. Ambassador Sayyar stated that the number of Bahraini citizens currently in Lebanon is very small, with the majority being students.

He explained that the return of citizens wishing to leave will be facilitated through Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport.

In the event that all flights are suspended at Beirut airport, the embassy will arrange for their return by land to Syria and then by air to Bahrain via Damascus International Airport, he stated.

# Six-month shrimp fishing ban set to be lifted today

TDT | Manama

The General Directorate of Marine Wealth at the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE) has announced the lifting of the shrimp fishing ban effective today.

The six-month ban, which runs from February 1st to July 31st each year, is aimed at protecting the Kingdom's marine resources.

The SCE emphasised that the ban is in line with regional decisions aimed at safeguarding fish stocks, highlighting their commitment to ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of Bahrain's marine ecosystem.

The Directorate General of Marine Wealth also stressed the importance of fishermen adhering to authorised fishing methods as outlined in Decree No. (205) of 2018, which prohibits bottom trawling (Kraf) in Bahrain's territorial waters.

This annual ban plays a crucial role in allowing shrimp populations to replenish and ensuring a sustainable future for the Kingdom's fishing industry.

The SCE continues to encourage responsible fishing practices and urges all fishermen to comply with regulations for the benefit of the entire community.

# Two Bahraini climbers conquer Mount Elbrus

TDT | Manama

Two Bahrainis, Mohammed Al-Maamari and Ali Shakeeb, successfully raised the Kingdom of Bahrain's flag atop Mount Elbrus in the Russian Federation.

At 5,642 meters, Mount Elbrus is the highest peak in Europe and Russia and ranks tenth globally.

This feat was organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Bahrain Youth Hostels Association, with oversight from the Bahrain Fitness Academy.

Reflecting on the experience, Al-Omari stated, "We achieved the desired goal of the adventure by raising the Kingdom's flag high on the summit of Mount Elbrus, which is the highest mountain peak in Europe and among the highest peaks in the world. The adventure was very difficult in light of the difficult climatic conditions and low temperatures, in addition to many challenges that we were able to overcome to reach the desired goal."

Shakeeb, the youngest Arab climber to reach the summit, expressed pride in his achievement, saying, "I was able to achieve an accomplishment that is added to



Mohammed Al-Maamari and Ali Shakeeb, along with their leader, Musab Hamada raise the Bahrain flag at Europe's highest peak

the series of accomplishments achieved by the youth of the Kingdom of Bahrain. By reaching the summit of Mount Elbrus, I was able to register my name as the youngest Arab climber to reach the summit. I am proud of this accomplishment and I will seek to enhance it in future adventures."

## Difficulties and challenges

He added, "Reaching the sum-

mit was not easy. We faced many difficulties and challenges, including the weather conditions and cold, in addition to the high altitudes where the oxygen level is low. However, our love for raising the Bahraini flag and affirming the status of our youth made us overcome all challenges."

Both climbers were under the guidance of Musab Hamada, who highlighted the importance of preparation, stating, "Taking

on such adventures requires physical and mental preparation and fitness, so we were keen to prepare the two young men, Al-Maamari and Shakeeb, before taking on the difficult test of climbing the summit. They lived up to expectations through their commitment to the entire climbing plan and their high ability to overcome difficulties while climbing to the summit to reach the desired goal."

# 3,644 inspections to safeguard fisheries

● First six months of 2024

TDT | Manama

The General Directorate of Marine Wealth has announced the completion of 3,644 inspections across all governorates of Bahrain in the first half of the year 2024.

These inspections demonstrate the directorate's commitment to protecting fish stocks and regulating fishing practices to ensure the sustainable management and conservation of marine resources.

"The inspections, which encompassed public beaches, central markets, fishmongers, and outdoor stalls, were carried out in collaboration with relevant authorities.

They included verifying fishing licenses, inspecting fishing equipment and methods, ensuring adherence to permitted fish species and fishing seasons, and assessing the safety of workers' practices.

The inspections resulted in the identification of 93 violations, which were addressed in coordination with relevant authorities," the Directorate highlighted in a statement.

"The directorate's efforts extend beyond inspections. They are committed to preserving natural resources, bolstering fish stocks, and regulating fishing practices through a series of initiatives and programs. These efforts aim to ensure the sustainable development and conservation of marine resources for current and future generations," the statement explained.

# Northern Council member calls for swift property registration in Al-Lawzi

TDT | Manama

Northern Council Member Zainab Al-Durazi has emphasised the urgent need to expedite property registration for citizens and residents in Al-Lawzi, particularly in Block 1020, urging the authorities to take swift action to address the issue.

This includes establishing commercial shops and parking

spaces in the newly planned properties.

Al-Durazi mentioned that the Ministry of Housing has confirmed ongoing efforts to finalise the approval procedures for housing project plans.

She had earlier proposed the creation of a market, shops, and parking areas to benefit the Al-Lawzi area.

Al-Durazi emphasised that these facilities are crucial for

generating business opportunities and enabling residents to access daily necessities without lengthy travel. She also suggested adequate parking spaces to ensure convenience for shoppers and visitors.

In an official response, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning stated that the new plan takes into account the area's needs and population density, adhering to approved planning

standards.

The ministry confirmed ongoing efforts to complete the plan approval procedures, following a study of the area's population density and available services.

Al-Durazi stressed the necessity of including playgrounds and parks in the new plan to cater to residents' recreational and sports needs. She noted that these facilities are vital for enhancing the quality of life and

providing essential services to citizens and residents.

The Housing Bank's response indicated that, according to the approved master plan, several government properties have been designated as shops for the bank's benefit and are in the process of being registered with the Survey and Land Registration Authority.

The proposal will be reviewed once the registration procedures

are complete.

The Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture confirmed that it has received the land registration proposal and has contacted the Ministry of Housing to approve the registration of properties such as parks, walkways, and playgrounds.

The process of registering government sites within housing projects requires approvals from multiple authorities.





# NBB names partners for third EVOLVE Summer Internship



**TDT | Manama**

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has announced the training providers, companies, educational institutions, and non-profit organisations supporting the third edition of its highly acclaimed EVOLVE Summer Internship Programme.

This announcement follows the recent launch of the programme, which continues to offer valuable opportunities for high school and university students to gain practical experience and industry knowledge.

NBB is collaborating with a diverse range of prominent institutions to ensure a comprehensive curriculum for EVOLVE participants.

These companies and training providers include Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company ("Mumtalakat"), Bahrain FinTech Bay, Berlitz Bahrain, Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF), INJAZ Bahrain, Mada Translation, Traffic Directorate Session and Senyar Diving Centre.

Students from universities such as the Bahrain Institute

of Banking and Finance (BIBF), Ahlia University, British University of Bahrain, American University of Bahrain, Bahrain Polytechnic, and Euro University of Bahrain will be participating in the programme. Meanwhile, high school students include those attending from Bahrain Bayan School, Ibn Khuldoon National School (IKNS), APG School, St. Christopher's

School, Alhekma International School, British School of Bahrain and Naseem International School.

Student candidates from non-profit organisations such as the Crown Prince International Scholarship Programme, Royal Humanitarian Foundation, AlMabarrah AlKhalifia Foundation, and INJAZ Bahrain will also join in the programme.

EVOLVE offers attendees hands-on vocational trainings, functional simulations, and exposure to various divisions within the Bank.

Furthermore, it emphasises soft skills development through team-building exercises, first-aid training, and even sign language lessons to ensure participants become well-rounded professionals.

## Kanoo Ventures invests in CorrosionRADAR

**TDT | Manama**

Kanoo Ventures, the investment arm of YBA Kanoo, has announced a significant investment in CorrosionRADAR, the leading provider of predictive Corrosion Under Insulation (CUI) monitoring solutions. This latest funding round, which also includes investments from Aramco Ventures, Dow and Mercia Ventures, brings the total capital raised by CorrosionRADAR to \$14 million (£11.7M).

This infusion of capital will enable CorrosionRADAR to accelerate the deployment of its cutting-edge CUI monitoring systems on a global scale, enhance its product offerings, and further its mission to improve safety and operational efficiency within the oil, gas, petrochemical and hydrogen sectors.

Dr. Chiraz Ennaceur, Chief Executive Officer at Corrosion-



RADAR, expressed enthusiasm about the strategic support from these industry leaders: "CorrosionRADAR is in a period of rapid growth, and we are leading the way with our predictive CUI monitoring solutions that safeguard critical assets and ensure the longevity of critical infrastructure."

"We're delighted to have companies such as Aramco Ventures, Dow, Kanoo Ventures, and Mercia Ventures on board. This investment will allow us

to continue with our ambition to increase our global footprint and develop state-of-the-art solutions that improve industrial processes through the early detection of CUI, promoting more efficient operations," she added.

Mr. Nabeel Kanoo, Chairman of Kanoo Ventures, commented: "Our investment in CorrosionRADAR underscores our commitment to supporting innovative technologies that enhance operational efficiency

and sustainability. We believe CorrosionRADAR's pioneering solutions will set new industry standards and significantly improve safety and reliability globally."

UK-based CorrosionRADAR is already making waves in the industry, with its predictive CUI monitoring systems being utilized by major companies worldwide, including Dow and Aramco. The continued collaboration and investment from Kanoo Ventures and other stakeholders will further bolster CorrosionRADAR's capacity to innovate and lead in the field.

Kanoo Ventures continues to build on its strong track record across industrials, travel, consumer goods and specialty logistics. Additionally, the firm is actively focusing on healthcare, food and agriculture and the new economy sectors both regionally and globally.

## CrowdStrike outage to cost Delta \$500 mn: CEO



Representative picture

**AFP | New York, United States**

A global computer outage in July that stranded thousands of travelers will cost Delta Air Lines \$500 million, the company's CEO Ed Bastian told CNBC yesterday.

Bastian added in an interview that the carrier would seek damages for the disruptions, saying: "We have no choice."

"We're looking to make certain that we get compensated however they decide to, for what they cost us," he said, referring to US companies Microsoft and CrowdStrike.

CrowdStrike, the cybersecurity company that caused the outage, previously said that the breakdown stemmed from a problem in its test software. The company said in an incident report that the glitch was pushed out to millions of computers running Microsoft's Windows software and

that it will change the way it handles such updates in the future.

The incident has cost Delta "half a billion dollars" over five days -- lost revenue, as well as tens of millions of dollars per day in compensation and hotels, said Bastian.

CrowdStrike said earlier this month that about 8.5 million devices were impacted by the outage, which hit a wide range of industries.

Users were faced with "blue screens of death" that made rebooting impossible -- with the airline industry visibly impacted by the crash.

Delta, which was said to have cancelled more than 5,000 flights, was particularly affected.

According to Bastian, it had to manually reset 40,000 servers.

"It's been a wakeup call for me because we have issues regularly in this space," he said.

## Boeing names new CEO as it reports hefty loss

**AFP | New York, United States**

Boeing named former Rockwell Collins chief Robert "Kelly" Ortberg its next CEO yesterday, as the aviation giant reported a hefty loss on continued operational problems.

Ortberg, 64, helped lead Rockwell Collins and integrate it into United Technology prior to his retirement from RTX in 2021.

His appointment comes as

Boeing attempts to rebound from a series of safety and quality control problems that have sharpened scrutiny on the company.

Ortberg "is an experienced leader who is deeply respected in the aerospace industry," said Boeing chairman Steve Mollenkopf in a message to employees.

Ortberg is set to become CEO on August 8, taking over for Dave Calhoun, a former Gen-

eral Electric and private equity executive who has held the post since early 2020.

"We look forward to working with Kelly as he leads Boeing through this consequential period in our long history," Mollenkopf said. Boeing on Wednesday reported a second-quarter loss of \$1.4 billion, compared with a loss of \$149 million in the year-ago period.

Revenues fell 14.6 percent to

\$16.9 billion. The quarterly results reflected a continued drag from Boeing's commercial division, where it has lowered production while addressing safety and quality control issues under the close watch of regulators.

Boeing has been in the hot seat since a January incident in which a 737 MAX operated by Alaska Airlines made an emergency landing after a fuselage panel blew out mid-flight.

News in brief

◆ **The European Union** yesterday said it had begun paying 400 million euros (\$430 million) in emergency funding to the Palestinian Authority to help address its "critical" budget problems. Brussels said the first 150-million-euro tranche includes grants to help pay the salaries of civil servants in the West Bank and support vulnerable families. The rest of the funds will be disbursed in August and September "subject to progress in the implementation of the reform agenda of the Palestinian Authority (PA)", the EU said in a statement. The authority has long faced a fiscal crisis, but its finances have been hit further by the Gaza war in Gaza as Israel has withheld tax revenue meant for the Palestinian territory.



**EU begins paying 400 mn euros emergency aid to Palestinian Authority**

◆ **President Volodymyr Zelensky** said Ukraine and the entire world wants to see Russia take part in global forums aimed at ending the grinding conflict in Ukraine. Leaders and top officials from more than 90 countries gathered at the Swiss resort of Burgenstock in June for a first peace summit, which Russia derided as a waste of time. But Zelensky has recently indicated that Moscow should be represented at the second summit tentatively planned for this year, a change of approach after Kyiv explicitly excluded Moscow from the first high-level meeting. "The majority of the world today says that Russia must be represented at the second summit, otherwise we will not achieve meaningful results," Zelensky said. "Since the whole world wants them to be at the table, we cannot be against it," he told AFP and other French media during an interview Tuesday in western Ukraine.

**'Whole world' wants Russia at next peace summit: Zelensky**



◆ **The United States sanctioned** two people and four firms on Wednesday for facilitating the procurement of weapons on behalf of Yemen's Huthi rebels. The group began launching attacks on ships in the Red Sea following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, forcing many shipping companies to alter their routes and triggering retaliatory strikes by the United States and its allies. Wednesday's sanctions targeted "procurement operatives, shipment facilitators and suppliers" based in Yemen and China who sourced dual-use equipment for use in the Huthi's advanced weapons systems, the Treasury Department said in a statement. It said that those sanctioned had "directly supported" the Yemeni rebels' efforts to procure "military-grade materials abroad," which were then shipped to Huthi-controlled areas of Yemen, enabling their ongoing attacks. The Huthis "have sought to exploit key jurisdictions like the PRC (People's Republic of China) and Hong Kong in order to source and transport the components necessary for their deadly weapons systems," US Treasury under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence Brian Nelson said.

**US sanctions Huthi weapons procurement network**



SPOTLIGHT

**Russia seizes almost 200 km2 of Ukraine in July**

AFP | Paris, France



Russia consolidated its territory gains in eastern Ukraine in July, taking control of almost 200 square kilometres (77 square miles), according to an AFP analysis yesterday. The analysis, based on data from the US-based Institute for the Study of War (ISW), shows an increase over the previous month but a big slowdown compared to May, when Russian forces launched a ground offensive in the border region of Kharkiv, which has since been stopped. In that month Russian forces seized 449 square kilometres, an average of 14.5 square kilometres per day, their biggest monthly gains since March 2022, just after President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine.

square kilometres, or an average of 6.6 square kilometres per day. More than three-quarters, or 155 square kilometres, are in the eastern region of Donetsk, parts of which have been controlled by Kremlin-backed separatists since 2014.

The region is a springboard for Russia as it seeks to seize Pokrovsk, Toretsk and Chasiv Yar, as they prepare attacks on Kramatorsk and Sloviansk. In June, Russia had seized 129 square kilometres, or 4.3 square kilometres per day. Since the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022, Russia has taken 65,776 square kilometres of Ukrainian territory. If territory already annexed by Russia such as the Crimean peninsula and eastern zones already under Russian control before the invasion are included, Russian now occupies 107,956 square kilometres or 18 percent of Ukraine according to its internationally recognised borders. AFP's calculations are based on information provided by a daily ISW report that relies on public information published by the two warring sides and satellite images.

Since the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022, Russia has taken 65,776 square kilometres of Ukrainian territory. If territory already annexed by Russia such as the Crimean peninsula and eastern zones already under Russian control before the invasion are included, Russian now occupies 107,956 square kilometres or 18 percent of Ukraine according to its internationally recognised borders.

AFP's calculations are based on information provided by a daily ISW report that relies on public information published by the two warring sides and satellite images.

AFP's calculations are based on information provided by a daily ISW report that relies on public information published by the two warring sides and satellite images.

AFP's calculations are based on information provided by a daily ISW report that relies on public information published by the two warring sides and satellite images.

'It's a thunderbolt,' say Palestinian

AFP | Palestinian Territories

The killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in an air strike in Tehran yesterday came as a "thunderbolt" to war-weary Gazans, with some expressing disappointment Iran was unable to "protect him". "This news is like a thunderbolt, something unbelievable," said Wael Qudayh, 35, a resident of the central city of Deir al-Balah.

Yesterday, Hamas and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards announced that Haniyeh had been killed in Tehran in an Israeli air strike. He was in the Iranian capital to attend the swearing-in on Tuesday of President Masoud Pezeshkian. "Qatar was able to protect Haniyeh for 10 months, but Iran was unable to protect him even for a few hours," said Youssef Saeed, 40, also a resident of Deir el-Balah.

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Hossam Abdel Razek, 45, an employee in a private institution in Ramallah, said Haniyeh's killing showed that the "blood of Palestinians is cheap". "The assassination of Ismail Haniyeh in Iran proves that we, the Palestinian people, have no protector, that our blood is cheap, and that the Arab and Islamic nation sold us out to America and Israel," he said.

Sami Naem told AFP in Deir al-Balah that the assassination "will affect the negotiations" for a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. "Ismail Haniyeh is a politician who has his say over all the Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip", Naem said. Rami Youssef disagreed, saying the Hamas leader's killing might even hasten the end of the war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "was under pressure from America to end the war but he wants an achievement ... and he believes that Haniyeh is a great achievement," Youssef said. 'Martyrdom' Palestinian factions called for a general strike and marches across the West Bank on Wednesday to protest the killing of Haniyeh. Several Palestinians in the Gaza

**Hamas chief burial in Doha Friday after Tehran funeral ceremony**

Doha, Qatar

The burial of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh is to be held in Doha on Friday a day after a public funeral ceremony in Tehran, the Palestinian group said yesterday.



People hold up the Palestinian flag and a portrait of assassinated Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh Hamas

Haniyeh "will be given an official and public funeral ceremony in the Iranian capital, Tehran, tomorrow," Hamas said in a statement, explaining his body would be transported to

the Qatari capital later the same day. It said funeral prayers will be held at Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque, Doha's largest mosque, after Friday prayers, with the burial carried out at a cemetery in Lusail, north of the Qatari capital. The Hamas statement added the ceremony in Doha would be held "with popular and factional attendance and the participation of Arab and Islamic leaders".

**Hezbollah say was in Beirut**

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Hezbollah said yesterday that senior military commander Fuad Shukur was inside a south Beirut building hit by Israel the previous day but that his fate remained unknown. The Israeli military said its Tuesday strike had "eliminated" Shukur, a top Hezbollah commander it blamed for carrying out a weekend rocket attack on the annexed Golan Heights that killed 12 children in a Druze Arab town.

Hezbollah said in a statement that "the great jihadist commander brother Fuad Shukur (Hajj Mohsen) was present" in

**Qatar questions future**

AFP | Doha, Qatar

Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani yesterday cast doubt over the success of future mediation between Israel and Hamas following the killing of the group's political chief Ismail Haniyeh. "Political assassinations & continued targeting of civilians

in Gaza while talks continue leads us to ask, how can mediation succeed when one party assassinates the negotiator on other side? Peace needs serious partners," Sheikh Mohammed, who has led Qatar's mediation efforts, wrote on X. Later on Wednesday, Sheikh Mohammed received a call from US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken with the pair confirming

Strip said Haniyeh had achieved "martyrdom" because of the way he was killed. "This is what every Palestinian

he was killed. "This is what every Palestinian

Here is a list of previous killings over the

YOU KNOW WHAT

1996: booby-trapped phone  
Yehya Ayash, Hamas's bomb-making expert, is killed on January 5 by a booby-trapped telephone in the Gaza Strip.

1997: poisoning attempt  
Israeli intelligence agents poison Khaled Meshaal, a key Hamas leader, in the Jordanian capital Amman on September 25. But Jordanian officials capture the assailants and demand an antidote in exchange for their release, saving Meshaal's life.

2002: building bombed  
Salah Shehadeh, head of the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, is killed along with 15

other people, nine of them children, on July 22 when an Israeli warplane drops a one-tonne bomb on a building in Gaza.

2003: strike on car  
On August 22, senior Hamas leader Ismail Abu Shanab is killed in an Israeli strike on his car in Gaza.

2004: founder killed  
On March 22, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the wheelchair-bound founder of Hamas, is killed along with seven others in a

helicopter strike as they leave dawn prayers at a Gaza City mosque. On April 17, Abdelaziz Rantissi, who had taken over from the assassinated leader, is killed in a helicopter strike on his car in Gaza City. On September 26, a car bomb kills top Hamas official Ezzeddine Sheikh Khalil in the Syrian capital Damascus. Israel unofficially admits responsibility. 2009: Gaza offensive  
On January 1, Nizar Rayan, a leading proponent of the use of suicide bombers by

**Al Jazeera says Israeli strike kills two of its journalists in Gaza**

Doha, Qatar

Two Al Jazeera journalists were killed yesterday in an Israeli strike in Gaza, the Qatar-based channel reported as war rages in the Palestinian territory between Israel and Hamas. "Al Jazeera Arabic journalist Ismail al-Ghoul and his cameraman Rami al-Refee have been killed in an Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip," the network reported adding the strike "targeted a car near the Aidia area, west of Gaza City".

The network's office in Gaza has already been bombed in the conflict and two other correspondents killed. Last month, an Israeli court confirmed it had extended a ban on the network

**Switzerland urges nationals to leave Lebanon**

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Switzerland yesterday urged its nationals to leave Lebanon, noting the highly volatile situation in the country. "The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs recommends that Swiss nationals leave the country by their own means, if this seems possible and safe," the Swiss foreign ministry said in its updated Lebanon travel advice.

"The decision to leave the country is taken voluntarily, at the risk and expense of the person leaving the country," It said the Swiss embassy in Beirut remained open and would continue to provide its regular services. "Swiss nationals who decide to remain in the country or travel to Lebanon despite the FDFA's recommendations should, however, be aware that if the security situation worsens, Switzerland would be able to provide only limited services, if any, and would have only limited possibilities to provide assistance in an emergency," the foreign ministry said.



It said a significant deterioration of the security situation throughout Lebanon was possible at any time, while "targeted airstrikes can also endanger uninvolved persons". Just under a thousand Swiss nationals were living in Lebanon at the end of 2022, the ministry says.

**Israelis fear f**

AFP | Haifa, Israel

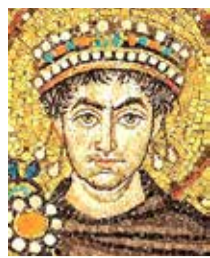
Concerns grew among Israelis yesterday over the fate of dozens of hostages still held captive in Gaza following the killing of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. Haniyeh's killing "was a mistake as it threatens the possibility of having a hostage deal," said Anat Noy, a resident of the coastal city of Haifa, in her 50s.

"We woke up today with a sense of fear in our hearts that this can escalate even more. There is no calm... we are afraid." As the political chief of the Palestinian movement Hamas, Haniyeh was overseeing the negotiations for a deal to end the war in Gaza and release hostages held in the territory in exchange for Palestinian prisoners in Israel. Both Israel and Hamas have blamed each other for the delay in striking the deal.

"We will be happy when the hostages come back home and the war will be over," said another



Justinian I becomes the sole ruler of the Byzantine Empire after the death of his uncle Justin I



Results of the Domesday inquiry presented to William the Conqueror in Salisbury (the date of compilation and the Great Domesday are historically contestable)

English chemist Joseph Priestley discovers oxygen by isolating it in its gaseous state

Slavery Abolition Act 1833 comes into effect, abolishes slavery throughout the British Empire

# ns of Hamas chief's killing

## ys top commander Shukr building hit by Israel



The aftermath of an Israeli military strike on a building in Beirut's southern suburbs

great commander and other citizens" who were also in the building, the statement said. Chairing a cabinet meeting Wednesday, Lebanese Prime Minister Naib Mikati warned: "Things could get out of hand if the enemy continues its reckless and murderous criminal madness. "The strike on the southern suburbs is a strike on... efforts for calm," Mikati said in a statement released by his office, adding: "Lebanon does not want war". In a provisional toll, Lebanon's health ministry said four civilians -- two women and two children -- were killed in the strike.

## Hamas armed wing says killing takes war to 'new levels'

Palestinian Territories

Hamas's armed wing said yesterday that the killing of its political leader Ismail Haniyeh takes the war with Israel to a "new levels," warning of repercussions for the entire region. "The criminal assassination of leader Haniyeh in the heart of the Iranian capital is a watershed and dangerous event that takes the war to new levels and will have enormous consequences for the entire region," the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, whose fighters are engaged in fierce battles with Israeli troops in Gaza, said in a statement.

# re Israel-Hamas talks

reckless Israeli behaviour of continuously targeting civilians in Gaza will lead to the region slipping into chaos and undermine the chances of peace," said. "The ministry reiterates the State of Qatar's firm position rejecting violence, terrorism and criminal acts, including political assassinations, regardless of the motives and reasons," it added.

the importance of continuing to work to reach a ceasefire in Gaza", Qatar's foreign ministry said in a statement. The foreign ministry had condemned Haniyeh's killing in Tehran on Wednesday, describing it as a "heinous crime", a "dangerous escalation" and "a flagrant violation of international and humanitarian law". "This assassination and the

## hopes for... to obtain martyrdom while defending his land, his past three decades

people and its sanctities," said Muhammad Farwana, 38, from Hamas, is killed along with his four wives, 10 of his 12 children and two neighbours during Israel's December 27-January 18 offensive in the Gaza Strip. Two weeks later a senior Hamas leader in Gaza, interior minister Said Siam, is killed in an Israeli air strike in Gaza. 2010: 'assassination' in Dubai On January 29, Hamas accuses Israel of the "assassination" in Dubai of Mahmud Abdel Rauf al-Mabhuh, a founder of its military wing, Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, who

died on January 20. 2012: targeted killing in Gaza On November 14, Israel's biggest military campaign against Gaza in nearly four years, Operation Pillar of Defence, begins with the targeted killing of top Hamas commander Ahmed Jaabari in an air strike on his car, triggering a major flare-up. 2014: three commanders killed On August 21, 2014, six weeks into a war between Israel and Hamas, a pre-dawn air strike kills three senior commanders of the Hamas armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam

the southern city of Khan Yunis, where Israeli troops ended a major ground assault this week that displaced tens of thousands of people. "Haniyeh was someone who gave away his children and grandchildren on the same path." In June, 10 family members of Haniyeh were killed in an Israeli air strike in the Al-Shati refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip. In April, Haniyeh lost three sons and four grandchildren in an Israeli strike in central Gaza, with the Israeli military accusing them of "terrorist activities". Haniyeh said at the time that about 60 members of his family had been killed since the war broke out on October 7.

Brigades: Mohammed Abu Shamala, Raed al-Atar and Mohammed Barhum. 2024: deputy leader killed in Beirut January 2: Nearly three months after Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel triggered war in Gaza, Hamas deputy leader Saleh al-Aruri is killed in a strike in Beirut's southern suburbs blamed on Israel. Hamas military leader Mohammed Deif and Gaza leader Yahya Sinwar have topped Israel's hit list throughout the war but have remained elusive.

# or hostages after Hamas chief's killing



Smoke billows from burning tyres as Israeli soldiers deploy in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron

Haifa resident, Avi Ben-Ishai. Campaign group the Hostages and Missing Families Forum acknowledged the military gains of the past nearly 10 months of the

war, but said "true achievement" can come only with the return of the hostages. "Time is of the essence, and we implore the Israeli government

and global leaders to decisively advance negotiations," it said in a statement released after Haniyeh's killing was announced. "This is the time for a deal." Tel Aviv resident Shahar Binyamini said she was anxious over how Hamas and allies like Lebanon's Hezbollah movement would react to Haniyeh's killing. "What stresses me now is the reaction of Hamas and Hezbollah," Binyamini, 25, told AFP as she cancelled plans to go to the beach out of fear. "My partner was in reserve service in the north since September and was told to be on standby." Tel Aviv resident Jacob, who only gave his first name, said he was unsure whether Haniyeh's killing would resolve the conflict. "Our goal first of all should be the release of the hostages, and the war of October 7 should not have happened," he said. "Israel is doing its best to exist in the Middle East in peace, all we do is defend ourselves all the time."

# Pilot dies after small plane crashes on Dutch highway



The accident happened at around 12:45 pm (1045 GMT) near the southern city of Breda, about 60 kilometres (38 miles) south of Rotterdam.

AFP | The Hague, Netherlands

A small plane crashed yesterday on a highway in the Netherlands, killing the pilot and scattering debris across the double-lane road, Dutch emergency services said. The accident happened at around 12:45 pm (1045 GMT) near the southern city of Breda, about 60 kilometres (38 miles) south of Rotterdam. "A plane crashed on the A58 from Breda in the direction of Roosendaal," the Middle-West Brabant Safety Region said on its website. "Unfortunately the pilot, the only person on board, died," it said, without disclosing the

type of plane. No other injuries were reported. Images posted on X showed a burned-out wreck and debris on the highway, where traffic had been blocked off by emergency services from both sides. A logo of a local aviation flight school could be spotted on the wreckage, local broadcaster Omroep Brabant said. "I suddenly saw something descend. It was the plane," an unidentified witness told Omroep Brabant. "At the moment it crashed, we saw a ball of fire and that was it." The highway will remain blocked off for the rest of the day, emergency services added.

# Prowling leopard injures two at S.Africa air force base

Johannesburg, South Africa



Representative picture

A prowling leopard attacked and injured two military personnel at a South African air force base near a world-famous national park, the military said yesterday. The two injured members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) were in stable conditions and recovering from what an air force spokesman described as "mostly scratches" following the separate encounters with the big cat. The unprovoked attacks occurred between Friday and Sunday last week at the north-eastern Hoedspruit air base, said Brigadier General Donovan Chetty. One officer was going for a morning jog when he was pounced on by the spotted animal, while the other was leaving work in the afternoon, he said.

The base lies within the catchment area of the Kruger National Park, a tourist magnet bordering Mozambique famed for its rich wildlife. This makes for frequent encounters with wild animals, Chetty said. "It's not uncommon to see leopards, it is uncommon for them to attack," Chetty told AFP. It was not known what prompted the animal, a nocturnal hunter, to pounce during the day, he added.

# China sanctions US lawmaker over Tibet 'interference'

AFP | Beijing, China

Announcing sanctions, the ministry accused the lawmaker of "an attack on sovereignty, security and interests" of China. The measures imposed Wednesday ban McGovern and his family from China, as well as allowing a freeze on any assets he has there. Beijing imposes strict control on access to Tibet, a Himalayan region which it considers an inalienable part of its territory. China took control of Tibet in 1951 before the Dalai Lama fled into exile in 1959.

China sanctioned US lawmaker Jim McGovern yesterday for "interference" over his support for Tibetans. The US Congress adopted a bipartisan law last month that strengthens support for Tibet, where China is accused of human rights abuses. McGovern, a Democrat, was one of the authors of the bill. The foreign ministry in Beijing said McGovern has "frequently interfered in China's internal affairs in recent years".



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Distressed by the landslides in parts of Wayanad. My thoughts are with all those who have lost their loved ones and prayers with those injured. Rescue ops are currently underway to assist all those affected. Spoke to Kerala CM Shri @pinarayivijayan and also assured all possible help from the Centre in the wake of the prevailing situation there.

@narendramodi

02



Today I signed a 123 Agreement on civil nuclear cooperation with Singapore. In addition to deepening our energy partnership with Singapore, they will also join our FIRST program to build capabilities to further explore clean, secure, and safe nuclear energy.

@SecBlinken

03



Farmers and ranchers work around the clock to put food on our tables and steward our nation's land - they should never experience discrimination in farm loan programs. Today, I'm addressing that inequity.

@POTUS

04



Population collapse is happening in so many countries

@elonmusk

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

# India landslide toll hits 270 as rain hampers rescue work

AFP | Wayanad, India

Relentless downpours and howling winds hampered yesterday's search for survivors of landslides that struck Indian tea plantations and killed at least 270 people, most believed to be labourers and their families.

Days of torrential monsoon rains have battered the southern coastal state of Kerala, with blocked roads into the Wayanad district disaster area complicating relief efforts.

The only bridge connecting the worst-hit villages of Chooralmala and Mundakkai was washed away, forcing rescue teams to carry bodies on stretchers out of the disaster zone using a makeshift zipline erected over raging flood waters.

Several people who managed to flee the initial impact of the landslides found themselves caught in a nearby river that had burst its banks, volunteer rescuer Arun Dev told AFP at a hospital treating survivors.

"Those who escaped were swept away along with houses, temples and schools," he said.

Senior police officer M.R. Ajith Kumar told AFP that around 500 people had been rescued since successive landslides struck before dawn on Tuesday.

"Still large areas are to be explored and searched to find out whether live people are there or not," he said.

Wayanad is famed for the tea estates that crisscross its hilly



Relief personnel conduct a search and rescue operation after landslides in Wayanad



A damaged vehicle lies amid mud after landslides in Wayanad



A man stands near a damaged house

countryside and which rely on a large pool of labourers for planting and harvest.

A number of brick-walled row homes built to accommodate seasonal workers were inundat-

ed by a powerful wall of brown sludge as labourers and their families slept.

Other buildings were caked with mud as the force of the landslide scattered cars, cor-

rugated iron and other debris around the disaster site.

"Catastrophic debris flows are extremely violent, so survival is very difficult," Hull University earth scientist Dave Petley told

AFP. "This will have been exacerbated by the timing -- in the early hours when people were asleep -- and by flimsy structures that offered little protection." A total of 238 bodies had been recovered so far, the office of state revenue minister K. Rajan told reporters.

More than 3,000 people were sheltering in emergency relief camps around Wayanad district, the state government said.

At least 572 millimetres (22.5 inches) of rain fell in the two days leading up to the landslides, according to state chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Kerala's disaster agency said more rain and strong winds were forecast for the week with the likelihood of "damage to unsafe structures" elsewhere in the state.

## 'Incessant rains'

Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi, who until recently represented Wayanad in parliament, said he had been unable to go through with a planned visit to the disaster.

"Due to incessant rains and adverse weather conditions we have been informed by authorities that we will not be able to land," he said in a post on social media platform X. "Our thoughts are with the people of Wayanad at this difficult time," he said. Monsoon rains across the region from June to September offer respite from the summer heat and are crucial to replenishing water supplies.

## Ex-BBC presenter Edwards pleads guilty to indecent child images charges



Former BBC news anchor Huw Edwards

London, United Kingdom

Former BBC news anchor Huw Edwards, one of the most recognisable faces on UK television, pleaded guilty Wednesday to three counts of making indecent images of children.

The 62-year-old -- who resigned from the BBC in April on "medical advice", six months after he was arrested -- faces a maximum prison sentence of 10 years and a minimum of 12 months.

Wearing a dark suit and blue tie, Edwards sat impassively during the 25-minute court hearing as he admitted receiving 41 indecent images of children on WhatsApp, including seven of the most serious type.

Under English law, electronic communications involving indecent imagery of children -- including receiving and downloading pictures and videos -- can constitute the offence of making indecent images of children.

## UNESCO welcomes UK's Stonehenge tunnel cancellation

AFP | Paris, France

The United Nations' cultural organisation on Wednesday welcomed Britain's decision to cancel a controversial tunnel project near Stonehenge, a world heritage site.

The UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves on Monday announced a number of "difficult" budget decisions, telling parliament that a few "unfunded" projects launched by the previous government would not go ahead under the Labour administration of Prime Minister Keir Starmer, including plans for a road tunnel close to Stonehenge, a renowned prehistoric site in England.

"UNESCO welcomes the Starmer government's decision to cancel the construction of a road tunnel under the Stonehenge World Heritage Site," the organisation's Director-General Audrey Azoulay said in a social media post.

UNESCO last month warned that Stonehenge could be added to its world heritage in danger list because of the tunnel project.

# Palestinians detained by Israel subjected to 'torture': UN report

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Palestinians detained by Israel during the Gaza war have largely been held in secret and in some cases subjected to treatment that may amount to torture, the United Nations said yesterday.

Since the October 7 Hamas attacks, thousands of Palestinians -- including medics, patients, residents and captured fighters -- have been taken from Gaza to Israel, "usually shackled and blindfolded", the OHCHR UN human rights office said in a report.

Thousands more have been detained in the West Bank and



Displaced Palestinians return to Bani Suhayla and neighbouring towns east of Khan Yunis following reports of Israeli forces withdrawing from the area in the southern Gaza Strip

Israel, it added.

"They have generally been held in secret, without being given a reason for their detention, access to a lawyer or effective judicial review," OHCHR said.

Israel did not immediately comment but has rejected previous critical reports saying its prisons are run according to international law. The report was released the day after Israel's

military police questioned soldiers arrested on suspicion of sexually abusing a Palestinian detainee.

At least 53 detainees from Gaza and the West Bank have died in Israeli detention since the Gaza war began on October 7, the report found.

Testimonies for the report suggested that Israel had subjected prisoners to "a range of

appalling acts, such as waterboarding and the release of dogs on detainees", UN rights chief Volker Turk said.

The report covers October 7 to June 30. It relies primarily on information gathered through interviews with released Palestinian detainees and other victims and witnesses of violations, OHCHR said.

The report said there were "reasonable grounds to believe" that since October 7, Israel and Palestinian armed groups had "committed gross violations and abuses... of the rights to life, liberty and freedom from torture and other ill-treatment."

These included the use of "rape and other forms of sexual violence," warning the abuses may amount to war crimes.

Besides calling for the abuses to cease, the OHCHR urged all parties to "immediately end all forms of arbitrary detention, including the holding of hostages".

## 'Burnt with cigarettes'

The report said most Palestinians held since October 7 have been detained "without charges or trial".

Many released Palestinians reported treatment "including

severe beatings, electrocution, being forced to remain in stress positions for prolonged periods, or waterboarding".

The report said detainees had been subjected to blackmail, "being burnt with cigarettes, and given hallucinogenic pills".

The report also said the Palestinian Authority "continued to carry out arbitrary detention and torture or other ill treatment in the West Bank, reportedly principally to suppress criticism and political opposition".

A host of studies by rights groups and UN agencies have condemned conditions in Israeli prisons as well as Hamas's treatment of detainees.

Amnesty International said this month it had documented 27 cases of Palestinians, including five women and a 14-year-old boy, who were detained by Israel "for up to four and a half months" without being able to contact their families.

According to the Prisoners Club, a Palestinian rights watchdog, about 9,600 Palestinians are currently in Israeli jails, including hundreds under administrative detention where they can be held for long periods without charge.



At least 53 detainees from Gaza and the West Bank have died in Israeli detention since the Gaza war began on October 7, the report found.





# celebs

## Gwyneth Paltrow believes life 'starts getting good' at 40

**Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles**

Gwyneth Paltrow is convinced life "starts getting good" at 40. The *Goop* founder, 51, this year revealed she has dialled back on her fitness obsession and "doesn't give a f\*\*\*" now she is in her fifties, and spoke out on again on her views about



the positives of ageing in her newest 'ask me anything' online video exchange with her millions of online fans. During the Instagram Stories session, Gwyneth filmed a video reply to the post from one follower: "Just turned 40. Tell me life isn't over yet." In a video taped while Gwyneth appeared to be in her leafy back garden, she smiled as she replied: "Forty is when it all starts getting good, Kate. It all starts get-

Gwyneth Paltrow

ting good." Gwyneth was wearing an open weave cream jumper and blue jeans in the clip, and had minimal make-up. Also in the chat, Gwyneth admitted she no longer likes leaving her house that much, and posted an image of her and her second husband Brad Falchuk sitting beside a fountain. She married the 53-year-old in 2018, two years after finalising her divorce from her Coldplay frontman first husband Chris Martin, 47, with whom she has children Apple, 20, and Moses, 18 - and from whom she famously said she was "consciously uncoupling" in 2014.

## Britney Spears reaches out to estranged sons

**Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles**

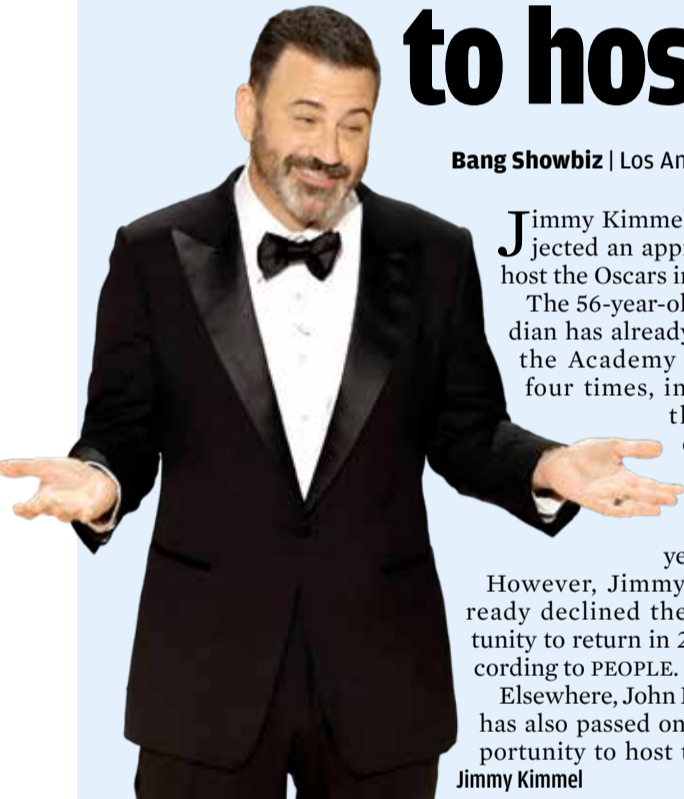


Britney Spears has been "reaching out" to her estranged sons. The 42-year-old singer shares Sean Preston, 18, and Jayden James, 17, with her former husband Kevin Federline but they have a strained relationship due, in part, to the boys' reported embarrassment about their mum's raunchy social media posts. A source told *Us Weekly*: "Britney has been reaching out to her sons more and wants to start spending more time with them when they are ready." **Britney Spears**

Sean and Jayden moved to Hawaii with Kevin, 46, and his wife Victoria Prince, 41, plus their two children, in 2023. It is thought at the time of her sons' move to Hawaii Britney did not object. In June, Kevin - who split from Britney in 2007 after three years of marriage - denied he had relocated to the island to take advantage of a legal loophole that would extend Britney's child support obligations. He insisted his wife landed a job offer at a university, while he had DJ opportunities. Kevin has largely maintained primary custody of the boys due to Britney's controversial 13-year conservatorship, which left her life and financial affairs and decisions in the hands of her father before it was ended in November 2021.

# Jimmy Kimmel 'rejects offer to host the Oscars'

**Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles**



Jimmy Kimmel has rejected an approach to host the Oscars in 2025. The 56-year-old comedian has already hosted the Academy Awards four times, including the ceremony held earlier this year. However, Jimmy has already declined the opportunity to return in 2025, according to *PEOPLE*. Elsewhere, John Mulaney has also passed on the opportunity to host the next

Jimmy Kimmel

Academy Awards.

The 41-year-old comedian - who is married to actress Olivia Munn - actually hosted the Academy's 14th Governors Awards in January. He was approached to host the Oscars earlier this year, but he's already rejected the opportunity. The awards ceremony went host-less from 2019 to 2021, while the 2022 event was jointly hosted by Regina Hall, Wanda Sykes and Amy Schumer. Jimmy returned to host the awards show in 2023 and it proved to be a big hit with viewers, attracting a US TV audience of 19.5 million people. Despite this, Jimmy previously admitted that the show requires lots of planning and

preparation.

He told *PEOPLE*: "We work very hard to make the show as good as it possibly can be." The TV star has learned a number of important lessons through hosting the ceremony so often. Jimmy - who has hosted his own late-night talk show since 2003 - said: "The big challenge always is trying to keep the show moving, so it's a matter of picking your spots and popping in when you're needed and staying out of the picture when you're not." Jimmy was reminded of the potential pitfalls of hosting the ceremony by his wife Molly. But the comedian suggested Molly's attitude actually en-

## Justin and Hailey Bieber 'are ready to become parents'



Justin and Hailey Bieber

**Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles**

Justin and Hailey Bieber are committed to being "the best parents possible". The 30-year-old pop star and Hailey, 27, are preparing to become parents for the first time, and they're both looking forward to the challenge. A source told *PEOPLE*: "They're ready to become parents. They're planning for the baby's arrival and it's very cute. "They are super committed to their marriage, but also to being the best parents possible." Justin and Hailey have been able to support each other through the process. The insider explained: "Hailey has always been very supportive of Justin. She's his rock. She is patient and someone he can always lean on." Hailey is also supporting Justin as he figures out his

next career moves. Another source said: "She's very involved and helps him make decisions." Hailey and her husband - who tied the knot in 2018 - announced their baby news with a montage on Instagram, which featured the pair renewing their wedding vows in Hawaii. Among a series of behind-the-scenes snaps, the model was seen wearing a white, lace dress that highlighted her baby bump. A source previously admitted that the loved-up couple had wanted a child "for a long time". The insider told *'Entertainment Tonight'*: "Hailey and Justin are thrilled to be expecting a baby together. "They have wanted this for a long time and can't wait to expand their family and bring a child into the world."

## Channing Tatum thanks Ryan Reynolds for 'having his back'

**Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles**

Channing Tatum feels he owes Ryan Reynolds a debt of gratitude. The 44-year-old actor stars alongside Ryan in *'Deadpool and Wolverine'*, and Channing has taken to social media to heap praise on his co-star. Channing wrote on Instagram: "I sat in the audience when Ryan showed his first peek of *Deadpool 1* to the world and I think I ran back stage right after and found him and I think I just hugged him and was like holy s\*\*\* you did it man. It's perfect. I didn't know him really at all back then. But since



Channing Tatum and Ryan Reynolds

then I can say that there is almost no one that has had my back in this industry more

than Ryan. I thought I had lost *Gambit* forever. But he fought for me and *Gambit*. I will owe him probably forever. Cause I'm not sure how I could ever do something that would be equal to what this has meant to me. I love ya buddy. (sic)" Channing admitted that he feels proud to appear in the new *'Deadpool'* movie. He said: "All things happen for a reason. I'm so grateful to be in this movie. It's a masterpiece in my opinion." Hugh Jackman also stars in the new film, and he recently admitted that he relished the challenge of getting in shape in order to play *Wolverine*.

### SUDOKU

6	9		8					2
3	1		4	6				
			2	7			1	
	3	1			2			
	8		7	4				9
			5				7	3
		3		6	9			
			3	2				1
	7			5				8
								3

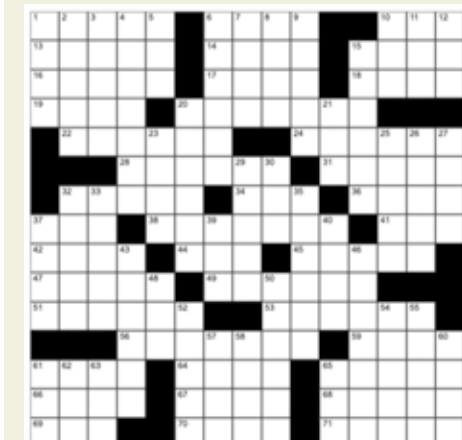
Yesterday's solution

7	1	6	8	5	2	3	9	4
8	9	2	3	6	4	5	1	7
4	5	3	9	7	1	2	6	8
6	4	5	7	1	8	9	2	3
9	3	7	5	2	6	4	8	1
2	8	1	4	9	3	6	7	5
5	7	8	2	4	9	1	3	6
1	2	4	6	3	7	8	5	9
3	6	9	1	8	5	7	4	2

How to play

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

### CROSSWORD



Across

1- Stub; 6- Actor Rob; 10- Beta Kappa; 13- Ignited again; 14- Screws up; 15- Gator's kin; 16- State Farm rival; 17- Burrows and Vigoda; 18- Actor Auberjonois; 19- Confident; 20- Catch; 22- Father or mother; 24- Pines for; 28- Thespians; 31- Eye sores; 32- Indian metropolis; 34- Magician's prop; 36- Genesis setting; 37- Upper limb; 38- Describing the path of a satellite; 41- Ames and Asner; 42- Raton; 44- Long time; 45- Laughs loudly; 47- Consecrate; 49- Flowing gently; 51- Syrian city; 53- Out there; 56- Cold weather head protector; 59- Fragrant neckwear; 61- Bard's river; 64- Young cow; 65- Rips; 66- Pen points; 67- Nautical direction; 68- Donkeys; 69- Mai (drink); 70- Prophet; 71- Consumers;

Down

1- Ladies of Sp.; 2- Get ready to drive; 3- Extreme; 4- Ore; 5- Sch. group; 6- Simple shed; 7- Spheres; 8- Small songbird; 9- Short literary composition; 10- Start to fix; 11- Darlin'; 12- Chiller; 15- Bring into being; 20- Whole; 21- Hi- monitor; 23- Reverberate; 25- U-Haul competitor; 26- Food and water; 27- IRS IDs; 29- Thick-skinned charger; 30- Was in session; 32- Whimsically funny; 33- Toastmaster; 35- Import or export duty; 37- Swedish pop band whose hits include "Waterloo"; 39- Halloween greeting; 40- Burt's ex; 43- Quaking trees; 46- Eternal; 48- Pampering place; 50- Blue pigment; 52- Killer whales; 54- Buy alternative; 55- More urgent; 57- Boy or man; 58- Peter Fonda role; 60- Flat sound; 61- Aardvark's snack; 62- By means of; 63- Wan Kenobi was a character in "Star Wars"; 65- Kind of cross;

Yesterday's solution

R	E	L	A		S	T	E	A	D		M	A	L
I	R	A	T	E		N	E	E	D		O	V	O
D	E	C	A	L		O	N	I	O	N	B	A	G
B	L	O	W	O		L	O	O	S	E	A	M	I
B	L	O	W	O		S	M	E	L	T	S		
R	E	N	E	W		S	P	E	S	O	S		
O	N	E	A		T	E	E	M	S		S	H	O
I	T	A	R		Y	O				H	E	B	E
L	O	L	A		S	E	N	S	E		A	L	O
					B	L	E	S	S		T	E	L
P	I	G	L	E	T		A	T	A	L	O	S	S
S	O	L	E	S		R	I	S	E	S			
A	N	O	S	O	A	R	S		T	E	E	N	A
L	I	V		O	R	G	A	N		E	L	D	E
M	A	E		N	O	U	N	S		R	I	D	O

# 'Different, but better' - Jacobs confident of defending 100m title

Italian sprinter confident of retaining gold despite challenges since Tokyo triumph

● **Jacobs aims to defend 100m and 4x100m relay golds**

● **Overcame criticism and injuries post-Tokyo**

● **Changed coach and moved to US for training**

● **Considers semi-final the most challenging hurdle**

AFP | Paris

Olympic 100m champion Marcell Jacobs said yesterday he is a "changed, but better" athlete and is confident of defending his title at the Paris Games.

The Italian stunned the field to snatch gold in the Covid-delayed Tokyo Olympics, in a European record of 9.80sec.

He made it double gold just days later by helping Italy to victory in the 4x100m relay.

The 29-year-old told reporters he was back at the Summer Olympic Games.

Games for one reason only: to defend his title in one of its standout events.

"I'm the Olympic champion. I want to win again," Jacobs told reporters.

"I know what I can do. I know I am the Olympic champion. I won the 100m at

I worked really hard to get here to win again... so I can do the double."

After his stunning success in Tokyo, Jacobs went off the radar, citing fatigue and a knee

problem.

**We're 'not robots'**

His conspicuous absence raised eyebrows and brought criticism that still stings.

"What hurt me was that people didn't understand that we are not robots, we are not machines. We are human," he said. "We work every day at 100% with our body, so it's normal to have some difficulties, some injury."

"The problem with doping (accusations) after the Olympics didn't touch me because I know what I have to do to get a win, so I know what is not true."

"It's hard to survive at the Olympics and win, but it's harder to continue to win."

"So for that, you have a lot of injury and people didn't understand that."

"In Italy, we never had an Italian guy make the Olympic final, but I won and they continued to criticise me. So it hurt me."

Jacobs showed his determination to bag back-to-back golds by upending his life, both professionally



**Marcell Jacobs is the first Italian sprinter to ever win an Olympic gold in the 100m. His win in Tokyo marked a historic moment for Italy in Olympic sprinting history**

”

**I know what I can do. I know I am the Olympic champion. I won the 100m at the Olympic Games. I worked really hard to get here to win again... so I can do the double**

MARCELL JACOBS

semi-final because we are this year 15 or 16 guys who can go to the final. The semi-final will be hard," he said.

"Every year is a different, every year there are some people who can run really fast. This year we have the Jamaicans, the Americans, but every year is like that."

"In Tokyo it was like everybody can wait for the silver medal because the gold was being prepared for Trayvon Bromell."

"He ran 9.76sec at the beginning of the season, but he didn't even make the final so you never know. The Olympics are different."

Jacobs concluded: "But it will be fun because there are a lot of guys who can run really fast, but only one can win, and on Sunday we'll know!"



## WRC add Saudi race to calendar



Kalle Rovanpera of Finland and his co-driver Jonne Halttunen of Finland steer their Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 HYBRID during the last stage SS20 of the WRC TET Rally Latvia WRC event

AFP | London

World Rally Championship announced yesterday that it will add races in Saudi Arabia, the Canary Islands and Paraguay to its calendar next year.

Rally Saudi Arabia will end the season on November 27-30 with the event in the Spanish archipelago on April 24-27 and the race in South America on August 28-31.

Rallies in Croatia, Poland and Latvia are no longer on the circuit.

## Flick opens his Barcelona tenure with win over Man City

AFP | Orlando

New Barcelona manager Hansi Flick made a triumphant start to his tenure on Tuesday as the Spanish giants beat Manchester City on penalties after their pre-season friendly at Orlando finished 2-2 at full-time.

Toni Fernandez, who signed with Barca earlier this month after turning 16, flicked in a left-footed shot past reserve City goalkeeper Stefan Ortega to give the German manager's

side a 4-1 win on penalties.

Barcelona kicked off their US tour in the pre-season contest against the four-time reigning Premier League champions, guided by former Barcelona player and coach Pep Guardiola.

A sellout crowd of 63,237 spectators were unhappy early as a storm delayed the start by 80 minutes, but were delighted with a strong early pace, before both teams gave reserve players abundant time on the pitch.

## National Center for Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation welcomes handball stars with advanced technology

Hussain Almaskati  
TDT | Manama

The National Center for Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation, part of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, recently hosted a delegation from the Bahrain Handball Federation.

The delegation, led by Ismail Baqer, Director of National Teams at the federation, and Dr. Karim Eid, a specialist in the federation, was warmly received by Dr. Moyad Al-Alawi, Director of the centre.

The visit included a comprehensive tour of the center's facilities, with advanced ser-

vices and programs designed to enhance Bahraini athletes' performance.

Key highlights included the state-of-the-art Physical Performance Laboratory, which offers precise assessments of players' physical capabilities and personalized training programs.

The delegation also explored the center's modern rehabilitation programs, aimed at rapid recovery from injuries and swift return to play.

This collaboration is telling of Bahrain's leadership to advancing sports and providing top services for its athletes.

## Fifteen stadiums, five cities in Saudi 2034 World Cup bid

AFP | Riyadh

Saudi Arabia, the only bidder for the 2034 World Cup, will host the 48-team tournament in fifteen stadiums across five cities, including eight in the capital, state media said yesterday.

The announcement came days after the kingdom submitted its official bid to the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA).

Saudi Arabia plans to host "the largest-ever edition" of the tournament in a single country, according to the bid book, details of which were carried by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

The bid book outlines five proposed host cities for the tournament, including the capital Riyadh, the Red Sea city of Jeddah, Al Khobar, Abha, and NEOM, a \$500 billion, futuristic new city, SPA said.



An artist's impression of the new 92,000-capacity stadium in Riyadh

They will feature 15 advanced stadiums, eleven of which are new, according to the agency.

Riyadh will be home to eight stadiums, including the new King Salman Stadium, which will accommodate over 92,000 spectators and is set to host the opening and final matches of the tournament, SPA said.

As the only bidder, Saudi

Arabia was anointed host of the 2034 World Cup last October by FIFA after gas-wealthy neighbour Qatar hosted the Middle East's first World Cup at an eye-watering cost of \$220 billion, including related infrastructure.

To host the 48-team World Cup, the kingdom needs 14 all-seater stadiums capable of

holding at least 40,000 people, according to the bid document.

It currently has two: Jeddah's King Abdullah Sports City Stadium and Riyadh's venerable King Fahd International Stadium, which is undergoing a major refit.

Infrastructure is the initial concern for the oil-rich kingdom, which is snapping up high-profile sports events in an attempt to sweep away its conservative image and entice foreign investment.

By the time the World Cup kicks off, the desert country of 32 million will have hosted the 2027 Asian Cup and even the 2029 Asian Winter Games.

In 2034, the same year as the World Cup, Riyadh will host the Asian Games -- a two-week tournament with more events than the Summer Olympics and a similar number of athletes.

# Djokovic and Alcaraz stay on track

Djokovic, Alcaraz close in on Olympics showdown as Zheng ends Kerber career in Paris amid sweltering conditions

● **Djokovic defeats Koepfer, reaches fourth Olympic quarter-final**

● **Alcaraz brushes aside Safiullin in straight sets**

● **Tsitsipas faces Djokovic in quarter-final rematch of 2021 French Open final**

AFP | Paris

Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz shrugged off crushing humidity on yesterday to stay on course for an Olympic gold medal showdown as Zheng Qinwen ended the career of former world number one Angelique Kerber.

Djokovic, seeking a first Olympic title at Roland Garros to add to his record-breaking collection, defeated German left-hander Dominik Koepfer 7-5, 6-3, becoming the first man to reach four singles quarter-finals at the Games.

Alcaraz brushed aside Roman Safiullin, the Russian playing in Paris as a neutral, 6-4, 6-2.

In the women's singles, Zheng

defeated Kerber 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 7-6 (8/6) to become only the second Chinese player to reach an Olympic singles semi-final.

The 37-year-old Djokovic has only ever collected a bronze at the Olympics, at Beijing 16 years ago, but he was rarely troubled by his 70th-ranked opponent.

"I'm soaking wet, honestly," said Djokovic, who has won three of his 24 Grand Slam crowns on Paris's famous red clay.

"It's a very, very humid day as it was yesterday. But you have to accept and embrace the conditions and try to make the best out of it."

Djokovic,

who had breezed past old rival Rafael Nadal in the second round, goes on to face 11th-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas. Djokovic boasts an 11-2 head-to-

head record over Tsitsipas, including a victory from two sets down in the 2021 French Open final.

**'Erased it'**

"I've erased it," said Tsitsipas when asked to recall that heart-breaking defeat.

"I can see he's motivated for this Olympics but I want to get out on the court and show that I'm a worthy player on the clay courts."

Despite his confidence, Tsitsipas has not defeated Djokovic for almost five years, with the world number two having claimed the last 10 meetings.

French Open and Wimbledon champion Alcaraz has also yet to drop a set in Paris and breezed past 66th-ranked Safiullin in 90 minutes.

Alcaraz broke serve four times and wrapped up victory with his fifth ace of the contest.

"I am really happy with the way I managed everything during the match. The conditions were really tough with the heat and it was really humid," said Al-

Novak Djokovic



**Djokovic, still wearing strapping on his right knee after June surgery, is hunting for his first trophy in 2024 and considers representing Serbia at the Olympics the "greatest honour"**

”

**I'm soaking wet, honestly. It's a very, very humid day as it was yesterday. I just hope it rains so it cools down the temperature a bit and the air. But it is what it is. You have to kind of accept and embrace the conditions and it's the same for you and your opponents so you have to try to make the best out of it**

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

caraz.

Up next for Alcaraz is Tommy Paul, the American he defeated in the Wimbledon quarter-finals.

Paul made the last eight by seeing off Corentin Moutet, whose defeat ended all French interest in the five Olympic tennis events.

Australian Open runner-up Zheng became the first Chinese woman since Li Na in 2008 to reach the singles semi-finals.

Her three-hour victory, in which she unleashed 64 winners, sent 36-year-old former world number one Kerber, a silver medallist at the 2016 Rio

Games, into retirement.

"What can I say? I gave everything," said Kerber, who has slumped to 212 in the world rankings. "I have loved playing tennis. Now I can leave in peace."

Anna Karolina Schmiedlova is the first Slovakian player to make the Olympics semi-finals since Miloslav Mecir won the men's singles title at Seoul in 1988.

The 67th-ranked Schmiedlova stunned Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejčíková in straight sets.

## Son nets twice in Spurs' preseason win in South Korea

AFP | Seoul

Homecoming hero Son Heung-min scored a brace of goals as Tottenham Hotspur defeated a K-League All Stars team 4-3 in a preseason match in Seoul yesterday.

Dejan Kulusevski opened the scoring for Spurs in the 29th minute before Son, captain of both the Premier League side and the South Korean national team, went to work.

He cut in from the left wing and found the top right corner of the net with a curling effort from the edge of the box in the 38th minute.

He then teamed up with Kulusevski in stoppage time before the break to calmly score again in the bottom corner to give Spurs a 3-0 lead.

The local team returned with



Son Heung-min in action

an entirely new lineup for the second half to replace a starting XI that had been voted in by fans.

Emerson Royal found the woodwork with a header and Stanislav Iljutcenko then put the K-League team on the board

in the 52nd minute, slotting the ball home after Spurs keeper Brandon Austin was unable to hold an initial shot by Jeong Jae-hee.

Iljutcenko got his second goal two minutes later with a diving header off a Jeong cross.

After mass substitutions by Spurs, Will Lankshear put the Premier League side two goals in front in the 66th minute, volleying home a cross by Timo Werner.

The K-League team responded in the 81st minute when Oberdan hit a first-time volley after Austin punched a corner right to the Brazilian midfielder.

Spurs hung on for the narrow win, with James Maddison striking the left post during stoppage time.

Yang Min-hyeok, the South Korean teenager signed by Spurs on Sunday, started for the Korean side but did not make much of an impression.

He is currently playing for Gangwon FC in the K-League and will join Spurs in January.

Spurs faces Bayern Munich in Seoul on Saturday.

## Azarenka happy with shoulder injury recovery in Washington win



Victoria Azarenka returns a shot to Hailey Baptiste

AFP | Washington

Two-time Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka outlasted Hailey Baptiste 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/3) on Tuesday to reach the second round of the WTA and ATP Washington Open.

The sixth seed from Belarus, coming off a shoulder injury, advanced past the hometown hero after two hours and 23 minutes into a last-16 match against China's Wang Yafan.

"I think my mindset was the key today for the victory," Azarenka said. "I knew it was going to be some ups and downs, I would have to adjust in some moments. I also know she's a very talented player. She didn't give me much of the rhythm."

Azarenka could meet compatriot and two-time reigning Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka in the quarter-finals if the world number three defeats Russia's Kamilla Rakhimova after a first-round bye.

Azarenka, like Sabalenka, withdrew from Wimbledon due to a shoulder injury.

"It was good for me to test my shoulder today," she said.

”

**I knew it was going to be some ups and downs, I would have to adjust in some moments. I also know she's a very talented player. She didn't give me much of the rhythm**

VICTORIA AZARENKA

"It went well, so I'm pretty happy with that."

Former world-number-one Azarenka, who beat Baptiste in their only prior meeting at Chicago in 2021, said she never felt comfortable during the match.

"It was hard for me to expect a high level of tennis after having a break and coming off from injury, not really having too much time on the practice court," Azarenka said.

"But I feel like I fought really hard. In the tie-breaks, in the important moments, I really executed well and did what I wanted to do. I'm very happy with that aspect, that when it did count, I really was able to step up my level."

## North-South Korea Olympic podium selfie goes viral

AFP | Paris

Images of Olympic table tennis players from North Korea and South Korea taking a selfie together on the medal podium in Paris went viral in South Korea yesterday, hailed as a rare show of cross-border unity.

Nuclear-armed North Korea declared the South its principal enemy earlier this year and tensions between the two countries are at one of their highest points in years.

But after South Korea won bronze and North Korea silver in the mixed doubles behind China, South Korea's Lim Jonghoon took a group photo after the medal ceremony.



South Korea's Lim Jonghoon takes a selfie with his teammate and Chinese and North Korean mixed table tennis team medallists

North Korea's Ri Jong Sik and Kim Kum Yong, the South's Shin Yu-bin and the victorious Chinese team Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha all beamed into Lim's phone, a South Korean-made Samsung.

"A selfie with both Koreas'

national flags and a Samsung phone," said the widely read daily JongAng Ilbo.

It was the first time North Korea had been on an Olympic podium since 2016, as they did not send athletes to the Tokyo Olympics because of the Covid pandemic.

"I congratulated them when they were introduced as Silver medallists," Lim told Korean media after the award ceremony.

South Korean broadcasters have repeatedly run videos of the selfie, with many commentators reflecting on the significance of a rare moment of unity.

"This is the true spirit of the Olympics," one commentator said.

# France, Britain win triathlon golds after Seine suspense

Cassandre Beaugrand and Alex Yee shine in Olympic triathlon after Seine pollution delays

● **Cassandre Beaugrand wins women's gold for France**

● **Alex Yee claims dramatic victory in men's race**

AFP | Paris

France and Britain dominated the podiums in the Olympics triathlon yesterday, which finally began in the Seine after days of suspense over whether the river would be clean enough for racing.

Cassandre Beaugrand took the women's gold ahead of Switzerland's Julie Derron and Britain's third-placed Beth Potter.

In the men's competition, which had to be delayed by 24 hours after the Seine failed water tests, Alex Yee stormed to a dramatic victory by passing rival and friend Hayden Wilde from New Zealand in the final stretch.

Frenchman Leo Bergere finished third.

"I started to find my legs with about 3k to go and I said to myself 'I'll give myself one last chance to make this happen'," Yee told reporters of his late surge, adding that British legend Alistair Brownlee had shouted him on during the last lap.

All the attention during the build-up had been on the Seine, which was the centrepiece of a spectacular course that included a biking and running route through the historic heart of the French capital.

The Seine has been too dirty for swimming all week after Paris was deluged by rain during the opening ceremony of the Games on Friday, with the equivalent of a month's rain falling over 36 hours.

The storms overwhelmed the city's sewerage system despite a recent 1.4 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) upgrade, leading to discharges of untreated waste water that sent E.Coli bacteria



Triathlon - women: Gold medal winner Cassandre Beaugrand celebrates as she crosses the finish line



**Cassandre Beaugrand, who grew up near Paris but moved to Britain in 2023, vomited before the race start and was comforted by fellow competitor Georgia Taylor-Brown from Britain**

levels spiking.

Beaugrand said she "never doubted" that the swimming would go ahead despite warn-

ings that it might be cancelled, which would have turned the triathlon into a duathlon of only cycling and running.

"It would have been shameful for our sport... it would have been a disgrace," she told reporters afterwards.

### Strong currents

After the competition was given the go-ahead at around 4am (0200 GMT), thousands of fans turned out to line the streets which were slippery and hazardous during the women's race after overnight showers.

Beaugrand was in contention from the start, remaining in touch with front-runner and defending Olympic champion Flora Duffy during the swim when many competitors reported being surprised by the strength of



**I started to find my legs with about 3k to go and I said to myself 'I'll give myself one last chance to make this happen**

ALEX YEE

the river currents.

The UK-based 27-year-old had vomited before the start, finding comfort in words from fellow competitor Georgia Taylor-Brown from Britain, the silver medallist at Tokyo 2020, who helped settle her nerves.

"She told me 'It's just a race, you can do it,'" Beaugrand, who grew up near Paris but moved to Britain in 2023, told French television.

After so much public debate about the water quality, Hayden said the currents were the biggest concern.

"I watched the women's race beforehand and was like 'wow,'" he told a press conference.

### Table tennis stunner

In other early action on day five, China's table tennis world number one Wang Chuqin suffered a shock defeat, a day after having his bat broken.

Wang won mixed doubles gold on Tuesday but his elation turned to anger after a photographer accidentally snapped his bat while jostling to take a picture.

Less than 24 hours later, Wang went out in the singles after a 4-2 defeat to Truls Moregard of Sweden.

"I've almost never taken a set against Wang so it's crazy to win here at the Olympics," said Moregard, the world number 26.

China ramped up their bid for a clean sweep in diving, prevailing in the women's synchronised 10m platform ahead of North Korea and Britain.

China have won all three golds in the sport in Paris so far.



Triathlon - men: Gold medal winner Alex Yee in action



Cycling - Women's BMX Freestyle Park: Gold medal winner China's Deng Yawen in action



Diving - Women's Synchronised 10m Platform: Gold medal winners Chen Yuxi and Quan Hongchan of Team China compete



Cycling - Women's BMX Freestyle Park: US' Hannah Roberts (L) and Czech Republic's Iveta Miculycova fall a ramp after colliding during a warm-up



Sailing - women's 49erFX skiff: Spain's duo Tamara Echegoyen Dominguez and Paula Barcelo Martin compete in race 10



Table tennis - men's singles: China's Wang Chuqin plays a return to Sweden's Truls Moregard