

Government's electronic services reviewed



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, chaired the 486th meeting of the Coordination Committee. During this session, the committee reviewed the latest advancements in the electronic development of government services, assessing progress and discussing strategies to enhance service effectiveness for citizens. The committee also examined a presentation on transitioning to the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC4). This transition aims to align economic activity classifications with international standards for improved accuracy and relevance. The committee discussed a project focused on enhancing services for pilgrims, emphasising the need to improve quality and effectiveness to ensure a comfortable and safe experience. The meeting addressed developments in priority draft laws, underscoring the importance of expediting their adoption and implementation to align with the country's development objectives.

Bahrain humidity levels to go down
TDT | Manama

Humidity levels in the Kingdom of Bahrain are expected to decrease today.

The maximum relative humidity has been forecasted to reach 65% and the minimum at 10%, according to meteorological predictions.

The Kingdom has been experiencing high humidity levels since dawn on Wednesday, which intensified throughout the evening, reaching 90% relative humidity accompanied by elevated temperatures.

The Meteorology Directorate at the Ministry of Transportation confirmed that this high humidity had persisted yesterday.

During this period, the maximum relative humidity remained at 90%, with some cloud cover in the morning, transitioning to hot conditions during the day.

Plane carrying body of Haniyeh arrives in Doha
AFP | Doha

A plane carrying the body of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, killed in a strike in Tehran blamed on Israel, landed in Doha yesterday after a public funeral in Iran, Qatar-based network Al Jazeera reported.

Haniyeh, who had resided in exile in the Gulf state with other members of Hamas's political office, is to be buried in Qatar today.

'Agony is over'

Russia frees US reporter in major prisoner swap with West

AFP | Washington

Jailed US journalist Evan Gershkovich and a Russian intelligence colonel jailed for a Berlin murder were among two dozen prisoners freed yesterday in the biggest East-West prisoner swap since the Cold War.

The prisoners were flown to Turkey's capital Ankara from Russia, the United States, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway and Belarus under the complex deal, the Turkish presidency said.

In total, 10 Russians - including two minors - were exchanged for 16 Westerners and Russians imprisoned in Russia, said a statement released by the Turkish presidency.

Overjoyed family members appeared in the White House alongside President Joe Biden, who said they'd been able to phone their freed loved ones from the Oval Office.

Hailing a "feat of diplomacy," Biden said US allies Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway and Turkey "stood with us."

"Bold and brave decisions"

"They made bold and brave decisions" to release Russians

held for espionage and other crimes in return for the Westerners and Russian dissidents and human rights activists, he said.

"Some of these women and men have been unjustly held for years. All have endured unimaginable suffering and uncertainty. Today, their agony is over," Biden said. He described their convictions in Russia as "show trials."

Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris were to greet the freed prisoners at Joint Base Andrews outside Washington later in the day.

Dmitry Medvedev, a former Russian president and close ally of current leader Vladimir Putin, celebrated the return of Russians who he said had "worked for the Fatherland."

'Overwhelmed with relief'

The Wall Street Journal said it was "overwhelmed with relief" at the release of Gershkovich, 32, who was detained in Russia in March 2023 and sentenced in July to 16 years in prison on spying charges that were denounced by the United States.

Paul Whelan, a former US marine detained since 2018, also



US journalist Evan Gershkovich, left, former US Marine Paul Whelan, second from right, and US-Russian journalist Alsu Kurmasheva, right, on a plane after their release from Russia. (AFP)

flew to Ankara. Another American, Alsu Kurmasheva, and Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian with US residency, were likewise freed.

Opposition politician Ilya Yashin and Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian-Briton with US residency, who had both been jailed for criticizing Russia's invasion of

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- US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Ukraine, were among the Kremlin opponents released.

Yashin will go to Germany and Russians, according to the US administration. They included Rico Krieger, a German who was sentenced to death in Belarus on espionage charges before a reprieve this week.

Among those returned to Moscow was Vadim Krasikov, a Russian intelligence agent imprisoned in Germany for killing a former Chechen rebel commander in a brazen assassination.

Property market booms

Bahrain's real estate hits record BD661mln growth

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Real estate transactions reached a total of BD661,680 million over the first seven months of 2024, according to

the Survey and Land Registration Bureau (SLRB), covering 13,876 deals.

July witnessed the highest increase in transaction volume to date, with a 27% rise compared to the previous month.

In July, transactions amounted to BD85,333 million across 2,317 deals.

March saw the second highest number of transactions with 2,086, followed by February with 2,021 and January with 2,017.

This data reflects a marked increase in real estate activity in the early part of the year.

Transactions declined in April, May, and June, but July reversed this trend with the largest growth rate observed so

far. The SLRB is actively working on developments and updates to adapt to advancements, support the expansion of real estate trading in Bahrain, and encourage a sustainable investment environment.

