

Expat drowns in swimming pool

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

A 40-year-old expatriate yesterday drowned in a swimming pool.

According to sources, the Indian national was having a pool party along with a group of friends who had come from Saudi Arabia to celebrate Eid Al Fitr holidays when the incident happened.

The body of the deceased is kept at Salmaniya Medical Complex morgue. More details were unavailable until press time.

Tunisia retrieves 24 more bodies

Tunis

Tunisia's coast guard has retrieved 24 more bodies of migrants who had been among about 120 people on boats that sank off the Tunisian coast at the end of April, a judicial official told Reuters yesterday.

The confirmed death toll has now reached 67 from last month's sinking of four boats as they tried to cross the Mediterranean to Italy. More than 50 people are still missing.

'Carnage' continues

310 Ukraine fighters killed by Russian forces, 36 military equipment destroyed in 24 hours

Moscow

Russian troops killed 310 Ukrainian fighters and destroyed 36 units of weapons and military equipment in 24 hours yesterday, Russia's Defense Ministry spokesman Major General Igor Konashenkov said.

"Operational tactical and army aviation of the Russian Aerospace Forces hit 77 areas of concentration of manpower and military equipment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Up to 310 nationalists and 36 units of weapons and military equipment were destroyed," state news agency TASS cited Konashenkov as saying.

"Missile troops and artillery hit the Ukrainian battery of multiple launch rocket systems BM-21 Grad, as well as 83 areas of concentration of manpower and military equipment, at firing positions," he said.

He added: "Russian air defense systems destroyed six Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicles during the day in the areas of the settlements of Avdiivka, Severodonetsk, Vesela Hora of



Destroyed Russian armored vehicles in the city of Bucha, west of Kyiv, yesterday. (AFP)

the Luhansk region, as well as over Zmeiny Island."

Russia's heavy bombardment

of Ukrainian sites comes as the European Union moved to impose further sanctions on Moscow by proposing a ban on oil

imports. Heavy fighting also raged

at the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol, the last stronghold of Ukrainian resistance in the city.

Grace and energy

Renowned Bharatanatyam dancer enthralls audience

Event held as part of First BKS Indo-Bahrain Dance and Music Festival

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

Renowned Indian dancer Asha Sharath was at her best as she performed Bharatanatyam to Malayalam poetess Sugathakumari's timeless poem 'Krishna Nee Enne Ariyilla' at Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam (BKS) last night.

The event was held as part of First BKS Indo-Bahrain Dance and Music Festival.

The fully-packed crowd at BKS auditorium was enthralled after seeing the classical dance-



Asha Sharath performing Bharatanatyam on stage

er's mudras, postures, footworks and expressions that poured out the love and devotion for Lord Krishna.

"She is numero uno among Bharatanatyam performers," said Indian national Sarat Chand.

"I am really privileged to be here to witness this great performance. We are thankful to Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam for organising this event."

Sheeba Prakash, another great Asha Sharath fan, said away from the dancing skills she loves the artiste's versatility in acting too.

"Asha Sharath and Sobhana are my favorite dancers. We are fortunate to be seeing this great performance in the Kingdom here."

Asha, who is Dubai-based, is also an actress whose laurels include Malayalam blockbusters 'Drishyam' and 'Varsham'.

She is a renowned dance trainer, running a world-class dance academy in the UAE.

The festival is being held under the patronage of the Embassy of India and in association with Bahrain Authority for Culture Antiquities (BACA) and Soorya Stage and Film Society. It will conclude on May 14.

The highlights of the festival include an inimitable performance by the world renowned Sarod trio Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, and his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash, renowned Veena player Rajhesh Vaidya, and his team of accompanying artists.

In the evening today, art enthusiasts can witness a night of musical magic orchestrated by Stephen Devassy, and his team Umayalpuram, Attukal Balasubrahmaniam and Amith Nadig.

BAHRAIN COVID-19
TOTAL TESTED
9733630
ACTIVE CASES
3111
DEATHS
1476
DISCHARGED
565516
NEW CASES
376
CRITICAL
2

220 fils (includes VAT)



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Ahlam dazzles crowd at Al Dana Amphitheatre

Eid celebrations held in spectacular fashion in Bahrain's newest and most exciting live entertainment destination



Uniquely elegant performances entertain the crowd at Al Dana Amphitheatre

TDT | Manama

Al Dana Amphitheatre, Bahrain's newest and most exciting live entertainment destination, celebrated Eid in spectacular fashion with a dazzling concert by renowned singer Ahlam on 3 May.

With pre-show entertainment that included a live oud session and a traditional dance show (Ardah), the event had a festive, celebratory atmosphere, and drew an audience that spanned

different generations.

The headline act, Ahlam, delivered a majestic performance that justified her place as the 'queen' of Arabic entertainment. Loved for her music as well as her TV appearances, she did not disappoint her fans, giving them an epic show that lasted more than three hours.

Arriving on stage in a floor-length, sparkly gown, Ahlam, kicked off the show with a heartfelt welcome message and proceeded to singing her special set, showcasing her distinctive, melodic voice,

in a unique fusion of traditional and modern Arab music.

Supported by a backing group of dancers and an impressive orchestra led by Maestro Ameer Abdulmajeed, Ahlam produced a uniquely elegant performance, with some of her most popular hits and timeless classics.

Her performance at Al Dana Amphitheatre was preceded by a lively show of traditional dancing, plus a live oud session that appealed to visitors young and old in celebratory mood. This blend of tradition, up-to-the-minute sound

and lighting effects and happy Eid vibes made it a family-friendly night to remember.

Before leaving the venue, Ahlam expressed her gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for supporting the Kingdom's efforts in initiating the artistic venue.

Full of pride to be standing before her fans during this special night, Ahlam expressed her joy towards the crowd and conveyed

her gratitude towards the organising team, thanking them for their outstanding efforts which led to the success of the night.

The show was the penultimate event in Al Dana Amphitheatre's fascinating season of events before the summer, which began last November and concludes on Friday, 13 May with a concert by legendary Saudi singer Mohammed Abdo.

Located in Sakhir, Al Dana Amphitheatre is set to become a regional industry leader through the creation of internationally recognised experiences further

promoting the Kingdom as an essential entertainment destination and contributing to its economic growth. The venue can host a variety of indoor and outdoor events for global event promoters, corporate events and private celebrations.

Follow Al Dana Amphitheatre's social media accounts on Instagram (@aldana_amp), Twitter (@aldana_amp), Facebook (facebook.com/aldanaamphitheatre), TikTok (@aldana_amp) and Snapchat (@aldana_amp).

First BKS Indo-Bahrain Dance and Music Festival officially inaugurated

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

Shaikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, Director-General, Culture and Arts at Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, last night officially inaugurated the First Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam (BKS) India-Bahrain Dance, Music Festival.

Present on the occasion were Indian Ambassador Piyush Srivastava, Chairman of Bahrain Indian Society and leading businessman Abdulrahman Juma, BKS President P V Radhakrishna Pillai, General Secretary Varghese Karakkal, Festival Director Soorya Krishnamoorthy and BKS Official Prashanth Govindapuram.

Speaking on the occasion, Shaikha Hala said she was really glad to be part of the Indian cultural extravaganza. "I wish the organizers very best in this endeavour and let this event be a great success."

Mr Srivastava said showcasing Indian cultural treasures in a country, which possesses great cultural heritage is a matter of great happiness. "This is also a bond of great friendship between India and Bahrain."

Mr Pillai said the event offers boundless pride and satisfaction to every BKS member, for they worked hard, day and night, to make this great dream a reality.



Shaikha Hala inaugurates the festival in the presence of Mr Srivastava, Mr Juma, Mr Pillai, Mr Karakkal, BKS officials and dignitaries

"This festival is a tribute to great leaders of two nations - India and Bahrain - for taking the bilateral relations to new heights.

"This is also the proud 75th year of existence for Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam," he highlighted.

The festival is all set to showcase the performances of legendary Indian artists.

On May 7, a Carnatic music concert will be conducted by Abhishek Raghuram and his team of accompanying musicians.

Music exponent with the voice of a nightingale, Nithyasree Mahadevan and her team will perform a concert on May 8th.

A dance drama production from Bahrain, Buddha - The

Divine, by Vidyasree, with music composition by Palakkad Sreeram, and lyrics by L Sampathkumar, will grace the stage on May 9th.

South India's most favoured singer - music director M Jayachandran, accompanied by Sankaran Namboodiri, Sreevalsan J Menon, Lalu Sukumar and team, will bring a night of melody on May 10.

Artists from the Kingdom of Bahrain will perform on May 11. A Kathak performance by Khalil Alashar will be followed by a concert by the band Majaz Bahrain.

On May 12 is a classical instrumental night headed by Mysore Nagaraj, Dr Mysore Manjunath

on the violin, accompanied by Thiruvavoor Bhakthavalsalan, Alappuzha R Karunamoorthy, and Giridhar Udupa.

On May 13 is a concert by the man with the enchanting fingers, Rajhesh Vaidya, and his team Bhuvanesh, Kumaran, Mohan and Sai Hari.

May 14 will showcase a once in a lifetime night of music by the Sarod Maestros Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash.

The BKS Indo-Bahrain Dance and Music Festival is conducted in association with the Embassy of India, Bahrain, Authority for Culture and Antiquities, and Ministry of Social Development, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain and Italy review ways to boost cooperation



Participants in the online discussion

Rome

Bahrain and Italy reviewed bilateral relations of cooperation and close friendship and ways of boosting them by following up the implementation of the signed agreements and memoranda of understanding.

This came as Bahrain's Ambassador to Rome Dr Nasser Mohammed Al Belushi met remotely with Italian Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Manlio Di Stefano.

The meeting was also attended by the Regional Director of the Economic Development Board in the Italian Republic Davide Allegra.

They also discussed exploring the opportunities and possibilities for cooperation and exchange of experiences in the economic, trade, tourism and investment fields, and work to develop them for the benefit of both countries and peoples, along with an exchange of views over regional and international issues of common concern.

CBB raises key interest rate

TDT | Manama

The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) yesterday raised its key policy interest rate on the one-week deposit facility, from 1.25% to 1.75%.

The CBB also raised the overnight deposit rate from 1.00% to 1.50%, the four-week deposit rate from 1.75% to 2.50% and the lending rates from 2.50% to 3.00%.

Safety measures in place

Police directorates and Interior Ministry ensure smooth flow of traffic during Eid Al Fitr



Police officers work round the clock to protect everyone's safety

● Security patrols deployed 24/7 around Kingdom

● Citizens, residents and tourists enjoy three-day holiday

● Police guarantee prompt response to incoming reports

● Best services for incoming and outgoing travellers at ports

TDT | Manama

Police directorates in the four governorates and Ministry of Interior departments have made all the necessary preparations and procedures to safeguard the safety of citizens, residents and tourists during the Eid Al Fitr holiday, including the deployment of security patrols around the Kingdom.

They implemented a number of security measures and established their presence in

streets, complexes, commercial markets and residential neighbourhoods.

They were aimed at spreading the spirit of security, tranquility, joy and pleasure to everyone on the occasion of Eid Al Fitr.

The General Traffic Department, on the other hand, increased its traffic presence by monitoring the main streets and intersections, as well as near commercial complexes and roads, where there is a high traffic density. It also increased the number of foot and mobile police to ensure the smooth flow of traffic.

The Public Security Presidency's Operations Department deployed emergency patrols in



Police have implemented a number of security measures and established their presence in streets, complexes, commercial markets and residential neighbourhoods.

various locations to support the efforts of the police directorates and guarantee the prompt response and handling of incoming reports.

The General Administration of Ports Security, for its part, confirmed the readiness of the Kingdom's land, air and sea ports to receive and depart visitors during the holiday.

It is coordinating with all the authorities operating at the ports, with the aim of providing the best services to travellers, ensure ease and smooth movement at the ports, and complete the travellers' procedures with the required speed and efficiency.

Directorate service centres to resume normal operating hours

TDT | Manama

The General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science's Criminal Information Department has announced that its service centres would resume normal operating hours following the Eid Al Fitr holiday.

The service centre in the southern governorate's General Traffic Department is open from 7.30am to 2pm, while the service centre in the Muharraq governorate's security complex is open from 7.30am to 5.30pm.

The Criminal Information Department reminds the public to print the service request form by visiting the Criminal Information Department's website, www.cri.gov.bh, as well as make an appointment in advance using the SKIPLINO application, before going to the

service centers to save time and effort.

NPRA operations

The Nationality, Passports, and Residence Affairs (NPRA) has also announced that its service centres at the Security Complex in Muharraq and Isa Town would resume normal operating hours.

The contact centre accepts phone questions from 7.30am to 6pm.

NPRA emphasises the importance of scheduling an appointment in advance through the MAWAEID application to review the service centres.

For any questions, the public can call the call centre at 17077077 or e-mail info@npa.gov.bh. The e-government site is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week via Bahrain. bh and Evisa.gov.bh.

Four more days left for Filipinos to vote for national election back home

TDT | Manama

Filipinos residing and working in the Kingdom still have four more days to cast their votes for the May 9 national election back home.

The Philippine Embassy in Mahooz is calling on eligible Filipino voters to come forward and exercise their right and duty to choose future leaders before the overseas voting comes to a close.

Filipino expats will select the successor of current President Rodrigo Duterte, as well as the next vice-president, 12

senators and a party-list representative.

Nine candidates will contest this year's presidential elections, with Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the son and namesake of the late Philippine dictator, being a favourite to win.

Trailing him in pre-election surveys is Vice President Leni Robredo and Manila Mayor Isko Moreno. Boxing legend Sen. Manny Pacquiao is also a candidate.

Voting is open daily from 8am to 4pm until 8 May and from 8am to 2pm on the last day of the voting period on 9 May.

Covid-19 took five lives last month; number of casualties declining

● February 2022 saw 46 Covid-19 deaths, the highest this year

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

Five Covid-19 deaths were reported last month as the number of new cases stabilised since the beginning of April, 2022.

Highlighting the Kingdom's success in the battle against the virus, the number is a steep decline when compared to last February, which saw 46 Covid-19 deaths, the highest monthly death number during the third wave of infection.

The death numbers stood at 1,476 yesterday and there are only two critical cases now. Highest single day death number (four) since the beginning of the New Year was reported on February 13 and February 23.

There were 357 new cases yesterday along with 425 recoveries. There are 3,091 active cases including 14 hospitalised patients infected with Covid-19.

Having approved eight vaccines to be administered to the public in its battle against Covid-19 vaccine, the Kingdom now stands fourth along with Botswana, Cambodia, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Viet-

Daily New Cases in Bahrain



Total Coronavirus Cases in Bahrain



nam in the matter of giving nod to different anti-Covid vaccines.

India and Mexico, which have approved 10 anti-Covid vaccines top the list. The two countries are followed by Argentina, Ne-

pal, Moldova, Hungary and Ecuador with each of them approving nine different vaccines.

Bahrain became the first country in the world last month to authorise, receive and admin-

ister Valneva's Covid-19 vaccine manufactured by the French biotech major.

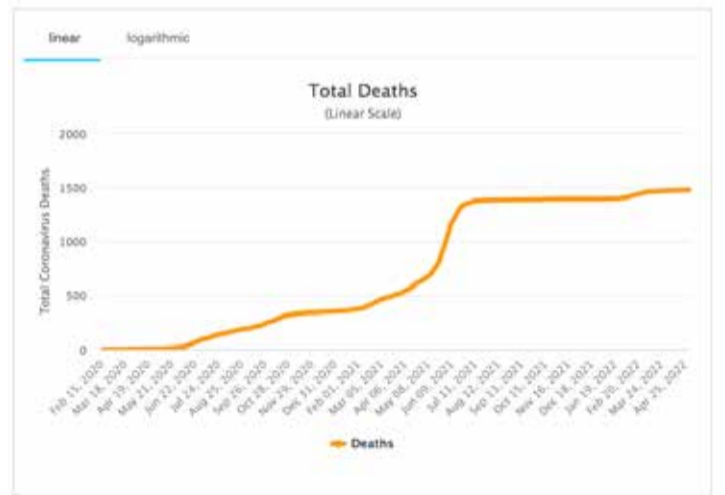
The Kingdom was one of the first countries to provide access to all FDA approved vaccines, with other effective vaccines, such as Sinopharm, also being made available. Elsewhere, most entry restrictions for those arriving in Bahrain have been removed and Bahrain International Airport is in the process of introducing a dedicated medical protocol for COVID-19 cases.

A robust multi-lingual media strategy underpins Bahrain's public awareness campaign, which delivers regular pandemic developments, reiterates the necessity of following restrictions, and promotes getting vaccinated.

Earlier, the Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, praised the efforts of the Kingdom in supporting the organisation's role in facing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. He lauded the Kingdom's remarkable role in curbing the spread of the virus by taking effective preventive measures. He also praised Bahrain's solidarity with the other member states of the organisation in taking comprehensive measures and unifying efforts to quickly find the necessary treatment.

Dr Tedros praised the Kingdom for adopting a compre-

Total Coronavirus Deaths in Bahrain



hensive approach to handle the pandemic by taking precautionary measures in a proactive and extremely effective way to slow the spread of the virus. He also lauded the Kingdom's continuous coordination with the organisation to follow up on the development of the virus and the organisation's decisions in this regard.

Bahrain has taken proactive precautionary measures to mitigate the spread of the virus by implementing the highest tracking standards to know the details of the impact of contacts. Bahrain has also made efforts to increase the capacity of hospitals, precautionary quaran-

tine centers, and isolation and treatment centers. It has also increased the number of laboratory tests, intensive care equipment, and personal protective equipment.

A complete plan was also drawn up to recruit, qualify and train the necessary manpower. It succeeded in handling cases and improving therapeutic capacity, as demonstrated by effective treatment protocols in the Kingdom, which helped in treating a large number of existing cases. Bahrain was the first Arab country to join a "solidarity test" to test the first vaccine, and start clinical trials of treatment with blood plasma.

Major sewage project in Hidd Industrial Area in full swing

● Work duration is 24 months, projected to be finished in fourth quarter of 2023

● Part of government initiatives to develop infrastructure in investment areas

TDT | Manama

The construction of the main sewage water carrier project in Hidd Industrial Area has achieved 30% completion rate.

It is one of the major projects being carried out by the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning.

The Undersecretary for Works Affairs, Eng. Ahmed Abdulaziz Al Khayyat, said the project comes within the Ministry's plan to implement the government's program in developing sewage networks and providing infrastructure in various regions in the Kingdom, as well as in investment areas that support the national economy.

This project falls within the strategic national plan set by



Eng. Al Khayyat

the Ministry for the Sanitation Sector, which is concerned with planning, developing and expanding networks and wastewater treatment systems in Bahrain in light of the rapid urban development.

Eng. Al Khayyat stated that the project's implementation work is going as planned, and he reminded those in charge of it of the need to maintain the same pace of work until the project is completed on time.

The project duration is 24 months, and implementation work began in September 2021. The project is projected to be finished in the fourth quarter of 2023, according to the project timetable.

According to Eng. Al Khayyat, the project includes the building of a major sewage conveying

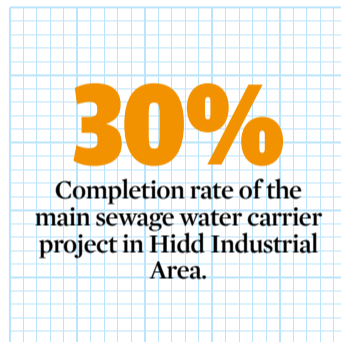


The main sewage water carrier construction work in progress

line with a total length of about 3.3 kms, of which 1.1 km will be performed by digging an open trench and the remaining 2.2 kms would be excavated. Three pumping stations will be re-established using Micro Tunneling equipment.

The installation of main sewage network pipes using the open-drilling technique on Road No. 1545 and 1550 had already been completed.

Experiment excavations were also carried out to complete the



column location prior to beginning the excavation operation

utilising the deep digging technique and diverting the network. Existing rainfall drainage is incompatible with the building of project manholes, the installation of manholes on Road No. 1546, and the completion of preceding concrete pouring works to create sewage drainage holes on Route No. 1510.

Eng. Al Khayyat emphasised the goal of the project, which is to achieve sustainable development for this sector in the Kingdom and to provide the best

This project falls within the strategic national plan set by the Ministry for the Sanitation Sector, which is concerned with planning, developing and expanding networks and wastewater treatment systems in Bahrain in light of the rapid urban development.

services for all regions.

The project will also contribute to reducing the operating and maintenance costs of old pumping stations, in addition to raising the capacity of the sewage network from 2,300 cubic metres per day to approximately 24,000 cubic metres per day in order to serve the current and future industrial facilities in the region.

The tender for the project was awarded by the Tender and Auctions Board to Abdulhadi Al Afwa LLC, at a cost of BD3,285,603.

'Punarjani' offers visual treat



Thirty-five dancers took part in the dance drama 'Punarjani' (rebirth), which was held at Indian Club Bahrain on Sunday (May 1) as part of International Labour Day celebrations. The event, which left the audience spellbound with unique visual effects, dance steps and formations, stressed mankind's battles and success saga against Covid-19 virus, which took over the entire world after a mighty invasion two years ago. The event was directed and conceptualized by writer, film actor and leading expatriate cultural figure Jaya Menon, who was honoured by Labour and Social Development Minister Jameel Humaidan in the presence of Indian Ambassador Piyush Srivastava.

16 residential towers in Salman City with large deep foundations 'global model'



Ministry of Housing officials and other stakeholders at the building construction site

TDT | Manama

Huge deep foundations have been used to construct 16 residential towers in Salman City.

The major project, which is implemented by the Ministry of Housing, will provide 1,382 apartments with an area of up to 3,600 square metres per floor.

Based on the field of design, construction and operation of infrastructure, the residential towers project is a global model. It has more than 12,000

deep bases to support an area of 70,000 square metres and a depth of more than 15 metres, and consumed nearly 70,000 cubic metres of concrete and 5,000 tonnes of steels.

The Ministry held a celebration on this occasion at the project site, in the presence of Eng. Muhammad Rashdan, Director of the Department of Construction and Maintenance of Housing Projects, and Engineer Housam Al Salman, Director of the Department of Planning and Design of Housing Projects.

Also present were representatives of the companies that support the project, namely Strong Force Company, Dar Al Khaleej Engineering, Al Moayyed Contracting Group, Chabo Arados Contracting Company, Salvo Engineering and Management, and Al Ansari Engineering Services.

The engineering team supervising the project used integrated and interconnected geotechnical design and analysis to implement safe, cost-effective and environmentally friendly foundations.

Six new Knights of Rizal-Bahrain Chapter members inducted

TDT | Manama

The Knights of Rizal-Bahrain Chapter has inducted six new members.

They joined the distinguished order during a Knighthood and Elevation Ceremony held at Al Manzil Hotel in Juffair on 29 April.

The new Knights of Rizal are Messrs. Dr. Cornelio Neil P. Banez, Henry P. Berbano Jr., Kim V. Cabalit, Nathaniel M.



The Knights of Rizal-Bahrain Chapter with new members and top Philippine Embassy officials

Mangune, Ronald T. Gal and Krause A. Muyot Jr. Labor Attache Vicente Cabe of the Philippine Embassy

was elevated from the rank of Knight of Rizal (KR) to the rank of Second Degree Knight Officer of Rizal (KOR).

Ferrari says core earnings rose 12% in Q1, orders strong



A Ferrari SF90 Stradale hybrid sports car is seen during a media preview at the Auto Zurich Car Show in Zurich, Switzerland

Reuters | Milan

Ferrari (RACE.MI) said yesterday its core earnings rose 12% in the first quarter as demand for its sports cars remained strong despite global political turmoil.

Adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) came in at 423 million euros (\$445 million) in the January-March period, helped by the collection of advances on the Daytona SP3, one of Ferrari latest models.

The results matched analyst expectations of 425 million euros, according to a Reuters poll.

"These results were sustained by a strong net order intake, which continued firmly over the first three months of the year: today the order book already covers well into 2023 and most of our models are sold out," Chief Executive Benedetto Vigna said in a statement.

Vigna noted that 2022 had been marked by "uncertainties in the geopolitical scenario" but added that he remained "optimistic about the future prospect of the company".

Ferrari confirmed its forecast for the year it provided three months ago, including one for an adjusted EBITDA of between 1.65 and 1.70 billion euros.

A tech industry veteran, Vigna took charge of Ferrari last September, with a task to take a brand synonymous with roaring combustion engines into the new era of silent and cleaner electric mobility.

He will present his first comprehensive business plan for the company next month.

Crude oil jumps 4% as EU plans ban on Russian oil

● US crude stocks fall 3.5 mln bbls last week - API

● EU set to unveil sanctions on Russian oil

● Beijing tightens COVID curbs

Reuters | London

Oil prices jumped yesterday as the European Union, the world's largest trading bloc, spelled out plans to phase out imports of Russian oil, offsetting demand worries in top importer China.

Brent crude futures rose \$3.76, or 3.6%, to \$108.73 a barrel by 1353 GMT. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose \$3.93, or 3.8%, to \$106.34 a barrel.

European Commission Presi-



Storage tanks are seen at the Petroineos Ineos petrol refinery in Lavera, France, March

dent Ursula von der Leyen yesterday proposed a phased oil embargo on Russia over its war in Ukraine, as well as sanctioning Russia's top bank, in a bid to deepen Moscow's isolation.

The Commission's measures include phasing out supplies of Russian crude within six

months and refined products by end-2022, von der Leyen said. She also pledged to minimise the impact on European economies.

"Russian oil is now 'bad oil'," SEB chief commodities analyst Bjarne Schieldrop said.

"This energy war of 'good oil' versus 'bad oil' has just started,"

he added.

Investors are also waiting for an announcement from the U.S. Federal Reserve on Wednesday. It is expected to intensify efforts to bring down high inflation by raising interest rates and reducing its balance sheet.

In the United States, crude and fuel stocks fell last week, according to market sources citing American Petroleum Institute figures. Crude stocks fell by 3.5 million barrels for the week ended April 29, they said. This was more than an expected 800,000-barrel drop estimated in a Reuters poll.

Oil prices fell more than 2% on Tuesday on demand worries stemming from China's prolonged COVID-19 lockdowns that have curtailed travel plans during the Labour Day holiday season.

The global manufacturing purchasing managers index contracted in April for the first time since June 2020, with China's



Hungary and Slovakia, however, will be able to continue buying Russian crude oil until the end of 2023 under existing contracts,

lockdowns a key contributor, Caroline Bain, chief commodities economist at Capital Economics said in a note.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and their allies on Thursday are expected to stick to their policy for another monthly production increase.

Bahrainis launch the world's first Arabic Metaverse

TDT | Manama

H z m C o i n launched the first Arab digital currency for its metaverse world under the name the NEMO LAND KINGDOM, which will be a union of five worlds distributed between desert, plains, snow and water, and a modern capital from the future. Point Nemo is a large area of the South Pacific Ocean located off the coast of Chile and used as a vast cemetery of space navigation equipment to



accommodate remnants of outdated space equipment and missiles.

Fakih pointed out that Hzm is the first and most widely spread

Arab currency, as it is on six global platforms, and plans are to reach 11 platforms.

"So, it is natural that the first Arab Metaverse world is one of its projects in addition to other projects that are kept secret for fear of their property rights."

Cisco unveils technology to predict network issues

Reuters

Cisco Systems Inc (CSCO.O) yesterday unveiled a technology that it says can predict issues on enterprise networks before they happen to help prevent problems and increase reliability.

The predictive software engine will gather data from various sources within a company's network, learn the patterns and help engineers find hardware issues, bandwidth spikes and app configuration

problems before they cause difficulties. "A dedicated team of about 30 people have been working on this over the last two

years," Cisco Chief Executive Officer Chuck Robbins told Reuters. "We will apply this technology to a broad range of products and services over the next few years." Cisco, which sells a range of networking equipment and software to connect devices to the internet, has tested the technology with about 15 customers, including Phillips 66 and Schneider Electric.

Traditional technologies can detect issues and react only when they happen, but if networks can predict issues and make changes proactively, the user will have a vastly better experience, Robbins said.



Vitol sends first shipment of Russian ESPO crude cargo to UAE, data shows

● Vitol might supply the volume to its own refinery in Fujairah.

Reuters | Singapore

The world's largest independent oil trader, Vitol, loaded a cargo of Russian ESPO Blend crude for the United Arab Emirates this week, the first such voyage for the grade, data from several analytics firms showed.

Suezmax tanker Kriti Breeze, chartered for \$2.3 million, loaded the 740,000-barrel cargo from the Far East port of Kozmino on May 3, and is heading to the port of Fujairah, data from Refinitiv, Kpler and Vortexa showed.

According to one trader, Vitol might supply the volume to its own refinery in Fujairah.

Vitol via subsidiary VTTI company, which it co-owns with IFM and ADNOC, controls a refinery complex in the emirate with a capacity of some 100,000 barrels per day and storage for about 2 million tonnes of oil.

The tanker is expected to discharge the cargo at Fujairah in late May or early June, the data showed.

Two traders who regularly track ESPO crude said the crude is typically sold to North Asia.

The shipment is "very creative and FOB (free-on-board) discounts must be huge for it to work", one of the traders said, referring to the crude's spot discount to Dubai quotes, excluding freight cost.

US plastic recycling rate drops to close to 5% - report

Reuters | Washington

The rate of plastic waste recycling in the United States fell to between 5%-6% in 2021 as some countries stopped accepting U.S. waste exports and as plastic waste generation surged to new highs, according to a report released yesterday.

The report by environmental groups Last Beach Clean Up and Beyond Plastics shows the recycling rate has dropped from 8.7% in 2018, the last time the Environmental Protection Agency published recycling figures.

The decline coincides with a sharp drop in plastic waste exports, which had counted as recycled plastic. China and Turkey have since implemented plastic import bans and other countries set plastic waste contamination limits under the Basel Convention Plastic Waste Amendments, which the United States did not



A man with a protective face mask walks with recyclables in a shopping cart as the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues in the borough of Brooklyn in New York, U.S.

ratify in 2019.

"The U.S. must take responsibility for managing its own plastic waste," said the report, which used 2018 EPA, 2021 export and

recent industry data to estimate the 2021 recycling rate.

The EPA did not release its updated yearly recycling rate data last year. It last published

data in 2020 showing 2018 rates. The agency was not immediately available for comment.

The recycling rate is falling as plastic waste generation soars

in the United States, the report said. Per capita plastic waste went from 60 pounds per year in 1980 to 218 pounds in 2018 - a 263% total increase.

The petrochemical and plastic industry has been advocating for improved recycling across the country but is facing pressure to curb its production of virgin plastic. Last week, California Attorney General Rob Bonta launched an investigation into the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries' role in "causing and exacerbating the global plastics pollution crisis" and accused the industry of "perpetuating a myth that recycling can solve the plastics crisis." L2N2WQ2LY

"Recycling does not work, it never will work, and no amount of false advertising will change that," said report author Judith Enck, a former EPA regional administrator.

News in brief

◆ **The first head of state of an independent Belarus, Stanislav Shushkevich, who with the leaders of Russia and Ukraine signed a decree dissolving the Soviet Union, has died aged 87, his wife told AFP.** Shushkevich, who later became a critic of Belarus's strongman leader Alexander Lukashenko, died of complications from coronavirus, his wife Irina said yesterday. As chairman of the Belarus Supreme Soviet, Shushkevich, along with Russian leader Boris Yeltsin and Ukrainian leader Leonid Kravchuk, signed the 1991 declaration that dissolved the Soviet Union. Shushkevich led Belarus from independence until he was defeated in a 1994 election by Lukashenko, becoming a prominent member of the opposition.



Ex-Belarus leader Stanislav Shushkevich, who helped dissolve USSR, dies at 87

Myanmar junta court rejects Suu Kyi corruption appeal



◆ **A Myanmar junta court yesterday rejected an appeal by ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi against a five-year sentence for corruption handed down**

last week, according to a source with knowledge of the case. Since a coup ousted her government in February last year, plunging Myanmar into upheaval, Suu Kyi has been in military custody and faces a raft of charges that could jail her for more than 150 years. Last week the Nobel laureate was convicted of accepting a bribe of \$600,000 cash and gold bars -- a charge she said was "absurd", according to her lawyer. An appeal filed by Suu Kyi's legal team was on Wednesday "summarily dismissed without hearing from either side", the source said. The 76-year-old Suu Kyi had already been sentenced to six years in jail for incitement against the military, breaching Covid-19 rules and breaking a telecommunications law.

◆ **The number of people facing hunger rose to 193 million last year as conflict, climate change and economic crises ravaged people's livelihoods, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said Wednesday.** While experts have warned that Russia's war in Ukraine could cause famine, the FAO said in an annual report that nearly 40 million more people were pushed into "acute food insecurity" in 2021. Among 53 countries facing the problem, the most affected include the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Yemen and Afghanistan where millions face hunger after the country plunged into financial crisis following the Taliban takeover in 2021. The United Nations defines "acute food insecurity" as when a person's inability to consume adequate food puts their lives or livelihoods in immediate danger. "This is hunger that threatens to slide into famine and cause widespread death," the FAO said. The number has risen constantly since the first report was published by the FAO, the World Food Programme and the European Union in 2016.

40 million more faced acute hunger in 2021: UN



COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally	
USA	83,240,101	1,021,581		514,763,538
India	43,088,401	523,920		
Brazil	30,482,429	663,765	Deaths	
France	28,757,765	146,262		
Germany	24,949,403	136,183	6,266,199	
UK	22,073,858	175,319		
Russia	18,206,167	376,421	Recovered:	
S. Korea	17,395,791	23,079		
Italy	16,586,268	163,889	New cases	
Turkey	15,036,110	98,801		
Spain	11,953,481	104,668	+195,880	
Vietnam	10,662,446	43,047		
Argentina	9,083,673	128,653	New deaths	
Netherlands	8,054,728	22,266		

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	515,645		24,613		442,182	48,850
Saudi Arabia	754,464	+124	9,094	+1	742,127	3,243
UAE	899,441	+199	2,302		883,160	13,979
Kuwait	631,409		2,555		628,090	764
Oman	389,126		4,258		384,243	625
Qatar	364,778		677		363,573	528

Kremlin dismisses speculation to declare war on Ukraine on Monday

● **Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said: "There is no chance of that. It's nonsense."**

● **Peskov also said that people should not listen to speculation**

Reuters | London

The Kremlin yesterday dismissed speculation that President Vladimir Putin planned to declare war against Ukraine and declare a national mobilisation on May 9 when Russia commemorates the Soviet Union's victory in World War Two.

Putin has so far characterised Russia's actions in Ukraine as a "special military operation", not a war. But Western politicians and some Russia watchers have speculated that he could be pre-



Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov

paring for a major announcement next Monday with a range of possible scenarios ranging from an outright declaration of war to a declaration of victory.

Asked about speculation that Putin will declare war against

Ukraine on May 9, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said: "There is no chance of that. It's nonsense."

Peskov also said that people should not listen to speculation that there could be a decision on

a national mobilisation. "It is not true. It is nonsense," Peskov told reporters.

The May 9 Victory Day is one of Russia's most important national events - a remembrance of the enormous Soviet sacrifice made in defeating Nazi Germany in what is known in Russia as the Great Patriotic War.

An estimated 27 million Soviet citizens were killed in the 1941-45 war which left the Soviet Union devastated and almost every Soviet family mourning.

Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine has killed thousands of people, displaced millions more and raised fears of the most serious confrontation between Russia and the United States since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

Putin says the "special military operation" in Ukraine is necessary because the United States was using Ukraine to threaten Russia and Moscow had to defend against the persecution of

EU targets Russian oil, banks as Ukraine says

● **EU proposes toughest sanctions yet on Russia**

● **Ukraine keeps wary eye on Belarusian army drills**

● **Russia says NATO arms supplies to Ukraine are target**

● **More evacuees leave on buses from Mariupol**

Reuters | Kyiv/Brussels

The EU proposed its toughest sanctions yet against Russia yesterday, including a phased oil embargo, as Kyiv said Moscow was intensifying its offensive in



India releases 2020 death data ahead of WHO COVID mortality study it objects

Reuters | New Delhi

India registered about 1.475 million more total deaths in 2020 than the previous year, government data released months ahead of schedule on Tuesday showed, as the World Health Organization readies its estimates of excess COVID-19 deaths whose methodology New Delhi has opposed.

Vinod Kumar Paul, a top health official who has overseen India's fight against the pandemic, said there was nothing "dramatic" in the total death data for 2020 and that those were "absolute, correct and counted numbers".

He said the data showing 8.1 million total deaths in India in 2020 was released by the

3m
Countries around the world reported only 1.83 million COVID-19 deaths in 2020 but the WHO estimates excess mortality of at least 3 million globally for that year.

Office of the Registrar General two to three months in advance because of the attention on the country's COVID toll.

"There is a public narrative in the media, based on various modelling estimates, that India's COVID-19 deaths are many times the reported figure - that's not the case in reality,"

he told state TV.

"We now have actual data for 2020, there is no need to do any modelling now. We will have actual, robust data for 2021 too. Modelling can lead to overestimation, absurd estimation."

The death count grew slower in the country of 1.35 billion people in 2020 than in the previous two years, the data showed.

India officially reported 148,738 COVID-19 deaths in 2020, with the tally jumping to 523,889 on Tuesday out of more than 43 million cumulative infections. Only the United States and Brazil have recorded more deaths as of Tuesday.

India has said it does not agree with the WHO's methodology.

Vatican prepares

Reuters | Vatican City

The new barracks of the Vatican Swiss guards will be built to accommodate female members if Pope Francis or his successors allow women to join the elite and colourfully dressed force.

Officials of the Swiss foundation that is raising the estimated 45 million Swiss Francs (\$46 million) to replace the current 150-year-old barracks signed a memorandum of understanding with the Vatican's Secretary of State on Wednesday.

"The project includes single rooms with private bathrooms," Riccardo Boscardin, an executive of the foundation, said in the courtyard of the barracks after the signing. "There are two reasons. One is because COVID hit when the project started and the second is the possibility of integrating



Putin May 9



Putin has used previous Victory Day speeches to needle the West and showcase the firepower of Russia's post-Soviet armed forces.

Ukraine says it is 'ready' if Belarus joins Russian war effort



A view shows the Senkivka checkpoint near the border with Belarus and Russia in the Chernihiv region, Ukraine
Reuters | Kyiv

Kyiv will be ready if Belarus's armed forces join Russia's war effort in Ukraine, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian State Border Service said on Wednesday.

Belarus, a close ally of Russia, said its military had begun large-scale drills on Wednesday to test their combat readiness and that they posed no threat to its neighbours.

"We do not rule out that the Russian Federation could at some point use the territory of Belarus, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus, against Ukraine," said Andriy Demchenko, spokesperson for Ukraine's State Border Service. "Therefore, we are ready," he said, adding that the border with Belarus had been strengthened since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

Russian Orthodox Church scolds Pope Francis after 'Putin's altar boy' remark



Patriarch Kirill has been a key pillar of Russia's ruling apparatus, championing conservative religious values

- Pope took the wrong tone - Russian Orthodox Church

- Kremlin says: no agreement on pope meeting

- Pope said Kirill should not be Putin's altar boy

- Patriarch Kirill: my flock is divided

Reuters | London

The Russian Orthodox Church scolded Pope Francis yesterday for using the wrong tone after he urged Patriarch Kirill not to become the Kremlin's "altar boy", cautioning the Vatican that such remarks would hurt dialogue between the churches.

Francis told Italy's Corriere Della Sera newspaper that Kirill, who has given the Ukraine war his backing, "cannot become [President Vladimir] Putin's altar boy".

The Russian Orthodox Church said it was regrettable that a month and a half after Francis and Kirill, the patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, had spoken directly, the pope had adopted such a tone.

"Pope Francis chose an in-



correct tone to convey the content of this conversation," the Moscow Patriarchy said, though it did not explicitly mention the "altar boy" comment.

"Such statements are unlikely to contribute to the establishment of a constructive dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches, which is especially necessary at the present time."

Kirill, 75, a close ally of Putin, sees the war as a bulwark against a West he considers decadent, particularly over the acceptance of homosexuality.

But Kirill also expressed sorrow over the conflict.

"Of course, this situation is associated with great pain for me. My flock is on both sides of the confrontation, they are mostly Orthodox people," the Patriarchy quoted him as saying.

"How can we foster the pacification of those fighting with the single goal of achieving the consolidation of peace and justice?"

Russia's Russian offensive intensifies

eastern Ukraine.

"Russia's military command is attempting to increase the tempo of its offensive operation in eastern Ukraine," Ukrainian Defence Ministry spokesman Oleksandr Motuzanyk said.

The European Commission proposed phasing out supplies of Russian crude oil within six months and refined products by the end of 2022. The price of Brent crude jumped 4% to more than \$109 a barrel after the news.

The plan, if agreed by EU governments, would be a watershed for the world's largest trading bloc, which remains dependent on Russian energy and must find

alternative supplies.

Hungary and Slovakia want to be exempted from the ban for now, sources said. An official familiar with the talks said there was no immediate deal, with EU envoys expected to move closer to agreement when they meet again on Thursday.

Von der Leyen also announced sanctions targeting Russia's largest bank Sberbank, two other lenders, three state broadcasters as well as army officers and other individuals accused of war crimes.

The EU has yet to target Russian natural gas, used to heat homes and generate electricity across the bloc.

On the war front, Russia's Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said the United States and its NATO allies were continuing to pump weapons into Ukraine and reit-

erated a warning that Moscow would seek to hit those shipments.

Road accident kills 26 in western Ukraine

Twenty-six people were killed in a collision in the Rivne region of western Ukraine involving a bus, a minibus and a fuel truck that exploded after the crash, the interior ministry said yesterday.

The bus had been heading to Poland, the ministry said on Facebook. It did not say whether it was carrying any people fleeing the war in Ukraine following Russia's invasion.

The dead from Tuesday's collision included 24 passengers and the drivers of both the bus and the minibus. Twelve others were hurt including the driver of the fuel truck, the ministry said.

Opening for possibility of women Swiss Guards



Swiss guards march at the Vatican

women into the guard," Boscardin said. "But this decision is not ours, but exclusively that of the Vatican and the pope," he said.

The Foundation of the Pontifical Swiss Guard, which supports the guard financially, has already raised about 37 million francs and

needs to raise about 7.5 million more, Boscardin told Reuters.

He said work was due to start in January, 2026 so the guards would not be displaced during the 2025 Holy Year, when millions of pilgrims are expected to visit the Vatican.



The force, whose principal mission is to protect the pope, has been exclusively male since its founding in 1506. The men are all Swiss citizens.

Beijing steps up COVID curbs as virus spreads in China

- Beijing shuts scores of metro stations, bus routes

- Extends curbs on restaurants, other venues

- Zhengzhou to enforce some COVID curbs next week

Reuters | Beijing/Shanghai

Beijing shut scores of metro stations and bus routes and extended COVID-19 curbs on many public venues yesterday, focusing efforts to avoid the fate of Shanghai, where mil-

lions have been under strict lockdown for more than a month.

The central city of Zhengzhou earlier also announced restrictions, joining dozens of big population centres under some form of lockdown as China seeks to eliminate a virus believed to have first emerged in Wuhan city in late 2019.

But that uncompromising battle is undermining its growth and hurting international companies invested there, data shows, and has also fuelled rare public outbursts of discontent. With dozens of new cases a day, Beijing is hoping mass testing will find and isolate the virus before it spreads. Twelve of 16 city districts held the second of three rounds of tests this week.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Today in Niger I met with victims of terrorism & violent extremism, and the generous host communities offering them support & solidarity. The international community must quickly recognise that this is not only an issue for the Sahel, but a threat to the entire world.

@antonioguterres

02



My Denmark visit has been excellently productive. The programmes covered different spheres ranging from diplomatic meetings, boosting cultural and commercial linkages and engagement with the Indian community. I thank PM Frederiksen, the Government and people of Denmark. @Statsmin

@narendramodi

03



If the Court overturns Roe, it will fall on our nation's elected officials at all levels of government to protect a woman's right to choose. And it will fall on voters to elect pro-choice officials this November.

@JoeBiden

04



"A pro-junta militia that recently claimed responsibility for the slaying of opposition party members is now openly threatening to kill journalists and their families over content the military regime has dubbed 'destructive to the state.'"

@KenRoth

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

CELEBS

celebs

Benedict loved challenging himself with different versions of 'Doctor Strange'

IAN S | Los Angeles

Hollywood star Benedict Cumberbatch was "excited" to challenge himself with different versions of his Marvel character in the upcoming film 'Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness'.

Speaking to The Hollywood Reporter, he said: "I think it's same-same, but different."

"You have to get a correlation so that you know you're watching an iteration that basically through perhaps choices or circumstance and environment has had a different outcome."

"But it's a nice sort of loop feeding into self-discovery and self-therapy for the character that we know from our universe, as to how he betters his choices or the situation. So it's a fun thing to explore. It's one of the paradoxes that a multiversal narrative will throw up, and I was excited by that challenge."

The Multiverse was opened in 2021's 'Spider-Man: No Way Home', when Doctor Strange tried to cast a spell to help Peter Parker (Tom Holland) by making people forget he was Spider-Man, but things



Benedict Cumberbatch

”
You have to get a correlation so that you know you're watching an iteration that basically through perhaps choices or circumstance and environment has had a different outcome

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

didn't go according to plan, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Cumberbatch has defended his character, noting he made his decision with "pretty good" intentions.

He added: "He's a human being, and I think it was a very human error. He saw Peter as a fellow foot soldier and then as a teenager going through a very formative experience of not being able to be his true self because of being exposed, and having lost a mentor, (Strange) decided to step in with a gesture of pretty good intention."

The actor stressed it wasn't even his own character who messed up the spell, as he pointed to Peter's impact.

Johnny Depp was to get \$22.5 mn for 'Pirates 6', says agent

IAN S | Los Angeles

Hollywood star Johnny Depp's agent testified that the actor was to receive \$22.5 million to star in the sixth 'Pirates of the Caribbean' film, but Disney decided to go "in a different direction" after Amber Heard published an op-ed reviving her domestic abuse allegations.

Jack Whigham, who represented Depp at Creative Artists Agency and later at Range Media Partners, testified that the December 2018 piece in the Washington Post had a "catastrophic" impact on Depp's career, reports 'Variety'.

"After the op-ed it was impossible to get him a studio film," Whigham testified.

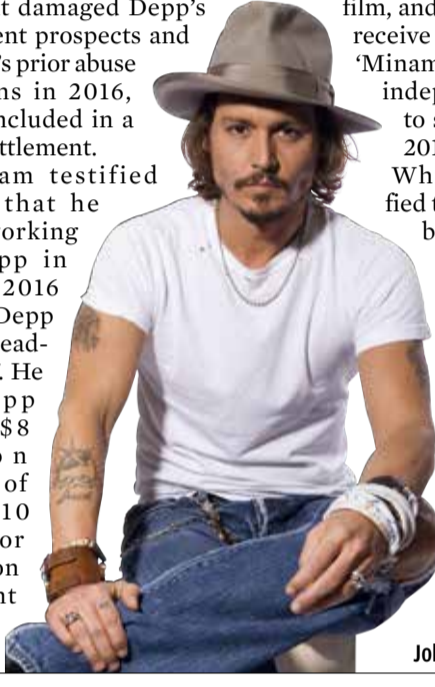
Depp is suing Heard for \$50 million, alleging that she destroyed his career with false allegations of domestic violence. The trial entered its fourth week on Monday, as Depp's team continued to call witnesses to sup-

port his claims.

Heard's side has yet to begin offering evidence, and she is expected to tell her own side of the story later in the trial.

Depp's attorneys are seeking to prove that it was the op-ed that damaged Depp's employment prospects and not Heard's prior abuse allegations in 2016, which concluded in a divorce settlement.

Whigham testified Monday that he started working with Depp in October 2016 and that Depp worked steadily in 2017. He said Depp earned \$8 million for 'City of Lies', \$10 million for 'Murder on the Orient Express'



Johnny Depp

and \$13.5 million for 'Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald' all of which were shot in 2017.

In the fall of 2018, he made \$1 million for 'Waiting for the Barbarians', an independent film, and he was set to receive \$3 million for 'Minamata', another independent film, to shoot in early 2019.

Whigham testified that the op-ed brought Depp's career success to a halt.

"It was a first-person account coming from the victim," he said.

"It became a death-knell catastrophic thing for



Johnny Depp's agent said Depp earned \$8 million for 'City of Lies', \$10 million for 'Murder on the Orient Express' and \$13.5 million for 'Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald' all of which were shot in 2017

Mr Depp in the Hollywood community."

After it was published, he said, the financing on 'Minamata' became shaky, and Depp had to give up some of his compensation to salvage the project.

Drew Barrymore apologizes for Johnny Depp-Amber Heard jokes amid defamation trial

FOX | Los Angeles

Drew Barrymore is offering her apologies for making jokes about the Johnny Depp-Amber Heard defamation trial.

"It has come to my attention that I have offended people with making light of Johnny Depp and Amber Heard, and for that, I just want to deeply apologize," the daytime talk show host, 47, said in a video shared to her Instagram on Sunday.

"I can be a more thoughtful and better person moving

forward because all I want to do is be a good person," she continued in the one-minute clip while iterating that she welcomed the criticism from many on social media as "this can be a teachable moment for me and how I move forward and how I conduct myself."

"I very much appreciate the depth of this and I will grow and change from it ... And I thank everyone for helping me grow along the way and teaching me," Barrymore added. "Thank you."

It was Friday's episode of "The Drew Barrymore Show" that the "Charlie's Angels" actress and actor Anthony Anderson were engaging in a time-filling back-and-forth about the viral trial.



Rachel Keller



Drew Barrymore

Alicia Silverstone is raising son Bear to love animals

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

The 45-year-old actress - who is mother to 10-year-old Bear with ex-husband Christopher Jarecki - claimed that parenthood is one of the most "rewarding things" in her life and so she regularly takes her son to visit rescued animals at charitable organisation Farm Sanctuary so he can think about the animals who are "robbed of the opportunity" to become mothers due to factory farming.

In an open letter obtained by PEOPLE, she writes: "One of the greatest and most rewarding things in my life has been being a mom to Bear. Many of you have seen him grow up over the last decade because one of our very favorite things to do together is visit the rescued animals at Farm Sanctuary! For animal lovers, Mother's Day can be bittersweet when we think of the other species who just want to love their babies and are robbed of the opportunity to exercise their maternal instinct because of human greed and exploitation in factory farming."



Alicia Silverstone

Turning Japanese: Rachel Keller on prepping for her role in 'Tokyo Vice'

IAN S | Los Angeles

' Fargo' star Rachel Keller was on cloud nine while prepping for her character Samantha in the crime drama 'Tokyo Vice' as she was always excited to learn the language since her grandmother grew up in Japan.

Rachel plays a pivotal role in the series as Samantha Porter,

an American migrant living in Japan.

The actress opens up on how she put an effort to get into the skin of the character in the show. She worked with a Japanese teacher to learn the foundation, grammar, sentence structure, and pronunciation and get the correct hang of the nuances of the language.

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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- "A Jug of Wine..." poet; 5- Gillette brand; 9- Coal-rich region; 13- Gap; 14- Pale; 15- Prod; 16- Camara model; 17- Loose coil of yarn; 18- Russian pancake; 19- Furry swimmers; 21- Bambi's aunt; 22- Sector; 23- Frozen treats; 25- "Twittering Machine" artist; 27- Defensive mounds; 31- Classified; 35- Quod _ demonstrandum; 36- See ya; 38- Snare; 39- Thrice, in prescriptions; 40- Snow conveyances; 42- Ed.'s pile; 43- Japanese immigrant; 46- Actor Stoltz; 47- Search; 48- Natural gas component; 50- Not a direct hit; 52- Hwy; 54- It parallels a radius; 55- Starting on; 58- Stutz contemporary; 60- Walking; 64- Drum sound; 65- Angry; 67- Leg joint; 68- _ breve; 69- Backing for an exhibit; 70- Richard of "A Summer Place"; 71- Jump; 72- Ceremonial act; 73- Deeply moved;

Down
1- Presidential battleground state; 2- "Beetle Bailey" cartoonist Walker; 3- Tons; 4- Proof of purchase; 5- Invite; 6- Of _ Sing; 7- Freshen, as a stamp pad; 8- Historical records; 9- Arctic; 10- Woody's son; 11- Not "fer"; 12- Actress Russo; 14- States; 20- Nipper's co.; 24- Old; 26- Many, many moons; 27- Knot again; 28- Give it _; 29- Cattail's locale; 30- Severe; 32- Marisa of "My Cousin Vinny"; 33- Much of Mississippi; 34- Student tables; 37- Old French expression meaning "goodbye"; 41- Surgical knife; 44- Side covering on a hat; 45- CD earnings; 47- Dollar; 49- More spine-tingling; 51- Messenger _; 53- Turkish palace; 55- Asian sea; 56- Flat-fish; 57- Leaf with Sanscrit writing; 59- Kiln for drying hops; 61- Swenson of "Benson"; 62- Type of tide; 63- Lady's escort; 66- Peg used on the first in golf;

Yesterday's solution

I	N	L	A		C	O	S	A		A	S	P									
T	E	E	N	A		A	N	O	N		A	P									
T	A	T	A	R		R	E	I	N		R	O	P								
O	R	A	L		F	E	A	T		U	R	E									
S	T									L	A	T	T	E	N						
S	I	E	S	T	A					N	O	O	S	E							
M	E	T	A	L		R	I	D		O	T	T	S								
F	A	A			R	E	N	A	M	E	S		E	O	S						
O	R	T	S		R	A	P			S	T										
S	L	E	E	P		E	S	P		I	E	S									
S	O	N	A	T	A					O	R	P	H	A	N						
										B	A	C	K	H	O	E		E	N	O	S
A	I	D	E							T	I	E	D		A	R	E	E			
I	S	E	E							U	R	A	L		D	E	E	R	E		
L	A	C								P	I	P	E		A	D	D	E	R		

Williamson to lead New Zealand in England Test series

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson to make Test return against England next month

● **New Zealand name 20-player squad for England Tests**

AFP | Wellington

New Zealand named a fit-again Kane Williamson as captain of their enlarged squad for the Test series in England, where he will hope the triumphs of a year earlier can be repeated.

An elbow injury sidelined captain Williamson from both of his country's recent home series draws against Bangladesh and South Africa.

The world class batsman has not played for New Zealand since November but returned to the crease last week for his Indian Premier League side, Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Williamson is relishing the chance to lead a 20-strong squad in England which features four players uncapped in the longest form.

The three-Test series falls a year after New Zealand beat the



Kane Williamson reacts during a training session (file photo)

English on home soil for the first time in more than 20 years.

Immediately after last year's series, the New Zealanders remained in England to beat India in the one-off inaugural Test World Championship final in Southampton.

"Playing Test cricket in England is always something quite special and we know the challenge is fierce," Williamson said.

"It's one of those places where conditions are unique. It's great

to play them in their back yard. "Our Test team's been fairly strong in terms of its consistency as a group for a while, so (the prospect of new players) is certainly something to be excited about."

Backup wicketkeeper Cam Fletcher has not played in any format for New Zealand while three players -- allrounder Michael Bracewell and seamers Blair Tickner and Jacob Duffy -- have played in shortened for-

”
Playing Test cricket in England is always something quite special and we know the challenge is fierce. It's one of those places where conditions are unique. It's great to play them in their back yard

KANE WILLIAMSON

mats only.

There is a recall for top-order batsman Hamish Rutherford, who has not played a Test for seven years.

Ajaz Patel also returns, having been ignored during the home summer on seamer-friendly pitches.

The left-arm spinner's last Test was in the loss to India in Wankhede five months ago, when he became the third player to take 10 wickets in an innings.

Williamson is among five players involved in the IPL who are unlikely to be involved in

”
YOU KNOW WHAT
Spinner Ajaz Patel, who is one of only three players to have taken 10 wickets in a test innings, will return for the three-test tour to England

two warmup matches -- at Hove (May 20-23) and Chelmsford (May 26-29).

The squad will be reduced to 15 ahead of the first Test against England, starting at Lord's on June 2.

Of the 15 players from the World Test Championship final squad, 13 are returning to England.

The exceptions are batsman Ross Taylor and wicketkeeper BJ Watling, who have both retired.

‘Devastated’ Rangers target Europa League final after death of kitman



Giovanni van Bronckhorst gives instructions during a training session (file photo)

AFP | London

Giovanni van Bronckhorst said yesterday he trusted in the character of his Rangers players as they seek to overturn a Europa League semi-final deficit against RB Leipzig while mourning the death of their kitman.

The death of the popular and long-serving Jimmy Bell at the age of 69 was announced by the Scottish club on Tuesday as the players were preparing for the second leg of their tie at Ibrox.

"Yesterday wasn't about keeping the spirits high," said the Rangers boss, whose side lost the first leg in Germany 1-0.

"We were all shocked by the news that Jimmy passed away, it was a hard day for all of us.

Leicester aim to write 'another chapter' against Roma in Euro semi

AFP | London

Leicester boss Brendan Rodgers says the club are attempting to write "another chapter" in their story as they prepare to face Roma with a place in the Europa Conference League final at stake.

The Foxes, who shocked the football world by winning the Premier League in 2016 under Claudio Ranieri, last season won the FA Cup for the first time in their history.

They travel to Italy on Thursday locked at 1-1 after last week's semi-final first leg against Jose Mourinho's men.

Rodgers, whose team dropped into the Conference League after failing to progress from the Europa League group stage, said yesterday he had been trying to create a "winning mentality" at the club, who have struggled in the Premier League this season.

"For some players they have to adapt to that," he said. "It takes time and these are experiences you want the players to learn from. It's something they are hungry for and we are all hungry to succeed.

"This is another chapter of the story. Our main objective is to keep the story of this club going, like we did in the FA Cup. We wanted to be the winners for the first time and we wanted that to be an objective in this competition as well."

Long-serving goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel vowed not to settle for second best with Leicester on the brink of their first European final.



Brendan Rodgers looks on during a training session (file photo)

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This is another chapter of the story. Our main objective is to keep the story of this club going, like we did in the FA Cup. We wanted to be the winners for the first time and we wanted that to be an objective in this competition as well

BRENDAN RODGERS

He said: "It's a European trophy. Every one is important, every competition you can win is important. I don't play football to finish fourth, fifth or sixth. You do it for the occasions regardless of competitions.

BETTER YOU KNOW
Leicester dropped into the Conference League after failing to progress from the Europa League group stage

"It's about winning trophies. That's what fans and players look back on, those moments when you got to lift trophies.

"The infrastructure of the club is in place to be successful. If we were to reach the final, that's sustained success over a period of time in terms of finals reached and trophies won."

Raducanu hopeful of Rome appearance despite back trouble

● **Raducanu saw 5 per cent chance of beating Kalinina in Madrid Open**

AFP | Madrid

Emma Raducanu revealed she has been dealing with back pain and "some niggles" throughout the week in Madrid but is not too concerned any injury will keep her out of next week's tournament in Rome.

The British world number 11 suffered a tight 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 against Ukrainian Anhelina Kalinina on Tuesday and said her back was restricting her from moving wide on the court in the opening set.

Raducanu received some treatment for her back and managed to move better as she levelled the match and forced a decider and says she leaves Madrid feeling positive about her game and progress on clay.

"I would have given myself a five percent chance of winning that match, and for it to almost happen, I think that was a positive thing," said the US Open champion.

"I was kind of struggling a bit with my back, to be honest. Throughout the week I have been carrying some niggles, and it's kind of just taking its toll, all of the matches at this kind of level.

"I think that's a good thing that I feel like I'm going through this and my body is building with each match I play."



Britain's Emma Raducanu serves against Anhelina Kalinina, of Ukraine

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EMMA RADUCANU

Raducanu played her first ever tour-level tournament on clay just last month in Stuttgart and her Madrid was just her second outing on the surface.

The talented teenager came agonisingly close to reaching the quarter-finals at the Caja Magica and gave credit to Kalinina, who has now knocked

out Grand Slam champions in each of her three matches so far this tournament.

"I'm feeling pretty positive. A lot of the time with me it's just overload and then three days', two, three days' complete rest and I'm okay to start training again," added Raducanu.

"Hopefully the plan right now is to still go to Rome."

Kalinina, ranked 37 in the world, is through to the first WTA 1000 quarter-final of her career. The 25-year-old Ukrainian was full of praise for Raducanu, who saved 7 of 12 break points against her.

"I think she's super talented, she's amazing, she moves excellent, she has good hands, good feeling," Kalinina said of Raducanu.

"She's covering all the court and she's playing good angles. She has all the shots, that's why it's so tough to play her."

Liverpool survives scare, advances to Champions League final

Jurgen Klopp hails another 'special' final after Liverpool fight back to see off Villarreal

● Luis Diaz turns tide at Villarreal to send Liverpool to their tenth European Cup final

AFP | London

Jurgen Klopp said reaching a third Champions League final in five years with Liverpool felt just as special as the first after his team saw off a spirited fightback from Villarreal on Tuesday to keep their quadruple hopes alive.

Trailing 2-0 from the first leg of their semi-final, Villarreal sparked hopes of a remarkable turnaround in the return at the Estadio de la Ceramica after Boulaye Dia finished in the third minute and Francis Coquelin headed in another to level the tie at 2-2.

But Klopp threw on Luis Diaz for Diogo Jota at the interval to shake Liverpool into life and it worked, the visitors scoring three times in 12 minutes through Fabinho, Diaz and Sadio Mane to secure a 3-2 win on the night and a 5-2 victory on aggregate.

"It feels like the first final because it's always so special -- it's the best club competition in the world," Klopp said. "Respect to Villarreal. Wonderful stadium and what they are doing here is incredible. It feels so special because it was so difficult for us."

"It was massive from the boys. Before the game I said I'd like to read the headlines that the mentality monsters were in town. I didn't want us to defend the result but go for the win, and the second half was like this."

Liverpool will await the winner of the second semi-final between Real Madrid and Man-



Liverpool forward Luis Diaz shoots the ball past Juan Foyth of Villarreal



Villarreal's Etienne Capoue in action with Liverpool's Fabinho

“It was massive from the boys. Before the game I said I'd like to read the headlines that the mentality monsters were in town. I didn't want us to defend the result but go for the win, and the second half was like this

JURGEN KLOPP

chester City, who meet at the Santiago Bernabeu later yesterday with City leading 4-3 from the opener last week.

"To be in a final is never easy and to make this a third in five years is incredible from this group of boys," Liverpool's Andy Robertson said. "As fans and players, we should never take days like this for granted."

Either City or Madrid will offer a sterner test than Villarreal, but after a chastening experience at Anfield last week, Unai Emery's side delivered a spirited performance that rattled Liverpool and showed why

they knocked out both Juventus and Bayern Munich to reach the semi-finals.

"I have no regrets," said Emery. "We have learned how to compete with the best teams. There were some answers we just couldn't find."

Liverpool were careless, perhaps complacent even, in the first half but sensational in the second. Diaz, who started on the bench, was integral to the fightback, and may soon have to be an automatic starter for Klopp.

"He's been special," said Robertson. "The talent he has, the will he has to win. He fits us perfectly. He made a big difference."

A banner draped behind the Villarreal goal at one end read "90 minutes from our dream" while before kick-off the stadium announcer shouted "it's possible, the comeback is possible!"

And if anyone inside the ground was still sceptical, they were given an early injection of belief as Pervis Estupinan swung in a cross from the left and Etienne Capoue's skewed finish was turned in by Dia.

Liverpool lacked their usual control and precision, with Vil-

larreal's second goal coming four minutes before half-time as Pau Torres launched a long ball from deep for Capoue to run onto.

Capoue's first touch cannoned away from him but he recovered, controlling and twisting away from Robertson before hanging up a superb cross with his left foot for Coquelin to head in.

Smarting

The half-time whistle prompted huge cheers from the home fans, whose team were level in

the tie, and a change from Klopp, as Diaz replaced Jota.

Liverpool looked like a team smarting after the break. They were rushing now to take throw-ins, eager to find the intensity they had previously lacked.

Trent Alexander-Arnold's deflected shot from distance looped onto the crossbar. Diaz volleyed over at the back post. And then Fabinho fired in, latching onto a Mohamed Salah pass and shooting early through the legs of Geronimo Rulli.

'We never make it easy,' says relieved Alexander-Arnold

AFP | London

Liverpool defender Trent Alexander-Arnold admitted Villarreal made life "really difficult" as Jurgen Klopp's side battled through to a third Champions League final in five years on Tuesday.

"We never seem to make these Champions League semi-finals easy for ourselves. Difficult, really difficult," Alexander-Arnold told BT Sport. "We came here and they



Trent Alexander-Arnold

played very well first half. We regrouped at half-time and got

This was a more familiar Liverpool, hitting a level Villarreal could not match, and five minutes later they scored a second, restoring their two-goal advantage on aggregate.

Alexander-Arnold was given too much space on the right and floated a cross into the area where Diaz aimed an excellent header down and in.

Seven minutes later, Liverpool delivered the final blow, as Rulli rushed out to close down a launched ball forward but failed to get there first.

Mane sprinted clear and rolled into an open net before Capoue was sent off, earning a second yellow card for a frustrated challenge with six minutes left.

the game by the scruff of the neck. We did what we needed to do."

"We never played football that first half and didn't pick up any second balls. They played the game they wanted to and we allowed them to do that," said Alexander-Arnold.

"Second half we came out and controlled the ball better. One bad half over two legs, we can concede that to get the job done."

Djokovic delivers 'best performance of year' to book Murray clash

AFP | Madrid

Top seed Novak Djokovic described his straight-sets opening win over Gael Monfils in Madrid on Tuesday as his "best performance of the year" as he set up a showdown with Andy Murray.

The 20-time major champion ensured he would keep his number one ranking for at least another week by extending his winning record against Monfils with a 6-3, 6-2 victory at the Caja Magica.

Djokovic, who entered the contest 17-0 head-to-head against the Frenchman, needed a win in their second round match to avoid surrendering the top spot to second-placed Daniil Medvedev.

"I would probably rate it as the best performance of the year, I would say. I felt very good on the court," said Djokovic.

"I'm very pleased, considering, you know, that up to today I was not playing my best tennis in the few tournaments that I played this year and still kind of



Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns the ball against Gael Monfils, of France

showing at his home tournament in Belgrade.

The Serb saved three break points in his first two service games before he wrested control of the match from Monfils and grabbed a one-set lead in

18

straight matches have been won by Novak Djokovic over Gael Monfils

47 minutes.

Djokovic had to save two break points as he served for the match before he booked a last-16 clash with Murray, a 6-1, 3-6, 6-2 winner against Canadian 14th seed Denis Shapovalov.

It will be the first meeting between Djokovic and Murray since the Doha final in January 2017.

"In theory I should have no chance in the match, he's obviously number one in the world and I'm playing with a metal hip," said Murray, who is 11-25 against Djokovic in his career.

"It's a great opportunity for me to see where my game's at

“I would probably rate it as the best performance of the year, I would say. I felt very good on the court. I'm very pleased, considering, you know, that up to today I was not playing my best tennis in the few tournaments that I played this year and still kind of finding my rhythm, finding my groove

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

and to play against him again. We've had so many battles over the years at some of the biggest tournaments in the world."

Carlos Alcaraz won his first match as a top-10 player, opening his Madrid account with a 6-3, 7-5 triumph over Georgia's

Nikoloz Basilashvili.

The Spanish teen sensation, who owns a joint ATP-leading three titles so far this season, extended his winning streak to six matches, having picked up the trophy in Barcelona 10 days ago.

The seventh-seeded Alcaraz, who turns 19 on Thursday, awaits Cameron Norrie or John Isner in the last 16 and could potentially square off with his countryman Rafael Nadal in the quarter-finals.

Sixth seed Andrey Rublev needed to rally from 0-3 down in the decider to overcome British wildcard Jack Draper 2-6, 6-4, 7-5.

The Russian world number eight, who beat Djokovic in the Belgrade final last week, dropped serve twice in the opening set and lost an early advantage in the second before squeezing past the left-handed Draper, who is ranked 121 in the world and was making his ATP clay-court debut in Madrid.

Sousa calls up 23 for Bangkok camp

Senior men's national team set to miss key players from Riffa and East Riffa for training in Thai capital due to club commitments

● Three of Bahrain's overseas-based professionals called up, along with players from five local clubs

● Bahrainis scheduled to hold camp between May 11 and 31, with an international friendly against Thais on last day

TDT | Manama

Bahrain head coach Helio Sousa has named a 23-member senior men's national football team for their upcoming overseas training camp in Bangkok, which they are conducting as part of their preparations for their AFC Asian Cup 2023 qualifiers next month. The team currently does not



Bahrain's talented star Komail Alaswad of Riffa Club, right, is one of the key names currently missing from the team

include any top names from national champions Riffa and top side East Riffa, as they will be busy with their clubs competing in the group stages of this year's AFC Cup competition in the mid-

dle of this month.

Sousa has called up three of the Kingdom's foreign-based professionals to the squad, including Ali Haram and Abdulla Hazaa from Al Tadhamon in Ku-



wait, and Abdulla Yousef from Slovan Liberec in the Czech Republic.

The rest of the players are from five local clubs, including Al Khaldiya, Muharraq, Manama, Al Ahli and Budaiya.

The Khaldiya contingent are Mahdi Humaidan, Ahmed Abdulla, Ahmed Bughamar,

Mohammed Adel, Mohammed Hardan, Sayed Dhiya Saeed and Sayed Shubbar Alawi. From Muharraq are Abdulwahab Al Malood, Amine Hasan, Rashed Al Hooti, Waleed Al Hayam and Sayed Mohammed Jaafar. From Manama are Mahdi Abduljabbar, Ammar Abbas, Mahdi Abdullatif and Ebrahim Khat-tal; while from Ahli are Abbas Ayyad, Jamal Rashid and Mohammed Abdulwahab. Abdul-laziz Mohammed from Budaiya completes the line-up of 23.

Bahrain's training camp in the Thai capital is scheduled for May 11 to 31. During their Bangkok camp, they will be playing a training game on May 24, in addition to an international friendly against their Thai counterparts on the 31st.

The Asian Cup qualifiers are then scheduled for the second week of June. Sousa is expected to include some key players from Riffa and East Riffa in

those matches.

Bahrain are in Group E of Asian Cup qualifying along with Turkmenistan, Bangladesh and Malaysia.

The group's games are set to be hosted in Kuala Lumpur, and they will be played over a single round on three match-days, including on June 8 against Bangladesh, on June 11 against Malaysia, and on June 14 against Turkmenistan.

The AFC Asian Cup is scheduled to kick off on June 16 next year in China.

Bahrain are looking to secure their seventh appearance in the tournament proper. They first appeared in 1988, and have qualified for the last five tournaments in 2004, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019.

The Bahrainis' best finish in the competition was fourth in 2004. They reached the last 16 in 2019, but did not make it past the group stage the other times.

Jabeur downs Halep to reach semi-finals in Madrid

Reuters | Madrid

Tunisian Ons Jabeur reached her career-second WTA 1000 semi-final after beating former world number one Simona Halep 6-3 6-2 at the Madrid Open yesterday.

Jabeur, who reached the Indian Wells last four in 2021, won an impressive 77.8% points on her first serve and converted four of her five break points against two-times champion Halep to seal the victory in just



Tunisia's Ons Jabeur in action

over an hour.

World number 10 Jabeur will face the winner of the match

between Ekaterina Anisimova and Amanda Alexandrova for a spot in her first WTA 1000 final.

Sara Sorribes Tormo of Spain will face American Jessica Pegula and Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina will take on Swiss Jil Teichmann in the other quarter-finals.

In the men's draw, 21-times major winner Rafa Nadal, world number three Alexander Zverev and Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas are all in action later yesterday in the round of 32.

World Cup winner Ginter rejoins hometown club Freiburg

AFP | Berlin

Bundesliga side Freiburg announced yesterday the signing of 2014 World Cup winner Matthias Ginter, who will return to his former club from Borussia Moenchengladbach on a free transfer.

The centre-back came up through the Freiburg academy but left in 2014 to join Bundesliga rivals Borussia Dortmund before switching to Gladbach in 2017.

Ginter, 28, has been signed



Matthias Ginter

as a replacement for current Germany international Nico Schlotterbeck, who is leaving Freiburg at the end of the season for Dortmund.

"I wanted to do something

special in my career, and there's nothing more meaningful to me than a return to SC Freiburg and to my home," said Ginter in a statement.

He was part of the Germany squad that won the 2014 World Cup without making an appearance at the finals in Brazil.

He won the last of his 28 international caps last November.

Freiburg are fourth in the Bundesliga with two games left and on course to qualify for the Champions League for the first time next season.

Brooks, F1's last remaining winner from 1950s, dies at 90

Reuters | London

Tony Brooks, the British 'racing dentist' who was Formula One's last surviving grand prix winner from the 1950s and finished second in the 1959 world championship, has died aged 90.

"I was saddened to hear the news that Tony Brooks has died," said Formula One chief executive Stefano Domenicali in a statement.

"He was part of a special group of drivers who were pioneers and pushed the boundaries at a time of great risk."

The BBC said the news was



Matthias Ginter

announced by Brooks' daughter Giulia.

Charles Anthony Standish Brooks, known as Tony, won six grands prix during one of the sport's deadliest eras, making his championship debut with BRM in 1956 and retiring in 1961 at the age of 29.

He also drove for Vanwall,

Ferrari and Cooper.

"Brooks was a tremendous driver, the greatest -- if he'll forgive me saying this -- 'unknown' racing driver there's ever been," late compatriot Stirling Moss told writer Nigel Roebuck in the 1986 book 'Grand Prix Greats'.

"He was far better than several people who won the world championship."

The Briton, a keen amateur racer, was a 23-year-old dentist student at Manchester University preparing for his finals when he won the 1955 non-championship Syracuse Grand Prix in Sicily.

Mercedes boss Wolff hopes China can host several races in future

Reuters | London

The Chinese Grand Prix is absent from the calendar for the third straight year due to the COVID-19 pandemic but Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said Formula One can have a "strong footprint" in the country and hopes it will one day host three races each season.

China is relatively lacking in motorsport culture, but is a key market for Formula One with a rapidly emerging middle class



Mercedes boss Toto Wolff looks on prior to a race (file photo)

"We've been in Shanghai before and couldn't be there the last two years, but this is an important market for us. I'd like to not only race in Shanghai, I'd also like to race in Beijing. It's a fantastic market for us as Mercedes, and I believe we should be embedded there with a strong footprint"

TOTO WOLFF

and lure as an attractive market for automakers.

Formula One has also extended its contract with the Chinese Grand Prix until 2025 and there has long been talk of a second race in the country.

"We've been in Shanghai before and couldn't be there the last two years, but this is an important market for us," Wolff told Xinhua news agency at the FIA Formula E Championship in Monaco over the weekend.

"I'd like to not only race in Shanghai, I'd also like to race in Beijing. It's a fantastic market for us as Mercedes, and I believe we should be embedded

there with a strong footprint.

"We have three races in the United States now - Las Vegas, Miami and Austin - and if we can do the same thing in China, that would be great."

China's first Formula One driver Guanyu Zhou enjoyed a superb start to his career at the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix in March, as the Alfa Romeo rookie finished in the points on his debut.

Chinese drivers have tested Formula One machinery before with Ma Qing Hua and Dutch-born Ho-Pin Tung, who was reserve for Renault in 2010 in another first.

Ter Stegen to miss Germany's Nations League ties in June

AFP | Barcelona

Barcelona's Marc-Andre ter Stegen will miss Germany's Nations League games against England, Italy and Hungary this June, the goalkeeper announced yesterday.

The 30-year-old is an understudy to Germany captain Manuel Neuer and has opted to take a break this summer with one eye on the World Cup finals in Qatar, which kicks off this November.



Marc-Andre ter Stegen

He said he was given approval from Germany head coach Hansi Flick.

"I'm happy every time I am

selected, but on the other hand, after three intensive seasons without a summer break, the national coach agrees that I need this," ter Stegen told the German football association's website.

Ter Stegen will miss games against Italy in Bologna on June 4, England three days later in Munich and then Hungary in Budapest on June 11.

He also misses the return fixture against the Azzurri in Moenchengladbach on June 14.