



Leadership hailed by Interior Minister on 27th National Guard anniversary

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Prime Minister, received cables of congratulations from His Excellency General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, marking the 27th anniversary of the establishment of the National Guard.

HE General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah highlighted the progress attained by the National Guard over the years due the visions of HM the King and supported by HRH Prince Salman.

The Interior Minister affirmed that the National Guard has reached the highest levels of readiness and competence thanks to its modern military experience, capabilities, and advanced training, becoming an essential pillar for safeguarding national security and protecting the national achievements attained by the kingdom during HM the King's prosperous era.

HM King lauds progress of solid Bahraini-Omani ties



His Majesty confers the Order of Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa-First Class on HH Sayyid Theyazin

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa commended the pioneering role played by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik Al Said of Oman in strengthening the solid Bah-

raini-Omani relations.

HM the King praised the progress witnessed by the Sultanate, under the leadership of HM Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

HM King Hamad was speaking as he received, in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa,



HM King receives, in the presence of HRH Prince Salman, HH Sayyid Theyazin

the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik Al Said, at the Al Safriya Palace yesterday.

HH Sayyid Theyazin conveyed to HM King Hamad greetings and appreciation from HM Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, as well as his wishes for abundant health and happiness to HM the King, and continued progress to Bahrain.

HM the King welcomed HH

Sayyid Theyazin, and requested him to convey his greetings to HM Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, and wishes for further progress and prosperity to the Omani people.

HM the King exchanged cordial talks with HH Sayyid Theyazin, affirming his pride in the solid deep-rooted fraternal bilateral relations, which are growing steadily, in light of the two countries' keenness to constantly develop them to meet

the aspirations of their peoples. HM King Hamad conferred the Order of Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa-First Class on HH Sayyid Theyazin in recognition of HH's role in enhancing the Bahraini-Omani relations.

HH Sayyid Theyazin expressed thanks and appreciation to HM the King for conferring the prestigious order on him, praising the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to him during his visit to the kingdom.

Beyond the walls

Shura Council shields doctors, teachers from domestic-violence reporting duty

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The Shura Council has rejected a proposal to criminalize doctors, teachers, and domestic workers who fail to report domestic violence.

The move sparked debate, with proponents arguing it empowers bystanders to act, while opponents warn it risks ensnaring professionals in sensitive family matters.

The proposed amendment, championed by the Council of Representatives, aimed to impose fines and even imprisonment on those who witnessed domestic violence but stayed silent. However, the Shura Council, after careful consideration, sided with its Women and Children Affairs Committee, which deemed the amendment unnecessary and potentially harmful.

Their concerns? Firstly, the law already penalizes domestic violence itself, making additional reporting requirements for bystanders redundant. Secondly, the broad scope of the amendment could drag doctors, teachers, and domestic workers into family conflicts, potentially violating their professional boundaries and even the "sanctity of the family."



The Shura Council session in progress

Furthermore, the committee argued that punishing someone for not reporting an incident they learned about casually, outside their professional duties, could have perverse consequences. Imagine a case where the victim chooses not to press charges – the potential reporter would then face the penalty, not

the perpetrator.

Ambiguity of amendment

Another concern raised was the ambiguity of the amendment. Who exactly qualifies as someone who becomes aware of domestic violence "through their work"? This vagueness, the committee argued, clashes

with the principle of clear and specific criminal laws.

Finally, the committee compared Bahrain's approach to other Arab nations. Most, like the UAE and Lebanon, don't criminalize non-reporting. Some, like Qatar, rely on existing penal codes. And a few, like Jordan, impose minor penalties,

like fines or short jail terms.

Ultimately, the Shura Council's decision reflects a cautious approach to tackling domestic violence, prioritizing victim protection and family privacy over a blanket reporting requirement for certain professions. The debate, however, is far from over, highlighting the complex challenges of balancing individual responsibility with family dynamics and professional ethics in the fight against domestic abuse.

Bahrain's e-passport wins global awards

Bahrain, Pakistan joint anti-terrorism drill concludes

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His Highness General Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, National Guard Commander, patronised the closing ceremony for the joint anti-terrorism drill between the National Guard and the Pakistani Army.

The ceremony coincides with the 27th anniversary of the establishment of the Bahraini National Guard.

220 fils (includes VAT)



BETTER YOU KNOW
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HM the King receives General Asim Munir



Kingdom keen to strengthen Oman relations, cooperation



HRH Prince Salman meets with HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, affirmed the strength of the Bahrain-Oman relations, which continues to promote cooperation across various fields in line with the support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Sultan of the Sultanate of Oman, His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq Al Said.

HRH Prince Salman yesterday met His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik Al Said of the Sultanate of Oman, at Sakhir Palace.

HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik conveyed the greetings and well wishes of His Majesty Sultan Haitham

bin Tariq Al-Said to His Royal Highness and to the Kingdom and its citizens. In return, HRH Prince Salman conveyed his greetings to His Majesty the Sultan of Oman and his wishes of progress and prosperity for Oman and its citizens.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister noted the Kingdom's commitment to promoting cooperation across various fields in line with the support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Sultan of the Sultanate of Oman, His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq Al Said.

His Royal Highness hosted a lunch banquet in honour of His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik Al Said's visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Minister of Finance and National Economy, His Excellency Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, was present in the meeting.

HM King hails growing Bahrain-Pakistan ties

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, expressed pride in the steadily-growing deep-rooted Bahrain-Pakistan friendship relations, praising the advanced level reached by the two countries' cooperation in the defence and military fields.

HM the King asserted that Bahrain is looking forward to expanding its cooperation with Pakistan to achieve common interests, stressing that such visits reflect the two countries' shared keenness to enhance their coordination to serve their common goals.

The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces was speaking as he received yesterday at Al Safriya Palace, General Asim Munir, Pakistan's Chief

of Army Staff, who is on a visit to Bahrain to attend the closing ceremony of the anti-terror drill, carried out by the Special Operations Unit at the National Guard.

HM the King welcomed Gen. Munir, who conveyed to HM greetings from the Pakistani President, Dr. Arif Alvi, and Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, as well as their wishes for further progress and prosperity to Bahrain.

His Majesty requested the Pakistani Army Chief to convey his greetings to the Pakistani President and Prime Minister, as well as his wishes for further progress and prosperity to the people of Pakistan.

Region's security and stability

HM King Hamad praised Pakistan's constant honourable stances, commending the role it is playing in safeguarding the

region's security and stability. He also lauded the contributions of the Pakistani expatriate community to the kingdom's comprehensive development process.

HM the King conferred the Order of Bahrain-First Class on Gen. Munir, in recognition of his efforts to consolidate his country's military and defence cooperation with Bahrain.

Order of Bahrain-First Class

The Pakistani Army Chief expressed thanks and gratitude to HM the King for conferring the Order of Bahrain-First Class on him, lauding the major role played by His Majesty in developing Bahraini-Pakistani relations, especially in the defence and military fields.

He stressed constant keenness to strengthen cooperation with Bahrain to serve the two countries' interests and meet

their peoples' aspirations.

On the occasion of the 27th anniversary of the establishment of the National Guard, HM the King, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, hailed the pivotal roles it is playing in defending the kingdom's sovereignty, security, stability and gains, along with the Bahrain Defence Forces and the Public Security Forces.

HM the King paid tribute to General His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the National Guard Commander, and all the force's affiliates, for their patriotic efforts.

HM the King, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, was presented with a commemorative gift from General His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa marking the National Guard Day.

Talks to address concerns over rising banking interest rates

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MP Hamad Al Doy has announced that a meeting will be held this week with several relevant entities to discuss the issue of some banks raising banking interest rates for citizens. Among these meetings, an important one will be with the Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain, His Excellency Khalid

Humaidan, and another with the Minister of Housing, HE Amna Al Rumaihi, in addition to other meetings with various entities related to the file.

MP Al Doy said these actions are taken due to the sensitivity of this issue and the potential harm it may cause to thousands of citizens benefiting from various housing programmes if interest rates are raised.

Galleria Mall Junior Rapid Chess Tournament successful

● **First outdoor event of the year**

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Galleria Mall & Arjun's Chess Academy, in collaboration with the Bahrain Chess Federation, has organised the Galleria Mall Junior Rapid Chess Tournament (Under-15), marking the initiation of the chess events for the year 2024.

The unique feature of this tournament was its outdoor setting, creating a vibrant and engaging atmosphere for the young chess enthusiasts.

The tournament, held at Gal-



Bahrain Chess Federation officials and event organisers with winners, guests and sponsors



leria Mall Zinj, witnessed the participation of a total of 60 talented players, competing in two categories - FIDE Rated and Unrated Category. The event



Games in progress

aimed not only to foster a spirit of healthy competition but also to encourage young minds to embrace the strategic and intellectual aspects of the game.

The Prize Distribution Function, a memorable moment in the tournament, saw distinguished guests gracing the occasion. AlBurshaid, Ebrahim, General



Secretary of the Bahrain Chess Federation, and RK Ajesh, CEO of Edumpus (India), honored the event as chief guests. Batool Mohammed Dadabhai, Director of

Dadabhai Group of Companies, and Arjun Kakkadath, Director of Arjun's Chess Academy, were also present, adding prestige to the ceremony.

Top 10 Prize Winners in FIDE Rated Category

1. Rishi, N
2. Hudson, Antony
3. Navaneeth, Sreekanth
4. Prutha, Bapat
5. Prithvi, Raj Prajeesh
6. Fares, Qanair
7. Rudra
8. Uttam, Baratam
9. Gabriel, Vivek Joseph
10. Tanya, Singh

Top 10 Winners in Unrated Category

1. Apramey, Kulkarni
2. Jonah, K Aji
3. Almusawi, Ali
4. Rudraprasad Bhure
5. Manas Madathil
6. Adam, Abdulrahman
7. Trishan, Moorkoth
8. Nilan S
9. Esther, Vivek Joseph
10. Dhruva Roy

Bahrain committed to advancing US strategic ties

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, emphasised the ongoing advancement of bilateral relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the US within the framework of a long-standing, strategic relationship and numerous joint agreements, including the recently signed Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA).

HRH Prince Salman was speaking as he met yesterday with a delegation from the US Congress, led by Senator Joni Ernst, at Riffa Palace.

His Royal Highness highlighted the mutual commitment to advance coordination and cooperation between the two countries and to achieve common goals regionally and globally.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister noted the role of the US, alongside other allies,



HRH Prince Salman with US Senator Joni Ernst

in bolstering global peace and security.

He underscored the importance of a unified effort to foster regional and global peace and sustainable development.

HRH Prince Salman and the delegation discussed issues of common interest and the latest regional and international developments.

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Isa bin Salman Educational Charitable Trust and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, also attended the meeting.

Administrative skills development for public sector employees vital



HH the Deputy Prime Minister chairs the online meeting

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His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the Deputy Prime Minister, emphasised the importance of developing administrative skills for employees in the public sector to enhance competence and improve institutional performance.

This came as the Deputy Prime Minister chaired a virtual meeting of the Institute of Public Administration Board of Directors yesterday.

He said that the development efforts has contributed to the comprehensive development process under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and

the follow-up of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah announced the launch of the institute's annual plan for 2024, which focuses on developing national cadres in line with government programme goals and institutional work system requirements in the public and private sectors.

He added that the National Programme for Government Leadership Development, in its new form, aimed at developing the capabilities of civil service employees and fostering a culture of positive change and creativity in government work.

Names of individuals involved in commercial cover-up published

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In a groundbreaking move, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce has published in the official gazette the names of 32 individuals who have received final judgments for the crime of commercial cover-up.

The ministry provided details in the official gazette regarding the names of 18 commercial establishments, as well as the names of both the person involved in the cover-up and the person being covered up for.

The penalties imposed on them included financial fines of up to BD1,000 each, as well as the deregistration of the establishment and the closure of the commercial premises where the violation occurred. In some cases, the violations also resulted in the deportation of the person being covered up for, for varying periods.

The activities of the offending establishments encompassed various fields, including barber shops, tailoring, vegetable trade, juice sales, and others.

Strong commitment

This move by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce marks the first of its kind, demonstrating a strong commitment to combat commercial cover-up practices. By disclosing the names and penalties of those involved, the ministry aims to raise awareness about the consequences of such illegal activities and to ensure transparency in the commercial sector.

The publication of these names serves as a warning to others who may be engaged in similar practices, emphasising the ministry's dedication to enforcing regulations.

Driving towards safety and more quiet roads

Stricter regulations underway to curb disruptive vehicle modifications and reckless driving

Zahra Ayaz

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In an effort to prioritise the safety of its citizens, the Minister of Interior, His Excellency Lieutenant General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, has implemented new regulations to crack down on disruptive vehicle modifications and reckless driving.

These measures aim to create a safer driving environment and reduce noise pollution.

Under the recently published decision in the Official Gazette, car owners who install devices or make modifications to their vehicles' systems, exhaust, engines, or related components in a manner that produces annoying or disruptive sounds may face penalties.

One of the penalties includes the temporary withdrawal of the vehicle for up to 60 days. The main objective of this measure is to prevent the creation or intensification of sounds that deviate from the vehicle's original design or intended purpose.

Additionally, the new regulations grant authorities the



Traffic police forces are prioritising road safety

power to tow vehicles in specific situations.

For example, if a driver fails to operate their vehicle safely, engages in sudden deviations, frequently maneuvers between other vehicles, or drives recklessly, thereby endangering or harassing other road users, their

vehicle may be subject to towing.

These regulations have become necessary in Bahrain, especially during occasions like National Day and New Year's, when reckless driving and loud exhaust sounds disrupt the roads.

Comfortable and healthy environment

Concerns raised by members of the community emphasise the importance of a comfortable and healthy environment for daily living and mental well-being.

Fatima, an activist, highlight-

ed the need to address issues such as sound pollution, which affects the creation of a comfortable and healthy environment in Bahrain.

While efforts to regulate various tangible environmental issues, such as recycling, green industry, and carbon neutrality, are intensifying, attention must also be given to reducing noise pollution caused by cars or loudspeakers in stores.

The introduction of these new measures aims to promote safer driving practices and discourage modifications that contribute to noise pollution or compromise the safety of road users.



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Gulf businessman to pay over BD5m in construction dispute

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The High Civil Court has ordered a Gulf businessman to pay more than BD5 million to a construction company for the value of construction work carried out by the contracting company on behalf of the businessman, which he failed to settle.

The court's decision was based on an expert report agreed upon by both parties, which concluded that the businessman was liable for the claimed amount.

The lawyer representing the

contracting company, stated that his client is a commercial establishment operating in the field of construction and building. An agreement was reached between the claimant, who is the contractor, and the defendant, referred to as the "Gulf businessman," who acted as the employer, for the execution of construction projects involving multiple buildings in various areas, including mosque construction and renovation. The claim was supported by architectural plans and engineering drawings.

He further added that his client successfully completed

all the work and construction projects mentioned, which were handed over to the defendant. The defendant then proceeded to sell some of the properties and invest in the remaining ones. However, he failed to pay the outstanding amount of the total cost of the construction and building works. As a result, the claimant officially notified him of the need for payment, but he took no action.

Unpaid entitlements

The claimant requested the court to appoint a technical expert and an accounting expert

to prove his unpaid entitlements and settle the accounts between the two parties.

The appointed experts submitted their reports, and the defendant also presented reports from engineering and accounting experts appointed by him.

These reports concluded that the claimant was liable for an amount exceeding approximately five million dinars, not the other way around. Due to the conflicting reports from both parties, the court urged them to agree on a third expert in engineering, who is considered more reliable.

Bahrain's electronic passport claims global design awards

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's electronic passport has won three gold and seven silver awards at the prestigious London Design Awards.

The passport was unveiled in March 2023 by His Excellency Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, and competed against 3,000 participants from 45 countries worldwide.

The London Design Awards recognises exceptional designs and outstanding creative projects in various fields, including architecture, interior design, product design, graphic design, and digital design.

Bahrain's electronic passport showcases distinctive Arabian features, portraying an image of a galloping Arabian horse and a falcon. It exhibits its own unique style, narrating stories from Bahrain's history as a center of pearl trade while highlighting the Kingdom's recent achievements and its 2030 vision for the future.

His Excellency Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Nationality,



Passports, and Residence Affairs (NPRA), praised the instructions of His Excellency the Minister of Interior, who also serves as the Chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Information Technology and Communication, and his unwavering support and attention to the issuance of the electronic passport with modern designs and stringent security standards in line with the ongoing plans for the digital transformation of all services provided by the Ministry of Interior sectors.

He commended the efforts of the electronic passport team in the Nationality, Passports, and Residence Affairs, who worked with a unified spirit as a team and successfully executed this national project in a record time of fewer than nine months.

Sincere gratitude

Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman expressed his sincere gratitude to HID, the company responsible for the design, and the passport issuance team, as well as all the collaborating sectors that worked diligently to ensure the success and prestigious reputation of the project.

He emphasised that Bahrain's electronic passport is one of the finest passports globally in terms of beauty and unique security features. It provides significant facilitation for citizens traveling to various countries around the world.

Bahrain's electronic passport incorporates modern security features and utilises advanced technologies, some of which are being used for the first time in passport issuance worldwide.

Forum on archaeology of irrigation technology and water management



HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the event

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On behalf of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa yesterday inaugurated the Archaeology of Irrigation Technology and Water Management in the Islamic World Conference.

HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman noted the importance of the conference as a platform to identify sustainable solutions to combat global environmental challenges, which remains a central part of the Kingdom's environmental efforts in line with the visions of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman affirmed the importance of hosting specialised conferences and events which allow for the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and best global practices and serve to highlight the Kingdom's com-

petitive capabilities. His Highness wished the conference attendees and its organisers success in their contributions to environmental protection and in ensuring the sustainability of water resources for future generations.

The President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiques (BACA), Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister for his patronage of the Conference and thanked HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman on inaugurating the event on behalf of His Royal Highness.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed noted His Royal Highness's support for all initiatives and programmes that enhance the Kingdom's pioneering position as a centre for promoting cultural heritage.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed highlighted the importance of the conference in promoting expert collaboration in the field of irrigation and water management and reflecting the extensive Islamic heritage in this field.

Bahrain's electronic passport showcases distinctive Arabian features, portraying an image of a galloping Arabian horse and a falcon. It exhibits its own unique style, narrating stories from Bahrain's history as a center of pearl trade while highlighting the Kingdom's recent achievements and its 2030 vision for the future.

Stage set for Feast of Our Lady of Arabia celebration

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The Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia in Bahrain has announced plans for its upcoming feast, the Feast of Our Lady of Arabia, Patroness of the Vicariate.

Scheduled for Friday, January 12, the celebration will be preceded by a nine-day Novena,

commencing on Wednesday, January, during the evening masses.

The Feast of Our Lady of Arabia represents a harmonious gathering of people from diverse backgrounds, united in faith and unity. The solemn mass, to be led by H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi, O.S.S.T., Apostolic

Vicar of Northern Arabia, will be the centerpiece of the celebration.

Adding to the festivities, a family day celebration will take place at the Cathedral grounds. Starting at 8am, attendees can enjoy a range of activities, including cultural and musical performances, games, and more,

throughout the day.

The Cathedral extends an open invitation to all, encouraging everyone to join in this joyous occasion. It is an opportunity to honor traditions, strengthen faith, and revel in the harmonious spirit that defines this magnificent event, the Feast of Our Lady of Arabia.

BDF to hold live ammunition drills

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The Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) has announced that live ammunition drills will take place in the northern maritime area (Hare Bul

Thamah) today, from 1pm to 3pm, at a safe altitude of 5,000 feet.

The BDF has called on those concerned to stay away from the designated area for their safety.

Speaker affirms Bahrain's keenness to bolster cooperation with China

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Council of Representatives Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam has affirmed the kingdom's keenness to strengthen constructive cooperation and relations with China across various fields to achieve the aspirations of the two peoples.

While meeting yesterday

His Excellency Ni Ruchi, the Chinese Ambassador to Bahrain, Speaker Al Musallam highlighted the Bahraini-Chinese parliamentary desire to open up new horizons of cooperation and understanding through enhancing bilateral relations in various developmental and vital sectors, as well as increasing trade.

Southern Governor inspects Camping Services Centre

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His Highness Southern Governor Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa visited the Camping Services Centre.

Deputy Governor Brigadier Hamad Al Khayat, along with officials and officers, took part in the visit.

The Southern Governor hailed the preparedness of the security and services authorities to ensure the success of the camping season. He continued that the provided services



HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa being briefed about the camping season

showcase the dedication of security authorities, such as the General Directorate of Civil Defence, the General Directorate of Traffic, the Southern Governorate Police Directorate and the National Ambulance Centre.

He attributed the high camping demands to the coordination and cooperation of concerned authorities. He was briefed about the progress of the weekly award of His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, HM's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs.

National Sickle Cell Symposium set for today

TDT | Manama

Under the patronage of the President of the Supreme Council of Health (SCH), His Excellency Lieutenant-General Dr. Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the Government Hospitals will host the Fourth National Sickle Cell Symposium.

The symposium was organised in cooperation with Educationplus and will take place today.

Dr. Maryam Athbi Al Jalahma, CEO of the Government Hospital Administrations, affirmed the importance of continuing to host the symposium and its role in providing quality healthcare services to sickle cell disease patients through exchanging expertise and knowledge among health specialists.

The symposium had an outstanding turnout in its previous editions, attracting a wide range of participants and showcasing many scientific papers that con-



Dr. Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah

To take part in the symposium, register now open via its website (<https://educationplus.me/scs-2024/>).

tributed to setting the goals of comprehensive sickle cell care. Registration for the symposium is now open via its website (<https://educationplus.me/scs-2024/>).

Tender Notice

The Embassy of Pakistan, Manama intends to invite sealed Technical and Financial bids from contractors and/or firms having valid Commercial Registration Certificate and registered with VAT Department National Bureau for Revenue, Bahrain for civil works (expansion of waiting area). Interested parties may collect tender documents on any working day from **08-01-2024 to 29-01-2024** between **9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**, from the Embassy of Pakistan (Villa No. 35, Road No. 1901, Block 319) Hoor/Manama. Phone No. 17244113

Tamkeen backs Alumicor for advanced aluminum recycling factory in Askar

The project is set to create 30 job opportunities for Bahrainis

● Alumicor is recognized as an emerging global innovator in the sector, with operations spanning Bahrain, South Africa, Australia, and the Seychelles.

● The upcoming facility is expected to create upwards of 30 job opportunities, including ten in senior executive and administrative roles

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The Labour Fund (Tamkeen) announced its support for Alumicor, a global leader in aluminum recycling and manufacturing, for the set up of its new operational base



The deal signing

in Askar.

The partnership brings cutting-edge international technologies in aluminum dross processing to Bahrain, offering local manufacturers opportunities to enhance operational efficiency, minimize waste, and improve profitability. Alumicor is recognized as an emerging global innovator in the sector, with

operations spanning Bahrain, South Africa, Australia, and the Seychelles.

The company's state-of-the-art technology has the capability to recycle over 48,500 tons of aluminum dross and waste annually, which equates to approximately half of the aluminum waste generated from Bahrain's manufacturing activities. Alumicor's eco-friendly recycling techniques conserve up to 90% of the energy typically consumed in traditional aluminum remanufacturing, thereby reducing emissions and allowing for the recycling of larger quantities of aluminum.

The upcoming facility is expected to create upwards of 30 new job opportunities for Bah-

raini professionals, including ten in senior executive and administrative roles. These opportunities are designed to hone the expertise of Bahraini professionals in the sector and position them as employees of choice in specialized and emerging industries. The project also supports the transfer of knowledge between Alumicor's international operations and its Bahraini workforce, infusing the local industrial domain with technological advancements that will boost efficiency and productivity.

Tamkeen Chief Executive Maha Abdulhameed Mofeez said, "We are pleased to extend our support towards this ambitious project, which promises to accelerate Bahraini industrial growth, creating opportunities that will fuel the expansion of the national economy. Additionally, it aligns with the Kingdom's aspirations towards carbon neutrality and establishing sustain-

able and eco-friendly practices as envisioned by the National Action Plan "Blueprint Bahrain". This innovative approach towards aluminum waste recycling is a gamechanger within the recycling sector, that will help create enduring job prospects for Bahrain's skilled workforce."

Alumicor spokesperson Ryan Macconnaiche added, "Our goal is to set a new benchmark for global eco-conscious recycling and to realize a circular economy within the aluminum industry by transforming aluminum dross and waste into valuable resources. This will span the entire production process through to the end of the material's lifecycle, with a zero-waste commitment. To this end, we will work closely with Bahrain's leading aluminum industry leaders to continually enhance waste recovery methods and innovate new waste management strategies."

Arab Bank named MidEast Bank of the Year 2023



Arab Bank

TDT | Manama

The Banker Magazine, owned by the Financial Times and based in London, named Arab Bank as Bank of the Year in the Middle East for 2023. The announcement came during The Banker's "Bank of The Year Awards 2023" ceremony held recently in London and attended by several senior representatives from leading banks from all over the world.

The Banker's judging panel's decision to honor Arab Bank with this highly coveted regional award was based on criteria assessing a number of different indicators, including the Bank's financials, strategy and performance, in addition to other specific indicators, a process that takes over 5 months to conduct.

The Banker Magazine, for more than 90 years, has been the world's longest-running international banking title and the leading monthly journal of record for the global banking

industry.

Commenting on this recognition, Randa Sadik, Arab Bank's Chief Executive Officer, said: Such global recognition is a testament to the leading position Arab Bank enjoys both locally and regionally. It reflects the bank's consistent ability to deliver solid performance despite the challenging circumstances across the region and the world." She added, "The bank continues to provide a wide range of banking solutions to its customers in line with its comprehensive strategy and its well-established institutional approach, with an ambitious, forward looking vision that keeps pace with the latest technological developments in the banking industry."

Arab Bank received significant recognition and awards from various reputed international and regional institutions during last year, including Best Bank in the Middle East for 2023 from New York-based Global Finance publication, for the eighth consecutive year.

CBB launches FMIs, Payment Oversight Framework

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The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) launched the Financial Market Infrastructures (FMIs) and Payment Oversight Framework.

The framework was developed by the CBB's FMIs and Payment Oversight division, whereby the Oversight function is defined by the Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures (PFMI) by the Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems (CPSS).

CPSS was established in 1990 by the G10 Governors, currently named the Committee on Payments and Market Infrastructures (CPMI) under the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) and its main aim is to ensure financial stability by mitigating and lowering systemic risk and



Hessa Al Sada

presenting core principles for effective banking supervision.

The purpose of the framework is to outline the key roles, objectives, expectations, powers, standards, approach and tools of the Oversight function in response to the transforma-

tional developments that have affected the financial sector to strengthen the legal basis of protecting settlement finality and netting arrangements, and identifying FMIs that should be subject to oversight by CBB.

Hessa Al Sada, Executive Director of Banking Operations at CBB, said that the FMIs and Payment Oversight framework is a testament to CBB's efforts in maintaining international standards and ensuring safe and effective performance of payment systems in the Kingdom, which enhances trust in the local financial system. Through these guidelines, CBB aims to foster innovations in payment systems to keep pace with the momentum in the financial ecosystem. The FMIs and Payment Oversight Framework is available online on CBB's website.

Bahrain All Share Index closes higher

TDT | Manama

Bahrain All Share Index closed at 1,978.35 points, marking an increase of 5.73 points above the previous closing.

This increase was due to the rise in the financial sector and the materials sector.

Bahrain Islamic Index closed at 738.35 points, marking an increase of 8.78 points above the previous closing.

Results indicated that 64 equity transactions took place with a volume of 1,849,512 worth BD 450,926.

Investors traded mainly in the financial sector, representing 87.10% of the total value of securities traded.

Regulators order inspections on some Boeing MAX 9 planes after emergency

Washington, United States

Around the world grounded some versions of the Boeing 737 MAX 9 jets pending inspections Sunday, with dozens of flights cancelled over the weekend after a panel blew out of one of the planes over the western US state of Oregon.

The Federal Aviation Administration "is requiring immediate inspections of certain Boeing 737 MAX 9 planes before they can return to flight," the agency said on X.

It added that around 171 aircraft worldwide would be affected, with each inspection taking four to eight hours.

Alaska and United Airlines fly the largest number of MAX 9

planes, while Turkish Airlines has a smaller fleet.

Boeing has so far delivered about 218 of the 737 MAX planes worldwide, the company told AFP.



Boeing's 737 MAX planes were grounded worldwide following two MAX 8 crashes in 2018 and 2019 that killed 346 people in total. The FAA approved the planes' return to service only after the company made changes to its flight control system.

China sanctions five US firms over Taiwan arms sales

Shanghai, China

China announced sanctions on Sunday against five US defence firms in response to their involvement in arms sales to self-ruled Taiwan, which Beijing claims as part of its territory.

China has vowed to one day seize Taiwan, while the US Congress requires the supply of weapons to the self-governing democracy for its defence.

Last month, the US State Department approved a \$300-million arms package to strengthen Taipei's joint battle command and control system, prompting Beijing to say it would take unspecified "countermeasures" against the companies involved.

China's foreign ministry on Sunday named those companies as BAE Systems Land and Armament, Alliant Techsystems Operation, AeroVironment, ViaSat and Data Link Solutions.

"The countermeasures consist of freezing the properties of those companies in China, including their movable and immovable property, and prohibiting organizations and individuals in China from transactions and cooperation with them," the ministry said.

"The US arms sales to China's Taiwan region... seriously harm China's sovereignty and security interests," it added.

Beijing has ratcheted up pressure on Taiwan since independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen took power there in 2016.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

MY MAMA ALWAYS SAID, LIFE IS LIKE A BOX OF CHOCOLATES. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GONNA GET FORREST GUMP

TODAY IN HISTORY

1656

Oldest surviving commercial newspaper, "Weekelycke Courante van Europa (Haarlems Dagblad)", still in printed circulation begins publication in Haarlem, Netherlands



1790

First US President George Washington delivers the first state of the union address

1835

US national debt is \$0 for the first and only time in history

1926

Abdulaziz Ibn Saud becomes King of Nejd and Hejaz; forerunner of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

News in brief

Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu suspended three deputy ministers on Sunday for making "derogatory remarks" against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi...



Maldives suspends ministers after 'clown' jibe against India's Modi

Bangladesh election officials counted votes Sunday after polls guaranteed to give a fifth term in office to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina...

Niger regime admits 'civilian victims' after air assault near the border with Burkina Faso, Niger's military regime announced yesterday...

Civilian victims have been discovered after air strikes by Niger's army against "terrorists" near the border with Burkina Faso...

Kosovo says Spain recognises its passports as AFP | Pristina, Kosovo

Spain has agreed to recognise passports from Kosovo, having previously been one of five EU states not to do so...

SPOTLIGHT

Trump rallies supporters in Iowa on Capitol riot anniversary

Donald Trump hit the campaign trail Saturday in the first-in-the-nation presidential nominating state of Iowa...



Runaway leader in the race for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, Trump was impeached for inciting insurrection...

In an evening appearance at a middle school in the town of Clinton, Trump gave another meandering speech in which he attacked Biden as too old to govern...

Trump mocked President Joe Biden, his putative rival in November's election. He said Biden has overseen economic decline and invited chaos at the nation's borders...

Iran woman gets 74 lashes for 'public morals' violation

AFP | Tehran, Iran



Roya Heshmati

Iranian authorities have whipped a woman 74 times for "violating public morals" and fined her for not covering her head...

sharia," and "for violating public morals," Mizan said. All women in Iran have been required by law to cover their neck and head since shortly after the 1979 Islamic Revolution...

22-year-old Iranian Kurd arrested for an alleged breach of the Islamic republic's strict dress code for women. During the protests, female demonstrators cast off their headscarves or even burned them...

Iran's parliament has also discussed a bill that would toughen penalties for those breaching the dress code. Her lawyer Maziar Tatai told the reformist Shargh daily...

Jordan king presses Blinken on Gaza ceasefire, aid

AFP | Amman, Jordan



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (R) visits a World Food Program (WFP) regional warehouse in Amman

Jordan's king urged the top United States diplomat yesterday to push for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and an end to the humanitarian crisis brought by three months of war...

Washington has twice exercised its veto at the United Nations Security Council over ceasefire calls, drawing outrage in the Arab world, and Blinken has bypassed Congress to rush weapons to Israel...

"We'll be working on that as well in the days to come," he said at the warehouse. Two-state solution King Abdullah, whose country signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994, also reaffirmed the need for a two-state solution...

There is "real concern" over the Israel-Lebanon border, which even before the Aruri strike had seen regular exchanges of fire largely between Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement, and Israeli forces...

US defence chief pledges transparency after hospitalization

AFP | Washington, United States



US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Saturday accepted responsibility for failing to disclose a recent hospitalization, following reports that even top White House officials and President Joe Biden were in the dark that he was ill and unable to carry out his duties...

medical procedure" -- a breach of standard protocol at a time when the United States is embroiled in the Middle East crisis. NBC News reported Austin was in the intensive care unit for four days. He remained at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Saturday and a discharge date was not yet known...

On Saturday, Seoul's military said North Korean forces had fired over 60 artillery rounds near Yeonpyeong Island, a day after both sides staged live-fire drills in the same area near their contested maritime border. The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the shells landed in a buffer zone created under a 2018 tension-reducing deal...

South Korean leader Kim Jong Un's powerful sister yesterday denied Seoul's claims that Pyongyang had fired dozens of artillery rounds near their border a day earlier. On Saturday, Seoul's military said North Korean forces had fired over 60 artillery rounds near Yeonpyeong Island, a day after both sides staged live-fire drills in the same area near their contested maritime border...

Elderly woman pulled from rubble five days after Japan quake



Members of the Self-Defense Ground Force's 33rd General Regiment transporting supplies to isolated areas along hillside trains in Uri-cho near Wajima, Ishikawa prefecture

AFP | Suzu, Japan

A woman in her 90s trapped for five days under rubble caused by a huge earthquake in central Japan was rescued against the odds, but snow and storms were further complicating relief efforts on Sunday...

She was taken to hospital and was able to hold a conversation, according to public broadcaster NHK. "Hang in there!" rescuers were hearing call from the woman in police footage from the rainy scene published by local media...

At least 128 people have died since the 7.5 magnitude tremor on New Year's Day and its aftershocks -- a toll sure to rise, with 195 others reported missing, according to local authorities. The shockwaves toppled buildings, sparked a major fire and triggered tsunami waves over a metre high on the Sea of Japan side of the main island of Honshu...

Not all were so lucky. In the town of Anamizu, a 52-year-old man who lost his 21-year-old son and his parents in-law waited to hear news of his wife, his other three children and more family members. "I want them to be alive. It's unthinkable that I could be left alone," he told NHK.

Kim's powerful sister denies N. Korea fired rounds near border



Kim Jong Un with Kim Yo Jong

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's powerful sister yesterday denied Seoul's claims that Pyongyang had fired dozens of artillery rounds near their border a day earlier. On Saturday, Seoul's military said North Korean forces had fired over 60 artillery rounds near Yeonpyeong Island, a day after both sides staged live-fire drills in the same area near their contested maritime border...

"Our military did not fire a single shell into the water area," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency. Kim claimed instead that her country's military had detonated explosives simulating the sound of gunfire 60 times and "watched the reaction" of the South Korean forces...

"The result was exactly as we expected," she said, adding: "They misjudged the sound of explosives as gunfire, assumed it was an artillery fire provocation, and shamelessly made up a lie." "In the future, they will misjudge even the rumbling sound of thunder in the northern sky as artillery fire from our military," she said.

LEGAL VIEWPOINT

Islamic Finance & Corporate Governance



DR. ABDELGADIR WARSAMA GHALIB AWARSAMA@WAESAMALL.COM

TOP 4 TWEETS

01



Global temperatures hit record highs in the last year, and extreme weather events continue to affect people around the world. It's time to move from promises to action. Concrete #ClimateAction. Now.

@antonioGuterres

02



Humanitarian partners like the World Food Program are providing life-saving support to Palestinian civilians in Gaza. @WFP's staff are working tirelessly and at great personal risk to reach those who are in greatest need of food assistance.

@SecBlinken

03



Today, the Union Cabinet has approved the transformative 'PRITHVI VIGYAN (PRITHVI)' scheme. This initiative marks a significant stride in our journey towards advanced earth system sciences.

@narendramodi

04



To my brothers and sisters celebrating Orthodox Christmas this weekend -- may your homes be filled with peace, and your loved ones blessed with good health and hope. Merry Christmas.

@DrDretos

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

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

CELEBS

Kevin Hart 'hoodwinked' Chris Rock into shooting Netflix special

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Kevin Hart "hoodwinked" Chris Rock into filming their comedy special.

The 44-year-old comedian stars alongside Chris, 58, in the Netflix show 'Kevin Hart and Chris Rock: Headliners Only' - but Kevin has revealed that he had to convince the stand-up star to commit to the project.

Speaking to 'Extra', Kevin joked: "I had to hoodwink Chris into understanding that it would be cool to film it."

"Chris is a little stubborn, so he wouldn't have jumped at the opportunity out of the gate. So I lied to him."

Kevin is set to receive the coveted Mark Twain Prize in March.

The award recognises individuals who have "had an impact on American society in ways similar to" Twain, and Kevin predicts that he'll become "emotional" when he receives the accolade.

He said: "When I get there and I'm able to kind of sit in it, it'll hit differently. I'll probably get emotional. I won't cry, because it's not what action stars do ... There may be an inkling of a feeling that I'll verbalise."

Kevin previously described winning the award as a "surreal" experience. The Hollywood star will re-



Chris Rock and Kevin Hart

ceive the accolade at the Kennedy Center on March 24.

Kevin previously said: "I've been doing comedy since the

When I get there and I'm able to kind of sit in it, it'll hit differently. I'll probably get emotional. I won't cry, because it's not what action stars do ... There may be an inkling of a feeling that I'll verbalise

KEVIN HART

inception of this award 25 years ago. To be honored in this commemorative year feels surreal. Comedy is my outlet for social commentary and observations

on life - I am grateful to the Kennedy Center for recognising my voice and impact on culture. I can't wait to celebrate!"

Meanwhile, Deborah F. Rutter, the president of the Kennedy Center, said: "For over three decades, Kevin Hart has been a source of laughter across America and throughout the world with his iconic characters, inimitable physical comedy, and relatable narratives."

"An accomplished writer, producer, actor, and comedian, he has made lasting contributions to the comedic landscape and represents our celebration of American humor at the Kennedy Center."



Kim Kardashian to end mobile game

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Kim Kardashian's mobile game is shutting down after almost 10 years.

The 43-year-old star teamed up with Glu in 2014 to launch 'Kim Kardashian: Hollywood' - on which players made a bid for stardom by making an impact with events, dating, acting, modelling and club appearances - but she has now confirmed the venture is closing so she can focus on her other "passions".

The SKIMS founder said in a statement: "I'm so grateful from the bottom of my heart to every-

one who has loved and played Kim Kardashian: Hollywood in the past 10 years.

"This journey has meant so much to me but I've realised that it's time to focus that energy into other passions."

"I want to thank the Glu team and the many people behind the scenes who have worked diligently on making it a success."

"I will be forever inspired by this community that we built together."

The game itself was free to play, but users were able to purchase 'K stars' to boost their attempts to climb the ladder of success.

I want to thank the Glu team and the many people behind the scenes who have worked diligently on making it a success

KIM KARDASHIAN



Shia LaBeouf confirmed into the Catholic Church

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Shia LaBeouf has been confirmed into the Catholic Church.

The 37-year-old 'Transformers' actor took part in a confirmation ceremony at the Old Mission Santa Ines Parish in Solvang, California on Sunday to join the Capuchin Franciscans - Western America Province and the organisation shared details of Shia's religious journey in a post on Instagram revealing he has "embarked on a profound spiritual journey".

The post read: "We are thrilled to share that our dear friend Shia LaBeouf has fully entered the Church this past weekend through the sacrament of confirmation!"

"The Capuchin Franciscan friars Shia LaBeouf

are overjoyed to welcome him into the fold and witness his deep commitment to his faith journey."

"Shia LaBeouf, known for his incredible talent and passion in the entertainment industry, has embarked on a profound spiritual journey that has led him to embrace the teachings of the Catholic Church. His decision to fully enter the Church is a testament to his sincere desire to grow in his relationship with God and live out the Gospel values."

The message added: "As Capuchin Franciscans, we believe in the transformative power of faith and the incredible impact it can have on one's life. We are humbled and grateful to walk alongside Shia as he takes this important step in his spiritual journey."

"We invite you to join us in celebrating this momentous occasion and to keep Shia LaBeouf in your prayers as he continues to deepen his faith and seek God's guidance in his life. May his example inspire others to explore their own spiritual paths and find solace in the loving embrace of the Church."

The organisation added pictures of Shia's confirmation mass which showed him taking part in a service alongside the friars.

Spice Girls immortalised in stamps for 30th anniversary

Celebretainment | London

The Spice Girls have released a set of 15 stamps to mark their 30th anniversary.

As girl power turns the big 3-0 in 2024, the 'Viva Forever' hitmakers - Melanie C, Emma Bunton, Mel B, Geri Horner, and Victoria Beckham - have teamed up with Royal Mail to sell a range of collectible products to celebrate

the milestone.

The girls said: "We are so excited to be celebrated by Royal Mail, alongside some of the most iconic and influential music legends. When we formed the Spice Girls we couldn't have dreamt that 30 years later we would be the first female group to be dedicated an entire stamp collection, that's Girl Power!"

The Spice Girls' stamp set fol-



lows those of The Beatles in 2007, Pink Floyd in 2016, Queen in 2020, The Rolling Stones in 2022 and Iron Maiden in 2023.

The main set of stamps were taken between 1997 and 2012, including the Spice Girls performing at The BRIT Awards, in 1997, Melanie C performing at The BRITs in 1998, their iconic closing ceremony set at the London 2012 Olympic Games, Geri performing at the BRITs in

1997, Spice Girls performing in San Jose, California in 2007, Emma Bunton performing at Wembley, London, in 1998, and their concert in Istanbul in 1997.

Victoria Beckham performing during 'The Return of the Spice Girls Tour' at Madison Square Garden, New York City, in 2008, the band performing in Dublin in 1998, and Mel B performing at the BRITs in 1997 complete the main set.

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

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Across

1- Comic Rudner; 5- Mission control gp.; 9- NFL 6-pointers; 12- Quod _ demonstrandum; 13- Uruguayan friend; 15- Ersatz; 16- Colorado resort; 17- Fable finale; 18- Trim; 19- Opening word; 21- Remove from action; 23- Realtor's sign; 25- Kind; 26- Back muscle, briefly; 29- Light gas; 31- Establishes; 35- Clean air org.; 36- So far; 38- Dark; 39- Contented sighs; 41- Streamlined; 43- Arizona city on the Colorado River; 44- Arrogant; 46- Paradises; 48- Native ruler of Tunisia; 49- Shorthand pros; 51- Lose one's cool; 52- Radical '60s grp.; 53- Wife of Jacob; 55- Duration; 57- Regent; 61- Poorly ventilated; 65- Very, in Versailles; 66- Basic monetary unit of Sweden; 68- It may be landed; 69- Kimono ties; 70- Cold mold; 71- In a jiffy; 72- Nine-digit ID; 73- Furniture wood; 74- French summers;

Down

1- Guns; 2- Dies _; 3- Mai _; 4- Country album?; 5- Anonymous; 6- Latin I verb; 7- Letter opener; 8- From the top; 9- Pad _; 10- Phooey!; 11- "Peter Pan" pirate; 14- Blast from the past; 15- Rancorous; 20- _ Lisa; 22- Creamy-beige color; 24- Holmes's creator; 26- Springs; 27- Separated; 28- Lake in the Sierra Nevada; 30- Food and water; 32- Bludgeons; 33- Measured with a watch; 34- Remains; 37- Mall frequenters; 40- Dismal; 42- Backpack; 45- Go-getter; 47- Petty quarrel, ejected saliva; 50- Decaf brand; 54- Actor Buchholz; 56- Suckle; 57- Old Pontiacs; 58- Globes; 59- Blood vessel; 60- Thick cord; 62- Kicker; 63- Floating ice; 64- Cravings; 67- Actress Peeples;

Yesterday's solution

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

Classifieds



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Rockets hold off Bucks despite Antetokounmpo's big night



Boston's Jayson Tatum celebrates a basket

AFP | Los Angeles

Aperen Sengun scored 21 points to lead seven Houston players in double figures and the Rockets withstood a 48-point performance from Milwaukee star Giannis Antetokounmpo in a 112-108 NBA victory over the Bucks on Saturday.

Two-time NBA Most Valuable Player Antetokounmpo added 17 rebounds for a seventh straight double-double, but it wasn't enough in a game that saw Houston take control early before fending off a fourth-quarter Bucks charge.

Sengun added 11 rebounds and four assists and Jeff Green and Jalen Green added 16 points apiece for the Rockets, who emerged from a tight first quarter with an 11-point lead that they pushed to 20 at halftime.

The Bucks trailed by as many as 18 early in the fourth quarter but cut the deficit to 110-105 on Antetokounmpo's put-back basket with 7.9 seconds remaining.

Houston's Fred VanVleet made a pair of free throws to finally put it out of reach.

"We just relied on our defense," Jeff Green said. "We've been in these situations plenty of times, we've relied on each other. We got the stops when we needed them and made big shots."

Antetokounmpo's 18th career game of 45 or more points tied Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for the most in Bucks franchise history.

In Indianapolis, Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown combined for 69 points and the Boston Celtics again kept the potent Indiana Pacers offense in check in a 118-101 victory.

Tatum scored 38 points

"We just relied on our defense. We've been in these situations plenty of times, we've relied on each other. We got the stops when we needed them and made big shots"

JEFF GREEN

and Brown added 31 for the league-leading Celtics, who held the Pacers to a season-low in points as they snapped Indiana's six-game winning streak.

Boston, who restricted the Pacers to their previous season low in points in their 155-104 win on November 1, were dialed in defensively, holding the Pacers to 17 points in the first quarter.

But the Celtics suffered an early blow when Kristaps Porzingis exited in the first quarter with an eye laceration and the Pacers clawed back.

Aided by 18 Celtics turnovers -- 12 of them in the first half -- the Pacers chipped away at a 16-point deficit and trailed 58-49 at halftime.

Indiana, who eliminated the Celtics from the NBA in-season tournament in December, cut the deficit to 84-81 heading into the fourth, but the Celtics powered away in the final period.

Tatum made a season-high eight three-pointers -- half of the Celtics' 16. He added 13 rebounds and six assists.

"We know they can put up 160," Tatum said. "That's one of the best offenses in the league. They play with pace. They share the ball. They can shoot, so you've got to be locked in when you come to Indiana."

De Bruyne back for Man City as holders power into FA Cup fourth round

AFP | London

Kevin De Bruyne made his long-awaited return for Manchester City as the FA Cup holders thrashed Huddersfield 5-0 in the third round yesterday.

Belgium midfielder De Bruyne had been sidelined since tearing his hamstring during City's Premier League opener against Burnley in August.

He finally got back in action as a 57th minute substitute in City's emphatic victory over the Championship strugglers at the Etihad Stadium.

Chants of 'Oh Kevin De Bruyne' echoed around the stands when the 32-year-old replaced Julian Alvarez.

Pep Guardiola's side were leading by goals from Phil Foden and Alvarez when De Bruyne was introduced.

De Bruyne's arrival kept the momentum going as City netted three more times through Ben Jackson's own goal, another Foden effort and a Jeremy Doku strike on his return from injury as a second half substitute.

Fittingly, Doku's goal was set up by a deft lofted pass from De Bruyne.

City have stayed afloat without De Bruyne, but his world-class quality in midfield will be a key factor in their bid to retain the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup.

"We are incredibly delighted to have him back because Kevin helps to win games. It is so important to have him back after a long injury," Guardiola said.

"He will help us with his talent but I don't want to put all the pressure on Kevin's shoulders because it is not fair.



Manchester City's Ruben Dias (L) passes the captain's armband to Kevin De Bruyne

"We are incredibly delighted to have him back because Kevin helps to win games. It is so important to have him back after a long injury"

PEP GUARDIOLA

"Of course he has a special ability and quality to do something that is difficult to find. Kevin is exceptional. He is unique."

After winning five major trophies in 2023, City have their sights set on more silverware in the new year and their first step on the road back to Wembley could not have been any easier.

City famously thrashed Huddersfield 10-1 in 1987 in a match featuring three hat-tricks.

While this wasn't quite that brutal on Huddersfield, there was never any doubt City would

progress despite the absence of Rodri, due to his grandmother's death, and the injured Erling Haaland.

Foden broke Huddersfield's resistance in the 33rd minute, squeezing his shot in at the near post after Alvarez's effort was blocked.

Alvarez nabbed City's second goal four minutes later, the Argentine stretching to tap in Rico Lewis's pass from close-range.

De Bruyne had been on for just seconds when City scored their third as Oscar Bobb's shot went in via a wicked deflection off Jackson.

Foden struck again in the 65th minute with a clinical low strike from 20 yards.

Belgium winger Doku capped the demolition in the 74th minute, meeting De Bruyne's sublime pass with a first-time finish.

Premier League strugglers Luton were held 0-0 by third tier Bolton at Kenilworth Road. In their first top-flight cam-

paign since 1992, Luton's primary goal is survival and a draining replay was the last thing Hatters boss Rob Edwards needed.

Nottingham Forest were also given a scare by League One opponents as Nuno Espirito Santo's men recovered from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Blackpool.

Blackpool beat Forest in the third round last year when the Seaside were in the Championship and almost repeated the trick at the City Ground.

Jordan Lawrence-Gabriel and Albie Morgan put Blackpool two up by the 27th minute, but Nicolas Dominguez got one back in the 39th minute and Morgan Gibbs-White equalised in the 56th minute.

West Ham were held to a 1-1 draw against second tier Bristol City at the London Stadium.

Jarrod Bowen struck for West Ham in the fifth minute but Tommy Conway's 61st minute equaliser sent 9,000 travelling City fans wild.

Rublev romps to Hong Kong title to boost Australian Open hopes

AFP | Hong Kong

World number five Andrey Rublev prepared for next week's Australian Open in perfect style as he swept past Finland's Emil Ruusuvuori 6-4, 6-4 to win the Hong Kong Open yesterday.

The 26-year-old Rublev has reached nine Grand Slam quarter-finals without ever progressing further.

But he must be rated among the favourites for the first major of the year at Melbourne Park after romping to his 15th ATP tour crown in just 77 minutes.

"The title is something special," said Rublev. "So I couldn't have had a better week.

"Now with a really happy feel-



Russia's Andrey Rublev holds the trophy after winning the final

ing I go to Melbourne. I will enjoy one week of practice there and then we will start the Australian Open."

The last time Rublev lost to a player outside the top 50 was to the 69th-ranked Ruusuvuori, in

a 3-hour, 16-minute marathon, at the Cincinnati Masters last August.

But that never looked like it might be repeated at Victoria Park.

Both players quickly settled into the final, with some furious hitting off both wings from Ruusuvuori at the baseline being met with more powerful counter-punching from Rublev.

At 3-3, Rublev upped the ante further and, on his fourth break point, nudged ahead with a rasping backhand winner.

Ruusuvuori saved a set point at 4-5 and then created his first and only break point in the match, but it proved in vain as Rublev took the opener in 44 minutes.

"The title is something special. So I couldn't have had a better week. Now with a really happy feeling I go to Melbourne. I will enjoy one week of practice there and then we will start the Australian Open"

ANDREY RUBLEV

The Russian dominated the second set more than the scoreline suggests, barely giving up a point on his own serve while constantly pressuring his 24-year-old opponent.

Dar Kulaib, Nabih Saleh triumph in volleyball league



Dar Kulaib, Nabih Saleh triumph in volleyball league

TDT | Manama

Dar Kulaib and Nabih Saleh both got off to winning starts last night in the second round of the Top Six stage in the 2023/2024 Isa bin Rashid Bahrain Volleyball League.

Defending champions Dar Kulaib needed to dig deep to overcome an inspired Al Najma challenge 3-2 (25-18, 25-22, 22-25, 18-25, 15-9); while Nabih Saleh ousted Al Nasser 3-1 (25-19, 25-16, 12-25, 25-23).

Both tightly contested affairs were held at Isa bin Rashid Arena at the Bahrain Volleyball Association headquarters at Isa Sports City in Riffa.

Dar Kulaib and Nabih Saleh strengthened their bids to secure a place in the Golden Square semi-finals with last night's results.

In Dar Kulaib's win, they got off to a strong start and then were able to stave off the Najma surge to narrowly take the five-set thriller.

Dar Kulaib were spearheaded by Mohammed Yaqoob, Hassan Alaiwi, Ali Habib, Ali Mohammed, Hassan Al Warqa, Abdulla Mohammed, Brazilian import Caio Oliveira, and veteran Mahmoud Abdulwahed, who was playing despite nursing an injured left hand.

Paced

Najma were paced by Fadhel Abbas, Hassan Dhahi, Hussain Mahdi, Mahmood Hassan and Swedish professional Jacob Link, but they could not out-punch their rivals in the end.

Dar Kulaib's win helped them claim their fifth victory of the Top Six. They are virtually assured of a spot in the last four. Najma, on the other hand, stayed on a single victory from six tries, and will need to fight back in their remaining fixtures in order to compete for a spot in the Golden Square semis.

In Nabih Saleh's win, leading the way for the victors were Sayed Hashem Isa, Mohammed Jassim, Hussain Ashoor, Hassan Jaffar and Nigerian professional Oyewale Oyedepo, among others.

Nasser tried to rally behind their top stars Ebrahim Mohammed, Yousef Ali, and Mohammed Omar, but could not build from their momentum in the third set.

Nabih Saleh claimed an all-import third win from six games and stayed in the final spot for a place in the Golden Square. Nasser, like Najma, suffered their fifth loss to go with just one win.

Top Six action continues tonight with Al Ahli squaring off with Muharraq at 6.30pm at the same venue.

Nadal out of Australian Open with muscle tear

Rafael Nadal withdraws due to muscle tear after recent comeback; future in doubt

● Nadal sidelined by a "micro tear on a muscle" post Brisbane International

AFP | Melbourne

Spanish superstar Rafael Nadal yesterday pulled out of the Australian Open with a "micro tear on a muscle" barely a week after making his comeback from a year-long injury absence, but said he remained positive.

The 37-year-old had been out of the game since injuring his hip at the 2023 Australian Open, undergoing surgery before making his return at the Brisbane International.

He won his opening two matches in straight sets and looked in good touch, but needed a medical timeout towards the end of his quarter-final loss to Australia's Jordan Thompson after feeling pain in his upper left thigh.

"During my last match in Brisbane I had a small problem on a muscle that as you know made me worried," he said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

"Once I got to Melbourne I have had the chance to make an MRI and I have micro tear on a muscle, not in the same part where I had the injury and that's good news.

"Right now I am not ready to compete at the maximum level of five-set matches. I'm flying back to Spain to see my doctor, get some treatment and rest."

His absence from the Australian Open could mean he has played at Melbourne Park for the last time, having said there



Rafael Nadal reacts as he leaves the court after his loss against Jordan Thompson

Right now I am not ready to compete at the maximum level of five-set matches. I'm flying back to Spain to see my doctor, get some treatment and rest

RAFAEL NADAL

was a "high percentage" that 2024 would be his farewell to the tour.

He said in Brisbane that his health would be the deciding factor in any decision about continuing to play after this season.

"We will miss you in Melbourne, Rafa," the Australian Open said on its official X feed. "Sending all our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery. See you on the court soon."

Long-time rival and world number one Novak Djokovic also has an injury cloud hanging

over him ahead of the opening Grand Slam of the season.

The Serbian needed treatment on a troublesome right wrist during the United Cup last week, but said: "I think I have enough time to get myself in the right shape for the Australian Open."

'Sad news for me'

Injuries have been a recurring theme of Nadal's record-breaking career, a painful by-product of his all-action, brutal-hitting style that has led to struggles with serious knee, wrist and foot problems.

The 22-time Grand Slam champion stressed in Brisbane that he did not come into the tournament expecting to win, and hinted that the Australian Open might come too soon.

"I have worked very hard during the year for this comeback and as I always mentioned my goal is to be at my best level in three months," he said.

"Within the sad news for me for not being able to play

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Injuries have been a recurring theme of Nadal's record-breaking career, a painful by-product of his all-action, brutal-hitting style that has led to struggles with serious knee, wrist and foot problems

in front of the amazing Melbourne crowds, this is not very bad news and we all remain positive with the evolution for the season.

"I really wanted to play here in Australia and I have had the chance to play a few matches that made me very happy and positive. Thanks all for the support and see you soon."

During his career, Nadal dominated the French Open, where he won 14 of his majors, his first arriving just days after his 19th birthday in 2005, his last in 2022 making him the event's oldest champion.

He is a four-time champion at the US Open, won Wimbledon in 2008 and 2010, and is a two-time winner at the Australian Open -- with 13 years spanning his first triumph at Melbourne Park in 2009 and his second in 2022.

The injury absence saw Nadal's ranking slip to 672 while rival Novak Djokovic has passed him in the Grand Slam title count with 24.

Confident Rybakina, resurgent Dimitrov win in Brisbane

AFP | Brisbane

Elena Rybakina will head to the Australian Open full of confidence after demolishing Aryna Sabalenka in the Brisbane International final yesterday, while Grigor Dimitrov upset Holger Rune to win his first title since 2017.

Rybakina, who will now become world number three, won the first eight games in a row on her way to a 6-0, 6-3 win in just 73 minutes over the Australian Open champion in a repeat of the 2023 Melbourne Park final.

It was her sixth WTA title and comes a week before the first Grand Slam of the year.

"For sure it gives me confidence," she said about her Australian Open prospects.

"But this week is just the beginning for all the players. I feel like maybe not everyone is in the best form yet.

"I'm playing well now, so hopefully, as I said, I continue."

The 2022 Wimbledon winner was in irresistible form all week, spending only three hours and 40 minutes on court in her four matches.



Elena Rybakina with her trophy after winning the Brisbane International

The final was expected to be a different challenge -- the two players had met seven times previously with all but two of those matches going to three tough sets, including last year's Australian Open final.

But Rybakina soon put those expectations to bed with a blistering start, racing through the first set in 24 minutes, only dropping three points on serve.

She outshone the Belarusian in all aspects, serving beautifully

and hitting her groundstrokes with power and depth.

Rybakina admitted she was surprised at her form after being sick in the lead-up and unable to practise before the tournament because of rain.

"Also the first few days here it was really tough with the jet lag and everything," she said.

"I'm just pleased with the way I started the tournament because I was not feeling the greatest physically after the illness and everything."

For sure it gives me confidence. But this week is just the beginning for all the players. I feel like maybe not everyone is in the best form yet. I'm playing well now, so hopefully, as I said, I continue

ELENA RYBAKINA

World number two Sabalenka also had an impressive run to the final, but she appeared out of sorts and made a host of unforced errors.

She finally got on the board when she surprisingly broke Rybakina's serve at 0-2 in the second set, but dropped her next serve and there was no way back.

Sabalenka saw the humorous side during the presentations, laughingly blaming her own team for the loss.

"Congratulations to my team," she said. "6-0, 6-3. That's all your fault guys."

Bahrain's Shitaye claims top 10 finish in Dubai Marathon

TDT | Manama

Bahraini elite athlete Shitaye Eshete claimed a top 10 finish yesterday, taking sixth, in the women's race of the Dubai Marathon.

The event was a World Athletics Label road race which featured a renowned super flat course that stretched on Jumeirah Beach Road.

Shitaye completed the race distance in two hours 21 minutes 55 seconds. She was more than five minutes behind women's race winner Tigist Ketema of Ethiopia, who made a stunning debut in Dubai to triumph in 2:16:07.

Ruti Aga was the runner-up in 2:18:09 and Dera Dida third in 2:19:29 to make it an all-Ethiopian top three. Melat Kejeta of Germany came fourth in 2:21:47 while Amid Fozya Jemal of Ethiopia was just two seconds ahead of Shitaye at the finish in 2:21:53.

Shitaye's time was close to her personal best of 2:21:33, which she set in 2019. Yes-



Shitaye Eshete

terday's marathon was her first participation of 2024, which is an Olympic year with the Paris Olympic Games set to take place in July and August.

Shitaye is one of Bahrain's top elite athletes who are looking to be a part of the Kingdom's Olympic delegation. The 33-year-old long-distance specialist is a three-time Asian champion and also a former Asian indoor champion.

Loeb fights back to boost BRX Dakar victory hopes

Brilliant drive sees Bahrain Raid Xtreme star rise to third in Prodrive Hunter after gripping stage battle with Peterhansel

● Loeb recovers from setbacks, posts second fastest time on Day 2

● Loeb finishes 29 seconds behind Peterhansel after dramatic duel

TDT | Manama

Sebastien Loeb produced a brilliant fightback in the Dakar Rally today to keep Bahrain Raid Xtreme firmly in the hunt for a first win in the event.

Partnered by Fabian Lurquin in the BRX Prodrive Hunter, Loeb shrugged off the previous day's trail of mishaps which plunged him down the field to take his BRX Prodrive Hunter to the second fastest time on the 463 km second stage from Al Henakiyah to Al Duwadimi.

The nine-time World Rally Champion fought out a dramatic duel over the later part of the stage with 14-time Dakar winner and fellow-Frenchman Stéphane Peterhansel, who ul-



Sebastien Loeb and Fabian Lurquin in action in their Bahrain Raid Xtreme Prodrive Hunter

timately edged him out by just 29 seconds in an Audi.

The result saw Loeb rise to third place in the overall standings, finishing the day just 4

mins 17 secs behind the Audi of new outright leader Carlos Sainz, a gain for BRX of 16 places and 18 minutes on the day. Saudi Arabia's Yazeed Al Rajhi is third

in his Toyota.

It was a perfect response by Loeb following a frustrating time on the opening desert stage when he was halted by an early



Sebastien Loeb

“It was a good stage for us. It was a very long one. I tried to push quite hard for all the stage. We had two hesitations in the navigation but finally we quickly got back on track. It was not easy but it was a nice stage to drive, so we had a good day.”

SEBASTIEN LOEB

puncture, suffered a bent steering arm, and was forced to drive in third gear for the majority of the time.

Having recorded a record six successive stage wins in last year's Dakar Rally, Loeb will be eager to secure his first success of this year's event in tomorrow's 438km special from Al Duwadimi to Al Salamiya.

Loeb said at the finish: “It was a good stage for us. It was a very long one. I tried to push quite hard for all the stage. We had two hesitations in the navigation but finally we quickly got back on track. It was not easy but it was a nice stage to drive, so we had a good day.”

After finishing second in the Dakar for the last two years, Loeb will be aiming for another big performance tomorrow as he pursues a first win in the rally for himself, as well as BRX.

The driver who has denied him victory in the last two editions, Qatar's Nasser Al Attiyah, was another big climber on the day, setting the fourth best time to rise from 22nd overnight to seventh.

Peterhansel's stage win today, which saw him rise from 26th to ninth place overall, was the 50th of his career, making him the joint record stage winner alongside flying Finn Ari Vatanen.

Pizzi calls up Hussain for Dubai training camp

● Bahrainis went straight back to training yesterday morning following 0-2 loss to Australia in international friendly on Saturday

TDT | Manama

Bahrain head coach Juan Antonio Pizzi yesterday called up Al Shabab Club defender Salem Hussain to join the Kingdom's senior men's national football team at their ongoing training camp in Dubai.

Hussain joins a 26-member squad already in the UAE preparing for next week's AFC Asian Cup.

It is still unclear if Hussain is a part of the team list for the tournament.

The Bahrainis played an international friendly match Saturday night against powerhouses Australia and lost 0-2. They went directly back to work with a morning training session yesterday supervised by Pizzi.

Bahrain are scheduled to play an informal training match on Wednesday against African side Angola. They then fly to Doha the following day for their final lead-up to the AFC Asian Cup, which kicks off Friday.



Bahrain players during training yesterday

The Bahrainis are in Group E for the competition's preliminary round along with South Korea, Malaysia and Jordan. The nationals kick off their campaign against the South Koreans on 15 January at 2.30pm, and then take on their Malaysian counterparts on 20 January at 5.30pm. They complete the preliminaries against Jordan on 25 January at 2.30pm. All times are Bahrain.

Bahrain need to finish amongst the top two in their group to automatically advance to the knockout stage, or be one of four of the best-ranked third-placed teams from the six pools.



Salem Hussain

Group A features hosts Qatar, China, Tajikistan and Lebanon. Group B includes Australia,

Uzbekistan, Syria and India. Group C is composed of Iran, the UAE, Hong Kong and Palestine. Group D comprises Japan, Indonesia, Iraq and Vietnam. And Group F features Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan and Oman.

Bahrain will be making their seventh appearance in the AFC Asian Cup, having qualified for the competition's sixth straight edition. Their first appearance came in 1988, and then also played in 2004, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019. Their best finish to date was fourth overall in the 2004 tournament held in China.

Zverev-led Germany beat Swiatek's Poland to win United Cup

AFP | Sydney

Alexander Zverev saved two match points in a grueling three-set win over Hubert Hurkacz to help Germany upset top seeds Poland and clinch a maiden United Cup title in Sydney yesterday.

The world number seven kept the tie alive with his never-say-die 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 victory after top-ranked Iga Swiatek had swept past Angelique Kerber 6-3, 6-0.

Zverev returned to partner Laura Siegemund and seal the title with a 6-4, 5-7, 10-4 win over Swiatek and Hurkacz in the deciding mixed doubles.

“It was a matter of millimetres today for you guys (Poland) to be the champions,” Zverev said at the presentation ceremony.

“To my team, it's been amazing and so much fun. I couldn't be happier.”

Hurkacz and Zverev had not met since the 2021 ATP Finals, where the German was eventually crowned champion.

Both 26 years old and big servers, there were only small margins between them in the singles clash, with Hurkacz rising to the challenge in the first set tiebreak.

It went the distance again in



Alexander Zverev

the second set after the Pole saved two set points from Zverev at 5-6.

But this time, he lost his nerve in the tiebreak and blew two championship points as Zverev took it to a deciding set despite showing signs of fatigue.

With errors creeping in to Hurkacz's game, Zverev broke for a 4-3 lead in the third and, overcoming a bout of cramps, found a way to win.

“I was exhausted,” said Zverev, with Germany's semi-final not finishing until 2.18am yesterday.

“In the middle of the second set I was already exhausted and in the third set I was hanging on a lot of the time and somehow got the break,” he added.

“Obviously mentally and physically, it was extremely difficult because playing three days in a row singles and mixed is tough.”