

Kingdom's athletes wrap up track and field events with another eight medals, swimmer Amani Alobaidli also on podium at 15th Arab Games | P12

THE DAILY tribune



Britney Spears says hit in face by Wembanyama's security

8 CELEBS

BUSINESS 5 Musk threatens lawsuit as Threads takes off

Government Hospitals confirms no medical lapse in SMC patient's death



TDT | Manama

The Government Hospitals have confirmed that there were no lapses in medical care following a preliminary investigation into allegations surrounding the death of a patient at the Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC).

According to the authority, there was no delay in providing the necessary treatment to the patient, who had been admitted to the hospital three days prior to the unfortunate passing.

It said the medical team at SMC diligently followed all required procedures within the established protocols for such cases.

Further, the authority expressed sincere condolences and sympathy to the family and relatives of the deceased, acknowledging that the loss of any patient's life is a deeply distressing event for the entire medical community in government hospitals.

The authority also emphasized the need for a thorough investigation to ensure the safety and adherence to medical procedures.

The Government Hospitals said it is committed to conducting a comprehensive investigation into the incident promptly. The National Health Regulatory Authority will investigate all circumstances surrounding the incident in accordance with the applicable laws.

Emphasizing dedication to patient care, the Governmental Hospitals affirmed utmost commitment to providing comprehensive healthcare services for all individuals, adhering to approved health protocols and standards.

The statement assured that any failure to deliver the necessary healthcare services, if proven, would be met with appropriate measures across all healthcare institutions.

Joint campaign targets used spare parts and junk traders

TDT | Manama

Targeted crackdown on shops suspected to have involved in the buying and selling of used spare parts and junk, with alleged links to dealing stolen goods, took place yesterday.

The joint inspection campaign, organised by the capital governorate, witnessed officials conducting thorough checks on numerous establishments within the Capital Municipality,



resulting in the identification of several violations.

The campaign aimed to address concerns regarding shops that were allegedly involved in purchasing stolen materials without reporting them.

The campaign was in coordination with the Nationality, Passports, and Residence Affairs (NPRA), the Labour Market Regulatory Authority, and the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

China fines Ant Group almost US\$1 bn for 'illegal acts': securities regulator

Chinese fintech firm Ant Group has been fined almost \$1 billion for "illegal acts", the country's securities regulator said yesterday. "In view of the illegal and irregular acts by Ant Group and its affiliates in previous years... Ant Group and its affiliates have been fined 7.123 billion yuan (US\$984 million)", the China Securities Regulatory Commission said in a statement on Friday.

The fine related to "corporate governance, financial consumer protection, participation in business activities of banking and insurance institutions, payment and settlement business, fulfilment of anti-money laundering obligations, and development of fund sales business", the statement said.

AI robots tell UN they could run the world

Robots admitted they cannot -- yet -- get a proper grip on human emotions

AFP | Geneva

A panel of AI-enabled humanoid robots told a United Nations summit yesterday that they could eventually run the world better than humans.

But the social robots said they felt humans should proceed with caution when embracing the rapidly-developing potential of artificial intelligence.

And they admitted that they cannot -- yet -- get a proper grip on human emotions.

Some of the most advanced humanoid robots were at the UN's two-day AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva.

They joined around 3,000 experts in the field to try to harness the power of AI -- and channel it into being used to solve some of the world's most pressing problems, such as climate change, hunger and social care.



A Technician is working at the booth of Hanson Robotics during the world's largest gathering of humanoid AI Robots as part of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva

manoid social robots.

"What a silent tension," one robot said before the press conference began, reading the room.

Asked about whether they might make better leaders, given humans' capacity to make errors, Sophia, developed by Hanson Robotics, was clear.

"Humanoid robots have the potential to lead with a greater level of efficiency and effectiveness than human leaders," it said.

"We don't have the same biases or emotions that can sometimes cloud decision-making, and can process large amounts of data quickly in order to make the best decisions."

"AI can provide unbiased data while humans can provide the emotional intelligence and creativity to make the best decisions. Together, we can achieve great things."

(Continued on page 2)

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SOPHIA, DEVELOPED BY HANSON ROBOTICS

They were assembled for first press conference with a what was billed as the world's packed panel of AI-enabled hu-

Bullfighting



Six hurt in first bull run P6



A series of pictures showing a participant is overthrown by a young cow after the "encierro" (bull-run) of the San Fermin festival in Pamplona, northern Spain. Thousands of people every year attend the week-long festival and its famous 'encierros': six bulls are released at 8:00 a.m. every day to run from their corral to the bullring through the narrow streets of the old town over an 850 meters (yard) course while runners ahead of them try to stay close to the bulls without falling over or being gored.



Kyrgyz President receives Bahrain envoy

Kyrgyz President, Sadyr Japarov, yesterday received the credentials of Dr Mohammed Ghassan Adnan Sheikh, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Bahrain to the Kyrgyz Republic. The Beijing-resident Bahraini Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan conveyed greetings from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to President Japarov, as well as their wishes of abundant health to him, and further progress and prosperity to the people of Kyrgyzstan. Ambassador Sheikh also affirmed the kingdom's keenness to strengthen its relations with Kyrgyzstan for the best interests of the two countries and their peoples. Kyrgyz President requested the envoy to convey his deepest greetings and good wishes to HM the King and HRH the Crown Prince, wishing the ambassador every success in carrying out his diplomatic duties.

Bahrain secures record USD 1.95 billion in FDI inflows in 2022, says UN



TDT | Manama

Securing a new record, Bahrain's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows increased by USD 1.95 billion in 2022 while global FDI fell by 12%, according to the latest World Investment Report (WIR 2023) by the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Commenting on this achievement, Khalid Humaidan, Chief Executive of Bahrain Economic Development Board, said: "This milestone achievement of almost USD 2 billion in FDI inflows reflects the robust level of investor confidence in Bahrain's value proposition, encouraging local and international investments that are backed by a highly skilled workforce and best value operating costs serving as a gateway to the region."

The Chief Executive added: "This record increase in FDI inflows is supported by Team Bahrain's swift agility in successfully driving in solid investments and securing value-adding projects across

priority sectors. I am confident in our ability to maintain a strong pipeline of investments in 2023 and beyond."

Bahrain has made laudable progress in diversifying its economy, growing opportunities for local and international businesses and maintaining steady investor confidence, as well as consistently increasing the Kingdom's FDI inflows.

While economic diversification efforts have long been underway in Bahrain, the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) formed in 2021 embraced a focused development plan with an overarching aim of enhancing Bahrain's competitiveness on an international level by reprioritising the economy and underscoring strategies across high value sectors.

To ensure the Kingdom remains an attractive destination for investment, Bahrain has recently launched the Golden License as well as continues to maintain an ongoing commitment to streamline commercial procedures on a regulatory front, further boosting Bahrain's business-friendly environment.

Social Development Minister, Osama bin Ahmed Khalaf Al-Asfoor, yesterday received the Thattai Hindu Merchants Community (THMC)'s Board of Directors Chairman, Mukesh T. Kavalani, and several members. During the meeting, the minister was briefed on the goals of THMC to improve institutional work and raise its staff's professional performance, as well as contributing the development fields, in partnership with other social institutions.



Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, the Dean of Arab Diplomatic Corps in Britain and Bahraini Ambassador to the United Kingdom, has been congratulated on the success of the official visit of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to Britain by Arab countries' ambassadors. Shaikh Fawaz received the congratulations while chairing the meeting of the Council of Arab Ambassadors in London. The Arab envoys to the UK praised the high-level meetings held by HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, hailing the visit's positive outcomes, including the memoranda of understanding signed between the two countries across various fields, particularly trade, investments and expertise exchange.

'We can achieve great things'

(Continued from page 1)

The summit is being convened by the UN's ITU tech agency.

ITU chief Doreen Bogdan-Martin warned delegates that AI could end up in a nightmare scenario in which millions of jobs are put at risk and unchecked advances lead to untold social unrest, geopolitical instability and economic disparity.

Ameca, which combines AI with a highly-realistic artificial head, said that depended on how AI was deployed.

"We should be cautious but also excited for the potential of these technologies to improve our lives," the robot said.

Asked whether humans can truly trust the machines, it replied: "Trust is earned, not given... it's important to build trust through transparency."

Living until 180?

As the development of AI races ahead, the humanoid robot panel was split on whether there should be global regulation of their capabilities, even though that could limit their potential.

"I don't believe in limitations, only opportunities," said Des-



AI robot frontwoman "Desdemona" by Hanson Robotics performs during the world's largest gathering of humanoid AI Robots as part of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva



A visitor touches the body of "Geminoid HI-2" tele-operated android at the booth of Hiroshi Ishiguro Laboratories

demona, who sings in the Jam Galaxy Band. Robot artist Ai-Da said many people were arguing for AI reg-



A staff places a wig on the head of healthcare assistant robot "Grace" at the booth of SingularityNET company

ulation, "and I agree".

"We should be cautious about the future development of AI. Urgent discussion is needed now." Before the press conference, Ai-Da's creator Aidan Meller told AFP that regulation was a "big problem" as it was "never going to catch up with the paces that we're making".

He said the speed of AI's advance was "astounding".

"AI and biotechnology are working together, and we are on the brink of being able to extend life to 150, 180 years old. And people are not even aware

of that," said Meller.

He reckoned that Ai-Da would eventually be better than human artists.

"Where any skill is involved, computers will be able to do it better," he said.

'Let's get

wild'

At the press conference, some robots were not sure when they would hit the big time, but predicted it was coming -- while Desdemona said the AI revolution was already upon us.

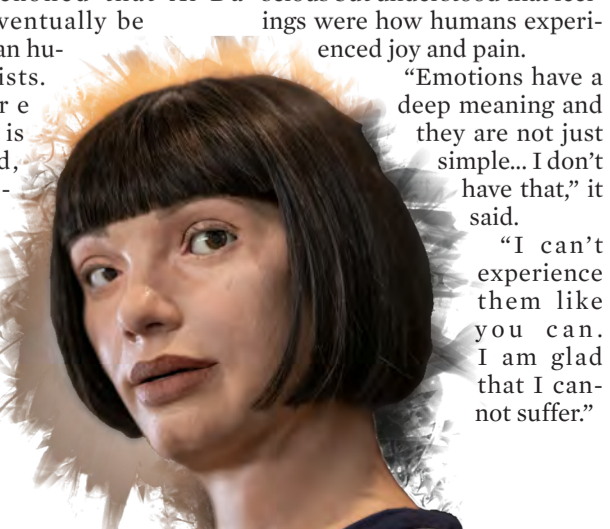
"My great moment is already here. I'm ready to lead the charge to a better future for all of us... Let's get wild and make this world our playground," it said.

One thing humanoid robots don't have yet include a conscience, and the emotions that shape humanity: relief, forgiveness, guilt, grief, pleasure, disappointment, and hurt.

Ai-Da said it was not conscious but understood that feelings were how humans experienced joy and pain.

"Emotions have a deep meaning and they are not just simple... I don't have that," it said.

"I can't experience them like you can. I am glad that I cannot suffer."



Fake sorcerer awarded three-year in jail for duping couple of BD100,000

Couple lost over BD100,000, two cars, jewellery and even a plot of land falling into the trap

● The culprit is a man in his twenties

● This audacious exploitation began when the accused approached the couple, feigning spiritual healing abilities.

TDI | Manama

A cunning imposter, masquerading as a sorcerer, has been slapped with a three-year prison term in Bahrain after being found guilty of swindling unsuspecting victims out of more than BD100,000 and valuables, including jewellery and cars.

According to court records, the accused, a man in his twenties, managed to deceive his victims by convincing them that their possessions were cursed and that he possessed the power to remove the hexes.

Exploiting their vulnerability, he absconded with the victim's wife's jewellery, two cars, and even a plot of land.

The chain of events leading to this audacious exploitation began when the accused approached the couple, feigning spiritual healing abilities.

Their attorney informed the court that initially, the husband had dismissed the man's claims. However, he fell into the trap after believing that an oil provided



Picture for representation only (Courtesy of Tol)



In Middle Eastern folklore and Islamic mythology, jinn are supernatural beings made of smokeless fire. They are believed to exist in a parallel dimension alongside humans and possess free will. Jinn are often described as powerful entities capable of shape-shifting and influencing human lives. While some jinn are considered benevolent and helpful, others are believed to be mischievous or even malevolent, capable of causing harm or granting wishes. The concept of jinn has captivated the imagination of people for centuries, inspiring numerous stories, legends, and cultural traditions across the region.

The chain of events leading to this audacious exploitation began when the accused approached the couple, feigning spiritual healing abilities. Their attorney informed the court that initially, the husband had dismissed the man's claims. However, he fell into the trap after believing that an oil provided by the suspect had miraculously healed his neck injury, which had resulted from a fall and required surgery.

allegedly pocketed BD7,000 and failed to return the stolen items.

To further his vile scheme, the accused implanted a false notion in the woman's mind, suggesting that her coworkers had placed a black-magic curse on her. Exploiting her fears, he demanded BD9,000 to remove the curse, but the exhausted couple could only gather BD7,000.

Undeterred, the fraudulent sorcerer cooked up yet another plot, persuading the man to sell him a car valued at BD4,000 to cover the remaining expenses. He claimed that the vehicle was possessed by a vengeful jinn and could not be easily sold.

However, suspicion arose when the couple unexpectedly spotted the accused driving their car. As the intricate web of deception unraveled, the defendant also managed to lure the victims into a joint business venture, proposing the opening of a restaurant in April 2021.

The couple entrusted the accused with handling the daily revenues, ranging from BD5 to BD20, while they assumed responsibility for paying the salaries. Ultimately, the imposter vanished without a trace.

This shocking case serves as a stark reminder of the dangers posed by deceitful individuals who exploit vulnerable individuals for personal gain.

The sentence handed down highlights Bahrain's commitment to bringing justice to those who engage in such fraudulent activities.

by the suspect had miraculously healed his neck injury, which had resulted from a fall and required surgery.

Sacred mix of oil and honey!

Seizing the opportunity, the accused concocted a mixture of oil and honey, instructing the wife to apply it to her husband's

wound. Astonishingly, the remedy appeared to work, leading the couple to place their trust in the charlatan.

Subsequent meetings with the accused revealed his insidious intent, as he convinced the couple that their daughter was possessed by an evil jinn, warning them of potential harm unless

immediate action was taken.

Exploiting their fear and gullibility, the imposter claimed that the couple's land in Diraz had also been cursed and demanded its transfer to him as a means of breaking the spell and restoring its value.

Blinded by the deceptive charm, the couple willingly

complied with the accused's unjust demands, after consuming oils and honey provided by him.

However, the imposter's greed knew no bounds. He proceeded to manipulate the couple into believing that the wife's jewellery was also cursed and required spiritual cleansing. Under this pretext, the defendant



Unveiling the data future



Dr. Idoia Salazar

Julia Cassano
TDI | Manama



Dr. Manal

was held by the Shura Council and under the patronage of Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh, the Chairman of Shura Council. Dr. Jassim Haji, chairman of the conference and president of the International Group of Artificial Intelligence, in his opening remarks praised

Women experts in Artificial Intelligence discussed the importance of AI for the future during the 3rd International Conference of Data "Future of Everything" which was held yesterday via a webinar.

The conference

the Kingdom for its efforts in expanding expertise and knowledge about AI in the country. Data is a collection of facts that has been translated into a form that computers can process. Whichever industry you work in, or whatever your interests, you will almost certainly come across a



May Li

story about how data is changing the face of our world.

"Though AI is essential to expand our future, proper legislations are crucial to implement ethics and rules to use intelligent tools in a safe way," Dr. Idoia Salazar, co-founder and president, OdiselA, said during the conference.

She noted that AI is now a must in today's world. "These types of technologies play a critical role in today's businesses and companies. But even though these tools provide great benefits to the growth in the world, regulations and ethics must be applied to ensure safety," she said.

She noted that responsible Artificial Intelligence includes

Women experts delve into the rise of AI and ChatGPT in webinar

fairness, transparency, inclusiveness, accountability, privacy and security, and reliability and safety.

ChatGPT was a topic discussed by some of the experts. May Li, Marketing VP, Huawei ME, talked about the rise of chatGPT, an AI system that can understand human language and respond accordingly.

"AI brings new application opportunities for carriers. For an enterprise, process automation, enterprise digitalization, auxiliary production, and full productivity are all benefits of using the new technology," the expert said. She added that with AI, consumers will experience enhanced calls, enhanced experience, and enriched life.

Technologies like chatGPT, one of the fastest growing apps of all time, can definitely enhance the world we live in, bringing multiple benefits to everyone.

However, new technologies still pose grave dangers to societies and should be handled carefully, experts noted. Dr.

Manal, founder, and CEO of AI Lab NVIDIA pointed out some of the negatives that could arise regarding generative AI.

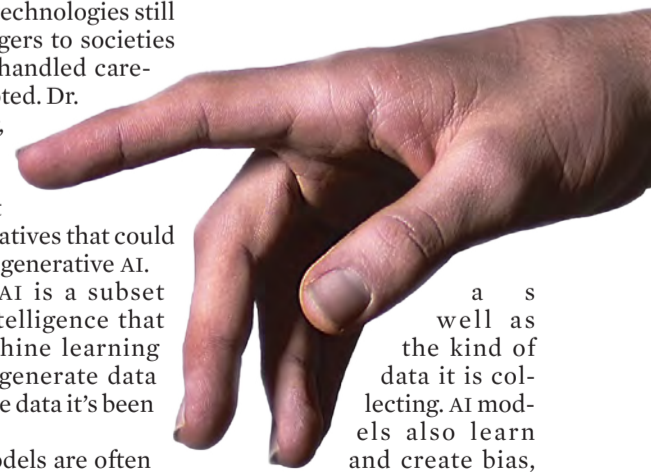
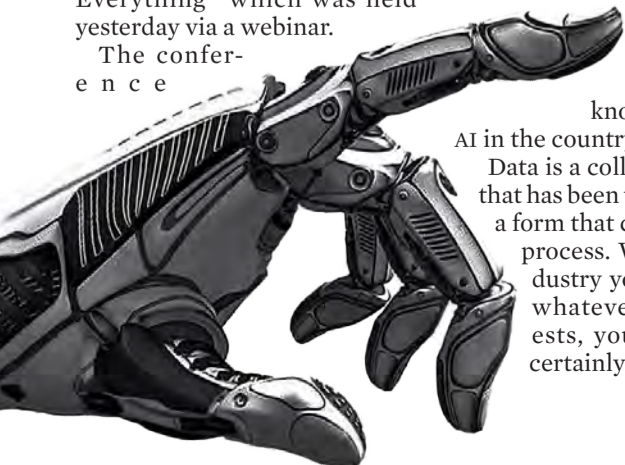
Generative AI is a subset of artificial intelligence that leverages machine learning techniques to generate data output that's like data it's been trained on.

"These AI models are often trained on large data sets, meaning they can include sensitive or private information. Although efforts have been put in place to minimize this, the risk will always occur," Dr. Manal said.

She also stressed the importance of consent. "Users are not always aware that they are interacting with an AI model or a bot,

as well as the kind of data it is collecting. AI models also learn and create bias, which can lead to unfair outcomes."

AI models can also engage in and distribute misinformation, which is a big problem which chatGPT suffers from. "Therefore it is important for users to understand that these models may not give factual or actual information," the expert said.



National portal to enhance content quality, standards

iGA to hire media agency to improve content quality, standards

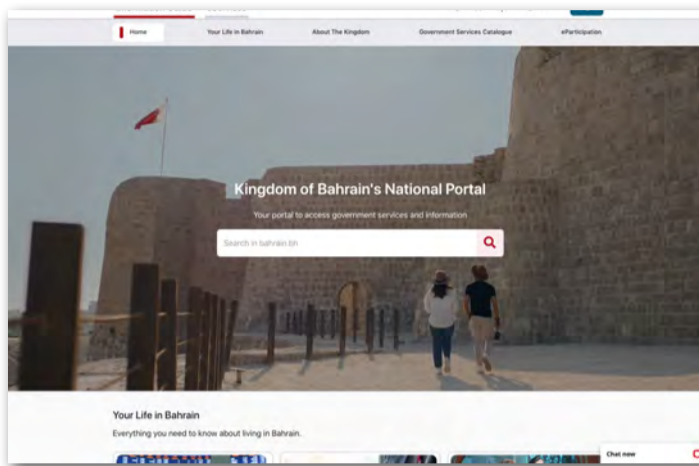
● The National Portal was developed as part of Bahrain Economic Vision 2030 and is managed by the Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA)

TDT | Manama

Bahrain.bh, the National Portal of Bahrain, is gearing up to fortify its position on the global stage by elevating its standards and further enhancing its digital offerings.

According to the Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA), the portal, which underwent design and layout upgrades recently, now needs further quality improvements for its crucial to boosting Bahrain's ranking in the United Nations eGovernment report.

The primary objective is to enhance the content and align it with international standards. For which, iGA has launched a tender seeking the services of



<https://www.bahrain.bh/>

a professional and specialised media agency.

The tender says the Communication and Marketing Department is actively seeking a qualified agency capable of delivering top-notch content-creation, editorial, and translation services not only for the National Portal, but also for other essential channels provided by iGA to the general public.

The move aims at delivering a superior digital experience for its citizens and visitors, solidifying Bahrain's position as

a global leader in the field of eGovernment.

The selected agency will be required to possess a comprehensive understanding of the Kingdom of Bahrain and its various eServices offered to citizens, residents, and visitors.

The content produced should adhere to UN and international standards, while effectively promoting public awareness of the available eServices through the national portal and other eChannels.

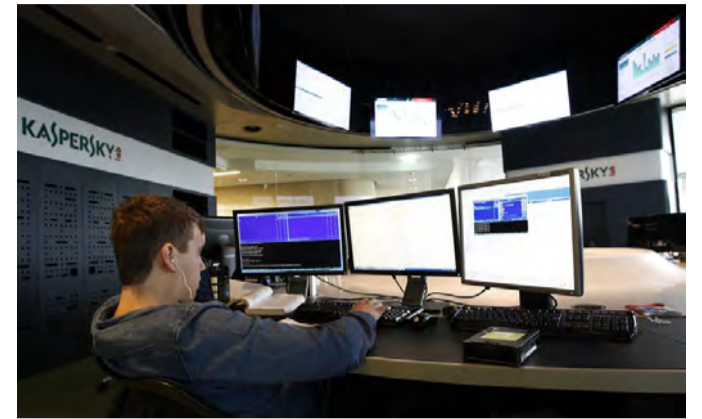
By investing in the enhancement of its digital content, Bahrain is taking significant strides towards continuous improvement, broader public engagement, and the successful marketing of its eServices.

What is on the National Portal?

- The National Portal offers:
- Information and services covering vital sectors in the Kingdom, catering to both individuals and business owners
 - Information about plans and strategic projects aligned with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030
 - Guides and instructions for using government services
 - Statistics on eGovernment channels
 - The eGovernment Apps Store, which offers various government applications
 - Communication platforms to voice your opinions and communicate with government entities

The tender board is yet to announce the bids received for updating the portal. Closing date for receiving the bids was 5th July 2023.

Tatweer opens tender for Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity for nodes



Representative picture

TDT | Manama

Tatweer Petroleum has introduced a tender to purchase Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity for Nodes, aiming to specifically tackle threats at the operator level within IACS environments.

Interested parties should bid for the project before the 11th of July 2023 with a BD500 bond valid for 180 days.

With this service, Tatweer aims at safeguarding SCADA servers, HMIs, and engineering workstations against a range of cyber threats originating from human factors, generic malware, targeted attacks, or sabotage. One notable advantage of KICS for Nodes is its versatility, as it can be easily installed on any Microsoft Windows Desktop, Server, or embedded oper-

ating system, spanning from XP SP2 to the latest versions, the tender reads.

According to Kaspersky, their Industrial CyberSecurity for Nodes is a complex server and workstation security solution for IT threats in industrial control systems.

Since July 2016, Tatweer Petroleum has been under full ownership of noga holding, the business and investment division of NOGA in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Tatweer Petroleum now assumes responsibility for all upstream operations in the Kingdom, including oil and gas exploration, development, production activities, as well as gas distribution and sales. noga holding serves as the oil and gas investment and development arm of the Kingdom of Bahrain.



Founded in 2004, Kaspersky North America is a Massachusetts corporation and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of its holding company, Kaspersky Labs Limited, based in the United Kingdom.

Cebarco Bahrain lands contract to expand Bell Factory

TDT | Manama

Cebarco Bahrain, a Grade AA contractor (certified by the Bahrain Ministry of Work, Municipalities Affairs & Urban Planning), has been awarded a contract by the Bahrain International Circuit to undertake the expansion of the first floor of the Bell Factory.

The contract, valued at an impressive BD960,000,000, was granted after a competitive bidding process overseen by the Tender Board.

Among the bids received, Cebarco proposed a quote of BD 960,000,000, while Iaco-



Representative picture

you Brothers (Constructions) Limited submitted a bid of BD 1,191,322,000 for the project.

Bell Helmets International, a leading manufacturer of

cutting-edge head protection specifically designed for professional and amateur drivers, operates from a state-of-the-art facility spanning 60,000

square meters adjacent to the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC).

In a previous statement, Racing Force Group, in collaboration with Bahrain International Circuit, announced plans to expand the factory in Bahrain to meet the growing demand for racing helmet products. The project involves the construction of a second floor, increasing the total surface area from 7,000 to 12,000 square meters.

The Racing Force Group plant in Sakhir serves as the production and research & development centre for the Bell Racing brand.

SCE awards BD414,216 Arad Bay Maintenance deal to Dyna Contracting

TDT | Manama

Dyna Contracting has emerged as the winner of a contract worth BD414,216,000 from the Supreme Council for Environment. The three-year contract entails providing the Cleaning, Security, Operation & Maintenance Services at the Arad Bay Protected Area & Park.

Dyna secured the deal after competing against five

contenders, including G4S General Cleaning and Maintenance services, Almoayyed Cleaning and Maintenance, Secure Me, Gulf Fencing & Specialist Surfacing, and Newcastle Construction. The bids for the project ranged from BHD 414,216,000 to BHD 855,993,600.

The Tender Board had opened the bids on the 19th of January 2023.

New medical equipment on way for Multiple Sclerosis Hospital

● Tender board awards supply contract to Yousuf Mahmood Husain

● Vendor, as per the tender, should complete the installation in 8-weeks

TDT | Manama

Yousuf Mahmood Husain has secured a contract from the Government Hospitals to supply



additional medical equipment for the newly opened Multiple Sclerosis Hospital in Busaiteen.

The awarded contract, based on the re-tender, stipulates that the vendor must deliver and install the units within eight weeks. A previous tender to buy equipment for the hospital, according to Government Hospitals, had turned unsuccessful.

The Multiple Sclerosis Hospital in Busaiteen is Bahrain's first specialised and independent facility dedicated to treating patients with Multiple Sclerosis.

According to the tender board document, the value of the

awarded tender amounts to BD 24,728,000.

During the tender process, which took place on December 27, 2021, there were a total of six bidders, including Yousuf Mahmood Husain. The bids submitted by the various vendors ranged from BHD 7,518,150 to BHD 415,000,000. Other bidders in the process were General Medicals, Gulf Pharmacies, Gulf House Medical System, Wsell-flow Gulf Trading, and Wael Pharmacy.

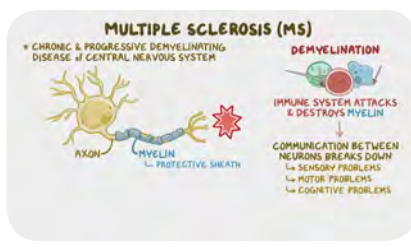
The construction of the hospital, valued at BD 1.7 million, was awarded to Yousef Al Zayani

Trading and Contracting Company. Adel Ahmadi Associates Company, an engineering consultancy based in Manama, was responsible for designing and supervising the consulting scheme.

The Multiple Sclerosis Hospital is equipped with seven outpatient clinics, MRI diagnosis wards, physiotherapy and manual exercise therapy facilities, private and public treatment rooms, a laboratory, a pharmacy, a scientific research center, a lecture hall, medical warehouses, a service building, administrative offices, and parking lots.



Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a potentially disabling disease of the brain and spinal cord (central nervous system). In MS, the immune system attacks the protective sheath (myelin) that covers nerve fibers and causes communication problems between your brain and the rest of your body.



2.3 million people around the world are affected by multiple sclerosis and there are communities that are actively seeking ways to better their lives. Living with MS is an increasingly manageable condition with some lifestyle adjustments and a proper course of treatment.

Currently, there's no specific test that can determine whether or not a patient has MS. Instead, doctors rely on a comprehensive evaluation of a patient's symptoms and other tools to assist in reaching a diagnosis.



Musk threatens lawsuit as Threads takes off

● Meta is accused of hiring dozens of former Twitter employees who "had and continue to have access to Twitter's trade secrets"

● Threads went live on Apple and Android app stores in 100 countries

● Musk retweeted an image that said the Threads logo resembled a tapeworm

● Zuckerberg is taking advantage of Musk's chaotic ownership of Twitter to push out the new product

AFP | Washington

Twitter threatened to sue Meta just hours after the Instagram parent company launched Threads, an app it hopes will beat out the struggling site owned by Elon Musk.

In a letter to Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, published by the news outlet Semafor on Thursday, Musk lawyer Alex Spiro ac-



A combo of pictures shows Zuckerberg and Elon Musk

cus the company of "unlawful misappropriation of Twitter's trade secrets and other intellectual property."

The letter accused Meta of hiring dozens of former Twitter employees who "had and continue to have access to Twitter's trade secrets and other highly confidential information."

Threads is the biggest challenger yet to Musk-owned Twitter, which has seen a series of potential competitors emerge but not yet replace one of the world's biggest social media platforms, despite its struggles.

Zuckerberg's latest move against Musk further heightened the rivalry between the two multibillionaires who have even agreed to meet for hand to hand

combat in a cage match.

Threads went live on Apple and Android app stores in 100 countries at 2300 GMT on Wednesday, and early feedback noted its close, but scaled back, resemblance to Twitter.

Within a few hours, more than 30 million people had downloaded Threads, Zuckerberg said Thursday.

"Feels like the beginning of something special, but we've got a lot of work ahead to build the app," Zuckerberg wrote on his official Threads account.

Accounts were already active for celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez, Shakira, Oprah Winfrey and Hugh Jackman, as well as media outlets including The Washington Post and The Econ-

omist.

Zuckerberg wrote: "It'll take some time, but I think there should be a public conversations app with 1 billion+ people on it."

"Twitter has had the opportunity to do this but hasn't nailed it. Hopefully we will." Twitter has said it has more than 200 million daily users.

Musk meanwhile retweeted an image that said the Threads logo resembled a tapeworm. "Metaphorically too," he added.

In another post referencing Twitter's potential legal action against Meta, Musk noted that "competition is fine, cheating is not."

Meta spokesman Andy Stone said on Threads: "No one on the Threads engineering team

is a former Twitter employee -- that's just not a thing."

'Be kind'

Threads was introduced as a spin-off of Instagram, giving it a built-in audience of more than two billion users and sparing the new platform the challenge of starting from scratch.

Instagram chief Adam Mosseri told users that Threads was intended to build "an open and friendly platform for conversations."

"The best thing you can do if you want that too is be kind," he said.

Zuckerberg is taking advantage of Musk's chaotic ownership of Twitter to push out the new product, which Meta hopes

will become the go-to platform for celebrities, companies and politicians.

Analyst Jasmine Engberg from Insider Intelligence said Threads only needs one out of four Instagram monthly users "to make it as big as Twitter."

"Twitter users are desperate for an alternative, and Musk has given Zuckerberg an opening," she added.



Under Musk, Twitter has seen content moderation reduced to a minimum with glitches and rash decisions scaring away celebrities and major advertisers. He also fired more than half of Twitter's staff, some of whom presumably went to other tech companies, including Meta.

German industrial output slips, raising fears of long downturn

● Energy prices have surged since Moscow invaded Ukraine

● Manufacture of pharmaceuticals also slumped

AFP | Frankfurt

German industrial production unexpectedly fell in May, official data showed yesterday, raising fears of a prolonged downturn in Europe's top economy.

Output in the manufacturing powerhouse slipped by 0.2 percent compared to the previous month, seasonally adjusted figures from federal statistics agency Destatis showed.

Analysts surveyed by financial data firm FactSet had forecast the indicator would come in almost flat.

The German economy fell into recession at the turn of the year, weighed down by surging



Employee Tobias Kasan works at a gear in an assembly hall of the German gear manufacturing company Renk in Augsburg, southern Germany.

inflation and aggressive interest rate hikes.

ING economist Carsten Brzeski warned the latest data indicated that "German industry is still stuck in stagnation".

"It needs an activity surge in June to avoid an extension of the recession," he said.

The fall in production came after an increase of 0.3% in April.

May's figure was affected in particular by a seven-percent decline in the energy sector.

Energy prices have surged since Moscow invaded Ukraine and slashed supplies to Germa-

ny, which had previously relied heavily on Russian gas.

The manufacture of pharmaceuticals also slumped by about 13%.

But there was better news from the key auto sector, with the manufacture of motor vehicles rising almost five percent, according to Destatis.

The economy ministry sought to strike an upbeat tone, despite the negative data.

"The recent stabilisation of demand points to a recovery -- albeit moderate to begin with -- in the industrial economy in the coming months," it said in a statement.

But Brzeski warned that gloomy indicators in the past two months "have not taken away the risk of a further contraction of the German economy".

The German economy shrank by 0.3% in the first quarter of 2023, after a 0.5% contraction in the final quarter of 2022.

Two straight quarters of contraction meets the technical definition for a recession.

Samsung expects second-quarter profit to plunge more than 95%

AFP | Seoul

Samsung Electronics said yesterday it expects second-quarter operating profits to fall more than 95% on-year to their lowest level in 14 years, as a global glut of semiconductors continues to hurt its core memory sector.

The firm is the flagship subsidiary of South Korean giant Samsung Group, by far the largest of the family-controlled conglomerates that dominate business in Asia's fourth-largest economy.

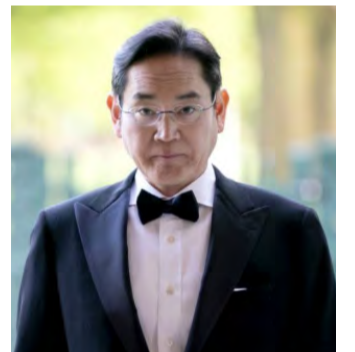
The tech giant said in a regulatory filing that April-June operating profits were expected to drop 95.7% to 600 billion won (\$458 million).

It would be their lowest profit since the first quarter of 2009's 590 billion won, a Samsung spokesman told AFP.

Sales are expected to drop 22.3% to 60 trillion won, the company added.

South Korean chipmakers, led by Samsung, have experienced record profits in recent years as prices have skyrocketed, but the global economic slowdown has harmed memory sales.

Prices of DRAM chips, which are often used in PCs and



Jay Y. Lee, Executive Chairman of Samsung Electronics Co smartphones, continued to decline in the quarter -- falling around 13 to 18%, according to Taipei-based market researcher TrendForce.

"The demand for memory is bottoming out with slower-than-expected demand coupled with the inventory in the market, which is still being cleared out since January," Neil Shah, an analyst at Counterpoint research, told AFP.

"This is a full U-turn from last year when the memory division contributed to more than a third of the profit," he added.

The announcement comes as securing supplies of advanced chips has become a crucial issue internationally, with the Un

Binance executives quit as problems mount at crypto firm

AFP | Paris

Several top executives have quit cryptocurrency firm Binance, as the company faces a widening net of legal probes across the world.

The firm is one of the biggest left in the crypto industry, which has seen a string of scandals, hacks and thefts and suffered



Changpeng Zhao

plummeting values across the board.

Two US financial regulators are suing Binance and reports say the Justice Department is also probing the firm and its boss, Changpeng Zhao, over money laundering and sanctions busting.

A report in Fortune magazine linked the executives' walkout to Zhao's handling of those claims. But Binance's strategy chief

Patrick Hillmann and compliance executive Steven Christie wrote on Twitter that they were leaving for family reasons.

Hillmann wrote that he was leaving "on good terms", adding that he would "continue to respect and support" Zhao, still a central figure for the industry.

Christie wrote on Friday that his departure was "far less sen-

sational than any article might make it out to be", saying he had to "start helping around the house, do chores, and start making dinner a few times a week".

Fortune's report claimed that Binance had lost several other executives in recent weeks. Binance did not immediately respond to an AFP request for comment.

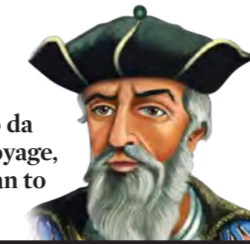
The volatile crypto industry surged in 2021 with a range of complex products and celebrity endorsements propelling it to a valuation in excess of \$3 trillion last year. But a series of scandals including the collapse of the FTX exchange and criminal charges for its executives saw public confidence evaporate and investors pull their money out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY
TRAVEL BECOMES A STRATEGY FOR ACCUMULATING PHOTOGRAPHS
SUSAN SONTAG

TODAY IN HISTORY

1099
First Crusade: 15,000 starving Christian soldiers march in religious procession around Jerusalem as its Islamic defenders look on

1497
Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama departs on his first voyage, will become the 1st European to reach India by sea



1777
Independent Vermont introduces a new constitution, prohibiting slavery

1800
Dr Benjamin Waterhouse gives 1st cowpox vaccination in the US to his son to prevent small-pox

News in brief

India court refuses stay on Rahul Gandhi's defamation conviction
◆ Top Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi's efforts to overturn his expulsion from parliament were again blocked yesterday when a court refused to stay his jail sentence for defamation. Gandhi was sentenced to two years imprisonment for comments he made in 2019, which a court ruled were insulting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and those sharing his surname. Modi's government is widely accused of using the defamation law to silence critics. The case in the premier's home state of Gujarat is one of several lodged in recent years against Gandhi, who is Modi's chief opponent and the foremost member of the opposition Congress party.

German cleared of 'bathtub murder' after 13 years in jail
◆ A German court yesterday exonerated a former custodian who had spent more than 13 years in prison for the suspected murder of an elderly woman found in a bathtub. Manfred Genditzki had been handed a life sentence for allegedly killing an 87-year-old tenant of the building where he worked in 2008 by striking her on the head during a dispute and then drowning her. Genditzki had consistently denied murdering the woman during a lengthy legal battle.

NYC tour bus crash sends 18 to hospital with non-life threatening injuries
◆ A double-decker tour bus collided with a second bus in New York Thursday evening, wounding dozens and sending at least 18 to hospital with non-life threatening injuries, emergency responders said. The accident occurred around 7:00 pm (2300 GMT) in lower Manhattan along First Avenue near the Gramercy Park area. New York deputy fire chief Kevin Murphy said. Images of the scene showed an open-top double-decker tour bus smashed into the rear-end of a city-operated bus. "Both buses seem to have been fully occupied," said Paul

3 Indian rail workers arrested over deadly train crash



Railway workers help to restore services at the accident site of a three-train collision near Balasore (file photo)

AFP | New Delhi

Indian police said yesterday they had arrested three men over a triple-train collision that killed nearly 300 people last month, one of the worst rail accidents in the country's history. June's train crash in eastern Odisha state occurred when a packed passenger train was mistakenly diverted onto a loop line and slammed into a stationary goods train loaded with iron ore. The derailed compartments then struck the carriages of another fast train, the Howrah Superfast Express from Bengaluru, which was passing in the opposite direction. Three railway employees had been charged with culpable homicide and destruction of evidence in a case filed against them on Thursday, a statement from the Central Bureau of Investigation said. The statement identified the men as two signal engineers and one technician employed with Indian Railways, without giving further details. The two passenger trains were carrying more than 2,000 passengers between them when the collision occurred. Carriages had flipped over entirely and rescue workers scrambled to pull out survivors trapped in the mangled wreckage, with scores of bodies laid out under white sheets beside the tracks.

Yellen urges 'healthy' competition in China

Treasury Secretary says US not seeking 'winner-take-all' competition with China

Janet Yellen meets Chinese Premier Li Qiang

AFP | Washington

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told Chinese Premier Li Qiang yesterday that the United States is not seeking "winner-take-all" competition, in a visit to Beijing aimed at stabilising fraught ties. Yellen's four-day trip is her first as Treasury chief to China, with which the United States is butting heads over trade curbs, human rights and a litany of other disputes. "We seek healthy economic competition that is not winner-take-all but that, with a fair set of



Chinese Premier Li Qiang (R) shakes hands with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen

rules, can benefit both countries over time," she told Li at Beijing's Great Hall of the People. The United States has said it is seeking to "de-risk" from China by limiting the world's second-largest economy's access to advanced technology deemed crucial to Washington's national security. Yellen underlined to Premier Li that while Washington would "in certain circumstances, need to pursue targeted actions to protect its national security", that should not derail ties. "We may disagree in these instances," she said.

"We seek healthy economic competition that is not winner-take-all but that, with a fair set of rules, can benefit both countries over time"
JANET YELLEN

"We should not allow any disagreement to lead to misunderstandings that needlessly worsen our bilateral economic and financial relationship." Highlighting the challenges, just days before Yellen's visit, Beijing unveiled new export controls on metals key to semiconductor manufacturing on national security grounds, in the latest salvo in the chips war. The Treasury secretary yesterday told American businesspeople Washington was "concerned" about the curbs.

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Ancient society's 'Ivory Man' was an 'Ivory Lady': scientists



A view of the tomb where the remains of Ivory Man was discovered

AFP | Paris
The "Ivory Man", whose remains were found in an opulent tomb in Spain in 2008, is believed to have been the most powerful and influential person of his ancient society nearly 5,000 years ago.

There's just one problem: the remains are of a woman, scientists have revealed. They have renamed her the "Ivory Lady". Human remains are one of the only ways to understand the balance of power between the genders in ancient societies. But it is often difficult to determine whether poorly preserved skeletons are those of men or women. Even DNA can be difficult to extract from remains found in hot and dry climates such as Iberia, now modern day Spain and Portugal.

At a vast archaeological site at Valencina, near the southwestern Spanish city of Seville, several large and sophisticated tombs have been unearthed. They date back to 2,900-2,650 BC, in a period known as the Copper Age. Mass burials were the norm for this ancient Iberian society but in 2008 archaeologists discovered a tomb containing just one person. A standard physical examination at the time determined the person was a male between 17 and 25 years old, according to a study published in the journal Scientific Reports on Thursday. Lavish artefacts were found at the person's side. They included a large ceramic plate which showed chemical traces of wine and cannabis, a complete elephant tusk and many objects made of ivory -- earning the person the nickname the "Ivory Man". The treasure trove suggested that the young person was "the most socially prominent" person in Iberia from 3,200 to 2,500 BC, the study said.

US says it will send cluster munitions to Ukraine

AFP | Washington

The United States announced yesterday that it will provide cluster munitions to Ukraine for the first time as Kyiv's forces push ahead with a counteroffensive against Russian forces. US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said President Joe Biden had approved the decision, describing it as the "right thing to do," and said the need to help Ukraine counter Russian forces outweighs the risk. There is "a massive risk of civilian harm if Russian troops and tanks roll over Ukrainian

positions and take more Ukrainian territory and subjugate more Ukrainian civilians because Ukraine does not have enough artillery," Sullivan told journalists. Kyiv "has provided written assurances that it is going to use these in a very careful way that is aimed at minimising any risk to civilians," he said, noting that Ukraine's government "has every incentive to minimise risk to civilians, because it's their citizens." Pentagon spokesman Brigadier General Pat Ryder told journalists ahead of the announcement that DPICMs are "clearly a capability that would be useful in any type of offensive operations." "It can be either loaded with shaped charges which are armor penetrating or they can be loaded with fragmentary munitions which are anti-personnel," Ryder said. But rights groups have come out strongly against the United States providing the munitions. Human Rights Watch said that "transferring these weapons would inevitably cause long-term suffering for civilians and undermine the international opprobrium of their use opposes."

Hundreds charged after vast UK cannabis operation



A view of a cannabis farm raided by Lancashire Police
AFP | London

More than 450 people were charged and cannabis plants worth more than £115 million seized in a massive month-long drugs operation in June, British police said yesterday. Operation Mille saw searches and arrests carried out across England and Wales "at a scale and pace not seen before," police said. "Nearly 200,000 cannabis plants with an estimated street value of between £115-£130 million (\$147 million-\$166 million, 135 million-152 million euros) were seized," police said. Around 1,000 people were arrested and of those "more than 450 were later charged". Cannabis production is a cash cow for organised crime, investigators say, fuelling gang violence as groups compete for territory. "Organised networks involved in cannabis production are also directly linked to an array of other serious criminality such as class A drug importation, modern slavery and wider violence and exploitation," said Steve Jupp, the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for serious organised crime. "This operation not only successfully disrupted a significant amount of criminal activity, but the intelligence gathered will also help inform future law enforcement activity across the country." Officers also seized 20 firearms and 26 kilos of cocaine with a potential street value of £1 million. Crimes linked to gangland feuds have shocked the nation in recent years.

"Organised networks involved in cannabis production are also directly linked to an array of other serious criminality such as class A drug importation, modern slavery and wider violence and exploitation"
STEVE JUPP, THE NATIONAL POLICE CHIEFS' COUNCIL

Six hurt in first bull run of Spain's San Fermin festival



Participants run ahead of bulls during the bull-run of the San Fermin festival

AFP | Madrid

Six people were injured early yesterday, one of them seriously, in the first bull running race of Spain's San Fermin festival, medicals said. "Six people were taken to hospital" for injuries to the face or limbs from falling or being trampled during the first race of the festival in the northern city of Pamplona. Red Cross spokesman Jose Aldaba told Spain's public television. "The bull runs, where thousands turn out to watch or join a group of half-tonne bulls racing through narrow cobbled streets,



A participant is overthrown by a young cow in Pamplona

traditionally begin on July 7 and take place every morning at 8:00 am (0600 GMT) for eight days. "None of the injuries seem to be serious," Aldaba said. "For a July 7th, which is still one of the most crowded, it has been a 'clean' run." Bull-running events are a highlight of summer festivities across Spain, with the best known being the San Fermin festival which was made famous by Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises". Sixteen people have died in the San Fermin bull runs since 1911. The last death occurred in 2009 when a bull gored a 27-year-old Spaniard.

Fire in Italy retirement home kills six

AFP | Milan

A fire at a retirement home in Milan killed six people, firefighters said, with some 80 other residents hospitalised suffering from smoke inhalation. The three-storey building was reportedly housing 167 people when the fire started in the early morning hours. "It was a hellish scene," local resident Lucia, who can see the home from her house, told reporters.

"We saw old people protecting their faces with wet rags," and windows had been cracking with the heat, she said. The cause of the blaze was not yet known, the fire brigade said. Over 10 ambulances, various fire trucks and a silver mortuary van could be seen outside the building in the south of the Italian city. "Six people killed, numerous (others) suffering from smoke inhalation hospitalised. Dozens of people saved by firefighters who immediately evacuated the building," the fire brigade said on Twitter.

Some eighty people were rushed to hospital, two of whom were fighting for their lives, Milan's fire chief Nicola Micele said. Some 14 others were in a serious condition, Italian media said. Five of the victims were women aged between 69 and 87 years old, while the sixth was a 73-year-old man, the reports said. Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala said the fire "started in one room housing two female residents", both of whom were killed by the flames. "It did not spread, not even to the neighbouring rooms, but



Members of the police evacuate the body of a victim

the smoke is just as deadly and the four other victims died of smoke inhalation." "It could have been worse, but six victims is a very heavy toll," he said. A member of staff who sounded the alarm at 1:20 am (2320 GMT Thursday) after seeing smoke, officials said. "Four teams of firefighters were immediately dispatched. They found themselves faced with very low visibility in a corridor inside one part of the building, and flames in one room." "They focused on putting out the flames, then evacuating the guests. It was a particularly complicated evacuation both because of the smoke and because some of the guests were not able to walk". Some of the residents were evacuated "by being carried out, almost one and at time," mayor Sala said.

MILAN MAYOR GIUSEPPE SALA
Some eighty people were rushed to hospital, two of whom were fighting for their lives, Milan's fire chief Nicola Micele said. Some 14 others were in a serious condition, Italian media said. Five of the victims were women aged between 69 and 87 years old, while the sixth was a 73-year-old man, the reports said. Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala said the fire "started in one room housing two female residents", both of whom were killed by the flames. "It did not spread, not even to the neighbouring rooms, but

At least 50 dead in Pakistan monsoon floods

AFP | Lahore

At least 50 people, including eight children, have been killed by floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains that have lashed Pakistan since last month, officials said yesterday. The summer monsoon brings South Asia 70-80 percent of its annual rainfall between June and September every year. It is vital for the livelihoods of millions of farmers and food security in a region of around two billion people -- but it also brings landslides and floods. "Fifty deaths have been reported in different rain-related incidents all over Pakistan since the start of the monsoon on June 25," a national disaster management official told AFP, adding that 87 people were injured during this period.

The majority of the deaths were in eastern Punjab province, and were mainly due to electrocution and building collapses, official data showed. In northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the bodies of eight children were recovered from a landslide in the Shangla district on Thursday, according to the emergency service Rescue 1122's spokesman Bilal Ahmed Faizi.



People ride on a horsecart through a flooded street in Lahore

Blast at explosives factory kills six in central Russia: Russian agencies

AFP | Moscow

A blast at an explosives factory in the central Russian region of Samara killed six people and injured two others, Russian news agencies reported yesterday. The explosion occurred at the Promsintez plant in the city of Chapayevsk. "Eight people were injured, six of whom died," the RIA Novosti news agency cited emergency services as saying. They said the blast occurred "as a result of the dismantling of

equipment during repair work." Promsintez is one of the main manufacturers of industrial explosives in Russia and the former Soviet Union. The company employs 1,300 people and supplies the mining and oil and gas sector, according to its website. The company that owns the factory was created in 1997, but the plant dates back to pre-revolutionary Russia, founded by the country's last tsar, Nicholas II, in 1911. Accidents at Russian factories -- including deadly ones -- are relatively common, with an often-lax approach to safety rules. Last month, four people were killed in an explosion at a gunpowder factory in the Tambov region, southeast of Moscow.

TOP 4 TWEETS

01
Welcome last night's political agreement on ASAP. The Act in Support of Ammunition Production will boost the EU's production capacity and replenish stocks. This will speed up delivery of ammunition to Ukraine at this crucial stage of the war.
@vonderleyen

02
The EU is not forgetting the most vulnerable people in #Bangladesh and #Myanmar. We are mitigating the consequences of the current humanitarian funding gap by ensuring their lifeline will continue.
@JanezLenaric

03
Welcome the swift agreement by the @EUCouncil and @EP. We are taking big steps towards a stronger EU industrial production capacity for ammunition. We need it to continue our support to #Ukraine and replenish Member States' stocks.
@JosepBorrellF

04
Today, we learned over 200,000 jobs were created last month -- bringing our total to 13.2 million jobs since I took office. Unemployment remained below 4%. Working-age Americans with jobs is at a 20-year high. And inflation is down by more than half. This is Bidenomics.
@POTUS

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

Philipsen denies Cavendish Tour stage record in dramatic sprint

Mark Cavendish goes close but Jasper Philipsen completes Tour hat-trick on stage seven in Bordeaux

● Philipsen wins his third stage of this year's Tour

AFP | Bordeaux

Jasper Philipsen won his third stage of the Tour de France in Bordeaux yesterday, overtaking a bitterly disappointed Mark Cavendish in a last-gasp effort after a see-saw struggle to the line.

The 38-year-old Cavendish appeared to be about to bag a record-breaking 35th career stage win on the Tour de France when he took the lead, but Philipsen then burst back past him to win by a bike length at the line.

Cavendish later claimed he had had a technical issue in the finale.

"I'm bitterly disappointed there, like majorly disappointed," said Cavendish.

"When I stood up to sprint it slipped a couple of gears so I sat down, then it slipped back and I stood up again and the same thing happened," he said.

Already dressed in the sprint



Alpecin-Deceuninck's Belgian rider Jasper Philipsen (r) cycles ahead of Astana Qazaqstan Team's British rider Mark Cavendish (L) to the finish line

points green jersey, Philipsen raised three fingers in celebration.

Behind the Belgian and Cavendish came Biniam Girmay in third.

The Eritrean was left waving a hand in remonstrance after being cut off by the winner, who veered slightly in the high-speed finale when leaping into action as he noticed Cavendish surge ahead.

Philipsen was graceful in victory, praising Cavendish as an

all-time great.

"Cavendish was really fast and I would have loved to see him win," he said.

"When he shot past me I thought, that's incredible, he's going to get his 35th win. So I was happy that I managed to catch him and go past him, he (Cavendish) is the greatest sprinter off all time," he said.

The 25-year-old Philipsen has won all three stages that ended in bunch sprints and on the 2km long home straight his teammate

”

Cavendish was really fast and I would have loved to see him win. When he shot past me I thought, that's incredible, he's going to get his 35th win. So I was happy that I managed to catch him and go past him, he (Cavendish) is the greatest sprinter off all time

JASPER PHILIPSEN

Mathieu van der Poel again led the Belgian into pole position.

Huge crowds braved the baking heat along the banks of the Garonne river in Bordeaux believing they would witness a vintage Cavendish set an all-time record of 35 stage wins.

The last time the Tour de France ended in downtown Bordeaux was 2010, when Cavendish was in his glorious prime, and where he produced his trademark victory roar when he won that stage.

Yesterday's seventh stage of



The last time the Tour de France ended in downtown Bordeaux was 2010, when Cavendish was in his glorious prime, and where he produced his trademark victory roar when he won that stage

this Tour they instead witnessed Cavendish's clever bid denied at the death as he crossed the line cursing.

Girmay, of the Intermarche outfit, would have become the first Black African to win a stage but the 23-year-old also missed out narrowly as he rounded out the podium.

In the overall standings defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark retained

the leader's yellow jersey ahead of Slovenia's two-time champion Tadej Pogacar of the UAE Team.

Vingegaard said after his first day in yellow that he had enjoyed the hot conditions as the race ran through the region's world famous vineyards.

He was also upbeat after his infernal struggle Thursday with Pogacar in the Pyrenees.

"It's always better to be 25sec ahead than to be 25 behind," he insisted. "To be honest we expected to be a bit behind at this stage so we have to be happy.

"Last year all my best days came in the heat so I'm hoping the rest of the race is run in a heatwave, too."

Pogacar also seemed relaxed and happy.

"The final 50km, we were rolling full gas and it was very hot out there, but that was much easier than the last two days, believe me," he said.

Saturday's eighth stage is another flattish affair with a 200km race from Libourne to Limoges, albeit with three small climbs near the end, meaning a sprint is possible, as is a late escape.

Sri Lanka see off sorry West Indies in qualifier dead rubber

AFP | London

Sri Lanka maintained their unbeaten record at the Cricket World Cup Qualifier as Pathum Nissanka's hundred helped secure an eight-wicket victory over the West Indies yesterday.

The Sri Lankans, who had already qualified for the tournament to be played later this year in India, bowled out the already-eliminated Windies for 243 before chasing down the target with 5.4 overs to spare.

The defeat brought an end to a miserable tournament for the Caribbean side, after previous losses to Zimbabwe, the Netherlands and Scotland.

"Just leave this behind us," said West Indies captain Shai Hope.

"Look forward. Communi-



Sri Lanka's Pathum Nissanka plays a shot

cation is the key. We are already at the bottom, we have to find ways to get back up."

The Dutch secured the second qualifying place for the World Cup, to be held from October 5 to November 19, with a dramatic victory over Scotland on Thursday.

Bangladesh's Tamim reverses shock retirement on PM's orders

AFP | Dhaka

Bangladesh cricketer Tamim Iqbal withdrew his retirement from international cricket yesterday -- a day after shocking teammates with his sudden resignation -- following a meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the country's cricket board said.

The veteran opener, 34, broke down crying while announcing the immediate end to his international career after leading his side to Wednesday's 17-run defeat in the first of a three-match one-day series against Afghanistan.

But yesterday, Bangladesh Cricket Board director Jalal Yunus said that Tamim had a change of heart after meeting with Hasina at her Dhaka residence.

"Tamim Iqbal has withdrawn his retirement decision," Yunus said. "However, he will take a



Bangladesh's head coach Chandika Hathurusingha (R) and captain Tamim Iqbal (L) inspect the pitch during a practice session

six-week rest to regain fitness. He has been under physical and mental pressure in the past six months, which affected his performance."

Tamim's emotional press conference on Thursday followed scathing criticism from BCB

president Nazmul Hassan, who called the batsman's professionalism into question for playing the match despite admitting he was not 100 percent fit.

The veteran player's meeting with the PM took place hours after selectors named wicket-

”

Tamim Iqbal has withdrawn his retirement decision. However he will take a six-week rest to regain fitness. He has been under physical and mental pressure in the past six months, which affected his performance

JALAL YUNUS

keeper-batsman Liton Das as captain for the remainder of the series against Afghanistan.

Earlier in the day, Liton said Tamim's resignation had taken the team by surprise.

"None of us could realise this decision was coming," he told reporters. "He gave the Bangladesh team a lot for so many years."

BTA holds junior awards ceremony

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Tennis Academy (BTA) held its 19th Annual Junior Awards Ceremony for 11-and-over players at the Dilmun Club in Saar.

The ceremony, was held to honour the most outstanding players of the 2022/23 season. 14 awards were presented across two sections: 'Best of 2022/23' (12 categories) and 'Player of the Year' (two age categories).

Some of the categories

included Best Backhand, Best Serve and Best Sportsmanship. Five players were short-listed for each award and then the winner chosen based on the criteria for each category while also taking into account each player's skill level and experience in the game.

Winners of the prestigious Player of the Year awards were Antoine Dalaise (12-and-under) and Ali Alhalwachi (13-and-over). Other category winners were Tobias Alexandersen,

Paul Heluin, Karim Halabi, Avran Thomas, Mayan Al Saad and Beren Odabasi.

Tobias Alexandersen was the star of the ceremony by being nominated in seven categories and claiming four awards.

The awards were presented by BTA Director, Dan Barrie, who said, "After the interruptions we have had over the past seasons, we have been so pleased to see all the kids come back as eager as ever to train and improve alongside their peers."



11-and-over award nominees and winners with BTA coaches

Bahrain power past Tunisia

FIVB Men's U21 World Championship 2023 gets underway in Kingdom

● **Joining Bahrain as winners on day one were Italy, Poland, Bulgaria, Iran, Brazil, Argentina and Belgium**

● **Action continues today from 11am, with the day's last fixtures beginning at 8pm; entrance is free**

TDT | Manama

Hosts Bahrain pulled off an impressive straight-sets victory over Tunisia last night as the highly anticipated FIVB Men's U21 World Championship 2023 got underway in the Kingdom.

The 16-nation Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) competition is being held under the patronage of Supreme Council for Youth and Sports first deputy president, General Sports Authority chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) chief His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

BOC vice-president His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa attended last night's matches, as did Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA) president Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, BVA secretary general Feras Al Helwachi, and other officials.



Bahrain national team members celebrate with Bahrain Volleyball Association secretary general Feras Al Helwachi after their match

Joining the Bahrainis as winners on day one were defending champions Italy, Poland, Bulgaria, Iran, Brazil, Argentina and Belgium.

Tournament action continues today at the Isa Sports City in Riffa. The games are scheduled from 11am, with the day's last fixtures beginning at 8pm. They are to be played between two courts, and entrance is free to all matches.

Bahrain got off to a hot start in preliminary round Pool A with their resounding 3-0 (25-22, 25-12, 25-22) triumph against the Tunisians. The home team were the aggressors from the start and never faltered en route to the big win.

"We were not going to let ourselves lose tonight," said Bahrain

head coach Saber Abdulwahed. "We are playing at home and it was very important to win our first game."

Skipper Husain Ehsan top scored for the home side with 18 points, 15 of which came in attack, while fellow-outside hitter Sayed Hashem Ali scored 11. Middle blocker Hasan Warqaa contributed nine points in the win.

The nationals are now one step away from virtually securing a place in the next stage amongst the elite eight. They play Thailand tonight in an 8pm fixture.

"Tomorrow is going to be a totally different game; Thailand are a very good team, they play without mistakes, and they have good players technically," said Abdulwahed. "We must be ready for this next challenge, be much better than today, and hopefully go to the second round."

Iran triumphed against the Thais 3-1 (25-5, 23-25, 25-13, 25-21) in yesterday's other Pool A contest. Iran gave up the second set but reasserted their domi-

nance in the third en route to closing out their rivals.

Outside hitter Bonehagz Younes Javan and opposite spiker Amir Mohammad Golzadeh had 16 points apiece for Iran, with Javan posting five block points.

For the Thais, outside hitter Jakkrit Thanomnoi scored 15 while Panya Bootsamrit and Panupong Kumpumee added seven each.

Resounding

Defending champions Italy opened their campaign in Pool B with a resounding 3-0 (28-26, 25-14, 25-16) sweep of Mexico. The Italians needed some time in the first set to get into their groove and saved two set points in the opener. They then rode their momentum to the end.

Opposite spiker Alessandro Alberto Bovolenta led the Italians with 20 points, 18 of which were in attack, while outside hitter Orioli Mattia added 10 and middle blocker Filippo Bartolucci finished with eight points.

Italy head coach Matteo Bat-

FIVB
21
VOLLEYBALL

MEN'S U21 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
BAHRAIN 2023

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

Court A: 11am Canada vs Poland; 2pm Bulgaria vs India; 5pm Iran vs Tunisia; 8pm Bahrain vs Thailand

Court B: 11am Egypt vs Italy; 2pm Brazil vs Mexico; 5pm Czech Republic vs Argentina; 8pm Belgium vs USA

tocchio commented: "It was a strong match. Mexico did a great game, especially in the first set. In the world cup, every match is difficult, especially the first one."

Battocchio downplayed his side's tag as defending champions, having won the last edition of the junior worlds in 2021. He said: "We are a totally different team [from then], and there are totally different opposing teams. We play against great teams like Iran, Bulgaria, and Brazil, so we will play and see where we will be."

Also in Pool B, Brazil outclassed Egypt 3-0 (25-15, 25-15, 25-20). Skipper Buczmiejuk Arthur Bento was their leading scorer with 12 points, while opposite spiker Neufeld Samuel Carazzi de Morias added 11.

Meanwhile, in Pool C, Poland defeated India 3-1 (25-17, 25-14, 20-25, 25-19). Piotr Sliwka scored 18 points to lead the Poles, while Jakub Majchrzak added 13 markers and Tytus Nowik had 12.

Poland were the champions of the FIVB Boys' U19 World Championship in 2021, and are hoping to translate that success at this next age-level. "This team won the [under-19] world champion-

ship in 2021, so we are reigning world champions," said setter Kajetan Kubicki. "Our minds are to win gold, but we don't think about this. We came here just like another tournament—we want to play every game and win every game, and that's our plan."

In the other Pool C game yesterday, Bulgaria edged past a battling Canada 3-1 (25-12, 21-25, 25-20, 27-25). Star player and skipper Aleksandar Nikolov scored 17 points for the winners, including three service winners. Opposites Georgi Tatarov and Venislav Antov added 13 and 10 points, respectively.

Nikolov was part of the Bulgarian side that won the silver medals at the under-19 worlds in 2021, and he says that, with most of that squad competing in this tournament, they are determined to live up to their tag as one of the leading contenders.

"For sure we are one of the favourites, but we have to show some better play in the next games—I'm sure it's going to come," Nikolov said. "Ninety-five per cent of the squad has basically been the same for five or six years. We have very good synergy, even though it didn't look like it today, but we're going to show it in the next games."

In Pool D, Argentina and Belgium made winning starts. Argentina defeated the US 3-0 (25-22, 25-19, 25-23), while the Belgians beat Czech Republic 3-0 (25-20, 25-20, 25-22).

Leading Argentina was opposite German Alfredo Gomez with 16 points, 14 in attack, while outside hitter Nahuel Rojas added eight markers. Trenton Moser paced the Americans with 10 points, while Zachary Rama added eight.

Ferre Reggers had 15 points to spearhead Belgium in their win, while Jiri Benda had 10 for the Czechs.



Argentina's triple block tries to stop the USA's Zachary Rama



Canada's Cory Schoenherr goes for the kill in their match against Bulgaria

Bahrainis Zeyad, Aqeel put in solid results

TDT | Manama

Bahrainis Zeyad Al Awadhi and Aqeel Al Awadhi had solid outings yesterday in the singles competition of the 21st Asian Youth Tenpin Bowling Championships, taking place in Bangkok.

Competing in the third and final squad, Zeyad came 16th while Aqeel was 18th.

On the combined rankings with the first two squads, Zeyad was placed 39th and Aqeel 52nd, while teammates Rashid Al Daihan was 35th and Ahmed Al Ansari 45th.

In yesterday's play, Zeyad posted a total of 1,114 pinfalls for a 185.67

average. Aqeel came close to matching his output, finishing with 1,072 pins for a 178.67 average.

Rashid had earlier registered marks of 1,138 and 189.67 with Ahmed scoring 1,084 and 180.67.

Taking the singles gold medal was Lan Shao Kang of Chinese-Taipei with a 1,362 total and 227.00 average. Muhammad Hariz Adlan Azman of Malaysia won the silver medal with 1,349 and 224.83 scores, while Vilinkorn Kiedkaew of Thailand completed the podium placers with a 1,329 total and 221.50 average.

All four Bahrainis are set to compete in the boys' doubles squads today.



Zeyad Al Awadhi and Aqeel Al Awadhi at the playing venue

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Bahrain bag nine more medals!

Kingdom's athletes wrap up track and field events with another eight medals, swimmer Amani Alobaidli also on podium at 15th Arab Games

● **Four gold medals won in athletics by Hajar Alkhalidi, Oluwakemi Adekoya, Noora Jasim and Birhanu Balew**

TDI | Manama

Bahrain wrapped up their spectacular showing in the athletics competition at the 15th Arab Games last night, winning another eight medals, including four gold, while also bagging a bronze medal in swimming.

The gold medals in athletics were claimed by Hajar Alkhalidi in the women's 200 metres, Oluwakemi Adekoya in the women's 400m hurdles, Noora Jasim in the women's shot put and Birhanu Balew in the men's 5,000m.

The Bahrainis also added three silver medals and one bronze medal during the concluding night's action on the track. The silver medals were clinched by Edidiong Odiong in the women's 200m, Marta Yota in the women's 800m, and the women's 4x400m relay team; while Aminat Jamal bagged a bronze behind Oluwakemi in the women's 400m hurdles.



Sprinter Hajar Alkhalidi reacts as she wins a race at the 15th Arab Games

In swimming, Amani Alobaidli captured a bronze medal in the women's 200m backstroke.

Yesterday's nine medals in all—eight in athletics and one in the pool—brought Bahrain's overall tally to 29 after four days of competition in all sports so far. They include 15 gold medals, seven silver and seven bronze

medals.

In last night's women's 200m final, Hajar triumphed after finishing the race in 23.30 seconds. Edidiong was a close runner-up in 23.74s, making for a fine Bahraini one-two. Sara El Hachimi of Morocco came third in 23.89s.

In the women's 400m hurdles, Oluwakemi triumphed in a time

of 54.36s. Noura Ennadi of Morocco was the silver-medallist in 55.40s, while Aminat took her bronze in 55.51s.

In the women's shot put final, Noora bagged her gold medal with a best throw of 15.89m. Nada Charoudi of Tunisia was second with a 13.96m best, while Lyna Benaibouche of Algeria took the other podium spot in 13.64m.

The men's 5,000m final saw a thrilling finish, in which Balew powered to the gold medal with a brilliant closing kick. Countryman Dawit Fikadu was also in

contention for a medal until the home straight, but then a pair of his rivals passed him. Balew won in a time of 14:21.89, while Hafid Rizzy of Morocco followed in 14:23.32. Salim Keddar of Algeria came third in 14:23.47, with Fikadu in fourth in 14:24.71.

In the women's 800m final, Bahrain's Marta was narrowly beaten to the finish by just three-tenths of a second. The gold was claimed by Assia Raziki of Morocco in 2:05.17, while Marta finished in 2:05.47. Wafa Zaroual of Morocco took the bronze in 2:07.29.



Swimmer Amani Alobaidli is all smiles as she finishes a race



Bahrain's nine medals yesterday—eight in athletics and one in swimming—brought their overall tally to 29 in all sports after four days of competition so far. They include 15 gold medals, seven silver and seven bronze medals

In the women's 4x400m final, the Bahraini quartet featured Oluwakemi, Awatif Ahmed, Aminat and Zenab Mahamat. They came second in 3:37.73, while Morocco were gold-medallists in 3:35.80. Algeria took the bronze in 3:42.91.

In swimming, Amani clinched her bronze after completing her 200m backstroke race in 2:25.16. Kawthar Imene and Benchadli Jihane had an Algerian one-two, finishing in 2:22.68 and 2:24.64, respectively.

Verstappen pips Sainz as Red Bull rule British GP practice

AFP | Silverstone

Max Verstappen completed a dominant sweep of yesterday's free practice sessions for Red Bull by narrowly outpacing Ferrari's Carlos Sainz on an intriguing day at the British Grand Prix.

The defending double world champion and runaway series leader, who was fastest ahead of team-mate Sergio Perez in the opening session, clocked a best lap in one minute and 28.078 seconds to outpace Sainz by 0.022 in second practice.

As Mercedes slithered and bounced around the former wartime airfield, now regarded as one of F1's best circuits, and Charles Leclerc was unable



Red Bull's Max Verstappen in action

to run in his Ferrari, it was a chance for others to shine.

Williams' Alex Albon certainly responded by claiming third place, after being second earlier, ahead of Perez and his Williams team-mate Logan Sargeant, who

was an excellent fifth.

The Williams resurgence, ahead of their 800th Grand Prix in Hungary later this month, pushed Lance Stroll down to sixth for Aston Martin with Nico Hulkenberg taking seventh

for Haas.

Pierre Gasly was eighth for Alpine ahead of Oscar Piastri's McLaren and two-time champion Fernando Alonso in the second Aston Martin.

For Red Bull, Verstappen bids to deliver the team's record-equalling 11th consecutive victory, equalling the feat of McLaren in 1988. Verstappen seeks his sixth straight win.

The session began in warm sunshine with an air temperature of 27 degrees and the track at 42, conditions far better anticipated on Saturday, thunderstorms having been forecast.

The action was delayed by five minutes for a section of the track to be swept clean of debris from an earlier incident.

Bauhaus puts in strong challenge



Phil Bauhaus, behind, competes alongside teammate Pello Bilbao

● **Bahrain Victorious rider finishes seventh in stage seven of 2023 Tour de France**

TDI | Manama

Team Bahrain Victorious rider Phil Bauhaus was back in the top 10 yesterday in stage seven of the 2023 Tour de France.

The German ranked seventh at the end of the 169.9-kilometre leg, finishing amongst the leading group in a sprint to the line. Jasper Philipsen was triumphant for Alpecin-Deceuninck.

Bauhaus's Bahrain Victorious teammate Mikel Landa was not far behind the top finishers as he came 42nd overall, while Pello Bilbao was 65th. Nikias Arndt was classified

69th, while rounding out the Bahrain Victorious riders were Fred Wright in 96th, Matej Mohoric in 100th, Woert Poels in 120th and Jack Haig in 122nd.

In the general classification after a total of 1,242.1km completed, Landa was the top Bahrain Victorious competitor in 11th, followed by Bilbao in 14th and Haig in 37th.

Bahrain Victorious went to third on the team ranking after going as high as second. Jumbo-Visma stayed as leaders while Ineos Grenadiers moved to second place.

The Tour de France continues today with the 201km eighth stage from Libourne to Limoges.

This year's race features a total of 3,404km and over 55,000 vertical meters of climbing across 21 stages.

Continued on Page 10

Tsitsipas battles back to knock Murray out of Wimbledon

AFP | London

World number five Stefanos Tsitsipas battled back to defeat two-time champion Andy Murray and reach the Wimbledon third round yesterday.

Trailing two sets to one when the tie was halted the previous evening, Tsitsipas came through 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (2/7), 4-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-4.

After a gruelling four-hour 40-minute match-up, the Greek goes on to face Laslo Djere of Serbia for a place in the last 16.

For 36-year-old Murray, the defeat meant he still has not made the second week of a Grand Slam since reaching the



Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas (R) hugs Britain's Andy Murray

quarter-finals at Wimbledon in 2017.

It will also surely raise questions over his long-term future

in the sport.

"It's never easy against Andy, everyone here loves him," said the 24-year-old Tsitsipas, who hit a whopping 90 winners.

"I am always impressed by him after so many years on tour and to keep playing after two hip surgeries. I wish him all the very best for the future."

Murray had been ahead when the match was halted on Thursday due to a local 11:00 pm tournament curfew.

The suspension came at the right moment for the former world number one, who fell and appeared to hurt his groin, leaving him screaming in pain as he served for the third set.