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HM King receives condolences cables from Saudi leaders



HM the King

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received a cable of condolences from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud following the passing of Shaikh Isa bin Mubarak bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

King Salman offered his deepest condolences and sympathy to HM King Hamad, praying to Allah the Almighty to rest the soul of the deceased in eternal peace and to bless the Royal Family with patience and fortitude.

HM the King received a similar cable from His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi fighter jet training crash kills two crew

AFP | Riyadh

A Saudi air force jet crashed yesterday during a training exercise in the east of the country, killing its two crew members, the defence ministry said in a statement.

The aircraft, part of the kingdom's fleet of F-15SAs, crashed "while it was carrying out a routine training mission at King Abdulaziz Air Base in Dhahran", said the statement attributed to defence ministry spokesman Brigadier General Turki al-Maliki, published by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

HRH Prince Salman visits BDF General Command



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Prime Minister, yesterday visited the General Command of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), accompanied by His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa. (Full report on Page 2)

Conduct under fire

Call for action as First Deputy Speaker of Parliament allegedly 'disrespected colleagues'

TDI | Manama

In a surprising turn of events, the spokesperson for the Strategic Thinking Bloc, MP Khalid Saleh Buanaq, has claimed that the conduct of Abdulnabi Salman Ahmed, the First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, has violated the parliamentary code of conduct.

According to Buanaq, Salman's repeated disrespectful behaviour towards his colleagues during parliamentary sessions has prompted the Strategic Thinking Bloc to call for the implementation of legal measures outlined in the internal regulations of the Parliament.

Buanaq did not mince his words when describing Salman's actions, stating that the First Deputy's attempts to belittle and engage in verbal confrontations with fellow MPs, using inappropriate and disrespectful



MP Buanaq, left, and MP Ahmed

language, have been witnessed in multiple sessions.

Such behaviour, Buanaq emphasized, is not only contradictory to Salman's responsibilities as a senior member but also goes against the expected conduct for

someone holding a leadership position within the Council.

Praising the efforts of the Speaker of the Parliament, Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam, in addressing previous instances of discord, Buanaq highlighted

the need for decisive action.

He referred to Article 195 of the internal regulations, which mandates members to "observe the necessary respect for the constitutional institutions, maintain decorum and respect towards their colleagues and the Council's speaker."

Dignity and prestige

Furthermore, Buanaq pointed to Article 63 of the Council's internal regulations, emphasizing that "MPs must express their opinions and viewpoints while preserving the dignity and prestige of the constitutional institutions in the state, as well as the dignity of the Council, its speaker, and its members."

According to Buanaq, the actions of the First Deputy Speaker blatantly violate these provisions on multiple occasions.

"It is imperative for the Speaker of the Parliament to take decisive action to prevent such behaviour from recurring and ensure that these inappropriate practices do not become an accepted norm within the Council's chambers," Buanaq asserted.

Brewing controversy

The Strategic Thinking Bloc's call for action brings to light a brewing controversy within the Parliament, shedding light on the need for accountability and adherence to established norms. As the allegations against Salman unfold, all eyes are now on the Speaker of the Parliament and the internal regulatory mechanisms to address and rectify the situation, preserving the integrity of the parliamentary proceedings.

Promoting sports culture



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Representative of HM the King for Humanitarian Affairs and Youth Affairs, and HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy to the Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Chairman of the General Body for Sports, and Chairman of Bahrain Olympic Committee, with the participants of Iron Kids 70.3 Middle East Ironman Championship on Thursday. More than 300 children aged 17 and under participated in the championship. HH Shaikh Nasser said the championship contributes to promoting sports culture in children and instill in them a passion to continue practicing.

Gaza death toll: 17,177

Urban fighting rages in Gaza as war enters third month

AFP | Jerusalem

Heavy urban combat raged in and around Gaza's biggest cities yesterday as the bloodiest-ever war between Israel and Hamas entered its third month since the Palestinian group's attack on October 7. The death toll in Gaza has soared to 17,177 according to the Hamas' health ministry, and vast areas of the besieged territory have been reduced to a rubble-strewn wasteland of bombed-out or bullet-scarred buildings. Israeli forces have encircled major urban centres as they seek to destroy Hamas over its unprecedented attack in October when the Palestinian fighters broke through Gaza's militarised border to kill around 1,200 people and seize hostages, 138 of whom remain captive, according to Israeli figures. Israeli troops are backed by air power, tanks and armoured bulldozers.



Maintaining security, stability 'top priority'

HRH Prince Salman briefed on BDF's initiatives to enhance combat readiness efficiency



HRH Prince Salman arrives for a meeting with senior BDF officials

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Prime Minister, received a comprehensive briefing on the Bahrain Defence Force's current and future development plans and programmes aimed at bolstering combat readiness efficiency.

This came as HRH Prince Salman yesterday visited the BDF General Command, accompanied by His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.



His Royal Highness was received by the Commander-in-Chief of the BDF, His Excellency Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Minister of Defence Affairs, HE Lieutenant General Abdullah bin Hassan Al Nuaimi, and

the BDF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Theyab bin Saqr Al-Nuaimi, and several senior officials.

During the visit, the Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces commended the continuous development, effi-



ciency, and combat readiness of the BDF, thanks to the support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

National duty

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad affirmed that the BDF personnel bravely carry out their national duty of protecting the Kingdom's interests and sovereignty with the utmost dedication and determination,

commending their domestic and international efforts, which are appreciated by all.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister commended the prominent role of the BDF, alongside allied countries, in ensuring the security, stability, and development of the region.

He expressed his appreciation to the members of the BDF for their efforts in performing their national duty with courage and loyalty, wishing everyone continued success.

Khalid bin Hamad competition winners for innovation in AI are honoured

TDT | Manama

The curtain has fallen on the fourth edition of the "Khalid bin Hamad Competition for Innovation in Artificial Intelligence", themed "A Resilient Future: Innovation for Water, Energy and Climate". The closing ceremony was held at the campus of the Bahrain Polytechnic yesterday.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports First Deputy Chairman, General Sports Authority Chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee President, the competition is organised by the Bahrain Polytechnic, in cooperation with HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad's Media Office and the Information and e-Government Authority (IGA).

The competition, which is part of HH Shaikh Khalid's scientific and humanitarian initiatives, is sponsored by Microsoft, Almoayyed Computers Middle East (ACME), Hope Talents (the talent management arm of Hope Fund) and Noventiq Company.

Bahrain, US hold Strategic Dialogue mid-year review

TDT | Manama

The Embassy of Bahrain in the US and the US Embassy in the kingdom held a mid-year review of the Strategic Dialogue between the two countries.

The review, conducted in an online meeting, assessed the outcome of the Strategic Dialogue since its last session in July and discussed cooperation mechanisms to be set up ahead of next year's session.

His Excellency Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashid Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Ambassador to Washington, and H.E. Steven Bondy, the US Ambassador in Bahrain, co-chaired the meeting.

The meeting discussed bilateral cooperation, including in security, economic, culture, education and tourism sectors. It also discussed the completion of procedures to launch direct flights between the two countries, as well as cooperation in combatting human trafficking,



Ambassador Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashid and Ambassador Bondy co-chair the online meeting

which contributed to earning Bahrain a Tier 1 ranking for the sixth consecutive year in the State Department's Trafficking in Persons report.

Ambassador Shaikh Abdullah underscored the importance of this collaborative effort, which reflects the commitment of both countries to further consolidating diplomatic communication to achieve mutual priorities.

Speaking during the meeting which also discussed region-

al and international developments, the ambassador reiterated Bahrain's stance in support of a ceasefire in Gaza, humanitarian relief efforts, de-escalation and protection of civilians.

Ambassador Body commended the strategic relations between the US and Bahrain and its positive impact on regional security and stability. He praised the relief efforts conducted by Bahrain in Gaza, represented by the Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF).

Parliamentary delegation visit



Council of Representatives Speaker, His Excellency Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam and Shura Council Chairman, H.E. Ali bin Saleh Al Salehl, and members of the parliamentary delegation visited the Bahraini pavilion in Expo City Dubai, as part of the International Parliamentary meeting, at the 28th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28). The delegation commended the Bahraini efforts at the exhibition, which reflect Bahrain's commitment to environmental security, climate and environmental issues, and support international efforts to combat climate change challenges. They commended the royal directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, supported by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, on the implementation of the National Action Plan, "Blueprint Bahrain" to achieve carbon neutrality, and the \$750 million technology fund, as well as the "Safaa" platform.



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MPs seek clarity on disability allowances and govt policies



H.E. Osama Al-Asfoor
Compiled by Safna Mujeeb
TDT | Manama

A wave of parliamentary inquiries has swept through the Kingdom of Bahrain as Members of Parliament (MPs) pose pressing questions to government officials, shedding light on critical issues affecting the nation.

Among the forefront queries is the submission by MP Mohamed



MP Ahmed Qarata

Yousif Al Maarafi, who has directed a parliamentary question to the Minister of Social Development, His Excellency Osama Al-Asfoor, delving into the state of disability support and policies in the country.

Al Maarafi seeks comprehensive data on the number of people with disabilities in Bahrain, their classifications, and the categories that have received disability allowances since January



MP Jalal Kadhem Hasan

this year. The detailed question encompasses monthly statistics, distinguishing between severe, moderate, and mild disabilities, and inquiring about the specific disabilities falling within each category.

The criteria for eligibility, programs for employment and integration, access to education and vocational training, and training programs for specialists in dis-



MP Hasan Ebrahim Hasan

ability services are also under scrutiny.

Coordination efforts

Additionally, the MP probes the coordination efforts to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities in sports and recreational activities, the existence of a decision prioritizing qualified individuals with disabilities for government jobs, and the



MP Mohamed Yousif Al Maarafi

percentage set by the Supreme Committee for Employing People with Disabilities in both private and government sectors.

Al Maarafi also seeks information on the plans and programs for the care, rehabilitation, and employment of people with disabilities approved by the Supreme Committee and its meeting outcomes since January this year.

The barrage of parliamentary inquiries extends beyond disa-



MP Dr. Hesham Al-Asheeri

bility concerns.

MP Ahmed Qarata investigates the implications of the free trade agreement between Bahrain and the United States, while MP Dr. Hesham Al-Asheeri explores the realm of taxi licenses.

MP Jalal Kadhem Hasan delves into commercial records, and MP Hasan Ebrahim Hasan examines the disbursement of disability allowances, overlapping with Al Maarafi's concerns.

Trainee doctors' social security inclusion lauded by MPs

Compiled by Safna Mujeeb
TDT | Manama

Several Members of Parliament (MPs) have welcomed the decision to register trainee doctors under the social security system.

MPs who proposed the inclusion of interns in the social security system welcomed the decision by the HR Department for Government Hospitals to provide insurance coverage for new interns in medical specialties programs.

They highlighted that the resolution aligns with their proposal, ensuring the rights of trained physicians and enabling insurance through the General Social Security Authority.

MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen praised the approval of the law proposed in August, aiming to include interns in the social security system, highlighting its positive impact on job seekers in training programs and the financial sustainability of the pension system in Bahrain.

The decision by government hospitals aligns with the proposed law, demonstrating progress towards comprehensive inclusion of trainees in various fields, the MP stated.

Dr. Hesham Al-Asheeri, a prominent MP, lauded the decision, citing its alignment with a proposal put forth by several MPs.



“The decision by government hospitals aligns with the proposed law, demonstrating progress towards comprehensive inclusion of trainees in various fields.”

- MP DR. MARYAM AL-DHAEN



“This proposal aims at ensuring that government registers trainees in the social security system, safeguarding their rights and accounting for years of service loss during their training period.”

- MP DR. HESHAM AL-ASHEERI



“The efforts of Dr. Jalila bint Al-Sayed Jawad Hassan and Dr. Maryam Azby Al-Jlahma should be commended for empowering and supporting Bahraini staff and contributing to the development of the health sector.”

- MP MOHSEN ALI AL-ASBOOL

training under the social insurance system.

Al-Darazi acknowledged the continued parliamentary support and significant efforts in addressing doctors' concerns and involving the Association in developing medical services.

Diligence

The Board of Directors of the Association echoed these sentiments, commending MPs for their diligence in following up on medical matters in the Kingdom. They extended deep gratitude for the proposal and appreciated the government's unwavering support for Bahraini doctors.

MP Mohsen Ali Al-Asbool praised the announcement of insurance coverage for new doctor trainees, emphasizing the importance of its retroactive application.

Deputy Al-Asbool indicated that the decision is expected to include all trainee doctors retroactively, beyond those in the new training program.

Al-Asbool commended the efforts of Dr. Jalila bint Al-Sayed Jawad Hassan, Minister of Health, and Dr. Maryam Azby Al-Jlahma, Executive President of Government Hospitals, for empowering and supporting Bahraini staff and contributing to the development of the health sector.

15-year jail term for father who tried to kill son with chainsaw

TDT | Manama

The Cassation Court has confirmed the jail time of 15 years in prison which was issued against a man accused of attempting to murder his son with a chainsaw.

The defendant was earlier sentenced to life in prison, but the High Appeals Court reduced it to 15 years behind bars which was approved by the Cassation Court.

The defendant was held guilty on grounds of premeditated assault. According to court files, the man reportedly tried to kill his son under the pretext that the teenager was on drugs and he was acting unstable. The victim's mother told prosecutors that the pair weren't seeing eye to eye.

Caught smoking

“Before the incident, the school requested us to come because an issue arose involving our son. They told us he was caught smoking e-cigarettes. I managed to convince them to punish him by suspending him for two days,” the mother told prosecutors.

Three 'human traffickers' to stand trial

TDT | Manama

The Public Prosecution has completed its investigations into a human trafficking incident and ordered to refer three Asian defendants to the Criminal Court with a session is scheduled for 12 December,

stated the Deputy Head of the Trafficking in Persons Prosecution.

Details indicated that a report was received from the first victim that the first accused had an intercourse with her by force kidnapped her.

The report stated that he

forcefully stole her money and kept her in a room all day and allowed her to go out only to exploit her in an illegal matter and then seizing what she earns from her work.

When the first accused was arrested, he was accompanied by the second victim.

Commercial store ordered to pay BD6,000 in municipal fees

TDT | Manama

The High Administrative Court obligated a commercial store to pay BD6,000 to the Southern Municipality as earned municipal fees. The owner refused to pay the due amount despite being notified by the municipality.

The court clarified that its ruling was built on the provisions

of Articles (35 and 36) of Decree Law No. 35 For the year 2001, issuing the Municipalities Law, which included among the financial resources of the municipality are the “fees” it collects for utilizing the facilities and services that it manages or supervises in accordance with the provisions of this law or any regulation.

It also explained that the pro-

visions of Articles (47 and 54) of the executive regulations of the Municipalities Law stipulates that the monthly municipal fees are due on all leased sites is 10% of the actual monthly rental value approved by the municipality for the leased site. Whatever the nature of the activity in that location and whatever the lease period specified for it.

Mind Matters

Fear of failure



ANEESA MOIDOO, PSYCHOLOGIST

When faced with a problem or an opportunity, I frequently pause or feel uncomfortable. Along with these feelings, I've seen a greater proclivity to delay, a reluctance to establish lofty goals, and a continuous self-doubt that persists even after tasks are completed. What are the possible causes for this feeling

Thank you for reaching out and sharing your concerns. It's commendable that you are taking the initiative to explore the underlying factors contributing to your feelings of hesitation and anxiety. Based on your description, it does seem like there might be elements of a fear of failure influencing.

Fear of failure often has deep roots in a person's past. A critical or unsupportive childhood environment can make individuals reluctant to take risks as adults.

Similarly, different definitions of failure contribute to this fear. For some, any deviation from planned outcomes is seen as failure, creating unrealistic standards that are tough to reach.

Striving for perfection intensifies the fear of falling short even more. Genetics also play a role; anxiety, including the fear of failure, can be hereditary. Family history may predispose individuals to develop similar fears and anxieties.

Perfectionism, marked by high standards, is another common source of this fear. The chase for flawlessness creates a constant feeling of inadequacy, amplifying the fear of not meeting self-imposed benchmarks. Traumatic experiences, like panic attacks during presentations or ridicule for performance, can leave a lasting imprint. Negative consequences, such as job loss or rejection, further solidify this fear.

While a certain level of fear is normal, it becomes a concern when it obstructs functioning. Recognizing root causes and seeking support, like therapy, can help address and overcome this fear, fostering personal growth and resilience.

Having said that there are some tips that can be practiced he fear of failure, it's beneficial to visualize various outcomes, including worst-case scenarios, and devise plans on how to navigate through them. By mentally preparing for potential challenges as you pursue your goals, the anxiety associated with the fear of failure can be alleviated.

Redirecting focus onto controllable factors is another effective strategy. Rather than expending energy on aspects beyond your control, concentrating on elements within your influence empowers individuals and diminishes the pervasive feelings of fear.

Strategic planning for challenges is crucial when faced with situations that trigger the fear of failure. Developing alternative strategies and establishing contingency plans, such as a plan B or C, fosters a sense of security and actively reduces anxiety about potential setbacks.

A fundamental shift in the perception of failure is also essential. Rather than viewing failure solely as a setback, recognizing it as a natural part of life can be transformative. Embracing failure as an opportunity for learning and skill development can significantly mitigate the fear associated with it.

Cultivating positive thought patterns is another valuable approach. Guarding against negative self-talk that undermines confidence and breeds anxiety is crucial. By actively working on thinking more optimistically, individuals can maintain high levels of motivation, realizing that success often emerges from a sequence of learning experiences, each contributing to personal growth.

It's important to recognize that adopting these strategies is a gradual process, and being patient with oneself during this journey enhances the effectiveness of these.

“While a certain level of fear is normal, it becomes a concern when it obstructs functioning. Recognizing root causes and seeking support, like therapy, can help address and overcome this fear, fostering personal growth and resilience.”



(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)

Cooperation promotes loyalty and belonging

TDT | Manama

Minister of Industry and Commerce, His Excellency Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, has affirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation with the Executive Office to implement more initiatives that raise the values of national loyalty and belonging.

Fakhro was speaking as he met with Brigadier-General Mohammed Bin Dinah, General Supervisor of the Executive Office of the National Plan. The meeting aimed at promoting the Spirit of Belonging to the Nation and Reinforcing the Values of Nationalism (Bahrainouna).

The Minister affirmed the prominent role of the National Plan to Promote the Spirit of Belonging to the Nation and Reinforce the Values of Nationalism (Bahrainouna), headed by General



Mr Fakhro and Brigadier-General Bin Dinah with other participants in the meeting

Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Committee to follow up the implementation of the national plan within the framework of community partnership.

Initiatives

Fakhro commended the initiatives achieved by the plan that embody the values of loyalty, good citizenship and social re-

sponsibility.

He highlighted the programmes and initiatives implemented by the Ministry within the initiatives of the National Plan (Bahrainouna), which include the “They Have a Fingerprint” programme, the “Made in Bahrain” initiative, the “Promoting Intellectual Property and Supporting Innovation” initiative; the initiative to organise the review and granting of trade

names periodically to ensure that they do not violate Bahraini values and customs.

Bin Dinah commended the support of General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah to enrich the outputs of the plan, expressing his appreciation for the efforts of the Ministry of Industry in continuing to implement initiatives and programmes in support of the values of the National Plan (Bahrainouna).

Unusual fog creates captivating landscape in Sakhir but raises safety concerns

Zahra Ayaz

TDT | Manama

Sakhir and its surrounding areas experienced an extraordinary weather phenomenon yesterday as a slight fog descended upon the region, transforming the landscape into a captivating sight.

The mist enveloped the roads, causing a considerable reduction in visibility in some governorates of Bahrain.

While the foggy weather presented challenges to the residents, it also provided an opportunity for local bike enthusiasts to showcase their skills and engage in thrilling stunts on the empty roads.

However, the significantly reduced visibility calls for extra vigilance from all residents and motorists. It is crucial for



The fog significantly reduces visibility on the road

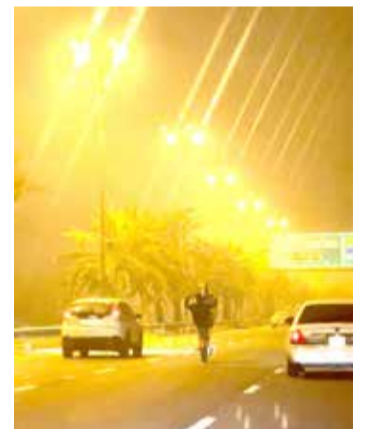
everyone to exercise caution and adhere to traffic regulations to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

Road safety

The Interior Ministry has consistently made efforts

to raise awareness, particularly among young people, about the importance of road safety.

In light of recent events, concerns have been raised regarding the dangerous stunts performed by bike riders in Bahrain. The Daily Tribune recently



highlighted the continued violations of road safety rules by these individuals.

While the fog may create an appealing backdrop for such activities, it is important to remember that reckless behavior can result in severe consequences.

Women staff honoured



Interior Ministry Undersecretary, His Excellency Shaikh Nasser bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, attended a celebration by the General Directorate of Women Police to mark Bahraini Women's Day. He honoured a number of the distinguished Ministry of the Interior's female affiliates, and hailed the support of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of HM the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW). Shaikh Nasser bin Abdulrahman asserted the directives of His Excellency Interior Minister to support women's empowerment and their productivity.

Third-week camping season winners



His Highness Southern Governor Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa has honoured the winners of the best camp award of the third week of the camping season, in the presence of Deputy Southern Governor Colonel Hamad Mohammed Abdullah Al Khayyat and officers and officials of the Southern Governorate. The award which was launched by His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, His Majesty's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, has been selecting the best camp for the 2023-2024 camping season. The award will continue every week until the end of the season on 29 February 2024. Those wishing to participate in the award should download the Southern Governorate app, select the (Tents) initiative, and complete the participation form.

Stock markets diverge, oil in slight rebound

London, United Kingdom

Global stock markets diverged yesterday, on the eve of key US jobs data, as oil prices rebounded slightly from five-month lows.

Tokyo's stocks index was by far the biggest faller among major indices, closing down nearly two% as the yen surged against the dollar, which makes Japanese exports more expensive.

Most other Asian markets ended lower and Europe's main exchanges were also down in afternoon trading.

Wall Street's main indices rose at the opening bell after having ended Wednesday lower.

"There isn't a lot of conviction on the part of buyers and there isn't a lot of conviction on the part of sellers," said Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare.

"Accordingly, the market is churning, waiting it seems for a new catalyst to give it some new direction for either a breakout or a breakdown," he added.

All eyes were on Friday's US jobs report to confirm a gentle slowdown in the economy that would allow the US Federal Reserve to cut interest rates early next year.

After global equities rallied in November on optimism that the Fed will begin to pare back interest rates early next year, markets have pulled back on concerns the buying was overdone.

Data released this week on US job openings and from the pri-

Key figures around 1430 GMT

New York - Dow:	▲ 0.2% at 36 points
London - FTSE 100:	▼ 0.2% at 7,501.55
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 0.2% at 7,420.84
Frankfurt - DAX:	▼ 0.1% at 16,634.61
EURO STOXX 50:	▼ 0.3% at 4,469.15
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 1.8% at 32,858.31 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng Index:	▼ 0.7% at 16,345.89 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.1% at 2,966.21 (close)
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 144.76 yen from 147.35 yen on Wednesday
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.0782 from \$1.0768
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.2575 from \$1.2559
Euro/pound:	▲ at 85.74 pence from 85.71 pence
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 1.2% at \$70.23 per barrel
Brent North Sea crude:	▲ 1.1% at \$75.14 per barrel



Traders work in front of a chart of Germany's share index DAX that is displayed (in background) at the stock exchange in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany

vate payroll firm ADP reinforced the view that the labour market and economy were slowing as inflation comes down. Jobless benefits claims data held steady. "The slowdown in hiring continues and is becoming more obvious," said Peter Boockvar,

author of the Boock Report.

"What I'm mostly focused on right now is the trajectory of activity -- and all I see is slowing in multiple places, including now the labour market."

Traders on Thursday were unimpressed with a better-than-forecast rise in Chinese exports, as data also showed imports fell unexpectedly, highlighting the continued weakness in the struggling economy.

The yen strengthened more than 1.5% against the dollar on speculation the Bank of Japan (BoJ) could announce a shift away from its ultra-loose monetary policy at a meeting this month.

The Japanese currency has tumbled for much of the year owing to the BoJ's refusal to budge but officials are shifting their positions as inflation rises.

Oil prices climbed, but they made little headway into the near four% losses seen on Wednesday that put US benchmark West Texas Intermediate below \$70 for the first time since July.

Data pointing to a jump in US petrol stockpiles compounded demand worries as economies slow, while traders remain sceptical that Saudi Arabia and its allies will stick to deep output cuts.

Analysts have begun to consider the possibility that Riyadh could abruptly reopen the taps to maintain market share, similar to a move in 2014 to counter rising US production.

Bahrain All Share Index marks 1,942.35 points



TDT | Manama

Bahrain All Share Index closed at 1,942.35 points marking a decrease of 0.50 points below the previous closing.

This decrease was due to the fall in the material sector. Bahrain Islamic Index

closed at 733.58 points marking a decrease of 0.11 points below the previous closing.

Results indicated that 29 equity transactions took place with a volume of 853,187 worth BD 291,372.

Investors traded mainly in the material sector representing 54.75% of the total value of securities traded.

KPMG explores merger of UK, Swiss ops

London, United Kingdom

Accountancy giant KPMG on Thursday said it was looking into a merger of its UK and Swiss divisions to grow profits.

"We have started conversations with our Swiss firm to explore how working more closely together would bring greater benefits to our clients, people and partners," chief executive of KPMG UK, Jon Holt, said in a statement.

"Together, we would grow

faster, be more profitable and do so in a sustainable way."

The UK unit employs about 17,000 staff and the Swiss arm more than 2,600.

KPMG rival EY recently failed in a bid to split its audit and consulting units, causing its boss Carmine Di Sibio to retire a year early.

EY last month said Janet Truncala would take over as chief executive from July, becoming the first woman to head the group.

GFH exits its first US student housing portfolio

TDT | Manama

GFH Partners Ltd., a fully Gowned subsidiary of GFH Financial Group yesterday, announced the sale and exit from its first Diversified US Student Housing Portfolio (the "Portfolio"), delivering total proceeds of 122% to investors in the fund following a two-year investment period.

Acquired in September 2021, the Portfolio was comprised of over 1,200 beds across two assets adjacent to the University of Arkansas and Florida State University. During the hold, SQ Asset Management, GFH's US-based specialised student



Nael Mustafa

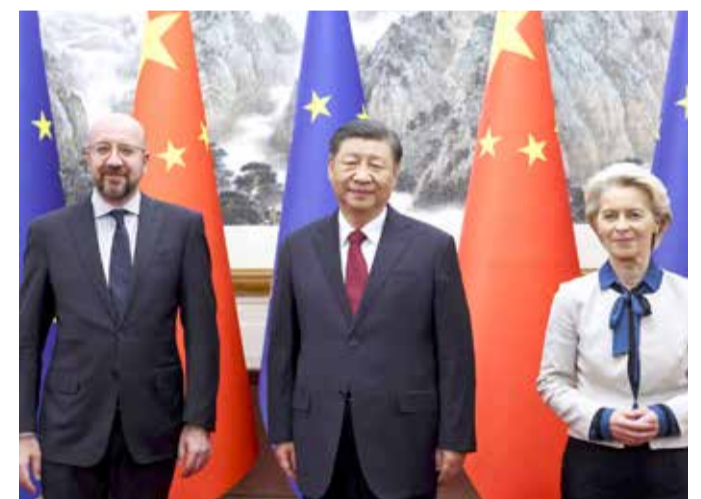
housing asset management subsidiary, was able to reposition the assets through a number of value-add initiatives that resulted in increased Net Operating Income (NOI). These initiatives enabled the properties to each perform in-line with

and above the original business plan, with both having occupancies at 100% and an NOI growth over the two-year hold period of ~40%. Initiatives included the signing of the master lease with the University of Arkansas to take up 40% of the total

bed spaces for three academic years, along with other operational improvements, and the rebranding of the properties to improve exposure within the market. All such initiatives resulted in an improved operating income of approximately 14% compared to the original projections.

Nael Mustafa, CEO at GFH Partners, said, "In addition to the US student housing sector, other key areas of focus for the Group today include the medical offices sector in the US, regional education and healthcare opportunities, and investments in the global and GCC logistics industry."

EU's von der Leyen tells Xi differences must be addressed



China's President Xi Jinping (C) receiving European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (R) and European Council President Charles Michel ahead of the 24th EU-China Summit in Beijing.

AFP | Beijing, China

President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen told Chinese leader Xi Jinping they must address the "imbalances and differences" between the bloc and China.

"China is the EU's most important trading partner," von der Leyen said in opening remarks at a high-level summit in Beijing, "but there are clear imbalances and differences that we must address".

The EU says it hopes the two-day summit in the Chinese capital between the bloc's leaders and Beijing's top brass -- their first in person in more than four years -- will provide a chance to discuss areas of common interest such as climate change and health.

President of the European Council Charles Michel said the bloc was seeking a "stable and mutually beneficial" relationship with China in his comments to kick off the meeting at Beijing's Diaoyutai State Guesthouse.

"We are united in being committed to the pursuit of a stable and mutually beneficial relationship with China," Michel told Xi and other Chinese officials, adding the bloc wanted ties based on "principles of transparency, predictability and reciprocity".

President Xi told von der Leyen and Michel that China and the bloc must work together to meet global challenges in his opening remarks.

"We must jointly respond to global challenges and work together to promote world stability and prosperity," Xi said.



Tamkeen's executive management met with Foulath Holding, an industrial holding company with major steel investments, as part of ongoing visits to introduce the new enhanced programs to private sector enterprises. Tamkeen's executive management showcased the programs, highlighting ways to benefit from them to employ and upskill Bahraini talent.

News in brief

◆ **Russia yesterday** set March 17 as the date for a presidential election which is expected to be another shoo-in for Vladimir Putin, who has silenced opposition during over two decades in power. In a meeting broadcast live on Russian television, the upper house of parliament unanimously approved the date of the vote. The decision "practically kicks off the presidential campaign," said the head of the chamber, Valentina Matvienko. Putin, a former KGB agent who has been in power in Russia either as president or prime minister since 1999, has not officially announced if he will stand in the vote for another six-year mandate. "So far there have been no statements by Putin, so let's be patient here," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, when asked about whether the president planned to run. Putin, 71, is due to hold an end-of-year press conference next week, where he could announce his candidacy. It will be the first time he holds such a press conference since he ordered Russian troops into Ukraine in February 2022.



Russia sets presidential election for March 17

UNESCO backs renovation of barracks of papal Swiss Guard



◆ **UNESCO has backed** a multi-million-euro plan to renovate the barracks of the papal Swiss Guard within the Vatican, a World Heritage Site, organisers said yesterday. An assessment by experts for the UN cultural agency was "overall very positive," Jean-Pierre Roth, president of the foundation set up to oversee the renovation, told reporters. Some "architectural elements" had still to be defined in the 44-million-euro (\$47.4 million) project, he said. The Swiss Guards, the world's oldest practising army who currently number about 125, was founded by Pope Julius II in 1506 and is renowned for its blue, yellow and red striped uniform. Under plans launched in 2016, the foundation aims to demolish the 19th-century buildings that house the pope's personal protection force and construct new facilities.

Pakistan zoo shut down after mystery tiger attack

◆ **A zoo in Pakistan** has been shut down after a man was mauled to death by tigers in an attack discovered during routine cleaning, officials said yesterday. The body was found on Wednesday morning in Bahawalpur's Sherbagh Zoo in the eastern province of Punjab after staff spotted one of the three tigers with a shoe in its mouth. "The zoo is closed right now as we determine how the man got in," Ali Usman Bukhari, a senior officer of the province's wildlife department, which operates the zoo, told AFP. The condition of the body suggests the attack happened late Tuesday night. "The autopsy report has not been released, however evidence gathered from the enclosure points towards him being alive when he was attacked by the tigers," Bukhari said.



CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Heavier rains in East Africa due to human activity: study



Representative picture Nairobi, Kenya

Climate change caused by human activity made torrential rains that have lashed East Africa since October and killed more than 300 people up to twice as intense, a scientific study said Thursday. Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia are grappling with heavy rainfall that has caused flooding in the latest devastating climate disaster to strike the region after a record drought. Scientists from the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group said the current rainfall "was one of the most intense ever recorded in the region" between October and December. "Climate change also contributed to the event, making the heavy rainfall up to two times more intense," they said, adding that the exact contri-

bution of global warming was unknown. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) -- a climate system defined by the difference in sea surface temperature between western and eastern areas of the ocean -- also added to "unusually extreme" rainfall, the WWA report said. "The scientists note that as long as the planet continues to warm, heavy rainfall events such as this one will be more frequent in East Africa," the report warned. The Horn of Africa is one of the regions most vulnerable to climate change -- even though the continent's contribution to global carbon emissions is a fraction of the total. "The prolonged hardship caused by the drought meant many people struggled to cope with the devastating rainfall" in the region, the report said.

'Clear shift' in West Bank gunshot victim injuries

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Palestinian gunshot victims in the occupied West Bank are now being shot more often in the head and torso rather than the limbs, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said yesterday. The medical charity's international president, who recently returned from the West Bank, said that since the war between Israel and Hamas erupted on October 7, there had been a "clear shift" in the injuries being witnessed by MSF staff in West Bank hospitals. "The type of trauma they are dealing with has changed completely," Christos Christou told reporters at MSF's headquarters in Geneva. "In the past, the mechanism of the shooting was different. They were targeting the limbs," he said. "Instead of having injuries



An injured Palestinian girl is helped onto a stretcher by Egyptian paramedics on the Egyptian side of the Rafah border crossing

in the limbs, they have gunshot wounds in the abdomen, the trunk and the head. This is a clear shift. "When you see that shift in the trauma, you will see more and more dead people." Christou called for greater international attention on the

West Bank, where violence has flared since the outbreak of war between Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority says Israeli fire and settler attacks in the West Bank -- which has been occupied by Israel since 1967 -- have killed more than 250 Palestinians during the current conflict. During an Israeli military incursion into the Jenin refugee camp witnessed by Christou, ambulances were prevented from reaching patients and the hospital entrance was blocked. "Inside the hospital you can feel the level of desperation, knowing that you're not able to reach the people. There's nothing worse for a doctor than not being able to reach patients," he said. Christou said that within the

Israel tank fire killed journalist in Lebanon: Reuters probe

AFP | Paris, France

Two Israeli tank rounds were used in the attack that killed a Reuters journalist and wounded six others in southern Lebanon on October 13, an investigation published yesterday by the news agency found. Issam Abdallah, 37, was killed instantly in the incident. The others present -- two other Reuters journalists, two from Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera, and two from AFP -- were all injured. AFP photographer Christina Assi, 28, was seriously wounded, later had a leg amputated and is still in hospital. An AFP investigation conducted with Airwars, an NGO that investigates attacks on civilians in conflict situations, showed that the first strike involved a 120-mm tank shell only used by the Israeli army in this region. Amnesty and Human Rights Watch also concluded that the first strike that killed Abdallah and severely wounded Assi was most likely a tank round fired from Israel. For its investigation, Reuters worked with the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO), an independent research institute which works with the Dutch defence ministry. The probe pointed to "the tail fin of a 120 mm tank round



An Israeli army self-propelled artillery howitzer fires rounds from a position near the border with the Gaza Strip in southern Israel

fired by a smoothbore tank gun positioned 1.34 km away from the reporters, across the Lebanese border". It analysed evidence from the scene, satellite images and hours of footage, including footage from Italian broadcaster Rai "that showed the launch point of the second strike as well as the tank round in flight, and the audio of the firing and the impact of both rounds taken from Al Jazeera's live feed". "Using the Al Jazeera audio, TNO calculated the interval between the sound of the two strikes and the thud of the muzzle blasts to determine that the firing point was 1,343 metres away from the reporters," Reuters said. "It said the sound signatures from the strikes matched, showing they were both tank rounds fired from the same position." It determined they originated from an Israeli military outpost in Jordeikh next to the border. "The evidence we now have, and have published today, shows that an Israeli tank crew killed our colleague Issam Abdallah," Reuters editor-in-chief Alessandra Galloni said. "We call on Israel to explain how this could have happened and to hold to account those responsible for his death and the wounding of Christina Assi of the AFP, our colleagues Thaier Al-Sudani and Maher Nazeh, and the three other reporters," she said.

Israel approves increase to Gaza

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel on Wednesday approved a "minimal" increase in fuel supplies to war-torn Gaza to prevent a "humanitarian collapse", Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said. The announcement comes as the United Nations warned of a total breakdown of public order in Gaza as fighting intensifies in the south of the Palestinian territory. A "minimal supplement of fuel -- necessary to prevent a humanitarian collapse and the outbreak of epidemics" had been approved to enter "into the southern Gaza Strip", Netanyahu's office wrote on X, formerly Twitter. It said the fuel supply increase

Israel approves new east Jerusalem: N

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israeli authorities have approved the construction of more than 1,700 new homes, a non-governmental organisation said Wednesday, a move constituting the expansion of settlements in occupied east Jerusalem. Half the "new neighbourhood" comprising 1,738 housing units will be in the city's annexed east, the Israeli NGO Peace Now said. "If it weren't for the war (between Israel and Hamas), there would be a lot of noise. It's a highly problematic project for the continuity of a Palestinian state between the southern West Bank and east Jerusalem," Peace Now's Hagit Ofran told AFP. In a statement, the NGO said: "Half of the Lower Aqueduct neighbourhood is situated beyond the Green Line in east Jerusalem, and the other half is within the

G7 leaders urge two-state solution

AFP | Washington, United States

G7 leaders reaffirmed their support for a two-state solution to the long-run-

ning Israel-Palestinian conflict in a statement issued after a virtual meeting on Wednesday. "We remain committed to

a Palestinian state as part of a two-state solution that enables both Israelis and Palestinians to live in a just, lasting, and secure peace," they said.

1863

Abraham Lincoln issues his Amnesty Proclamation and plan for Reconstruction of the South



1941

US and Britain declare war on Japan, US enters World War II

1941

US President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivers "Day of Infamy" speech to US Congress a day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor

1966

US and USSR sign treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons in outer space

Bank ies

Gaza Strip, patients were arriving in hospitals with severe injuries due to Israel's bombardment and dehydration.

"Something quite under-reported is the level of psychological trauma that we see," he added, notably among children arriving in Gaza hospitals with no surviving relatives.

"Even if they are intact and they are OK, there is a huge psychological trauma there that will take, I don't think only years, it will take generations to be healed."

The latest toll from the Hamas-run government media office said 16,248 people in Gaza, most of them women and children, had been killed.

Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas and free 138 hostages still held after scores were released during a short-lived truce.

'minimal' fuel a: PM office



was "necessary to avoid a humanitarian collapse and the outbreak of epidemics in the south of the Gaza Strip", which is controlled by Hamas.

"The minimal amount will be determined from time to time by the War Cabinet according to the morbidity situation and humanitarian situation in the Strip," it added.

new settlement in GO



Israel occupied east Jerusalem in 1967 and later annexed it in a move never recognised by the United Nations.

Green Line.

"However, its strategic location between the neighbourhoods of Givat Hamatos and Har Homa makes it particularly problematic from a political standpoint."

The Green Line refers to the 1949 Armistice Line established at the end of the war that accompanied Israel's founding a year earlier. It divided the city between Israeli-governed west Jerusalem and east Jerusalem, which was administered by Jordan until the 1967 Six-Day War.

Prince Harry says UK not safe for him and family without security



Prince Harry

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Prince Harry believes he was forced to leave the UK and that he and his family can never feel safe during visits home without adequate security, a court was told yesterday.

The youngest son of King Charles III quit the British royal family with his wife Meghan in early 2020, and moved to north America, eventually settling in California. He has brought a case against the British government at the High Court in London after his UK taxpayer-funded protection was removed.

A hearing has been taking place since Tuesday, with only the opening and closing session open to the media and public for security reasons. On Thursday, his lawyer Shaheed Fatima said Harry did not accept that he chose to stop being a "full-time working member of the royal family".

US military grounds fleet of Osprey after crash off Japan

Washington, United States

The US military announced Wednesday it was grounding its fleet of V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft following a deadly crash last week off the coast of Japan.

The Air Force Special Operations Command said in a statement the move was to "mitigate risk while the investigation continues" on the November 29 crash which killed eight US airmen.

The Naval Air Systems Command said later Wednesday it was following suit.

The hybrid V-22 Osprey aircraft, which can take off and land vertically like a helicopter and rotate its propellers forward to fly like an airplane, has been involved in three fatal accidents in just over a year.

The air force is probing what caused the fatal accident off southwest Japan.

"Preliminary investigation information indicates a potential materiel failure caused the mishap, but the underlying cause of the failure is unknown at this time," it added.



Putin, Saudi leader urge oil cooperation as prices flag

AFP | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

The leaders of Saudi Arabia and Russia used a rare face-to-face meeting to urge oil producers to stick to pledged supply cuts, a joint statement said yesterday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's trip to the Saudi capital a day earlier came as oil prices continued to slide, with US oil finishing below \$70 per barrel for the first time since July.

Analysts have begun to consider the possibility that Saudi Arabia could abruptly decide to open the spigots, recalling a move by the kingdom in 2014 to counter rising US production.

Meeting in Riyadh, Putin and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman highlighted the work of the 23-member OPEC+ group of



Russian state agency Sputnik shows Russia's President Vladimir Putin and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman attending a welcoming ceremony ahead of their talks in Riyadh

oil producers "in enhancing the stability of global oil markets."

"They stressed... the need for all participating countries to adhere to the OPEC+ agreement, in a way that serves the interests of producers and consumers and supports the growth of the global economy," said a statement from the official Saudi Press Agency.

The OPEC+ bloc unveiled fresh supply cuts after a virtual meeting last week, with Russia saying it would slash oil exports by 500,000 barrels a day between January and March, having already introduced a cut of 300,000 barrels a day earlier this year.

Putin hails ties with Iran

Russian President Vladimir Putin praised his country's re-

lations with Iran at a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi, as the two discussed the Israel-Hamas war.

Since launching its assault on Ukraine in February 2022, Moscow has sought to deepen its economic and political ties with Tehran, both of which have been sanctioned by the West. "Our relations are developing very well. Please convey my best wishes to leader (Ayatollah Ali) Khamenei," Putin told Raisi, referring to Iran's head of state. "Thanks to his support, we have gained good momentum over the past year," Putin said.

"It is very important for us to exchange views on the situation in the region, especially with regard to the situation in Palestine," Putin said.

UNESCO recognises Lebanese flatbread manoushe

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

The UN cultural agency on Wednesday said it was adding Lebanon's iconic flatbread, manoushe, to its list of intangible cultural heritage.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, convening in Botswana since Monday, approved the inscription of the renowned bread "topped with a mixture of thyme, sumac, toasted sesame seeds, salt and olive oil."

"The quintessential Lebanese breakfast, manoushe is a flatbread prepared in homes and specialised bakeries, and enjoyed by people of all backgrounds," UNESCO said.

The flatbread is often topped with a soft cheese called labneh, as well as tomatoes, cucumbers, olives and mint leaves.

"While preparing the dough, the practitioners pray that it



A baker tops traditional Lebanese manoushe flatbreads with mint, tomatoes and olives

will rise, with Muslims reciting the beginning of Fatiha and Christians reciting several prayers and making the sign of the cross before letting the dough rest," the UN agency added.

"The manoushe is eaten across communities, reflecting the symbolic idea of living together among the Lebanese," said Bahjat Rizk, Lebanon's cultural attache at UNESCO.

"The bakeries that prepare this dish are spread throughout

the country," he told AFP.

Manoushe remains one of the least expensive food options in a country struggling from a severe economic crisis since 2019.

"The preparation of manoushe for sale in small bakeries also contributes to local economic development," UNESCO said.

A popular street food, manoushe can also be found in bakeries around the world thanks to the Lebanese diaspora.

Russian girl, 14, shoots and kills classmate, commits suicide

AFP | Moscow, Russia

A 14-year-old girl shot a classmate dead and injured five people before killing herself at a secondary school in the Russian city of Bryansk near the Ukraine border yesterday.

Fatal attacks at educational facilities -- previously a rarity -- have become more common in Russia in recent years.

Moscow has taken steps to tighten already strict gun laws after a series of school attacks. After the Bryansk attack, the Kremlin said it would look into "why the measures did not work". Moscow has voiced



Emergency vehicles are seen on the grounds of Gymnasium Number Five following a shooting, in Bryansk

concern after previous attacks, with President Vladimir Putin calling the incidents a US import. "A 14-year-old girl brought a pump-action shotgun to school, which she used to

shoot her classmates," Russia's Investigative Committee said in a statement. "As a result, two people died -- one of them the shooter -- and there are five wounded," it added.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



I've just invoked Art.99 of the UN Charter - for the 1st time in my tenure as Secretary-General. Facing a severe risk of collapse of the humanitarian system in Gaza, I urge the Council to help avert a humanitarian catastrophe & appeal for a humanitarian ceasefire to be declared.

@antonioguterres

02



My thanks to Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Prime Minister of #Qatar, for a constructive dialogue on the health situation in #Gaza. I thanked him for Qatar's diplomatic efforts.

@DrTedros

03



Hanukkah Sameach! I extend my warmest greetings to our Jewish friends in India and around the world on the occasion of Hanukkah. May this festival bring peace, hope and brightness in everybody's lives.

@netanyahu

@narendramodi

04



We're determined to help Israel ensure that October 7th never happens again. We have to back that up with resources. We also must do everything possible to help the many innocent civilians in Gaza who desperately need humanitarian assistance.

@SecBlinken

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

celebs



Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez

Jennifer Lopez feels 'grateful' for Ben Affleck's support

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Jennifer Lopez feels "grateful" to have Ben Affleck by her side for her new short film.

The 54-year-old star recently announced plans to release 'This is Me...Now: The Film' in 2024, and Jennifer enjoyed working on the project with her husband.

A source told Us Weekly: "He helped her feel safe to share parts of her nobody has ever known."

The eagerly-awaited new film has been described as a "visual reimagining of her publicly scrutinized love life".

And Jennifer - who married Ben in 2022 - "wouldn't have wished for anybody else" to work with her on the project.

The insider added: "Nobody knows her better than Ben."

'This is Me...Now: The Film' will offer an honest insight into Jennifer's high-profile love life.

The project will stream globally on Amazon's Prime Video platform, and will feature a nod to Jennifer's high-profile romance with the Hollywood

star. A press release recently explained: "Although an astonishing vivid spectacle, the film is ultimately a heartfelt ode to JL's journey of self-healing and everlasting belief in fairy-tale endings. Audiences will be captivated and leave hopeful that true love can be more than a dream."

Meanwhile, Ben previously joked that Jennifer looks like she's "20 years old".

The 51-year-old movie star - who first dated Jennifer between 2002 and 2004 - revealed that his wife's exceptional "work ethic" is one of the keys to her youthful appearance.

During an appearance on 'The Drew Barrymore Show', Ben explained: "She works out. I mean, I work out, too. But I don't magically appear to be 20 years old, you know what I mean?"

"There's no taking away the work ethic. The work ethic is real, the discipline is very real. But also the superhuman thing is real. She's the most gorgeous woman in the world, she looks spectacular."

Julia Roberts reveals the advice she would give her younger self

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Julia Roberts wishes she could tell her younger self that everything was going to turn out okay.

The 56-year-old actress has been a mainstay in Hollywood since starring in classics like 'Steel Magnolias' and 'Pretty Woman' and has since gone on to win an Oscar but if she could go back in time, she would reassure herself about the future and joked that she would advise herself to "not pluck" her eyebrows.

Asked what advice she would give her younger self, she told this week's edition of People: "Stand up straighter. It's all going to be okay, and don't pluck your eyebrows."

The 'Erin Brockovich' star appears

alongside fellow Academy Award winner Mahershala Ali in the new Netflix thriller 'Leave the World Behind' and in the joint interview, he admitted he wishes he could tell his younger self to be "patient" about things.

He said: "Be patient because things will unfold as they should. I always tell myself to be prayerful, patient, and persistent. Those three things and I feel you've got it all, in my humble opinion."

Meanwhile, the thriller - which focuses on a family whose rental home is subjected to a cyberattack that takes out their devices before two strangers arrive at the door - may fit into the genre of horri but Mahershala admitted that these days he

"doesn't like to be scared" by a movie.

He said: "Not anymore. I loved it as a kid. I watched 'Friday the 13th' at eight or nine years old. Horror films and creature features. Then I got in my teens and drifted away from all that, and just as an adult I'm not that interested in being scared. ... Roller coasters, I'm good."

Julia added: "I used to like roller coasters when I was a kid growing up in Georgia; the Scream Machine at Six Flags was pretty

Julia Roberts



Halle Berry 'bonded' with Angelina Jolie over their divorces

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Halle Berry has "bonded" with Angelina Jolie over their "divorces and exes".

The Oscar-winning actress will star alongside Angelina, 48, in her new film project 'Maude v Maude', and Halle has revealed that they actually spent some time together discussing their love lives.

The 57-year-old actress - who was previously married to David Justice, Eric Benet and Olivier Martinez - told Variety: "We've been talking a lot about divorces and exes. We bonded, let's say that."

Despite this, Halle acknowledged that their friendship actually got off to a "rocky start".

The Hollywood actress - whose co-star has also been married three times - shared: "We had a rocky start and I think that is going to serve us well in our screen time together."



Halle Berry and Angelina Jolie

'Maude v Maude' marks Halle's first directorial project since 'Bruised', the 2020 MMA drama.

Halle has described making 'Bruised' as "hell" and she thinks it was a "miracle" that Netflix ever bought the movie.

She added: "Because I was a woman, and a black woman, the treatment I received and the things I had to put up with were unconscionable."

"If I were a white man or even a black man, it would have been easier. It's amazing I even made it and a miracle Netflix bought it."

Halle previously described directing as the "hardest thing" she's done in her career. She told The Hollywood Reporter: "It was harrowing."

"It was the hardest thing I've done in my professional career, because the character was a big, huge character that required a lot of my time and attention and preparation, and then directing for the first time also required a lot of my time, attention and preparation. So I was burning the candle at both ends, which made for super long days, really stressful days."

Taylor Swift didn't leave her house for a year after Kim Kardashian 'frame job'

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Taylor Swift didn't leave her house for a year after Kim Kardashian's "fully manufactured frame job".

The 33-year-old pop star went to ground after a dispute between her and Kim's then husband Kanye West went public and led to the reality TV star releasing a private telephone call between Taylor and the rapper which led to her being branded a snake and a "liar" - and the singer says she left the US and became a recluse after the highly-publicised drama.

She told Time magazine: "You have a fully manufactured frame job, in an

illegally recorded phone call, which Kim Kardashian edited and then put out to say to everyone that I was a liar.

"That took me down psychologically to a place I've never been before. I moved to a foreign country. I didn't leave a rental house for a year. I was afraid to get on phone calls. I pushed away most people in my life because I didn't trust anyone anymore. I went down really, really hard."

Taylor and Kanye fell out in 2016 over his song 'Famous' which included the lyric: "I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex / Why? I made that ***** famous."

Kanye claimed the singer had

approved the words, but Taylor insisted she didn't and Kanye's partner Kim later released a phone call between the pair which suggested the pop star had indeed given the rapper permission to use those lyrics.

Taylor is believed to have subsequently decamped to London where she spent time with her then-boyfriend, actor Joe Alwyn, and she claims the incident ruined her career.

Taylor Swift



SUDOKU

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Yesterday's solution

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

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

CROSSWORD

Across

- Capital of the Ukraine; 5- Sale sign; 9- Minute; 12- Et ... (and other men); 13- Clogs, e.g.; 15- Units of resistance; 16- "All The Way To ...", song by REM; 17- Actress Berger; 18- Disfigure; 19- Ultimatum words; 21- Foreign film feature; 23- What's more; 25- Scheme; 26- Wall St. debut; 29- Serpents; 31- Bars legally; 35- ... Quentin; 36- Recurring theme; 38- Have a feeling about; 39- Busy as ...; 41- Bill attachment; 43- Like a noted Norwegian Blue parrot?; 44- Warning; 46- Assert as a fact; 48- After; 49- Lure; 51- Catch sight of; 52- K-O connection; 53- Whispers sweet nothings; 55- Small gull; 57- Theoretical; 61- Oppose; 65- Crown of the head; 66- Dike, Eumonia and Irene; 68- Pip; 69- Go downhill fast?; 70- Erupts; 71- "A Jug of Wine..." poet; 72- Frozen Water; 73- Squeezes out; 74- Me neither;

Down

- Syrup brand; 2- Robert of "The Sopranos"; 3- Mozart's "... kleine Nachtmusik"; 4- Orchestra string; 5- Estimator; 6- Female pronoun; 7- Charged particles; 8- Organization; 9- Come again!; 10- Pianist Gilles; 11- Salinger girl; 14- Fine fur; 15- Left out; 20- Close with force; 22- Throw; 24- Sight-related; 26- Son of Abraham; 27- Poet Neruda; 28- Late bedtime; 30- Move sideways; 32- Actor Ryan; 33- Sacred song; 34- Family car; 37- Sumptuous meal; 40- Put up; 42- Maturity; 45- Heath; 47- Pianist Hess; 50- ... Ark; 54- Extent; 56- Thermoplastic yarn; 57- Church recess; 58- Indonesian resort island; 59- Canonized Fr. women; 60- Arduous journey; 62- Japanese wrestling; 63- Banned apple spray; 64- Cosmonaut Gagarin; 67- Reverence plus fear;

Yesterday's solution

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

Classifieds



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BAHRAIN GUARDING SOLUTIONS W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37722884 or GOVERNMENT@mre.co

BEN EID TOWERS CLEANING has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17250078 or KEHF-2011@HOTMAIL.COM

AL MOHAMMEDIA AUTO-UPHOLSTERY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33371333 or SJBREEL1981@GMAIL.COM

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Ramazan Gitinov is set to represent Bahrain at BRAVE CF 79

TDI | Manama

On December 8 in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Ramazan Gitinov will get his chance to make a real name for himself in the biggest fight of his professional career thus far.

BRAVE CF 79 will take place in Isa Town at the Khalifa Sports

City Arena. It will serve as one of the main events of BRAVE International Combat Week with a plethora of high profile stars making their way to this great nation in order to prove themselves at the elite level.

One of the most notable figures who will be attempting to do so is Ramazan Gitinov. While

he may not be a worldwide sensation to casual fans of mixed martial arts, he's certainly someone who is being looked at as a future world champion, especially after making his professional debut in style at BRAVE CF 71.

Gitinov is currently 3-0 as a pro with three finishes under his belt. However, the main focus hasn't been on what he's done in those three contests - it's what he was able to achieve as an amateur. As part of the flourishing KHK MMA Team, Ramazan has honed his craft to the point whereby he is now seen as an unstoppable force.

Of course, there are no guarantees in this game, and you



Ramazan Gitinov

have to go out there and do the work yourself. In this instance, though, the resume that Raamzan has been able to put together is out of this

world.

He holds 30 wins on the amateur scene and at the IMMAF World Championships earlier this year, he ran through four

opponents with relative ease to cement his status as one to watch. He then turned professional and has since shown no signs of slowing down, as his 3-0 record reiterates.

In terms of the future, the man standing across the cage this weekend will be Beknazar Zhanybekov. He is a fellow undefeated fighter competing out of Kyrgyzstan, and he knows this is his opportunity to cause the kind of upset that would send shockwaves through BRAVE CF.

For Ramazan Gitinov, that's precisely the kind of situation he wants to be in as he continues to grow and evolve into someone that everyone will soon fear.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I, **MS. SWETA IVAN**, holder of **INDIAN PASSPORT NO. S6628978** issued at Bahrain on 29 May 2018, permanent residence at **NIDHIRI (H), ANGADIKADAVU, KANNUR DISTRICT, KERALA, INDIA** and presently resident of **FLAT 21, BUILDING 1268, ROAD 2421, BLOCK 324, BAHRAIN** and **MR. KEVIN ASSARIETH MATHEW**, S/o. Mr. Mathew Assarieth George, holder of **U.S. PASSPORT NO A13017859** issued at United States Department of State on 17 March 2023, permanent residence at **201 BRECKENWOOD DRIVE, CARY, NORTH CAROLINA, USA** and temporary resident of (Not applicable) intend to solemnize our civil marriage during January 2024 at the Embassy of India, Building 1090, Al Seef, P.O.Box 26106, Kingdom of Bahrain under the **FOREIGN MARRIAGE ACT 1969 OF INDIA**. Objection(s), if any, may be forwarded to the **EMBASSY OF INDIA**, Kingdom of Bahrain within a period of 30 days from the date of publication of this notice.

NATIONAL HOTELS COMPANY BSC



Notice

National Hotels Company BSC would like to inform its shareholders that the Ordinary General Meeting scheduled at 10:00 AM on Thursday 14th December 2023 at the "Majlis Hall" - Ground Floor of Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel, Residence & Spa has been cancelled.

Faisal Ahmed Al Zayani
Chairman

Moroccan lion Naurdiev poised to devour Algerian Rival Hadbi at BRAVE CF 79!

TDI | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation has witnessed some of the fiercest rivalries in MMA and nothing gets bigger beyond when athletes representing Algeria and Morocco face each other. In the main event of BRAVE CF 79, two of the most passionate nations in the world of MMA clash as Tahar Hadbi (14-8-0, 2 NC) from Algeria faces Ismail Naurdiev (22-7-0) representing Morocco.

In a very interesting showdown, Hadbi's "Fast Hands" will test the "Heavy Fists" of Naurdiev. The main event of BRAVE CF 79 sets two generations of European superstars.

Tahar Hadbi made it to the main event picture during the early days of BRAVE CF with heated rivalries between Carl Booth, Jarrah Hussein Al-Sila-



wi, and Mohammad Fakhreddine.

Naurdiev however, made his debut at BRAVE CF 50 and is 10 years younger than Hadbi. Hadbi's experience and Naurdiev's youth will be key factors coming into the main event. They will probably have big shoes to fill as the fight card is full of superstars.

Hadbi is notorious for his

heated rivalries with Mohammed Fakhreddine. Interestingly, Fakhreddine is involved in BRAVE CF 79 as he will be in the corner of Adel Ibrahim from Lebanon.

Since all the fighters will meet each other in the venue BRAVE Combat Federation has already doubled down the security for the event. However, when professional fighters are involved

anything can happen anytime anywhere.

Both Tahar Hadbi and Ismail Naurdiev have moved into the Middleweight division following their recent failures in the Super Welterweight division. As the 185-pound weight class is currently without a champion, the winner of BRAVE CF 79's main event could be very well on its way to a world title shot.

The showdown will occur during the Bahrain BRAVE International Combat Week 2023 and the matchmakers have put together, the most amount of raw talent in the promotion's history with the sky being the only limit.

BRAVE CF 79 brings fighters from 14 nations destined to become the biggest names in the future of mixed martial arts.

Free tickets available as Bjorn commits to 2024 Bahrain Championship

TDT | Manama

Thomas Bjorn will tee it up as the DP World Tour makes its long-awaited return to the Kingdom of Bahrain for the Bahrain Championship from February 1-4, 2024, and golf fans can now secure free general admission tickets.

The tournament, which will be held under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, will mark the DP World Tour's first visit to the Kingdom since 2011 and forms part of the International Swing on the 2024 Race to Dubai.

Former Ryder Cup Captain Bjorn, who is Denmark's most successful golfer of all-time with 15 DP World Tour wins to his name, will return to the Kingdom for the first time in 13 years, since he finished in a tie for 44th at the Volvo Golf Champions.

"I am looking forward to returning to Bahrain in February and seeing how the country has changed since my last visit almost 13 years ago," said Bjorn, who has twice enjoyed success here in the Middle East with victories in the 2001 Dubai Desert



Thomas Bjorn

”
I am looking forward to returning to Bahrain in February and seeing how the country has changed since my last visit almost 13 years ago

THOMAS BJORN

Classic and the 2011 Commercialbank Qatar Masters.

"The beauty of the DP World Tour is we get to visit so many interesting places and help bring golf to new audiences, and I am thrilled to help to achieve that with the Bahrain Championship.

"I would like to thank His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa for welcoming us to his Kingdom and I can't wait to visit early next year."

General admission will be free of charge for spectators while there will also be a host of elevated and premium experiences available, including the Championship Chalet on the 18th, as well as a full programme of entertainment, including live

music and a wealth of F&B options for the whole family to enjoy.

With just over 50 days to go until the eagerly-anticipated event, which has a prize fund of US\$2.5 million, the Royal Golf Club course has undergone extensive upgrades, supported by Osool Asset Management and Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company (Mumtalakat), the sovereign wealth fund of the Kingdom of Bahrain, headed by His Excellency Sheikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa.

Among the key enhancements is the upgrading of a number of greens on the front nine to ensure it is in prime condition to welcome the elite stars of the DP World Tour.

Freddie Schmeisser, Championship Director of the Bahrain Championship, said: "We are looking forward to returning to the Kingdom of Bahrain next year as part of the DP World Tour's International Swing and excitement is now building with tickets becoming available and Thomas committing to play.

"Royal Golf Club is a fitting

venue for the Bahrain Championship and will be a great day out for all the family, with world class golf and a host of off-course activities."

The Bahrain Championship will be one of four events in the Middle East as part of the new International Swing on the revamped 2024 Race to Dubai.

The tournament follows the inaugural Dubai Invitational, the Hero Dubai Desert Classic, the first Rolex Series event of the season, and the Ras Al Khaimah Championship.

There are five Global Swings in the first part of the season, with the International Swing running from January to March. Each Swing will have its own identity and its own Champion who will each earn \$200,000 from an overall \$1million Bonus Pool. Swing Champions will also qualify for each of the 'Back 9' events later in the season.

Registration for free tickets for the 2024 Bahrain Championship is open now. To keep up to date with tournament news, follow @bahraingolfchamps on Instagram.

World-class racing all weekend at BIC

Rotax MAX Challenge Grand Finals 2023 and first round of 2023/2024 Bahrain Drag Racing Championship to take place

● **Rotax MAX Challenge Grand Finals to hold final two days of wheel-to-wheel action Friday and Saturday at Bahrain International Karting Circuit**

● **Bahrain Drag Racing Championship set for season-opening Race Day of 2023/2024 along National Hot Rod Association-sanctioned strip**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) is calling on motorsport fans to come and enjoy some of the most thrilling racing action all throughout this weekend at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East".

Two major events are currently taking place at the Sakhir facility. These include the Rotax MAX Challenge Grand Finals (RMC GF) 2023 and the season-opening round of the 2023/2024 Bahrain Drag Racing Championship (BDRC).

The RMC GF action intensifies on Friday and Saturday (Editor's note: 8 and 9 December) with its final two days of wheel-to-wheel karting at Bahrain International Karting Circuit (BIKC), BIC's world-class grassroots motorsport facility.

Also on Friday, head-to-head



Karters in action at BIKC in the RMC GF this week

eliminations will be taking place along BIC's world-class NHRA drag strip as the BDRC holds Race Day as an exciting culmination to the first meeting's events.

The RMC GF's pre-finals and finals are set to take place over the weekend. Fans wishing to watch the very best in global karting can attend the RMC GF free of charge. Due to limited capacity at BIKC, public access will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

BIKC's gates are scheduled to open to fans at 5pm on Friday, with last entry set for 8pm. On the event's concluding day on Saturday, gates will open from 9am and last entry will be permitted at 4.30pm. Spectator parking will be at P8.

Close to 400 karters from around the world are competing in the nine Rotax MAX classes, which include the 125 Micro MAX, the 125 Mini MAX, the 125 Junior MAX, the 125 Senior MAX, the 125 MAX DD2, the 125 MAX

DD2 Masters, the E20 Senior, E20 Master, and the E10.

Team Bahrain have a nine-strong contingent in the fray. The Kingdom's top talents showcasing their prowess include Nasser Nass and Shaikh Ahmed bin Saqer Al Khalifa in

the Mini MAX category; Luca Houghton and Tye Mejia in the Junior MAX; Oliver Kruglov, Mohammed Alhasan and Fahad Alkhaled in the Senior MAX class; Omar Alderayaane in the DD2 MAX; and Lewis Smith in the E20 Senior category.

Meanwhile, in the BDRC, more than 200 competitors in the cars and bikes classes are set to battle it out for podiums, bragging rights and all-important championship points. The drag racers are flying the flags of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Qatar.

Friday's programme is scheduled to be held from 4pm onwards. Spectator seating will be available along BIC's Beyon Grandstand.

2 Seas kick off Gulf 12 Hours drive

TDT | Manama

Bahraini-British motor racing team 2 Seas Motorsport had a solid start to their weekend's events yesterday in the Gulf 12 Hours, taking place at Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi.

2 Seas' #14 crew of Jules Gounon, Maximilian Gotz and Fabian Schiller, competing in the Pro class, were seventh overall on the open practice one timesheet, held under lights over an hour's duration.

The trio posted a fastest lap of one minute 53.208 seconds in the session behind the wheel of their Mercedes AMG-GT3 contender. They were also second-fastest in class, behind only



A drag racing participant gets ready to power down the strip

The 14 categories of competition in this season's BDRC include the Index 7.5, Pro 29.5 V8, Outlaw 4 Cylinder, Outlaw 6 Cylinder, Index 10.00, Index

9.00, Index 8.50, Competition 4.5 and Pro Mod; while the motorbike classes are Pro Street Bike, Street Fight 9.5, Index 8.5 Bike, Outlaw Bike and Street Fight.



More than 200 drag racers from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Qatar have descended upon the BIC strip this week for heated head-to-head competition in the 14 drag racing categories



2 Seas' #3 car being rolled out of the pits for yesterday's sessions

fellow Mercedes-AMG outfit GruppeM Racing.

2 Seas' other car, the #3 triumvirate of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Ian Loggie and Al Faisal Al Zubair, ranked 22nd overall. They had a fastest lap of 1:55.299, putting them seventh in class.

2 Seas, co-owned by HH Shaikh Isa, are part of a packed grid of 28 GT3 cars competing in the event.

Action continues today at the UAE capital with three more open practice sessions, the first two to be held over 60 minutes apiece and the last over 120 minutes. Tomorrow, there will be two free practice sessions, to be followed by qualifying.

The main event is then set for Sunday, with the race scheduled for a 9am start, Bahrain time. The podium presentation will follow at around 9.15pm, Bahrain, after the chequered flag comes down on the 12-hour endurance challenge.

BRAVE Combat Federation breaks record for 2023 live viewership

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation (BRAVE CF), the mixed martial arts (MMA) organisation that has hosted events in the most

number of nations in the world, has once again made history by breaking viewership records in 2023.

With over 500,000 viewers tuning in solely through

its homegrown digital platforms, BRAVE CF has solidified its position as a global force in the world of combat sports.

This remarkable achieve-

ment is a testament to BRAVE CF's commitment to accessibility and innovation. BRAVE CF actively advocates the integration of technology into sports to enhance the audience and athlete

experience.

The organisation broadcasts its events across 160+ countries to 848 million households, reaching audiences through a diverse network of platforms

and television channels.

On the digital front, BRAVE CF offers live streams on its YouTube channel (@bravemmf) and its own OTT platform, Brave TV.

Loughnane set for flying visit to Bahrain

Teenage sensation teams up with Boughey and Baker for first rides outside Europe in Bahrain Turf Series

● **Billy Loughnane takes time out from UK title-bid to ride on opening day of prestigious 2023/2024 series**

● **Trainer George Boughey confident of a bold show from Thunder Moor in opening sprint division event**

TDT | Manama

Teenage riding sensation Billy Loughnane is taking time out from his bid to win the UK All-Weather Jockeys' Championship to ride in Bahrain on the opening day of the Bahrain Turf Series today.

After a typically busy day yesterday with four rides at Chelmsford City, the 17-year-old will jump on an overnight flight to Bahrain for what will be his first ride outside of Europe, having previously ridden in the UK and Italy, when competing



Billy Loughnane...set for Bahrain debut in two races in the Bahrain Turf Series, where each race is worth \$80,000.

This time last year, Loughnane was reflecting on riding his first career winner on 28 November at Wolverhampton. He went on to ride over 100 winners in the 2023 season and was crowned UK champion apprentice.

In May, he became the youngest jockey since Lester Piggott to ride in a British Classic when

“It will be my first ride in the Middle East and I am really looking forward to it. I have been to Dubai on holiday but riding in Bahrain will be a new experience

BILLY LOUGHNANE

partnering Sweet Harmony in the Group 1 1000 Guineas at Newmarket.

Currently leading the All-Weather Jockeys' Championship with 22 winners, closely pursued by Rossa Ryan and Oisín Murphy, Loughnane will forego an eight-race winter floodlit meeting at Newcastle for the warmer climes of Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club. He then flies back to the UK to ride at Wolverhampton on Saturday evening.

Loughnane said: “It will be my first ride in the Middle East and I am really looking forward to it. I have been to Dubai on holiday but riding in Bahrain will be a



Intense competition at REHC last week

new experience.”

Loughnane has been booked to ride the three-year-old Thunder Moor for trainer George Boughey, the source of more winners to Loughnane than any other trainer, in the Al Manama Cup, which is the first race in the sprint division of the Bahrain Turf Series.

Loughnane and Thunder Moor are one of ten international contenders in the 18-strong field racing over 1,000m (5f).

Boughey, trainer of Thunder Moor, said: “We have had this

the October Tattersalls Horses-in-Training sale for £135,000 and joining George Baker.

Today's events will be the gelding's first start for his new handler and Baker once again has brought a strong team of horses to campaign in Bahrain. In all, 14 go to post for the Al Muharraq Cup, nine of which are international contenders.

Running from December through to February, the Bahrain Turf Series provides opportunities for internationally trained runners (rated 85-100) to compete against local Bahrain based horses across 10 races. Each race is worth \$80,000 with bonus cash prizes for the horses accumulating most points in the two divisions, sprint and middle distance.

Launched in 2021-22, today marks the start of the third edition of the Bahrain Turf Series.

The series runs alongside the domestic programme in Bahrain with international horses competing in the series also eligible to run in other Bahrain Turf Club races open to imported horses.

Riffa, Ahli through to HM the King's Cup quarters

● **Riffa power past A'ali 5-0, while Al Ahli outclass Um Al Hassam 4-0**

TDT | Manama

Riffa and Al Ahli marched through last night to the quarter-finals of the 2023/2024 His Majesty the King's Cup football tournament.

Riffa booked their berth with a resounding 5-0 victory over A'ali, while Ahli followed suit with a 4-0 triumph against Um Al Hassam.

Riffa will next take on the winner of the other round-of-16 tie between Muharraq and Galali. Ahli, on the other hand, will face the victor of the game between Sitra and Busaiteen in the last eight.

In Riffa's victory yesterday, they opened the scoring in the ninth minute through Hashem Sayed Issa. The national team ace took advantage of some mis-



Al Ahli's Jamal Rashed and Um Al Hassam's Essam Taha Al Haroubi vie for the ball during their match last night

communication between A'ali defender Qassim Saeed Ali and goalkeeper Mohammed Hassan Al Oud and needed only to tap the ball into an empty net.

Hazza Ali then added a scorching second, scoring from more than 20 yards out with a left-footed rocket that flew into the top-left corner of goal. That was enough to give Riffa the

two-goal advantage at the break.

Just five minutes after the restart, Abdulaziz Khaled made it 3-0 with a goal from close range off a brilliant back-healed pass from Issa. Another five minutes later Riffa made it 4-0 with Kmail Al Aswad sending the ball home off a cross from the right supplied by Sayed Redha Issa. Al Aswad then completed his

brace with a 91st minute effort off a brilliantly timed lobbed pass from Jassim Al Shaikh.

In yesterday's other game, Ahli scored all four of their goals against Um Al Hassam in the second half.

The round of 16 continues over the next three days. Tonight, Muharraq and Galali face off while holders Al Hala go up against defending league champions Al Khaldiya. Tomorrow, Al Shabab play Al Ettihad and Sitra take on Busaiteen; while on Sunday, Hidd battle Al Ettifaq and East Riffa go up against Manama.

All matches are scheduled for 7pm kick-offs.

The HM the King's Cup is the richest football competition in the Kingdom, with the winners taking home BD100,000 in prize money and BD50,000 going to the runners-up.

In the 2022/2023 His Majesty the King's Cup, Hala were crowned champions after a heart-stopping 6-5 victory over Al Ahli in a hugely thrilling penalty shootout in the final.

McLean erupts for 50 to lead Ahli in big win

● **American professional posts league's season-high to help lift perennial contenders against Sitra in week six fixture**

TDT | Manama

Unique McLean erupted for 50 points last night to spearhead Al Ahli in a 124-85 rout of Sitra in their week six fixture of the 2023/2024 Zain Bahrain Basketball League.

The American professional posted his season-high output in just 27 minutes of action, shooting 23-for-34 from the field for a 67 per cent clip while taking down 13 rebounds.

Ahli led 28-20 at the end of the first quarter and gradually added to their advantage over the course of the game. The perennial title contenders had red-hot second and third periods, where they nearly broke the 40-point mark in each to take a commanding 64-42 lead at the half, which they turned to 102-63 after three.

They then enjoyed their biggest gap of 50 points, 115-65, following a Mahmood Aljassas three-pointer with eight minutes left in the game, and cruised to the finish line from there.

Jamaican import Adrian Uter added 22 markers and also had 13 rebounds for Ahli, while Bahraini guards Ahmed Aldurazi and Maitham Jameel each finished with 12.

Ebrahim Murad Ebrahim had 16 as the top scorer for Sitra, who once again played



Al Ahli's Adrian Uter looks to score in the paint against Sitra last night

without a foreign professional. Ahli extended their lead atop the league standings with their fifth triumph in six tries, while Sitra remained winless after six outings.

League action continues tonight with Al Najma facing Al Hala at 5.30pm, followed by the titanic clash between defending champions Manama and last year's losing finalists Muharraq at 7.30pm.

The Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA) announced yesterday that Manama spectators have been banned from attending the team's games until further notice, following the behaviour of some fans in their previous outings. The BBA also imposed a BD5,000 fine to the club.

McTominay urges Man Utd to show consistency

AFP | London

Scott McTominay called on Manchester United to show consistency after they lifted the pressure on under-fire boss Erik ten Hag with a 2-1 win against Chelsea.

McTominay was United's hero with a brace in the vital victory at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

But the Scotland midfielder said the result would only be significant if his sixth placed team produce that kind of performance more regularly.



Scott McTominay (2R) headers the ball to score a goal

United's difficult start to the season had hit a new low last week when they blew the lead in

their Champions League draw at Galatasaray, then slumped to a lacklustre loss against Newcastle.

“We have to find that balance between us where we try and do that every single week,” McTominay said.

“I felt like that was a game where we had to come out and show to the fans that we have full focus on this game, we want to play well and give a reaction.

“It has to be like that every week, though, which is something that when I was in the dressing room, there was play-

ers speaking about it.

“It can't just be one game where we need to show a reaction. It has to come out and show that every week.”

United's difficult start to the season had put a spotlight on Ten Hag's relationship with his squad amid reports several players had grown disillusioned with his intense training sessions and hardline discipline.

Ten Hag has denied those claims and United's players certainly appeared to be on his side on the evidence of their hard-fought win against Chelsea.