

Historic International Combat Week

BRAVE CF announces major details of Combat Week in December at Khalifa Sports City Arena | **P12**

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER, 2023
 220 FILS
 ISSUE NO.9740

WORLD 6 Massive destruction of Gaza housing a war crime: UN expert

THE DAILY tribune

Jordan goes electric **8 AUTOBUZZ**

BUSINESS 5 Al Baraka Group posts Q3, nine-month profits



Exiled from Gaza

Palestinians flee fighting and intense bombardment as Israel tightens 'strangehold'

Alba reports third-quarter and nine-months profits



P5

Zain Bahrain Q3 profit rises 1.8% to BD 1.61 m



P5

Somalia floods kill 29 and displace 300,000 people

AFP | Mogadishu

Flash flooding in southwestern Somalia has claimed the lives of more than two dozen people and displaced hundreds of thousands from their homes, an official said, as El Nino downpours lash East Africa.

At least 29 people have died and about 850,000 others have been affected, including over 300,000 who have been uprooted from their homes.

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Three-day truce discussed in efforts to secure freedom for 12 hostages

AFP | Gaza City

Thousands of Palestinians were fleeing on foot yesterday in a surge away from the fighting and intense bombardment in Gaza as Israel said it was tightening the "stranglehold" around Gaza City.

But as people escaped south from Gaza City, many with nothing but the clothes they wore, details began to emerge of a potential three-day halt in fighting in negotiations to secure the release of 12 hostages.

Calls for a ceasefire to protect civilians have built over a month into the war sparked when Hamas attacked Israel and, according to Israeli officials, killed 1,400 people, mostly civilians, and took more than 240 hostages.

The health ministry in Gaza says more than 10,500 people have been killed in Gaza, many of them children, during Israel's retaliatory military campaign to destroy the Palestinian fighters.

A source told AFP that talks were underway for the release of a dozen of the hostages, including six Americans, in return



Palestinians fleeing Gaza City and other parts of northern Gaza towards the southern areas, walk on a road yesterday amid the ongoing fighting. (AFP)

for a pause in hostilities that would also allow time to deliver humanitarian aid.

Negotiations

Earlier yesterday, a source briefed on the process told AFP that Qatar was mediating negoti-

ations between Israel and Hamas for the release of up to 15 hostages.

As the talks proceeded, the pace of Palestinian civilians fleeing south from northern Gaza accelerated as Israel's air and ground campaign intensified, according to UN observers.

About 15,000 people had fled

on Tuesday, compared with 5,000 on Monday and 2,000 on Sunday, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said, as another surge was underway yesterday.

"We've lost our homes, we've lost our children. Where is the global community? Where are

our fellow Muslims? Look at us!" said Nouh Hammouda, who was among those fleeing.

"We left our homes due to the relentless bombardment. Where can we go now?" he said as people streamed southward on the road.

Troops advancing

Israel has set an aim of destroying Hamas and said its ground forces were advancing in pursuit of the Hamas fighters who have a deep network of tunnels and underground bases.

"Israeli troops are tightening the stranglehold around the city of Gaza," Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said.

Israel has air-dropped leaflets and sent texts ordering civilians in northern Gaza to flee south, but potentially hundreds of thousands remained in the worst-hit areas.

Hamas accused the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) of "colluding" with Israel in the "forced displacement" of Gazans, after residents followed instructions to flee.

An UNRWA spokeswoman did not immediately respond when contacted by AFP about the Hamas accusation.

G7 foreign ministers said they supported "humanitarian pauses and corridors" in the Israel-Hamas war, but stopped short of calling for a ceasefire.

Climate crisis intensifies

October hottest month ever as 2023 will be 'warmest' year

AFP | Paris

Last month was the hottest October on record globally, Europe's climate monitor said yesterday, as months of exceptional heat are likely to make 2023 the warmest year in history.

With temperatures soaring beyond previous averages by exceptional margins, scientists say the pressure on world leaders to curb planet-heating greenhouse gas pollution has never been more urgent as they prepare to

meet in Dubai for the UN COP28 climate conference this month.

Drought parched parts of the United States and Mexico during October, while huge swathes of the planet saw wetter than normal conditions often linked to storms and cyclones, said the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S).

Sea surface temperatures were the highest ever recorded for the month, a phenomenon driven by global warming that scientists say plays a key role in driving storms to be more fero-



A man cools himself down from a water fountain during one of the hottest days in Guadalajara, Mexico. (AFP)

cious and destructive.

"October 2023 has seen exceptional temperature anomalies, following on from four months of global temperature records being obliterated," said Samantha Burgess, C3S deputy director.

"We can say with near certainty that 2023 will be the warmest year on record, and is currently 1.43 degrees Celsius above the preindustrial average.

"The sense of urgency for ambitious climate action going into COP28 has never been higher."

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Programmes for 50,000 Bahrainis

TDI | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Isa bin Salman Education Charitable Trust, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Labour Fund, Tamkeen, issued directives to launch new programmes aimed at supporting 50,000 Bahrainis annually, the largest target since Tamkeen's inception.

The three main initiatives included in the programmes are the following: supporting the labour market by creating quality opportunities for new market entrants; supporting career development opportunities by ensuring Bahrainis remain the employees of choice within the labour market; and expanding enterprise support schemes to enhance

the private sector's competitiveness and role as a key economic driver, in line with Tamkeen's mandate.

This comes following the royal directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to continue creating quality opportunities for Bahriani citizens and the Cabinet's approval, chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Tamkeen's Board of Directors meeting was held yesterday, chaired by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Isa bin Salman Education Charitable Trust, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Labour Fund, Tamkeen.

Tamkeen's Board of Directors meeting was held yesterday to discuss the programmes.

Life sentence for participants in prison escape attempt



Image used for illustrative purposes only

TDI | Manama

The Court of Cassation approved a final life sentence for two defendants who participated in an attempt to smuggle inmates from the Centre for Correction and Rehabilitation.

Security services foiled their plan and 10 defendants were arrested, of whom the first court penalised three with life imprisonment. The remaining seven were penalised with seven years' imprisonment each. The court ordered the confiscation of a weapon intended to be used in the crime.

The incident began when security services received a tip that several terrorists had concocted a plan targeting the Correction and Rehabilitation Centre with firearms in order

to smuggle a number of life convicts. Secret sources were employed that confirmed the first defendant's plans.

The defendant developed his plan by communicating with the inmates and providing the means of transportation to smuggle them, as well as the firearm to be used. It was agreed that the inmates' role in the escape plan would be to cause riots and vandalism.

On the day of the incident, the first defendant parked his car at the Correction and Rehabilitation Centre's parking lot, according to plan. Aware of the scheme, security services had the suspect's car searched where a Kalashnikov assault rifle containing ammunition was found placed inside a laundry basket.

'Intensify GCC security cooperation, solidarity'

Muscat

Interior Minister, HE General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, called on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to intensify security cooperation and solidarity in the midst of the current operations in Gaza and the delicate situation in the region.

HE Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah delivered a speech as he chaired Bahrain's delegation at the meeting of the Interior Ministers of the GCC in Muscat yesterday.

"We should safeguard our unity, in the midst of the unfolding situation around us, and not allow attempts to cast doubt on our stances or disturb the security and stability of our nations



HE General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah at the event

to affect us," the minister said.

"This affirms the significance of coordinating mutual support for civil protection purposes among the GCC countries, in which the regional situation, security developments and the GCC principles require promot-

ing joint GCC security action."

Recognising the regional situation and security developments, HE Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah presented a proposal for a joint action strategy to address the growing cases of illegal immigration and their

connection to organised crime. The proposal aims to establish unified legal procedures to deal with this phenomenon effectively.

The ministers discussed topics aimed at strengthening joint GCC security cooperation. They were also informed about the recommendations of the specialised security committees.

They adopted the unified GCC tourist visa. They also endorsed a proposal to study the establishment of a joint GCC committee for law enforcement officials to combat corruption. They also agreed to complete the project to link traffic violations across GCC countries electronically.

Winners of the Prince Nayef Award for Security Research were also honoured.

Regional forum on women and young entrepreneurs empowerment successful

TDI | Manama

The regional conference of women's business and professional associations in the Asia-Pacific region, "Economic Empowerment of Women and Young Entrepreneurs," was concluded yesterday.

It was held in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Trade, with a remarkable international presence of delegations from

38 countries from around the world.

The conference agenda included a number of dialogue sessions, including a session on the economic empowerment of women through supporting entrepreneurship, in which Her Excellency Ms. Maha Abdel Hamid Mafeez, CEO of the Labour Fund "Tamkeen," spoke and she was interviewed by Ms. Afnan Al-Zayani, President of the Middle East Businesswomen's Network.



HE Mr Fakhro

In addition to sessions that highlighted women's success

stories of female entrepreneurs who achieved gender equality through leadership and partnership, and by eliminating poverty and providing social protection, in addition to success stories of young female entrepreneurs who achieved success through innovation and technological change in the digital age. The conference also included working sessions and meetings for the heads of associations of business and professional women.

iGA holds workshop on use of AI tools

TDI | Manama

The Information and eGovernment Authority (iGA), in collaboration with Microsoft, organised a workshop on harnessing low-code and no-code programming tools using artificial intelligence (AI) via Microsoft's platform.

Bringing together 100 IT professionals from governmental and semi-governmental entities in the Kingdom, the workshop showcased digital solutions and

features that support the development of government eServices and applications.

This workshop is part of the iGA's ongoing efforts to enhance government operations and services and support national initiatives aimed at accelerating digital transformation in line with Bahrain Vision 2030. Its goal is to make use of low-code and no-code software development tools, making the process of creating applications and websites faster and more efficient without the need



Workshop is about how to harness low-code and no-code programming tools using AI via Microsoft's platform.

for in-depth coding expertise.

This is intended to improve the efficiency of the public sector, boost productivity, and enable the rollout of additional digital government applications supported by Microsoft's Power Platform.

iGA Deputy Chief Executive of Operations and Governance, Dr. Khalid Almutawah underscored the government's commitment to adopting advanced technologies and digital solutions for its operations.

BKS-DC International Book Festival to kick off today

TDI | Manama

The highly anticipated International Book Fair and Cultural Festival, jointly organised by DC Books, India's leading book publisher, and the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam (BKS), is set to commence today at the BKS DJ hall in Segayya. The festival promises to be a remarkable celebration of literature, culture, and art.

The inauguration ceremony, scheduled for 8pm at the BKS Diamond Jubilee Hall, will be graced by the presence of esteemed guests.

"Indian Ambassador HE Vinod K. Jacob will preside as the Chief Guest, while the Director of Bah-



Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam officials speak about the event

rain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA), Huda Sayed Al Abdulghafar Alalawi, will be the Guest of Honour," said BKS president PV Radhakrishna Pillai and General Secretary Varghese Karakkal in a statement.

The International Book Fair and Cultural Festival will run

from November 9 to 18, offering a platform for renowned writers, cultural icons, and political activists to engage with the audience. Distinguished figures such as PS Sreedharan Pillai, MA Baby, Sagarika Ghosh, Murali Tummarukudi, Santhosh George Kulangara, V.J. James,

Chef Pillai, MV Nimesh Kumar, Ravunni, and others will participate as guests on various days. As part of the event, a diverse array of cultural and artistic programs are also scheduled throughout the festival's duration.

To cater to the literary appe-

tude of attendees, the book fair has assembled a collection of over 100,000 books encompassing more than 5,000 titles from leading publishers in India and abroad. These offerings span genres like stories, poetry, novels, popular books, classics, reference materials, children's

literature, dictionaries, self-help books, study aids for competitive exams, spiritual works, cookery, travelogues, biographies, autobiographies, health literature, and various Malayalam-English publications.

In addition to the literary delights, a captivating photography exhibition, organised by the BKS Photography Club, is also scheduled to start today, running in parallel with the book fair. The BKS Fine Arts Club has arranged a community painting event planned to commence at 3pm on Friday. Over 100 participants, including prominent artists and painters from Bahrain, will collaborate under the theme "Art for Peace."

Mind Matters

Anxious attachment style



ANEESA MOIDOO, PSYCHOLOGIST

I've been married for three years and am thirty years old. Every three months, my spouse's job requires him to travel. His lack of prompt response to my calls and messages annoys and frustrates me when he's not around. I think he has enough time to do more than just reply to my message. How can I resolve this?

It's understandable that you feel irritated and frustrated when your husband doesn't respond to your calls and messages as quickly as you needed. However, these feelings might stem from an anxious attachment style, where you may seek more reassurance and closeness in the relationship. Hence it's essential to recognise that your feelings are valid and you're not alone in this struggle.

First and foremost, it's important to acknowledge your emotions and accept them without judgment. It's okay to feel the way you do, and you deserve understanding and support. Recognising how you get attached is a

significant step, as it allows you to work towards understanding the root causes of your feelings of insecurity and abandonment.

Remember, you have the power to transform these negative experiences into positive, corrective attachment experiences. Start by being kind and patient with yourself. Reflect on moments in your life when you felt loved and worthy, both from others and from within. These memories can serve as a foundation for building your self-esteem and self-worth.

Boosting self-esteem intervenes with the worries related to self-worth and fears of rejection. Building this involves thinking positively about yourself, accepting your mind and body, and understanding that other people's actions are not necessarily a reflection of your worth. High self-esteem can reduce the need for constant reassurance and decrease the fear of rejection.

Building connections with people who have secure attach-

ment styles can provide valuable insights and support. Understanding that your emotional needs are valid and learning to communicate them effectively are crucial in any relationship. Don't be afraid to set boundaries and express your needs, even if it feels challenging at first.

Practising mindfulness and self-regulation can help you navigate through difficult emotions and triggers. Mindfulness allows you to be present in the moment, helping you recognise and manage your emotional responses. Self-regulation techniques, such as calming exercises and conflict resolution strategies, can empower you to handle situations more effectively.

Consider seeking therapy as a safe space to explore your feelings and work through your attachment patterns. Therapy can provide you with valuable tools and insights, helping you understand the origins of your anxieties and guiding you toward forming healthier, more secure bonds with others.

Remember that change takes time, and it's okay to take small steps. Be patient with yourself, celebrate your progress, and lean on the support of those around you. You have the strength within you to overcome and cultivate healthier, fulfilling relationships. Take each day as an opportunity to grow and learn, and with determination and support, you can make positive changes in your attachment and overall well-being.

Ed Sheeran to perform in Bahrain next year

● Pop sensation show at Al Dana Amphitheatre

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

The highly anticipated announcement confirming global pop sensation Ed Sheeran's upcoming performance in Bahrain has sent waves of excitement throughout the region. The Al Dana Amphitheatre has revealed that Sheeran, accompanied by special guest Calum Scott, will take the stage on January 15, 2024.

With a staggering record of over 150 million records sold worldwide, Sheeran's concert is expected to draw an immense crowd.

Ticket sales for the event will commence on November 10, 2023, at 10 a.m. through the official Al Dana Amphitheatre website.



Sheeran set to captivate audience with his mesmerising live performances

Given the history of rapid ticket purchases for previous performances, such as Maroon 5 and 50 Cent's Final Lap Tour, it is anticipated that tickets for Sheeran's show will sell out swiftly. Sheeran himself recently took to Instagram to unveil the calendar for his highly anticipated Mathematics Tour in 2024. The tour will kick off in January, traversing through Asia before captivating audiences across Europe throughout the summer. Fans worldwide are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to witness his mesmerising live performances.

Southern Governor reviews camping season preparation

TDT | Manama

His Highness Southern Governor Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa visit-

ed the Camping Service Centre to review the readiness of the Centre for the camping season 2023-2024 and services quality provided to the campers.

Present were Deputy Governor Colonel Hamad Mohammed Al Khayyat, a number of security directorates' officers and the governorate officials.

(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)



CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL INFORMATION, Zain Bahrain B.S.C.

For the Nine-Month Period Ended 30 September, 2023

Condensed Consolidated Statement of Financial Position (Reviewed)
as at 30 September, 2023

| | 30 September 2023 (Reviewed) BD '000 | 31 December 2022 (Audited) BD '000 |
|---|--|--|
| ASSETS | | |
| Current assets | | |
| Cash and bank balances | 13,509 | 12,648 |
| Trade receivables and other assets | 19,954 | 19,816 |
| Contract assets | 5,808 | 5,826 |
| Inventories | 1,499 | 1,898 |
| Total current assets | 40,770 | 39,188 |
| Non-current assets | | |
| Trade receivables and other assets | 1,256 | 1,510 |
| Contract assets | 1,798 | 1,821 |
| Right-of-use assets | 16,100 | 15,503 |
| Property and equipment | 63,136 | 69,533 |
| Intangible assets | 10,959 | 12,079 |
| Total non-current assets | 93,249 | 100,446 |
| Total Assets | 134,019 | 139,634 |
| LIABILITIES AND EQUITY | | |
| Liabilities | | |
| Current liabilities | | |
| Accounts payable and other liabilities | 30,251 | 37,120 |
| Lease liabilities | 3,438 | 3,321 |
| Contract liabilities | 1,512 | 2,014 |
| Total current liabilities | 35,201 | 42,455 |
| Non-current liabilities | | |
| Accounts payable and other liabilities | 1,251 | 1,251 |
| Lease liabilities | 12,770 | 12,227 |
| Provision for employees' end of service benefits | 567 | 525 |
| Total non-current liabilities | 14,588 | 14,003 |
| Total Liabilities | 49,789 | 56,458 |
| Equity | | |
| Share capital | 36,800 | 36,800 |
| Treasury shares | (754) | (754) |
| Treasury shares reserve | (6) | (6) |
| Share premium | 3,032 | 3,032 |
| Statutory reserve | 14,394 | 13,951 |
| Retained earnings | 29,292 | 28,651 |
| Equity attributable to owners of the Company | 82,758 | 81,674 |
| Non-controlling interest | 1,472 | 1,502 |
| Total Equity | 84,230 | 83,176 |
| Total Liabilities and Equity | 134,019 | 139,634 |

Condensed Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and other Comprehensive Income (Reviewed)
For the Three-Month and Nine-Month period ended 30 September, 2023

| | Three-Month period ended 30 September | | Nine-Month period ended 30 September | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | 2023 (Reviewed) BD '000 | 2022 (Reviewed) BD '000 | 2023 (Reviewed) BD '000 | 2022 (Reviewed) BD '000 |
| Revenue | 16,744 | 16,966 | 53,866 | 50,552 |
| Cost of revenue | (4,029) | (4,676) | (16,178) | (14,352) |
| Operating and administrative expenses | (6,718) | (6,383) | (20,151) | (19,064) |
| Depreciation of property and equipment | (2,669) | (2,602) | (7,845) | (7,788) |
| Depreciation of right-of-use assets | (1,032) | (969) | (3,077) | (2,850) |
| Amortization of intangible assets | (373) | (347) | (1,120) | (1,040) |
| Expected credit losses on financial assets and contract assets | (275) | (192) | (855) | (442) |
| Operating profit | 1,648 | 1,797 | 4,640 | 5,016 |
| Interest income and other income - net | 189 | 20 | 418 | 129 |
| Gain / (loss) on currency translation adjustment | 3 | 14 | (8) | 6 |
| Finance costs | (247) | (251) | (721) | (719) |
| Profit for the period | 1,593 | 1,580 | 4,329 | 4,432 |
| Other comprehensive income | - | - | - | - |
| Total comprehensive income for the period | 1,593 | 1,580 | 4,329 | 4,432 |
| Total comprehensive income for the period | 1,593 | 1,580 | 4,359 | 4,432 |
| Attributable to: | | | | |
| Owners of the Company | 1,609 | 1,580 | 4,359 | 4,432 |
| Non-controlling interests | (16) | - | (30) | - |
| Basic and diluted earnings per share | Fils 4 | Fils 4 | Fils 12 | Fils 12 |

Condensed Consolidated Statement Of Changes In Equity (Reviewed)
For the Nine-Month period ended 30 September, 2023

| | Share capital BD '000 | Treasury shares BD '000 | Treasury shares reserve BD '000 | Share premium BD '000 | Statutory reserve BD '000 | Retained earnings BD '000 | Equity attributable to owners of the Company BD '000 | Non-controlling interest BD '000 | Total equity BD '000 |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Balance, 31 December, 2022 (Audited) | 36,800 | (754) | (6) | 3,032 | 13,951 | 28,651 | 81,674 | 1,502 | 83,176 |
| Appropriation of dividends | - | - | - | - | - | (3,275) | (3,275) | - | (3,275) |
| Total comprehensive income for the period | - | - | - | - | - | 4,329 | 4,329 | (30) | 4,329 |
| Appropriation to statutory Reserve | - | - | - | - | 443 | (443) | - | - | - |
| Balance, 30 September, 2023 (Reviewed) | 36,800 | (754) | (6) | 3,032 | 14,394 | 29,292 | 82,758 | 1,472 | 84,230 |
| Balance, 31 December, 2021 (Audited) | 36,800 | (754) | (6) | 3,032 | 13,880 | 26,420 | 78,572 | - | 78,572 |
| Appropriation of dividends | - | - | - | - | - | (2,911) | (2,911) | - | (2,911) |
| Total comprehensive income for the period | - | - | - | - | - | 4,432 | 4,432 | - | 4,432 |
| Appropriation to statutory Reserve | - | - | - | - | 443 | (443) | - | - | - |
| Capital introduced to the subsidiary | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| Balance, 30 September, 2022 (Reviewed) | 36,800 | (754) | (6) | 3,032 | 13,823 | 27,498 | 80,393 | 1,500 | 81,893 |

Condensed Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows (Reviewed)
For the Nine-Month period ended 30 September 2023

| | 2023 (Reviewed) BD '000 | 2022 (Reviewed) BD '000 |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cash flows from operating activities | | |
| Profit for the period | 4,329 | 4,432 |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Depreciation of property and equipment | 7,845 | 7,788 |
| Depreciation of right-of-use assets | 3,077 | 2,850 |
| Amortization of intangible assets | 1,120 | 1,040 |
| Increase in expected credit losses on financial assets and contract assets | 855 | 442 |
| Provision for inventories | 126 | 165 |
| Finance costs | 721 | 719 |
| Gain on termination of leases | (30) | (10) |
| Loss on retirement of property and equipment | - | 43 |
| Provision for employees' end of service benefits | 48 | 58 |
| | 18,091 | 17,527 |
| Working capital changes: | | |
| Net change in inventories | 273 | (570) |
| Net change in trade receivables and other assets | (1,738) | (2,873) |
| Net change in contract assets | 43 | (156) |
| Net change in accounts payable and other liabilities | (3,260) | (1,943) |
| Net change in contract liabilities | (502) | (503) |
| Cash generated from operating activities | 12,907 | 11,402 |
| Payments for employees' end of service benefits | (6) | (1) |
| Interest expense paid | (721) | (719) |
| Net cash generated from operating activities | 12,180 | 10,682 |
| Cash flows from investing activities | | |
| Payment for acquisition of property and equipment | (2,248) | (1,596) |
| Payment for intangible assets | (2,812) | (2,639) |
| Movement in restricted cash | 5,074 | (5,038) |
| Net cash generated from / (used in) investing activities | 14 | (9,273) |
| Cash flows from financing activities | | |
| Repayment of principal portion of lease liabilities | (2,984) | (2,795) |
| Dividends paid to shareholders | (3,275) | (2,911) |
| Capital introduced by non-controlling interests | - | 1,500 |
| Net cash used in financing activities | (6,259) | (4,206) |
| Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents | 5,935 | (2,797) |
| Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of period | 7,574 | 10,388 |
| Cash and cash equivalents, end of period | 13,509 | 7,591 |
| Comprising: | | |
| Cash and bank balances | 13,509 | 12,629 |
| Lease Restricted cash | - | (5,038) |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 13,509 | 7,591 |

The above Condensed Consolidated Statement of Financial Position, Condensed Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Condensed Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and Condensed Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity have been extracted from the Financial Information of Zain Bahrain B.S.C. for the Nine-Month period ended 30 September 2023, which were approved by the Board of Directors and issued by Deloitte & Touche, Kingdom of Bahrain on 8 November 2023.

Shaikh Ahmed Bin Ali Al Khalifa - Chairman

Mr. Bader AlKharafi - Board Member

Deloitte & Touche - Financial Auditors



Aluminium Bahrain B.S.C. (Alba)

Interim Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements

For the nine months ended 30 September 2023 (Reviewed)

www.albasmelter.com

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

At 30 September 2023

| | 30 September 2023 (Reviewed) BD '000 | 31 December 2022 (Audited) BD '000 |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| ASSETS | | |
| Non-current assets | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 1,851,598 | 1,880,527 |
| Trade and other receivables | 2,912 | 3,013 |
| Derivative financial instruments | 14,715 | 18,095 |
| Deferred tax assets | 81 | 81 |
| | <u>1,869,306</u> | <u>1,901,716</u> |
| Current assets | | |
| Inventories | 404,242 | 371,542 |
| Trade and other receivables | 246,967 | 243,189 |
| Derivative financial instruments | 6,328 | 7,120 |
| Bank balances and cash | 106,745 | 93,617 |
| | <u>764,282</u> | <u>715,468</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>2,633,588</u> | <u>2,617,184</u> |
| EQUITY AND LIABILITIES | | |
| Equity | | |
| Share capital | 142,000 | 142,000 |
| Treasury shares | (4,455) | (4,831) |
| Statutory reserve | 71,000 | 71,000 |
| Capital reserve | 249 | 249 |
| Cash flow hedge reserve | 21,043 | 25,209 |
| Retained earnings | 1,543,249 | 1,588,831 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | <u>1,773,086</u> | <u>1,822,458</u> |
| Non-current liabilities | | |
| Loans and borrowings | 495,468 | 505,098 |
| Lease liabilities | 4,657 | 4,752 |
| Employees' end of service benefits | 1,799 | 1,401 |
| | <u>501,924</u> | <u>511,251</u> |
| Current liabilities | | |
| Loans and borrowings | 188,777 | 124,115 |
| Lease liabilities | 314 | 615 |
| Trade and other payables | 169,278 | 158,745 |
| Derivative financial instruments | 209 | - |
| | <u>358,578</u> | <u>283,475</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | <u>860,502</u> | <u>794,726</u> |
| TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES | <u>2,633,588</u> | <u>2,617,184</u> |

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS

For the nine months ended 30 September 2023 (Reviewed)

| | Three-month period ended | | Nine-month period ended | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | 30 Sept' 2023 BD'000 | 30 Sept' 2022 BD'000 | 30 Sept' 2023 BD'000 | 30 Sept' 2022 BD'000 |
| Revenue from contracts with customers | 399,969 | 403,204 | 1,156,934 | 1,378,526 |
| Cost of revenue | (351,365) | (324,179) | (960,549) | (913,484) |
| GROSS PROFIT | <u>48,604</u> | <u>79,025</u> | <u>196,385</u> | <u>465,042</u> |
| Other income - net | 2,021 | 2,429 | 5,086 | 3,084 |
| Foreign exchange (loss) gain - net | (1,669) | 3,880 | (543) | 13,021 |
| General and administrative expenses | (8,861) | (9,296) | (30,767) | (28,310) |
| Selling and distribution expenses | (10,700) | (20,506) | (42,863) | (65,666) |
| Finance costs | (12,102) | (8,937) | (42,237) | (24,226) |
| Realised gain on settlement of cash flow hedge for interest rate swap (IRS) | - | - | 10,060 | 14,410 |
| Changes in fair value of derivatives financial instruments | (269) | 412 | (216) | (632) |
| PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD BEFORE TAX | <u>17,024</u> | <u>47,007</u> | <u>94,905</u> | <u>376,723</u> |
| Tax | 264 | 974 | (272) | - |
| PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD | <u>17,288</u> | <u>47,981</u> | <u>94,633</u> | <u>376,723</u> |
| BASIC AND DILUTED EARNINGS PER SHARE (FILS) | <u>12</u> | <u>34</u> | <u>67</u> | <u>266</u> |

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the nine months ended 30 September 2023 (Reviewed)

| | Share capital BD '000 | Treasury shares BD '000 | Statutory reserve BD '000 | Capital reserve BD '000 | Cash flow hedge reserve BD '000 | Retained earnings BD '000 | Total equity BD '000 |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Balance at 1 January 2023 | 142,000 | (4,831) | 71,000 | 249 | 25,209 | 1,588,831 | 1,822,458 |
| Profit for the period | - | - | - | - | - | 94,633 | 94,633 |
| Other comprehensive income for the period | - | - | - | - | 5,894 | - | 5,894 |
| Total comprehensive income for the period | - | - | - | - | 5,894 | 94,633 | 100,527 |
| Net movement in treasury shares | - | 376 | - | - | - | (65) | 311 |
| Final dividend for 2022 approved and paid | - | - | - | - | - | (121,345) | (121,345) |
| Interim dividend for 2023 approved and paid | - | - | - | - | - | (18,805) | (18,805) |
| Reclassification adjustment of realised gain on settlement of cash flow hedge to profit or loss for interest rate swap (IRS) | - | - | - | - | (10,060) | - | (10,060) |
| Balance at 30 September 2023 | <u>142,000</u> | <u>(4,455)</u> | <u>71,000</u> | <u>249</u> | <u>21,043</u> | <u>1,543,249</u> | <u>1,773,086</u> |
| Balance at 1 January 2022 | 142,000 | (3,742) | 71,000 | 249 | 944 | 1,292,569 | 1,503,020 |
| Profit for the period | - | - | - | - | - | 376,723 | 376,723 |
| Other comprehensive income for the period | - | - | - | - | 39,354 | - | 39,354 |
| Total comprehensive income for the period | - | - | - | - | 39,354 | 376,723 | 416,077 |
| Net movement in treasury shares | - | (1,541) | - | - | - | 964 | (577) |
| Final dividend for 2021 approved and paid | - | - | - | - | - | (75,316) | (75,316) |
| Interim dividend for 2022 approved and paid | - | - | - | - | - | (45,123) | (45,123) |
| Reclassification adjustment of realised gain on settlement of cash flow hedge to profit or loss for interest rate swap (IRS) | - | - | - | - | (14,410) | - | (14,410) |
| Balance at 30 September 2022 | <u>142,000</u> | <u>(5,283)</u> | <u>71,000</u> | <u>249</u> | <u>25,888</u> | <u>1,549,817</u> | <u>1,783,671</u> |

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the nine months ended 30 September 2023 (Reviewed)

| | Three-month period ended | | Nine-month period ended | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | 30 Sept' 2023 BD'000 | 30 Sept' 2022 BD'000 | 30 Sept' 2023 BD'000 | 30 Sept' 2022 BD'000 |
| PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD | <u>17,288</u> | <u>47,981</u> | <u>94,633</u> | <u>376,723</u> |
| OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME | | | | |
| Other comprehensive income that may be reclassified to profit or loss in subsequent periods: | | | | |
| Effective portion of changes in fair values of cash flow hedge | 3,461 | 10,211 | 5,894 | 39,354 |
| TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD | <u>20,749</u> | <u>58,192</u> | <u>100,527</u> | <u>416,077</u> |

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the nine months ended 30 September 2023 (Reviewed)

| | Nine-month period ended | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 30 Sept' 2023 BD '000 | 30 Sept' 2022 BD '000 |
| OPERATING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Profit for the period before tax | 94,905 | 376,723 |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Depreciation and amortisation | 98,561 | 93,917 |
| Provision for employees' end of service benefits | 1,377 | 1,207 |
| Allowance for expected credit losses | 1,063 | 1,168 |
| Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment | 256 | 379 |
| Changes in fair value of derivative financial instruments | 216 | 632 |
| Interest income | (2,473) | (220) |
| Forex loss/(gain) on revaluation of loans and borrowings and bank balances - net | 1,017 | (24,183) |
| Realised gain on settlement of cash flow hedge for interest rate swap (IRS) | (10,060) | (14,410) |
| Finance costs | 42,237 | 24,226 |
| Operating profit before changes in working capital | 227,099 | 459,439 |
| Working capital changes: | | |
| Inventories | (32,700) | (137,905) |
| Trade and other receivables | (4,804) | 31,486 |
| Trade and other payables | (1,863) | (36,911) |
| Net cash generated from operations | 187,732 | 316,109 |
| Employees' end of service benefits paid | (979) | (1,655) |
| Income tax paid | (272) | (791) |
| Net cash flows from operating activities | <u>186,481</u> | <u>313,663</u> |
| INVESTING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment | (69,975) | (59,690) |
| Proceeds from disposal of property, plant and equipment | 87 | 781 |
| Interest received | 2,537 | 220 |
| Net cash flows used in investing activities | <u>(67,351)</u> | <u>(58,689)</u> |
| FINANCING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Proceeds from loans and borrowings | 349,330 | 453,541 |
| Repayment of loans and borrowings | (300,133) | (554,533) |
| Interest on loans and borrowings paid | (22,921) | (32,934) |
| Payment of leases liabilities | (397) | (596) |
| Dividends paid | (140,150) | (120,439) |
| Settlement of derivatives | 10,060 | 14,410 |
| Purchase of treasury shares | (6,255) | (8,759) |
| Proceeds from resale of treasury shares | 6,566 | 8,183 |
| Net cash flows used in financing activities | <u>(103,900)</u> | <u>(241,127)</u> |
| NET INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS | <u>15,230</u> | <u>13,847</u> |
| Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January | 93,617 | 93,311 |
| Effect of movement in exchange rates on bank balances and cash | (2,102) | (2,483) |
| Restricted cash (Deposit pledged against short term borrowings) | - | (29,210) |
| CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT 30 SEPTEMBER | <u>106,745</u> | <u>75,465</u> |
| Cash and cash equivalents comprise: | | |
| Bank balances | 86,921 | 49,848 |
| Short term deposits with original maturities of three months or less | 19,755 | 54,768 |
| Cash in hand | 69 | 59 |
| Bank balances and cash in interim consolidated statement of financial position | <u>106,745</u> | <u>104,675</u> |
| Restricted cash (Deposit pledged against short term borrowings) | - | (29,210) |
| | <u>106,745</u> | <u>75,465</u> |

These Interim Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements were authorised for issue in accordance with a resolution of the Directors on 08 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

Khalid Al Rumaihi
Chairman

Isa Bin Khalid Bin Abdullah Al Khalifa
Director

Ali Al Baqali
Chief Executive Officer

Alba reports third-quarter and nine-months profits

TDT | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba) reported third quarter and nine-month profits, which the company said were driven by lower LME prices (down by 8% YoY in Q3 2023 and down by 20% YoY for the 9 months of 2023) and lower premiums (down by 39% YoY in Q3 2023 and down by 36% YoY for the 9 months of 2023).

The company also said it expects the aftershocks from pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war will continue to weigh on aluminium fundamentals in the short-run.

Q3 results

Third quarter profit was BD17.3 million (US\$46m) down by 64% Year-over-Year (YoY), versus BD48m (US\$127.6m) in the same quarter a year ago.

Earnings per share was 12



Khalid Al Rumaihi



Ali Al Baqali

compared to fils 34 for the same period in 2022.

Total comprehensive income stood at BD20.7m (US\$55.2m) versus BD58.2m (US\$154.8m) – down by 64% in the year-earlier quarter.

Gross profit was BD48.6m (US\$129.3m) versus BD79m (US\$210.2m) for the same period in 2022 – down by 38% YoY.

Revenue from contracts with customers was BD400m

(US\$1,063.8m) versus BD403.2m (US\$1,072.4m) in Q3 2022 – down by 0.8% YoY.

Nine-month results

Profit was BD94.6m (US\$251.7m), down by 75% YoY, versus BD376.7m (US\$1,001.9m) for the same period in 2022. Earnings per Share was 67 versus 266 for the same period in 2022.

Total comprehensive income

was BD100.5m (US\$267.3m), down by 75.8% YoY, compared to BD416.1m (US\$1,106.6m) in the same period of 2022.

Revenue from contracts with customers was BD1,157m (US\$3,077m) versus BD1,378.5m (US\$3,666.3m) in the same period of 2022 – down by 16% YoY.

Chairman of Alba's Board of Directors, Khalid Al Rumaihi stated: "Our financial performance demonstrate our ability to adapt and thrive in a challenging economic backdrop and I am confident in our ability to sustain this momentum as we step into 2024."

Alba's Chief Executive Officer, Ali Al Baqali said: "Such performance was possible thanks to our ability to effectively manage costs and optimize our operations – allowing us to partially mitigate the impact of market fluctuations."

Zain Bahrain Q3 profit rises 1.8% to BD 1.61 m

TDT | Manama

Zain Bahrain reported third quarter 2023 net profit of BD 1.61 million, representing an increase of 1.8% from BD 1.58 m in Q3 2022. Earnings per share remained stable at 4 fils.

Revenue decreased by 1.3% to BD 16.74 m from BD 16.97 m in Q3 2022.

For the nine months, Zain Bahrain reported a net profit of BD 4.36 m, representing a 1.7% decrease from BD 4.43 m in the same period as in 2022. Earnings per share stood at 12 fils, the same as in 2022.

Revenue reached BD 53.87 million, an increase of 6.6% compared to BD 50.55 m for the same period in 2022.

Zain Bahrain Chairman, Shaikh Ahmed bin Ali Al Khalifa said: "This quarter, we have maximized our efforts to grow our core and digital services by enriching consumers' value propositions with digital ser-



We have successfully sunset our 3G network across the Kingdom and used that spectrum to improve the reach and speed of 4G/5G services

SHAIKH AHMED BIN ALI AL KHALIFA

vices catering to their new lifestyles and emerging demands."

He added: "The efforts during the first nine months of 2023 will help us bring the digital world's full potential to our customers across all segments."

Al Baraka Group posts Q3, nine-month profits

TDT | Manama

Al Baraka Group yesterday reported third quarter 2023 net income attributable to shareholders of US\$ 37 million, compared to US\$ 41m in 2022, primarily due to the high cost of funding and the depreciation of regional currencies against the US dollar.

Earnings per share was 3.08 US Cents compared with 3.41 US Cents for the same period of 2022. Total net income increased by 10% to US\$ 77m compared to US\$ 70m during the same period in 2022.

Nine-month results



Sheikh Abdullah Saleh Kamel



Housseem Ben Haj Amor

Net income attributable to equity holders of the parent company was US\$ 126m, equal to the Group's figures during the same time period in 2022. This was due to the high income from financing and investments which was offset the elevated cost of funding and the depre-

ciation of regional currencies against the US dollar.

Earnings per Share was 8.96 US Cents, down from 9.09 US Cents during the same period in 2022.

The continued improvement in the performance and cost-cutting measures of its

banking units led to the increase in total net income to US\$ 247m compared to US\$ 207m in 2022, an increase of 19%.

Sheikh Abdullah Saleh Kamel, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al Baraka Group, expressed his satisfaction with the profits, which he said, "underscores our flexibility and ability to adapt when it comes to global market fluctuations and the challenges they present."

Housseem Ben Haj Amor, Group Chief Executive Officer and Board Executive Member of Al Baraka Group, said; "Our strong performance is a result of our increased focus on enhanced investments and our improved operational performance."

Export Bahrain, Alibaba.com sign trade deal



Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro

TDT | Manama



The deal signing

Export Bahrain, the Kingdom of Bahrain's national export promotion agency and Alibaba.com, a leading platform for global business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce, yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost global trade and economic growth in Bahrain.

The MoU signed during the 6th China International Import Exhibition held in Shanghai, will enable Export Bahrain and Alibaba.com to leverage their respective strengths and expertise to facilitate trade, reduce barriers, and enhance market access for Bahraini businesses. The MoU was the result of extensive discussions held on the sidelines of a high-level trade visit to China by Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro,

Bahrain's Minister of Industry and Commerce.

Export Bahrain and Alibaba.com will work together to: Facilitate trade and reduce barriers for Bahraini exporters, and Enhance market access for Bahraini businesses.

Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry, Trade & Commerce and Chairman of Export Bahrain said, "This MOU is a testament to our commitment to enhancing Bahrain's global trade footprint. Alibaba.com's extensive global reach aligns perfectly with our goals to empower Bahraini exporters to expand into international markets."

Safa Akhaliq, CEO of Export Bahrain and Andrew Zhang, Vice President & Head of Global Supplier Development of Alibaba.com, welcomed the deal.

US Cybersecurity Company Resecurity Opens Office and Technology Hub in Bahrain

TDT | Manama

Resecurity Inc. (USA), a Los Angeles-based cybersecurity and intelligence company serving Fortune 500 clients globally, recently announced the opening of its latest office in Manama, Bahrain, supported by the Bahrain Economic Development Board. The Manama-based office will serve the local market as well as Resecurity subsidiaries across GCC.

Gene Yoo, Chief Executive Officer of Resecurity Inc., said the hub in Bahrain marks a pivotal decision to serve clients locally and in the Gulf beyond.

Musab Abdulla, the Executive Director of Business Development Information and Communications Technology (ICT) at EDB said, "Resecurity's tech hub will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise through dedicated workshops and training programs designed to further empower the local workforce with the necessary skills to navigate the ever-evolving cybersecurity landscape."

This Diwali, get guaranteed gold coins on gold jewellery purchase with Malabar Gold & Diamonds

Customers will get assured gold coins on purchase of Gold jewellery worth BD 300

TDT | Manama



Indians across the globe are on the last leg of their festive shopping as Diwali Day draws near. Ahead of the festival of lights, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer globally with over 335 showrooms across 11 countries, has ramped up its festive season offers across all of its showrooms globally. Customers will be eligible for free gold coins on the purchase of gold jewellery worth BD 300 from 9th to 11th November 2023. The offer can be availed across all Malabar Gold & Diamonds outlets in the GCC, Far East, the USA & the UK.

As part of the ongoing offer

that has been running across Malabar Gold & Diamonds showrooms, customers were eligible for free gold coins on the purchase of diamond and precious gem jewellery worth BD 300 and above. As the auspicious occasion of Dhanteras draws near, the assured gold coin offer that has been extended to cover gold jewellery purchase as well, is sure to be great news for jewellery buyers.

"We've been hearing great reviews about our Festive Jewellery collection from our customers. Considering the preferences of our multicultural audience, we took special care to ensure

that our jewellery collection incorporates designs to suit the cultural nuances of every celebration. We have a strong customer base who chooses to buy jewellery on Dhanteras day as part of safeguarding their beliefs and with Dhanteras just around the corner, we hope to add more value and joy to their celebrations by introducing the free gold coin offer on gold jewellery purchase as well", said Mr. Shamlal Ahamed, MD-International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

On Dhanteras Day (Friday, 10th November), all the outlets of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Bahrain will be open from 8.00 am, to be able to serve the high customer footfall that is expected at the showrooms.

The festive jewellery collection in Gold, Diamonds & Precious gems that the brand has unveiled during the festive season has been a tremendous hit amongst customers, eliciting a warm reception.

SMEs Development Board and BisB organize event to support SMEs

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), the leading provider of Islamic digital banking services in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and



Jawad Humaidan

SMES Development Board announced the launch of an event in support of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), set to take place at the Bank's Financial Mall in Budaiya, between 12 to 16 November 2023, from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The SMEs Development Board and BisB are organizing an event to showcase support for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kingdom. This event will provide innovative financing solu-

tions, instant services like 24-hour financing approval, and exclusive offers. BisB's strategic partners, including the Labour Fund 'Tamkeen,' STC Bahrain, Takaful Insurance, Export Bahrain, and Visa, will offer their services and special packages. The event will also feature other companies in fields like office interior design, corporate branding, marketing, advertising, printing, accounting, and auditing.

Jawad Humaidan, Chief Corporate and Institutional Banking Officer at BisB, said: "We aim to provide a comprehensive ecosystem for the SMEs to thrive and prosper."

News in brief

Ukraine said yesterday

it was behind the assassination of a Russia-backed politician and former militia leader who died in a car bomb attack in eastern Ukraine. Mikhail Filipenko, a deputy in the pro-Moscow Lugansk regional parliament, was killed on Wednesday morning when an "unidentified explosive device" detonated under his 4x4, Russian investigators said earlier. In a statement issued a few hours after the attack, Ukraine's military intelligence directorate said it had carried out a "special operation to eliminate" Filipenko, working "jointly with representatives of the resistance movement." Several high-profile backers of Russia's assault on Ukraine and Moscow-installed officials have been attacked since Russia launched its offensive last February -- though outright claims of responsibility by Kyiv are rare. Filipenko was a deputy in the Lugansk regional parliament and a former head of a Moscow-backed separatist militia set up in 2014 to fight against Kyiv.



Ukraine says it was behind car bombing of Russian proxy politician

Russia sentences captive Ukrainian soldier to 19 years



A Russian military court yesterday sentenced a Ukrainian soldier to 19 years for allegedly shooting a civilian he suspected of being a Russian infiltrator in Mariupol last March. Russian investigators said Anton Cherednik, a member of Ukraine's naval infantry, killed one man in the southern Ukrainian city -- which was under siege by Russian forces at the time -- after stopping two civilians while on a patrol. Russian forces launched an intense assault on Mariupol, a port city home to more than 400,000 people before the conflict, destroying large swathes in weeks of air strikes, shelling and gun battles at the start of the conflict last year.

Putin meets senior Chinese general, hails growing military ties



Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed strengthening military ties with Beijing yesterday as he hosted a senior Chinese general in Moscow. Russia has bolstered ties with its Chinese neighbour in the last year, as it seeks allies against the backdrop of its dragging offensive on Ukraine. "Our contacts in the military and military-technology spheres are becoming increasingly important," Putin told Zhang Youxia, a high-ranking general and vice chairman of Beijing's Central Military Commission. In televised remarks, the Russian president said Moscow and Beijing were not building a Cold War-style "military alliance", but said cooperation between them is "a serious factor stabilising the global situation." He said the United States was boosting its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region, and that Russia and China would react "calmly, carefully and by strengthening our defence capabilities." Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu had earlier welcomed Zhang and a Chinese military delegation in a red carpet ceremony in the Russian capital.

SPOTLIGHT

South Korean man killed by industrial robot



Representative picture

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

A man was crushed to death by a robot in South Korea after the machine apparently failed to differentiate him from the boxes of produce it was handling, the Yonhap news agency reported yesterday. The man, a robotics company worker in his 40s, was inspecting the robot's sensor operations at a distribution centre for agricultural produce in South Gyeongsang province.

The industrial robot, which was lifting boxes filled with

bell peppers and placing them on a pallet, appears to have malfunctioned and identified the man as a box, Yonhap reported citing the police.

The robotic arm pushed the man's upper body down against the conveyor belt, crushing his face and chest, according to Yonhap.

He was transferred to the hospital but died later, the report said.

In March, a South Korean man in his 50s suffered serious injuries after getting trapped by a robot while working at an automobile parts manufacturing plant.

Massive destruction of Gaza

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Israel's widespread and systematic bombardment of housing and civilian infrastructure in Gaza is a war crime, as are the indiscriminate Hamas rocket attacks that hit Israeli dwellings, an independent UN expert said Wednesday.

A month of Israeli strikes on targets within the Gaza Strip have destroyed or damaged 45% of all housing units in the Palestinian territory, Balakrishnan Rajagopal said, warning the destruction comes at a "tremendous cost to human life".

The UN special rapporteur on the right to adequate housing stressed that systematic or widespread bombardment of housing, civilian objects and infrastructure are strictly prohibited under international law.

"Carrying out hostilities with the knowledge that they will systematically destroy and damage civilian housing and infrastructure, rendering an entire city -- such as Gaza City -- uninhabitable for civilians is a war crime," he said.

When such acts are "directed against a civilian population, they also amount to crimes against humanity", he said.

Rajagopal stressed that civilian housing in Israel was also not a



A Palestinian civil defence member sprays a building with a hose to put out a fire in a collapsed building in the aftermath of Israeli bombardment in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip

military object, warning that Hamas's continuing indiscriminate launching of rockets from Gaza and elsewhere also constituted "a war crime".

According to the Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza, Israel's bombardment has killed more than 10,500 people, most of them

women and children.

Nearly 2,500 others, more than half of them children, have been reported missing and are most likely trapped under the rubble.

'Domicide'

Rajagopal, an independent expert appointed by the UN Human

Rights Council but who does not speak on behalf of the United Nations, had previously coined the term "domicide" to refer to the systematic and widespread attacks on civilian housing and infrastructure that cause death and suffering.

Domicide, he said, "is now be-

Michelangelo's 'secret' sketches open to public

AFP | Rome, Italy

Sketches drawn on the walls of a small room in Florence by Renaissance artist Michelangelo as he hid from an angry pope are going on show for the first time.

Charcoal figures run along the sides of the room, a former coal cellar in the depths of the Museum of the Medici Chapels which will open to the public from November 15.

Known as Michelangelo's "secret room", the space -- which measures 10 metres by three metres (33 feet by 10 feet) -- was used to store coal until 1955.

It was then "unused, sealed



Michelangelo

and forgotten for decades below a trapdoor covered by wardrobes, furniture and stacked furnishings" before being discovered again in 1975, the museum said in a statement.

The director at the time, Paolo Dal Poggetto, attributed many of the sketches uncovered to Michelangelo Buonarroti, best known for his statue of David and the frescos in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel.

Dal Poggetto believed Michelangelo had hidden from Pope Clement VII in the room for two months in 1530 because the pontiff, a member of the Medici family, was "infuriated" with him.

The artist had served as a supervisor of the city's fortifications during the short-lived republican government (1527 to 1530), when the Medici were driven out of the city.

"The drawings, still being studied by critics, were produced during the artist's 'self-confinement' period, using the walls of the small room to 'sketch out' some of his projects," the museum said.

Curator Francesca de Luca said the space was "truly unique for its exceptional evocative potential".

"Its walls appear to be teeming with numerous sketches of figures, largely of monumental size," she said in the statement.

"These are accompanied by studies, varying between in-depth and superficial analyses, capturing details of the body, facial features and unusual poses."

Scientists blame climate change for 'extreme drought' in Iraq, Iran and Syria

AFP | Baghdad, Iraq

The "extreme" drought gripping Iraq, Syria and Iran would not have occurred without climate change caused primarily by burning fossil fuels, scientists said Wednesday, warning that punishing dry spells will become more intense as the world warms.

High temperatures due to human-caused climate change made the drought "much more likely to happen" -- about 25 times more likely in Syria and Iraq and 16 times more likely in Iran, according to the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group.

"Human-induced climate change has increased the intensity of such a drought such that



Representative picture

it would not have been classified as a drought in a 1.2C cooler world," said the scientists.

It found that existing vulnerability from "years of conflict and political instability" also reduced people's ability to respond to the drought, sparking a "humanitarian disaster".

The research focused on the period from July 2020 to June

2023 in two regions where impacts have been most severe: Iran, and the basin of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the rivers that cross Syria and Iraq.

Both regions are currently experiencing an "extreme drought" as classified by the US Drought Monitor scale, said the scientists in a statement.

El Nino se

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

The El Nino weather phenomenon, which triggers higher global temperatures, is expected to last until at least April 2024, the United Nations said yesterday.

El Nino is a naturally occurring climate pattern typically associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as drought in some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere. The UN's World Meteorological Organization said the current El Nino, which developed rapidly during July-August this year, was likely to peak between now and January.

"There is a 90-percent likelihood it will persist throughout the upcoming northern hemisphere winter/southern hemisphere summer," it said in its lat-

1799

Napoleon Bonaparte pulls off a coup and becomes the dictator of France under the title of First Consul



1980

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein declares holy war against Iran

1994

Darmstadtium, Chemical element 110, discovered at GSI Helmholtz Centre for Heavy Ion Research near Darmstadt, Germany

1998

Brokerage houses are ordered to pay 1.03 billion USD to NASDAQ investors to compensate for price-fixing - largest civil settlement in US history

Gaza housing a war crime: UN expert

Israel to shun Paris Gaza aid conference: French presidency

Paris, France
Israeli representatives will not participate at today's "humanitarian conference" for Gaza in Paris organised by French President Emmanuel Macron, his office said.



A child carries a pot as Palestinians cook in a street in Rafah

Like other governments, Israel nevertheless has "an interest in the humanitarian situation improving in Gaza", an official in Macron's office, who asked not to be named, told reporters yesterday. Macron had spoken on Tuesday to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the pair will talk again once the aid conference is over, the Elysee Palace added.

The French leader had also spoken to Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Qatar's

Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on Tuesday, his office said. Both countries are playing a key role in attempts to bring more aid into the Gaza Strip.

Today's aid conference has been put together in a hurry on the sidelines of the Paris Peace Forum on November 10-11, an annual event launched by Macron.

Recent weeks have seen growing calls for humanitarian "pauses" or a full ceasefire to allow aid to enter Gaza and keep hopes alive of freeing the hostages.

International concern over the fate of Gaza's civilians, most of whom cannot flee the sealed-off territory, has prompted calls for a ceasefire.

But Israel has remained firm in keeping up its offensive, with a stated objective of destroying the Palestinian militant group Hamas -- which has governed Gaza since 2007.

Netanyahu has said there will be no fuel delivered to Gaza and no ceasefire with Hamas unless the hostages are freed.

The UN estimates that \$1.2 billion in aid will be needed for the populations of Gaza and the West Bank from now until the end of the year.

G7 backs 'humanitarian pauses' in Gaza, reaffirms Ukraine support

Tokyo, Japan

G7 foreign ministers said yesterday that they supported "humanitarian pauses and corridors" in the Hamas-Israel war but refrained from calling for a ceasefire.

The group also said after talks in Japan that their support for Ukraine in its war with Russia "will never waver" while calling on China not to support Moscow in the conflict.

"We stress the need for urgent action to address the deteriorating humanitarian crisis in Gaza... We support humanitarian pauses and corridors to facilitate

urgently needed assistance, civilian movement, and the release of hostages," a joint statement said.

The ministers also "emphasize Israel's right to defend itself and its people in accordance with international law as it seeks to prevent a recurrence" of the Hamas attacks on Israel on October 7.

It added: "We call on Iran to refrain from providing support for Hamas and taking further actions that destabilize the Middle East, including support for Lebanese Hezbollah and other non-state actors, and to use its influence with those groups to de-escalate regional tensions."

Blinken says Israel should not 'reoccupy' Gaza

Tokyo, Japan

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday called on Israel not to reoccupy Gaza once its war with Hamas ends.

Speaking to reporters after G7 foreign ministers held talks in Japan, Blinken listed what he said were "key elements" in order to create "durable peace and security."

"The United States believes key elements should include: no



forcible displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, not now, not after the war; No use of Gaza as a platform for terrorism or other violent attacks; No reoccupation of Gaza after the conflict ends," Blinken told reporters.

He added that other conditions included no "attempt to blockade or besiege Gaza" or any "reduction in the territory of Gaza."

Qatar negotiating release of 10-15 hostages for Gaza ceasefire: source

AFP | Doha, Qatar

Qatar is mediating negotiations between Israel and Hamas for the potential release of 10-15 hostages held in Gaza in exchange for a short ceasefire, a source briefed on the talks told AFP Wednesday.

"Negotiations mediated by the Qataris in coordination with the US are ongoing to secure the release of 10-15 hostages in exchange for a one- to two-day

ceasefire," the informed source said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the talks' sensitivity.

Qatar has been engaged in intense diplomacy to secure the release of those held by Hamas, negotiating the handover of four hostages -- two Israelis and two Americans -- in recent weeks.

Qatar also hosts the political office of Hamas and is the main residence of its self-exiled leader Ismail Haniyeh.

China ready to improve ties with US 'at all levels': VP

AFP | Singapore, Singapore

Beijing is ready to hold talks with the United States at "all levels", China's vice president said Wednesday ahead of an expected summit in San Francisco between leaders Xi Jinping and Joe Biden next week.

Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum in Singapore, Chinese Vice President Han Zheng said recent high-level meetings between Beijing and Washington were sending "positive signals" that relations were improving.

"We're ready to strengthen communication and dialogue with the United States at all levels, advance mutually beneficial cooperation, properly manage differences and joint-

ly address global challenges," Han said.

Relations between Washington and Beijing sunk to some of their deepest lows in recent years over a host of issues including export controls, human rights and national security. But both sides appear willing to patch things up, with Washington sending a number of top officials to Beijing this year in a bid to reestablish high-level dialogue.

US President Biden has said he expects to meet Chinese leader Xi on the sidelines of a summit in San Francisco next week for "constructive" talks.

Asked to confirm whether the summit would go ahead, China's foreign ministry Wednesday reiterated that the two sides had agreed to meet.

ing committed in Gaza".

Around 1.5 million people have been displaced in Gaza amid the destruction and Israeli calls to evacuate the entire north of the territory, according to UN figures.

Rajagopal said the Israeli evacuation order, issued despite a lack of adequate shelter and aid for those fleeing and while cutting off water, food, fuel and medicine and repeatedly attacking evacua-

tion routes and "safe zones", was "a cruel and blatant violation of international humanitarian law".

He said international humanitarian law is based on the distinction between civilian and military objects.

"Apartment buildings are not military objects. Hospitals and ambulances are not military objects. Refugee camps are not military objects," he said.

The expert insisted that even when combatants take shelter in civilian housing, as alleged in recent attacks on the Jabalia refugee camp, there is no justification for attacking entire apartment blocks housing civilians.

"No asserted right of self-defence under international law can cover such attacks," he said, adding that this was especially true "in the context of an occupation".

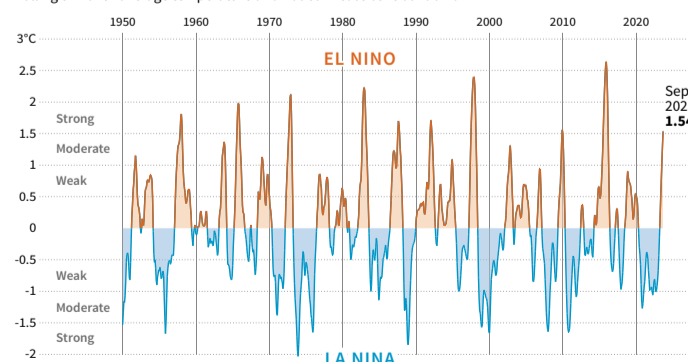


Sketches in the so called 'secret room' of Michelangelo

El Nino to last at least til April: UN

El Nino

The Oceanic Nino Index tracking the El Nino-Southern Oscillation climate pattern



latest update, adding that it was expected to last until at least April. The weather phenomenon typically occurs every two to seven years, and it usually increases global temperatures in the year after it develops.

casts for the current El Nino impact suggest a high likelihood of continued warming in the central-eastern equatorial Pacific through next April.

Above-normal sea-surface temperatures are also expected across most of the global oceans, while

above-normal temperatures are expected, too, over almost all land areas, it said.

Other impacts are likely to include above-normal rainfall in the Horn of Africa region and the La Plata basin in South America and in southeastern North America, as well as in parts of central and eastern Asia.



El Nino last occurred in 2018-2019 and was followed by an exceptionally long La Nina -- El Nino's cooling opposite -- which ended earlier this year.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Governments are literally doubling down on fossil fuel production, according to the latest @UNEP report. We need credible commitments to ramp up renewables, phase out fossil fuels & boost energy efficiency - while ensuring a just, equitable transition.

@antonioguterres

02



Five years ago, 12 people lost their lives in Thousand Oaks at the hands of a gunman armed with high-capacity magazines. Today, our hearts are with the victims' families and survivors. May we turn our pain into purpose by ending America's gun violence epidemic once and for all.

@POTUS

03



When #COVID19 struck, the world acted with urgency to respond, doing things differently because lives and livelihoods were on the line. The same sense of urgency is needed to negotiate a #PandemicAccord for a safer, healthier, fairer and more equitable world.

@DrTedros

04



The home front must be defended, so that the home front will give us the strength to continue as well. This will take time. But we, both the military and political leaderships, are very determined to complete the war, to complete this mission, and not give up

@IsraeliPM

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



Jordan goes electric

Electric vehicles gain traction in Jordan as petrol prices rise



Montaser al-Bustanji, of the "Bustanji motors" car dealership



Shadi Zatari, 43, owner of a US-made Tesla electric



A salesman at a car dealership assists a customer inspecting an electric vehicle

AFP | Amman, Jordan

Electric vehicle sales are surging in Jordan, a trend drivers and showrooms attribute to high petrol prices more than any concerns about air pollution and climate change. Boosted by low import taxes, especially affordable Chinese-made models have become a common sight on the streets of Amman and the kingdom's desert highways.

Tesla owner Shadi Zatari, 43, says he no longer worries about pump prices since he plugs in his car overnight at home, allowing him to drive 400 kilometres (250 miles) on a single charge. "The main goal of buying an electric car is definitely saving money," said the Amman-based merchant and father of three. "I saved almost two thirds of what



German-made electric cars for sale at a car dealership in Amman



A view of the "Haraj Tabbour" complex in Amman where traders and customers of traditional fuel cars sell and buy used cars.

I used to spend on gasoline." With Octane 90 unleaded petrol selling at about \$1.40 per litre, Zatari said he used to spend about 120 dinars (\$170) on fuel per month. He has slashed this to 40 dinars -- the average rise in his monthly electricity bill -- and is able to drive longer distances at no additional cost.

brid vehicle imports fall almost 25%.

Driven by savings

EVs have become a common sight, especially China's Changan Eado EV and E-Star, and models sold by BYD, Dongfeng and MG.

Zatari's car is one of 60,000 EVs now registered in Jordan -- still just a fraction of the total 2.2 million registered vehicles, but the fastest-growing segment.

The number of EVs on Jordan's roads rose 103% by the end of July from the same period last year.

The rise was 167% for all of 2022 -- a year that also saw imports of petrol and diesel powered cars drop 27% and hy-

Also popular are the South Korean-made Hyundai Ioniq 5 and Kona and Kia's Niro, as well as Japan's Nissan Leaf and Sylphy, Germany's Volkswagen ID4 and Italy's Fiat 500.

"There is currently a great demand for electric cars," said Hashim Al-Zayyat, director of Al-Zayyat Car Trading. "The main reason is the high price of gasoline in Jor-

dan, it is a burden with the high cost of living."

Jordan is facing tough economic times, with an unemployment rate of 22.6 percent last year, according to the International Monetary Fund, and youth unemployment around 50%.

Public debt exceeded 100% of GDP in the small and resource-poor country, which was hit hard by the Covid pandemic and the costs of hosting a large number of Syrian refugees.

The kingdom is now watching with high concern as Israel's war with Hamas militants flares in Gaza, the deadliest ever conflict in the Palestinian territory.

Amid the ongoing crises, budget-conscious Jordanians are mainly "interested in having the car travel the greatest distance with one charge", said

Zayyat.

Battery-powered cars have none of the toxic tailpipe emissions that pollute cities, and are considered clean overall if they are charged using solar or wind power.

For most Jordanians, Zayyat said, "the issue is a matter of savings, not an environmental issue at all." "The environment is the last thing one would think about," he added.

Government incentives

Jordan's government has encouraged the trend by slashing import duties on EVs to 10-15%, far lower than for petrol cars, where duties can top 80%.

It has also licensed dozens of charging points at petrol stations and private businesses, and the number of battery-powered cars in the government fleet increased by a fifth in 2022.

Chinese-made EVs are especially popular in Jordan, said Haytham Abu Hasan, a sales consultant at the Changan Auto dealership in the capital. "We used to sell 60 to 70 electric cars per month," he said. "Now we sell more than 100."

Many motorists driving petrol or diesel cars spend 150 to 200 dinars (\$211-280) on fuel per month, Abu Hasan said, compared with the extra cost of 30 to 40 dinars for battery-powered cars.

Many motorists value the range, with the Changan E-Star able to go more than 300 kilometres on a single charge, the Eado EV achieving more than 400 kilometres and the SL03 more than 500 kilometres, he said. "The demand for electric cars far exceeds the demand for gasoline cars, and every year it's greater than the year before."



Combustion vehicles have very comprehensive service schedules to cover oil changes, fluid flushes, spark plug replacements, timing belt services, and more. In sharp contrast, electric vehicles have a relatively simple electric motor that is virtually maintenance-free -- there are no oil changes, spark plugs to wear, or gearboxes to service.



Visitors look at the Audi Formula 1 racing concept car at the plant of Audi Hungary, one of the world's largest engine factories, in Győr, Hungary on November 7, 2023, prior to festivities to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Audi Hungaria. The Hungarian subsidiary of German automotive manufacturer of luxury vehicles started the serial production of its new generation electric engine.



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (R) presents a Turkish-made TOGG electric car to Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (3rd-R), on the sideline of the 10th Summit of the Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), in Astana.

Classifieds



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Stokes stars as England stop rot against Netherlands

AFP | Pune, India

Ben Stokes' maiden World Cup hundred set-up a 160-run win for England over the Netherlands in Pune on Wednesday as the struggling champions climbed off the bottom of the table.

Victory ended a five-game losing streak, with England having long since ceased to be in semi-final contention.

But just their second win of the 10-team tournament maintained England's hopes of a top-eight finish that would qualify them for the 2025 Champions Trophy in Pakistan.

England were in trouble at 192-6 after yet another batting collapse before Stokes' 108 and 51 from fellow all-rounder Chris Woakes took them to 339-9 in 50 overs.

The Netherlands were never in the hunt, collapsing to 179 all out inside 38 overs, Woakes and David Willey striking with the new ball before spinners Moeen Ali and Adil Rashid took three wickets each.

"I'm more pleased for us to get a victory over the line, it's been a tough World Cup," said Stokes.

Chris Woakes is a genuine

Leading batsmen and bowlers at the Cricket World Cup:

Batsmen

Quinton de Kock (RSA) 550 runs, Virat Kohli (IND) 543, Rachin Ravindra (NZL) 523, David Warner (AUS) 446, Rohit Sharma (IND) 442, Glenn Maxwell (AUS) 397, Daryl Mitchell (NZL) 375

Bowlers

Dilshan Madushanka (SRI) 21 wickets; Adam Zampa (AUS) 20; Marco Jansen (RSA) 17; Shaheen Shah Afridi (PAK) 16, Mohammad Shami (IND) 16; Jasprit Bumrah (IND) 15; Mitchell Santner (NZL) 14, Gerald Coetzee (RSA) 14, Ravindra Jadeja (IND) 14, Bas de Leede (NED) 14

Cricket World Cup standings

(played, won, lost, tied, no result, points, net run rate):

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------|--------------|
| India | 8 8 0 0 0 16 | 2.456 | -- qualified |
| South Africa | 8 6 2 0 0 12 | 1.376 | -- qualified |
| Australia | 8 6 2 0 0 12 | 0.861 | -- qualified |
| New Zealand | 8 4 4 0 0 8 | 0.398 | |
| ----- | | | |
| Pakistan | 8 4 4 0 0 8 | 0.036 | |
| Afghanistan | 8 4 4 0 0 8 | -0.338 | |
| England | 8 2 6 0 0 4 | -0.885 | |
| Bangladesh | 8 2 6 0 0 4 | -1.142 | |
| Sri Lanka | 8 2 6 0 0 4 | -1.160 | |
| Netherlands | 8 2 6 0 0 4 | -1.635 | |

Note: Top four teams qualify for the semi-finals

all-rounder. He's a very, very experienced cricketer. Having the skill he has with the bat down the order and seeing him with the new-ball tonight, it was very special."

England talisman Stokes, battling a longstanding knee injury, made a painstaking fifty in 58 balls and then accelerated, tak-

ing just 20 more deliveries to reach his fifth one-day international century.

He was well-supported by Woakes as England added 124 runs in the last 10 overs to finish on 339-9.

Test skipper Stokes, 32, eventually holed out in the last over for 108.

A target of 340 always looked like it might be beyond non-Test side the Netherlands, who had twice defeated England at the T20 World Cup but lost all six of the teams' previous ODI meetings.

"We've been in good in patches, similar today, we just need to do it for longer," said Dutch skipper Scott Edwards whose team stunned South Africa earlier in the tournament.

England 'quality side' "England are a quality side and they took it away from us."

England came into this match rock bottom of the table but opener Dawid Malan led the way with a 36-ball fifty that featured 40 runs in boundaries after skipper Jos Buttler won the toss.

England, however, lost two wickets in quick succession.

Joe Root fell for 28 in bizarre fashion when bowled between his legs by Logan van Beek attempting a reverse scoop.

And 133-2 became 139-3 when Malan was run out in sight of his second hundred of the tournament when sent back by Stokes going for a needless single.

Harry Brook gave his wicket away before Buttler and Moeen both fell tamely in single figures.

Stokes, dropped in the deep on 41 off a tough chance, survived a tight lbw review before smashing a no-ball from spinner Aryan Dutt -- and the ensuing free-hit -- for sixes.

He went into the 90s with another six, a straight drive off Bas de Leede.

A reverse swept four off paceman Paul van Meekeren, his sixth of the innings, saw Stokes to a 78-ball hundred that included five sixes on a ground where he had played for Pune in the Indian Premier League.

Woakes and Stokes shared a seventh-wicket stand of 129.

Van Beek -- who bowled 10 wides -- suffering in a return of 2-88.

The Netherlands slumped to 13-2 in reply, Max O'Dowd chipping Woakes to mid-on before Colin Ackermann was caught behind for a duck off Willey

Several batsmen made it into the 30s, while Teja Nidamanuru was left stranded on 41 not out when the man van Meekeren was stumped off Moeen.



Stokes celebrates with his teammate Chris Woakes

Borrowed shoes to World Cup stardom for fisherman's son Madushanka

Bengaluru, India

Dilshan Madushanka's World Cup ends on Thursday with the Sri Lanka fast bowler on top of the wicket-taking charts, the latest highlight in a career which began in borrowed shoes.

The son of a fisherman, Madushanka goes into the game against New Zealand with 21 wickets, more than celebrated fellow fast bowlers Shaheen Shah Afridi, Mohammad Shami and Jasprit Bumrah.

Amongst the left-armer's collection were the marquee dis-

missals of India's Virat Kohli and Australian duo, David Warner and Steve Smith.

Sadly for Madushanka, he found little support from the other end during the tournament -- fellow quick Kasun Rajitha is the next best Sri Lankan on the list with eight wickets.

"We would have liked to have somebody to support and back up Dilshan (who's had) a brilliant tournament," said Sri Lanka assistant coach Naveed Nawaz on Wednesday.

"So, it's a disappointment, I should say."

Madushanka's journey has been nothing short of a fairytale.

He had to drop out of serious cricket early on as he and his school could not afford the luxuries of the game including



Madushanka (L) bowls as India's Virat Kohli watches

pads and balls. He then turned to the less expensive soft-ball cricket where he was spotted by a district coach who helped him get selected as a net bowl-

er for the India and Sri Lanka Under-19 teams. Madushanka went through the sessions with borrowed shoes that hurt him.

He still impressed with his

performance and soon received a call from former Sri Lanka left-arm quick Chaminda Vaas who is now part of the squad's coaching set-up.

"He can go far and emerge as one of the greatest fast bowlers ever produced in Sri Lanka," Vaas confidently predicted to Indian magazine Sportstar.

"If he can work on these things, I am sure,

Madushanka made his international Twenty20 debut in last year's Asia Cup in Dubai and played a key part in the team's title win.

His ODI bow in India followed earlier this year before injuries to Dushmantha Chameera and Wanindu Hasaranga meant he became the pivot of the Sri Lankan attack in the World Cup.

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Al Najma keep semis hopes alive

Bahrain handball champions defeat San Francisco Calheat from US in IHF Men's Super Globe in Dammam



● **Mohammed Habib Ahmed scores nine goals, named Player of the Match**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain and Asian clubs' champions Al Najma Club yesterday kept their hopes alive of advancing to the semi-finals in the prestigious IHF Men's Super Globe, being held in Dammam, Saudi Arabia.

Najma outclassed the San Francisco Calheat from the US 29-22 to claim their first win in Group D of the competition's preliminary round. They had previously lost by a single goal to Barlinek Industria Kielce of Poland in their first game on Tuesday, but are now in the hunt for a spot in the last four.

They moved to temporary first place on the pool standings with one game to go between the Calheat and Barlinek Industria Kielce. That is scheduled to take place today at 12.15pm, Bahrain time, and it will determine the

final ranking in Group D.

Only the top team in each of the four preliminary round pools move on to the semis. The runners-up go to the fifth-to-eighth place bracket, while the bottom clubs will play in the ninth-to-12th placement games to determine their overall classification.

Najma and the Calheat were engaged in a tight battle in the first half yesterday, with the Bahrainis going ahead by no more than three. They took a 12-9 advantage into the break.

In the final 30 minutes, Najma went on an 8-3 scoring run to go up 20-12, and they never looked back. Their biggest gap from the Calheat was 10 goals, 29-19, when Mahdi Saad converted on a fast-break.

Mohammed Habib Ahmed finished as Najma's leading scorer with nine goals. He was later named the Player of the Match. Saad added six, while Hasan Mirza scored five goals. Belal Basham chipped in with four, while Hassan Madan, Mohammed Ali Abdulredha, Mujtaba Al Zaimour, Saud Al Junaid and Sayed Ali Shubbar all finished with a goal each.

For the Calheat, Felix Raff had seven goals while Benjamin Geisser added four in the losing effort.

Najma are participating in the IHF Super Globe for the second time, following the 2018 edition when they finished seventh. The global competition, organised by the International Handball Federation (IHF), is in its 16th year.



Today's clash between the San Francisco Calheat of the US and Barlinek Industria Kielce of Poland will determine the final rankings in Group D of the preliminary round, and thus decide if Al Najma advance to the final four

GROUP D STANDINGS

Al Najma's Mujtaba Al Zaimour attempts to attack the Calheat defence

| | P | W | D | L | +/- | PTS |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| Al Najma (Bahrain) | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 2 |
| Barlinek Industria Kielce (Poland) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| San Francisco Calheat (US) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | -7 | 0 |

Top seeds march through in ITF tennis

TDT | Manama

Top seeds Ariana Gogulina from Kazakhstan and Venkat Rishi Batlanki of the US both barged into their respective quarter-finals yesterday in the Bahrain ITF Juniors 2023 tournament, currently being played at the Bahrain Tennis Federation (BTF) hard courts in Isa Town.

Ariana cruised past Ayris Tokac of Turkey 6-0, 6-0 to make it through to the girls' singles round of eight, while Venkat eased past Sergiy Rafiee of Great Britain 6-0, 6-1 to qualify.

Ariana is next set to take on sixth seed Liliya Piskun in her last eight clash. Other match-ups in that stage pit third seed Sosanne Malak of Egypt against Luisa Fusil of Slovenia, Adiya Omarbek of Kazakhstan against Arina Malygina, and seventh seed Alina Sogomonyan against Simona Cucu.

Romania.

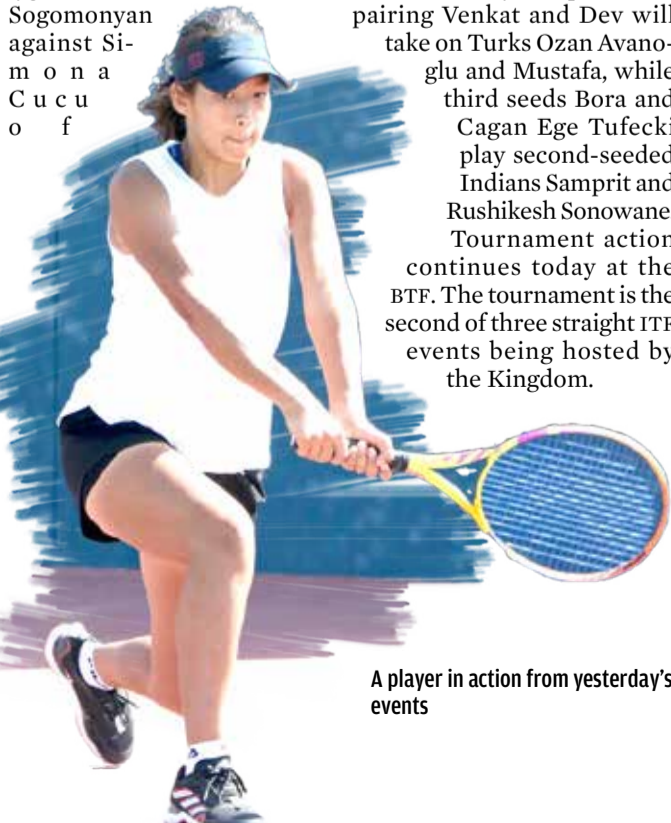
Amongst the boys, Venkat will be facing off with eighth seed Dev Kanbargimath of Romania in the quarter-finals. Dev outclassed Mustafa Ege Topbas of Turkey 6-1, 6-1 in their second-round encounter.

The other head-to-heads are between third seed Samprit Sharma of India and sixth seed Bora Bakici of Turkey, Radu Cojocaru of Australia and Andres Pereiro Lopez of Spain, and fifth seed Josh Hinton of Great Britain and Vishnu Balachandar of the US.

Meanwhile, the boys' and girls' doubles semi-finalists have been determined.

Amongst the girls, Ariana and Adiya, fourth seeds, take on Simona and Emily Lederer of Austria, while Arina and Anastasia Myachina face off with Luisa and Pallavi Patel of India.

For the boys, top-seeded pairing Venkat and Dev will take on Turks Ozan Avanoğlu and Mustafa, while third seeds Bora and Cagan Ege Tufeci play second-seeded Indians Samprit and Rushikesh Sonowane. Tournament action continues today at the BTF. The tournament is the second of three straight ITF events being hosted by the Kingdom.



A player in action from yesterday's events

Khaldiya draw with Najma in football league

● **Mahdi Abduljabbar scores second-half equaliser for Khaldiya**

● **Struggling Muharraq and Busaiteen play to goalless stalemate**

TDT | Manama

Defending champions Al Khaldiya salvaged a 1-1 draw against Al Najma last night in their week six match of the 2023/2024 Nasser bin Hamad Bahrain Premier Football League.

Mohammed Al Rumaihi opened the scoring for Najma in the second minute of first-half additional time. He rolled the ball into the net with a weak shot that was hit just enough,



Al Najma's Edimar Ribeiro Da Costa Junior, left, vies for possession with Al Khaldiya's Abdulla Al Hazza

and it put his team ahead at the half.

But in the 62nd, Khaldiya were level with a Mahdi Abduljabbar strike from close range.

Abduljabbar was on the receiving end of a fine assist from Gleison Wilson Da Silva Moreira Unmarked, he slotted home.

Both teams had other chances

to score, but neither side could convert their chances.

With the result, both Khaldiya and Najma claimed their third draw in six matches and stayed tied on 12 points atop the league table with 12 points. Khaldiya are first with Najma second with a superior goal difference.

In another match last night, Muharraq and Busaiteen played to a goalless stalemate.

Muharraq went to six points while Busaiteen improved to three.

League action continues today and tomorrow. Tonight, Al Hala and Al Shabab face off while Sitra take on Hidd. Tomorrow, a derby will feature with Riffa facing East Riffa, and Manama will be going up against Al Ahli. All games are scheduled for simultaneous 7pm kick-offs.

BIC set for a fantastic Friday

Batelco Fitness on Track and Orange Media Open Track Night set for tomorrow

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East", hosts tomorrow back-to-back activities both outside of the fast lane and in it.

Taking place from 6am to 10am will be the Batelco Fitness on Track, and then from 4pm to 11pm will be an Orange Media Open Track Night.

Both events are amongst the most popular offerings on the circuit's packed calendar and all interested to join are invited to register today.

Those participating will have the chance to exercise either on foot or on a bicycle within BIC's safe and controlled envi-



Cars in an Open Track event at BIC

ronment.

Tomorrow's activity will be bright and early, making for a pleasant start to the weekend. Runners and walkers will be utilising BIC's 2.550-kilometre Inner Circuit, while cyclists will be able to ride their bikes along the 3.543-kilometre Outer Circuit, with another dedicated area for children's cycling.

The cost to take part is BD2 for cyclists and BD1 for runners.

Children under the age of 12 can participate for free if accompanied by a paying adult. Meanwhile, the Orange Media Open Track Night offers motorsport enthusiasts the chance to satisfy their need for speed in their very own car or motorbike. Those taking part will get to take their vehicle out for a spin along BIC's 2.55 kilometre Inner Circuit, the same raced on in the Kingdom's top local

championships, while pushing them to their limits within a safe and controlled environment.

To add to that, they will get to take in the magnificence of BIC's state-of-the-art floodlights, illuminating the track and creating a brilliant setting. Following the Orange Media Open Track Night activity from 4pm to 11pm, an hour-long members-only session will take place from 11pm to 12midnight. Driver etiquette is of ultimate importance in every Orange Media Open Track Night, so there is no close or aggressive overtaking permitted. Overtaking is by invitation between corners and driving is monitored, with poor or dangerous driving being dealt with swiftly by officials.

Historic International Combat Week

BRAVE CF announces major details of Combat Week in December at Khalifa Sports City Arena

● Tickets for all three major events can be found at Platinum List, with Asian Championships also taking place to celebrate historic 2023 for Bahraini company

TDI | Manama

Bahrain is set to witness the biggest combat sports festival in the world once again, as BRAVE Combat Federation brings back its International Combat Week set to take over the Khalifa Sports City Arena, under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa. The official announcement of the festival was made today in a special press conference, with the presence of BRAVE CF president Mohammed Shahid and Bahrain MMA Federation president Mohammed Qamber.

The BRAVE International Combat Week will take place between December 5th and December 16th and will feature three major BRAVE CF professional events, as well as the first Asian Championships in amateur MMA to take place in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The third edition of the BICW in 2023 will put the finishing



Mohammed Shahid (center) speaks at the BICW Press Conference



touches on a historic year for mixed martial arts in Bahrain, and for BRAVE Combat Federation. The Bahraini organization

became the most global MMA promotion in the world when it hosted an event in France, making it the 29th overall nation to host BRAVE Combat Federation.

During the official press conference, Shahid celebrated the achievements of BRAVE CF in 2023 and announced major details for the BRAVE International Combat Week.

"In 2023, BRAVE CF broke several records, maybe none more important than becoming the most global MMA organization. And to celebrate that, there's nothing better than coming home and making more history.

We will have three professional events for the first time and the Asian Championships with the IMMAF and the Bahrain MMA Federation and Asian MMA Federation. We will have some of the best martial artists in the world together under one roof. This is the biggest edition of the biggest combat sports festival in the world, and a testament to the work and vision of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa" said Mr. Shahid.

He was followed by Qamber, who spoke about the achievements of Bahrain within the field of MMA at both sporting and

organizational levels. "Bahrain is now the number one country in the world of MMA. We also have, within our ranks, the number one pound-for-pound amateur fighters in the world, in both male and female divisions. On an operational level, the Bahrain MMA Federation is now the official organizing team of all IMMAF competitions around the world, showcasing the leadership of His Highness Shaikh Khalid on all levels of the sport".

Shahid also announced some of the biggest fights that will take place during the organization's return to Bahrain.

"This is a very exciting time to be an MMA fan in Bahrain and in the Middle East. We will have three major world title championships on the line, some of the biggest stars in BRAVE CF coming to fight, the return of legend Jarrah Al-Silawi, Shorty Torres vs Nkosi Ndebele 2 at BRAVE CF 80, and with the likes of Ramazan Gitinov, Khamzat Maaev, Rasul Magomedov. Bahrain's finest will also be in action, such as Mohammed Alsameea, Hussain Ayyad, and Abdulla Al-Yaqoob".

BRAVE will feature three major BRAVE CF events, with the Asian Championships also taking place during ten days of combat sports that will turn Bahrain into the epicenter of mixed martial arts worldwide.

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