

**Bahrain set for Asian Cup draw**

Kingdom's senior men's national football team to learn of group stage opponents today for continental football showcase | P12

THE DAILY **tribune**



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**Budget plan for fiscal years 2023-2024 discussed**

TDT | Manama

Top officials of the executive and legislative branches of government met yesterday to discuss the draft law approving the state's general budget for the fiscal years 2023-2024, attached to Decree No. (34) of 2023.

Representatives Council Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam and Shura Council Chairman Ali bin Salah Al Saleh co-chaired the session with the Minister of Finance and National Economy Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa.

The Government's team, led by the Minister of Finance and National Economy, staged



The executive and legislative meeting in progress

a presentation. The legislative side also outlined its feedback on the state's general budget draft law for the fiscal years 2023-2024.

The two sides pledged to give full priority to citizens when formulating initiatives and strategies, and planning projects and programmes

They also discussed a number of service projects included in the state's general budget draft law for the fiscal years 2023-2024 in the sectors of health,

works and municipalities.

They emphasised commitment to reach consensus on the state's general budget, which will have a positive impact on various development paths in Bahrain and spur growth.

The foundations of the draft law approving the state's general budget 2023-2024 came under the spotlight, mainly fiscal stability and sustainable economic growth, creating promising opportunities for citizens, and adhering to the fiscal balance program, in addition to continuing to improve the efficiency of government service and develop performance.



**NBB wins two major MENA banking awards**

P2

**Cross-border fire**

Israel and Palestinians trade rockets over Gaza as violence intensifies

AFP | Gaza City

Israel's army and Gaza fighters traded heavy cross-border fire yesterday, with 22 Palestinians killed over two days amid the worst escalation of violence to hit the coastal territory in months.

Sirens in the Tel Aviv area and Israel's south warned of incoming rockets in a fresh evening salvo, with an AFP reporter in Gaza observing dozens of launches as Israeli officials said Egypt was working on a possible truce with the Islamic Jihad.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant noted "over 400" launches from Gaza late yesterday, as the Islamic Jihad said Palestinian "resistance" was keeping up its fire.

Earlier in the day, smoke billowed from the densely populated coastal enclave after Israel announced it was targeting rocket launch sites of the Islamic Jihad.

Gaza's health ministry said seven people were killed, a day after Israeli strikes on the Palestinian territory left 15 dead.

Four of those killed yesterday were fighters with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the group said in a statement.

Israel's air defences intercept-



Rockets are fired from Gaza City toward Israel. (AFP)

ed rockets above the coastal city of Ashkelon and elsewhere in the south.

In a televised address late yesterday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel was "still in the midst of the campaign," noting that "no Israeli civilian has been wounded up to now".

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has escalated since Netanyahu's latest coalition, including

extreme right and ultra-Orthodox parties, took office in December.

It has come against the backdrop of Israel's biggest domestic crisis in decades around now-shelved judicial reforms proposed by the government of Netanyahu, himself on trial for corruption he denies.

**Ceasefire**

Earlier, an Israeli official said on condition of anonymity that Egypt was "trying to facilitate a ceasefire".

Sources in Gaza close to the Islamic Jihad and Hamas confirmed Egyptian efforts to secure a truce, without providing further details.

The latest violence comes a day after Israeli strikes on Gaza killed three top Islamic Jihad

fighters and 12 others, including four children, according to a health ministry toll.

Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen told public broadcaster Channel 11 late yesterday the Islamic Jihad were "begging for a ceasefire".

Islamic Jihad had vowed on Tuesday to retaliate, with Israel warning its residents near the border to stay near bomb shelters.



The Arab League yesterday condemned the "aggressive (and) barbaric Israeli raids on the Gaza Strip, which targeted civilians, children and women in residential neighbourhoods".

**HM King Hamad back from UK**

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa returned to the kingdom yesterday following a visit to the UK at the invitation of His Majesty King Charles III of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Head of the Commonwealth.

During the visit, HM the King attended the coronation of HM King Charles III, held at Westminster Abbey.

HM King Hamad also attended a reception hosted by HM King Charles III at Buckingham Palace.

**Saudi invites Assad**

AFP | Damascus

Syrian President Bashar Al Assad received an invitation to next week's Arab summit in Saudi Arabia, the presidency said yesterday, the first since his country's war began over a decade ago.

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