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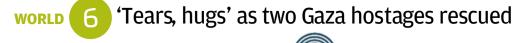
**TUESDAY** 

**220 FILS** 

ISSUE NO.9836

**Maloney, Browning** set testing pace

Rodin Motorsport, Hitech Pulse-Eight drivers top timesheets on second day of Formula 2, Formula 3 pre-season testing in Bahrain | **P12** 





Beyonce, Swift command conversation as Usher helms halftime

**Unlock your Financial Future** 

#### **HM King Hamad** to receive Amir of Kuwait today



**HM the King** 

TDT | Manama

 $\mathbf{H}$ is Majesty King Ham-ad bin Isa Al Khalifa will receive His Highness Shaikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, the Amir of Kuwait, upon his arrival to Bahrain today, the Royal Court announced yesterday.

HM King Hamad and HH Shaikh Mishal Al Sabah are scheduled to hold talks that will discuss the historical Bahrain-Kuwait relations and the latest regional and international developments.

The Royal Court welcomed the visit of HH Shaikh Mishal and his accompanying delegation.

> Visa **Fee** Surge



#### No more 'free visa'; visit to work visa change to cost BD 250

TDT | Manama

The Interior Ministry has decided to stop changing visit visas to work or dependent visas without a sponsor.

It was also agreed to increase the fees for changing visit visas to work or dependency visas from BD60 to BD250 only if it will be for the same sponsor.

#### **Ex-Guantanamo** prisoners freed

AFP | Kabul

Two former prisoners held at the US detention centre in Guantanamo Bay until 2017 were welcomed home to Afghanistan yesterday, more than 20 years after they were arrested.

220 fils (includes VAT)



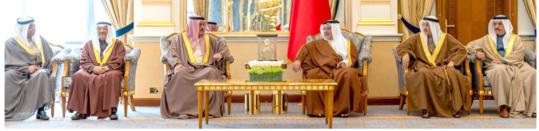
## Private sector hailed as 'significant driver of growth'

TDT | Manama

Tis Royal Highness Prince His Royal Figures ...... ifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, highlighted the development of the private sector and emphasised its importance as a significant driver of growth.

He commended the private sector's key role to contribute to and to spur the creation of quality committees at Gudaibiya Palace. opportunities for Bahraini citizens.

speaking as he met yesterday forts of Team Bahrain, compris- and development across variwith the Speaker of the Coun- ing of the Executive and Legisla- ous sectors, which reflects the the Kingdom's determination to HE Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla cil of Representatives, His Ex- tive Authorities, the private sec- essence of Team Bahrain and its achieve its wide-ranging devel- Al Khalifa, the Minister of Intecellency Ahmed bin Salman tor and civil societies, and their Al-Musallam, and the Chair- commitment to the Kingdom of man of the Shura Council, H.E. Bahrain's development, in line interests are at the forefront of initiatives and plans. Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh, and the with the vision and aspirations the various efforts to achieve a Shura and Representative Coun- of His Majesty King Hamad bin cil deputies and their heads of Isa Al Khalifa.



supporting development efforts HRH Prince Salman meets with Speaker Al-Musallam and Chairman Al Saleh

His Royal Highness noted the citizens. HRH the Crown Prince and importance of furthering the HRH Prince Salman was Prime Minister lauded the ef- Kingdom's accomplishments successes.

He noted that the Kingdom's

#### Determination

His Royal Highness expressed opment goals aimed at benefiting citizens through numerous bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, several

better present and a prosperous be achieved through the de- HE Sameer Abdulla Nass, also future for the Kingdom and its termination of Team Bahrain attended the meeting.

from their various workplaces as it continues to turn challenges into successes through a passion for achievement.

Speaker Al-Musallam and Chairman Al Saleh expressed their gratitude to HRH Prince Salman for his commitment to supporting Executive and Legislative collaboration and integration and affirming his commitment to achieving the Kingdom's development to benefit Bahraini citizens.

The Deputy Prime Minister, rior, HE General Shaikh Rashid ministers, and the Chairman of He emphasised that this will Bahrain Chamber of Commerce,

# Road to home and retirement

HRH Prince Salman orders easy access and benefits for Khatwa Program applicants



TDT | Manama

is Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, directed the relevant authorities to accept applications from those who meet the Khatwa Program for Home Projects' legal requirements for eligibility for a retirement pension.

This came following the Cabinet's approval of a memorandum by the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs by the team responsible for researching aspects of the Khatwa Program for Home Projects.

The Cabinet, chaired yesprogramme's registration and in Somalia.



regarding the report submitted HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting at **Gudaibiya Palace** 

retirement procedures

Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Commander of the Armed Forc- have been injured. Khalifa, the Crown Prince and es, Bahrain's citizens, and the Prime Minister, also approved family of the fallen serviceman, the recommendation from the Major Abdullah Rashid Al Noai-

The Cabinet also extended its The Cabinet extended its condolences to the fallen serdeepest condolences to His vicemen of the UAE and wished terday by His Royal Highness Majesty the King, the Supreme a speedy recovery for those who

#### **Congratulations**

It congratulated His Majesty Ministerial Committee for Le- mi, who was killed in a terror- King Hamad bin Isa Al Khaligal and Legislative Affairs that ist attack, along with several fa and Bahraini citizens on the the National Audit Office con- servicemen of the UAE, while 23rd anniversary of the adoption

the Kingdom's achievements following the adoption of the National Action Charter, which has contributed to progress and development across all sectors.

The Cabinet highlighted the importance of the Shield of Bahrain Project Cobra Z aircrafts, which were inaugurated by His Majesty the King, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, as well as the Kingdom of Bahrain's naval ship the RBNS Khalid bin Ali, which was inaugurated by HRH Prince Salman.

Both the Project Cobra Z aircraft and the RBNS Khalid bin Ali are valuable additions to the BDF's combat readiness. The Cabinet further emphasised the critical role these assets play in supporting the ongoing development and modernisation efforts of the Bahrain Defence Force, enhancing its capabilities in performing its national duties.

#### **Outcomes**

duct a review of aspects of the performing training missions of the National Action Char- outcomes of the third meeting Prime Minister of the Kingdom ter. The Cabinet commended of the Saudi-Bahraini Coor- of Saudi Arabia.



The Cabinet extended its deepest condolences to His Majesty the King, Bahrain's citizens, and the family of the fallen serviceman, Major Abdullah Rashid Al Noaimi, who was killed in a terrorist attack, while performing training missions in Somalia.

dination Council, co-chaired by HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al The Cabinet commended the Saud, the Crown Prince and

## news of bahrain

## **Time Travel in Bahrain**

Expats invited to unearth Kingdom's rich heritage through archaeological adventures

#### **Ashen Tharaka**

n a unique initiative blending sport and culture, the Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities (BACA) is inviting expats and citizens alike to explore the Kingdom's fascinating archaeological sites. This exciting program aims to raise awareness of Bahrain's rich heritage and offer residents a novel way to spend their leisure time.

The inaugural event, a 5km "Walkathon," saw over 200 participants, including expats from diverse backgrounds like Germany, Japan, the Philippines, Exploring the archaeological sites the UK, India, and Saudi Arabia. Even ambassadors residing in Bahrain joined the walk, exploring the ancient Dilmun burial mounds between Riffa and Aali.

'We welcome expats to delve deeper into our archaeological sites and delve into Bahrain's heritage," stated Salman Almahari, Director of Archaeology and Museums at BACA.

"They are welcome to participate in future events like the Walkathon and 'Little Archaeologist,' both incredibly engaging plans to transform archaeolog- park after the second phase of programs," he further stated to the Daily Tribune.

#### **Archaeological sites into** leisure parks on track





Participants in the 5km Walkathon (Pictures by Ashen Tharaka)

ical sites into vibrant leisure excavation is complete. parks. The latest excavation ered by British archaeologists, is yet," explained Almahari. This initiative also includes slated to become a recreational

"We began digging again dursite in Hamad Town, featuring ing the winter, but haven't una 4km irrigation channel discoverarthed any significant artifacts

The recent research by a Brit-

"We welcome expats to delve deeper into our archaeological sites and delve into Bahrain's heritage."

- SALMAN ALMAHARI, DIRECTOR OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS AT BACA

ish scholar revealed a distinctive triangle-shaped channel designed to expedite water delivery to the Karzakan village. Interestingly, researchers found two types of channels: "open" and "closed," indicating efforts to protect the water from dust and maintain its temperature.

Adding to the excitement, BACA anticipates a surge in visitors for the prestigious International Archaeological Summit

2024, including members from the GCC region. This event promises to be a highlight for history enthusiasts and archaeology profession-

So, whether you're an expat new to Bahrain or a long-time resident, grab your walking shoes and prepare to embark on a fascinating journey through time. Uncover the mysteries of ancient civilizations and immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of Bahrain's heritage!

# Beyon Money BIC Fan Village returns to Block 338, Adliya



Admission is free every day, accompanied by live music performances

#### Two-week spectacle to start tomorrow

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Cirafter a hugely popular debut in 2022. It is set to bring all Beyon Money, is set to raise the the excitement of the F1 Gulf levels of excitement and antic- Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2024 ipation ahead of the Formula closer to the fans with a daily 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix celebration in the heart of the 2024, with the return of the Kingdom's capital. Beyon Money BIC Fan Village to Block 338 in Adliya.

ebrating Formula 1 and a big Money, part of Beyon Group, part of the thrilling lead-up which is a financial services to the Kingdom's grand prix super app, enabling customweekend, is set to feature in- ers to connect to their bank credible daily attractions for accounts, access financial all the family, including daily insights to observe transaclive performances from a huge tions and spending habits, use mix of bands and DJs, Grand their prepaid card all over the Prix activations such as racing world, and send money abroad simulators and show cars, The instantly. Beyon Money stand, a village market, roaming family entertainment, street artists, and so much more.

The Beyon Money BIC Fan support partner for the event. Village will open at 6pm toweekdays and from 1pm to tickets.

12am on weekends.

All are welcome to enjoy everything on offer and entrance is completely free of charge.

The festival is being organised for the third time by BIC

This exciting experience for fans is once again being sup-The two-week festival, cel- ported by title partner Beyon

> Bapco Energies, the integrated energy company leading the energy transition in the Kingdom of Bahrain, is also a

At the Beyon Money BIC Fan morrow. From then, it will be Village, there will also be a BIC welcoming fans daily until 27 stand where official BIC and February. The village will be F1 merchandise can be puropen from 6pm to 12am on chased, as well as grand prix

# EAD THE LOVE السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته May the peace, blessings, and mercy of God be upon you

#### **GREETING FROM MATRIX!**

On the occasion of our first anniversary approaching, as a part of the Bahraini community and a proud local brand, we are indebted to give back and support the community.

Further to that, we are glad to invite you for a day full of fun for all our little heroes and champions who bravely face the challenges of

It will be an honor to have you at Matrix celebrating with us and the special children's, on February Tuesday 13th, 2024, between 10 am until 8 pm.

As we promise that you will have an amazing experience and an unforgettable day with us.

#### تحية طيبة من فريق ماتريكس!

بمناسة الذكرب السنوية الأولب لنا, وبما اننا جزء من المحتمع البحريني وعلامة تحاربة محلية نفتخريها. فإننا ملزمون بتقديم الشكر والدعم لجميع أفراد

ولذالك يسعدنا دعوتكم لقضاء يوم مليء بالمرح لُحميع أبطالنا الصغار المميزين من (اليتامب والمصابين بالتوحد والصم البكم وغيرهم) من الذين بواحمون تحديات الحياة بشحاعة واقدام

وسيكون من دواعي الشرف أن تحتفلوا معنا ومع الأطفال المتميزين في ماتريكس, وذالك في يوم الثلاثاء فبراير 13, 2024 , بين الساعة العاشرة صباحاً حتى الساعة الثامنة مساعً.

المحتمع

بشكل دائم ومستمر.

حيث نعدكم بأفضل تجربة مذهلة ويوم لا يُنسب

CALL FOR REGISTRATION AND INQUIRIES







**Matrix 3rd Floor** Juffair Mall

## Focus on Tamkeen's key role and postgraduate training



Officials of RCSI Bahrain, Private Hospitals, and Tamkeen at the meeting TDT | Manama

its annual Joint Board of Private in Dublin. Hospitals meeting.

vate hospitals in Bahrain: ex-

Mary Rose Sweeney, Executive

During the meeting Profesmembers of seven main pri- of RCSI Medical University of Bahrain, commented: "RCSI ecutive members of Tamkeen; Medical University of Bahrain the Chairman of the society of is committed to fostering its reprivate hospitals; the President lations with the private hospitals of Bahrain Medical Society; and and Tamkeen, with the ultimate executive members of the Uni- goal of providing international versity to discuss cooperation standards' training to medical keen is a significant step towards sor Jameela Al-Salman, Shura community care for the people Council.

Council Member and Professor of Bahrain and beyond."

Discussions focused on oppor- $R^{\text{CSI}}$  Medical University of Vice Dean for Education, Facultunities for a Continuing Professahrain hosted on campus ty of Nursing & Midwifery, RCSI sional Development (CPD) programme for General Practitioners and for professional nursing Present were executive sor Sameer Otoom, President qualifications proposed by the University, as well as student participation in observerships, electives and research at the private hospitals. Cooperation between the private hospitals and RCSI Medical University of Bahrain regarding postgraduate training and the upcoming Doctor in clinical training, education staff. Collaborating with Tam- of Medicine (MD) Programme was also discussed, which will be In attendance of the meeting enhancing healthcare services announced pending the approvwere Her Excellency Profes- and the delivery of primary and al from the Higher Education

# Visa Fee Surge

No more 'free visa'. Charges for conversion from visit visa to work visa goes up over four times. But will the sharp increase in visa fees affect the availability of workers? The Daily Tribune talks to specialists in immigration economics and immigration experts to find out.

#### Visit-to-work visa change to cost BD 250

#### **Mahir Haneef** TDT | Manama

ahrain government on Monday announced that it would not allow conversion of visit visas to work or dependent visas without a sponsor. While visit visas can be changed to work or dependent visas if the sponsor is the same, the fee for it has been increased by over four times. The fee, which was originally BD60, now stands at BD250 per visa.

The announcement came from Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Interior Ministry Undersecretary at Nationality, Passports, and Residence Affairs (NPRA). The official said the decision was taken by Interior Minister H.E. General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

As per the decision of the Interior Minister, "it was decided to stop changing visit visas to work if it will be for the same sponsor," the announcement said.

visit visas to support the local be seen," he said. workforce by making them the exploitation of visit visas.

fect on employment prospects of Bahrain citizens.

to work visas as well as for is-

is raised for issuing visas and has Stan added. it been tried out in any country before? The Daily Tribune got in touch with experts in immigrapolicies and they had plenty to

#### An economist's viewpoint

Increasing the visa fees to to the experts.

nis, is as a large increase in taxes workers," he said.

on imported labour services."



"The main way to think about this in economic terms, from the perspective of Bahrainis, is as a large increase in taxes on imported labour services."

- STAN VEUGER, A SENIOR FELLOW IN ECONOMIC POLICY STUDIES AT THE WASHINGTON-BASED THINK TANK AMER-ICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE



"If the cost of employing expat workers increases in Bahrain. it may be challenging for smaller to midsize companies to cater to higher government fees. resulting in fewer job opportunities for expat workers."

SHAYAN SULTAN, A PARTNER AT DUBAI-BASED IMMIGRATION SERVICES FIRM FRAGOMEN



"It will be interesting to see if other countries in the region follow suit and increase fees for expat workers, which could shift the dynamics of the job market in the Gulf region."

- CHETAL PATEL, HEAD OF IMMIGRATION, AT LONDON-BASED LEGAL FIRM BATES WELLS



"The fee increase might incentivize Bahraini employers to hire more local workers, boosting employment opportunities for Bahraini citizens."

- AJAY SHARMA, FOUNDER DIRECTOR OF THE OLDEST AND LARGEST IMMIGRATION CONSULTANCY FIRM IN INDIA



"The costs related with hiring expats will certainly trickle down to the employee themselves, some may have to pay this price upfront before embarking on their new job."

- SHAI ZAMANIAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION CONSULTANCY THE

or dependent visas without a crease on tax has a number of workers, according to the Frag- tant immigration costs," Chetal explained. sponsor. It was also agreed to consequences. "Incidence: It is omen expert. "No significant stated. increase the fees for changing a tax increase, i.e. it makes those shortage of skilled workers can visit visas to work or dependen- who pay the tax (or who reduce be foreseen at this point due to cyvisas from BD60 to BD250 only their reliance on expatriate la-the higher cost of employing bour) strictly worse enough. expat workers. Bahrain's health-Perhaps corresponding tax re- care sector does not heavily rely igrants per year. Ajay Sharma, Further, it said the decision is ductions or an improvement in on expat healthcare skilled proas per the government directives government services will make fessionals except for support is the founder director of the to intensify rules of changing up for that, but that remains to staff, i.e., technicians, nurses, oldest and largest immigration

first employment choice. The stated, "This kind of tax distorts healthcare facilities overall op- affect the attractiveness of Bahprocedures would be carried out the choice between relying on erational costs, impacting the rain among expat employees. in cooperation with the Labour expatriate labour versus capi- recruitment of expat workers Market Regulatory Authority tal, one's own labour, and other while promoting the employ- burden is on mid or large-sized (LMRA) to promote the National native labour." When it comes ment of Bahrainis in the health- Bahraini employers. They will Labour Market Plan and stop the to human capital and produc- care industry." tivity, these distorted incentives Calls had been made by varican have consequences down that there are examples of such proposed fee increase, Bahrain ous people in the Kingdom re- the road, as Bahrainis will fo- fee increases across the world. could generate more revenue cently for tightening the rules cus more on their efforts on "There are examples where to invest in infrastructure and regarding conversion of visit activities in which they do not governments of many countries social welfare programs for its Managing Director of immigra- of the hottest real estate markets visas to work visas, citing its ef- currently have a comparative have increased the fees levied citizens. Also, the fee increase tion consultancy The American in the world such as Sydney and advantage, the expert said.

Several proposals had been sult in a redistribution, with ed Kingdom and Kuwait. The ers, boosting employment opmade by the MPs in the Parlia-jobs going from the expatriate aftereffects usually require comportunities for Bahraini citizens. the conversion or increase the with them in the local market, analysis and budget planning to the potential impact on small of the expatriate workers themsuing work visas for foreigners. selves, on the other hand, it is employ expat workers or devel-cial challenge for them when But what happens when fees a pure negative on all fronts,"

#### How it would affect companies | Immigration concerns

Shavan Sultan, a partner at tion economics and immigration Dubai-based immigration ser- gration, at London-based legal care. vices firm Fragomen, points out firm Bates Wells, cited the exresults were mixed, according in fewer job opportunities for expat workers. The attractive-Stan Veuger, a senior fellow in ness of Bahrain for expat skilled nancially support migrants with that other countries may soon would lead to a shortage of firm based in Dubai told. economic policy studies at the workers will remain as factors their visas as it costs over GBP follow with similar action. Also, skilled workers need to be seen Washington-based think tank like social and economic infra- 20,000 (9,526 BD) for a worker as I stated above, it depends on as it evolves, Shai added. "With American Enterprise Institute, structure, affordable housing, and his family for the visas, she the size of the company hiring a tax, there will certainly be less fees would lead to more jobs for said, "The main way to think ease of obtaining work permits, pointed out. about this in economic terms, etc, will ensure Bahrain stays an from the perspective of Bahrai- attractive destination for expat cused on attracting the brightest in their overall workforce, and term there will be a shortage of with time. What do you think

op new recruitment strategies," he stated.

Chetal Patel. Head of Immithat it could affect smaller to ample of the UK, which is one of will be interesting to see if other mid-size companies. "If the cost the most expensive immigration countries in the region follow

iting ways in which they can fi- the Middle East — worldwide is

and the best, there's a concern their ability to pass on the addi- skilled workers as it takes time will be the effects of the change? But an increase in fees would that skilled workers will simply tional costs to end customers of for the marketplace to adjust to Tell us at editor@newsofbah-Further, Stan said such an in- not lead a shortage of skilled go elsewhere due to the exorbi- their products or services," Ajay change and then decide whether rain.com

#### Are there any positives?

India tops the list of countries with the highest number of emwho is based in New Delhi and etc. Any significant changes to consultancy firm in India, does Regarding efficiency, Stan government fees will increase not think higher visa fees would

"I don't think so because the pass it on to end-users and The expert also pointed out utilities. Additionally, with the short-term news," he said. for expats. Some examples in- might incentivize Bahraini emficial decisions when planning to increased fees may pose a finanhiring expat workers," Ajay said.

critical sectors such as health-

Many organizations are re-vis-bloc countries — in this case, expat workers," Shai said. international workers, the per- expats hired as company's face Bahrainis, and the real effects of "Whilst the UK remains fo- centage of international workers a fiscal crunch. In the short- the change will be known only

ernment has increased the apferent categories. The demand approach," he said. and supply situation is such that has no impact beyond creating tried out in many countries.

#### Possible adverse effects

will have an adverse effect.

creases in Bahrain, it may be sociated costs linked to visas, pat workers, which could shift we live in today is the intercon-

to hire expats or to continue to Levying higher visa fees from hold. The long-term impacts expatriates is also not unprece- could be that the quality of candented, states Ajay, whose firm didates and the number of actual processes thousands of visa ap- hires would decrease, however plications from immigrants to it would need to be reflected countries across the world. "It on after some time. Conversely, happens all the time. The US there could be a positive affect government recently increased if HR directors understand the the premium application pro- costs of bringing on expats so cessing fee. The Canadian gov- they work more rigorously to only bring in the most skilled. plication processing fee for dif- We have to take the wait and see

But Shai agrees that the pracemployers can only do with estice of levying higher fees from sential overseas workers that it expatriates for visas has been

"Absolutely. Australia and Canada have imposed heavy restrictions on foreigners pur-However, Shai Zamanian, chasing real estate within some Legal Center of Dubai, does not Vancouver. There are instances The higher visa fees will re- clude Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Unit- ployers to hire more local work- agree and says higher visa fees where placing your own citizens first makes a lot of sense. "The messaging behind the However, there needs to be a ment to either completely stop workers to those who compete panies to conduct more detailed However, it is vital to consider tariffs is exclusion. Expatriates discussion around the intention questioning to take the leap and of the new policy in Bahrain. Is fees for conversion of visit visas he said. "From the perspective help them make the most bene-businesses and start-ups, as the move to Bahrain, normally base this new regulation in place to their decision on a key principle: promote the hiring of the local Will I be welcomed? By virtue of population? If so, perhaps othtaxing every foreigner seeking er incentives should be consid-He also does not believe that it to make their dreams a possibilered in actual hiring of locals. will lead to a shortage of skilled ity in Bahrain, the messaging is Just because its taxing to hire workers in Bahrain, especially in unambiguous. The costs related foreigners, does not mean that with hiring expats will certainly instead local populations will be trickle down to the employee hired. Here, we should lean on "I doubt that will happen. It themselves, some may have to institutions that have discussed pay this price upfront before em- and analyzed the issue and perbarking on their new job. If the haps release a mandate outlining of employing expat workers in- systems in the world due to as- suit and increase fees for ex- success of the globalized world the intentions. Otherwise, there could be backlash and optically, lessen the inflow of migrants challenging for smaller to mid- in particular the Immigration the dynamics of the job market nectedness of global skills, this it could be perceived as undue had been adopted by many counsize companies to cater to high-Skills Charge (ISC) and Immi- in the Gulf region. My experi- new policy will certainly nega-punishment towards those that tries around the world and the er government fees, resulting gration Health Surcharge (HIS). ence with the policy actions of tively affect competitive skilled we require to continue building a vibrant Bahrain and GCC," Shai, Whether the higher fees who owns the US-licensed legal

> In short, the jury is still out there on whether higher visa

# Explore Dumistan Beach: Bahrain's well-kept secret

Hidden away in remote location, far from Kingdom's bustling residential areas

Zahra Ayaz TDT | Manama

estled within the village of Dumistan lies a hidden treasure waiting to be discovered by many.

Dumistan Beach, renowned for its picturesque landscapes and tranquil ambiance, remains a well-kept secret tucked away in a remote location, far from bustling residential areas.

One of the unique features that sets Dumistan Beach apart is a small bridge that stretches out into the sea, inviting adventurers to delve into its depths.

This intriguing structure not only adds to the allure of the beach but also offers an exceptional viewpoint to admire the breathtaking beauty of the ocean.

The beach is adorned with trees providing ample shade, setting the stage for families to relax and savor the serene surroundings. Additionally, there is a designated play area for children to engage in playful







dled with potholes, necessitating However, reaching Dumistan cautious driving. Yet, adventure Beach comes with its fair share enthusiasts will find the journey of challenges. The road leading exhilarating, as it adds an ele-

Hidden paradise

to the beach is rough and rid-ment of excitement to their visit. to arrive in the morning or be-ting lost. fore 4pm. The absence of street den paradise, it is recommended increasing the likelihood of get- which offer thrilling horseback experience.

lights in the area makes navi- visitors also have the opportuni- the untouched coastal retreat To make the most of this hid- gation challenging after dark, ty to explore nearby horse farms, that promises an unforgettable

rides along the shore.

According to sources, Dumistan Beach was once a favoured destination for boating enthusiasts, the availability of numerous public and private beaches in the vicinity has led to a decline in boating activities.

With the moderate weather at hand, now is the perfect time to uncover the secrets of Dumistan Beach. Pack your bags, embark on a journey of explo-Beyond the enchanting beach, ration, and immerse yourself in

### Parliamentary bloc to promote Bahrainisation

TDT | Manama

M P Hamad Al Doy has anlenges that impede Bahraini-nounced his efforts to essation in various sectors. tablish a parliamentary bloc dedicated to resolving the is- ploring ways to incentivise sue of Bahrainisation in pri- companies to prioritise Bahvate sector companies and the rainisation by offering competbanking sector.

have already joined the new across different industries. formation, with the doors open

mentary bloc plans to initiate a within these companies.

series of meetings and actions to identify the primary chal-

Among its objectives is exitive salaries for administra-He revealed that nine MPs tive and supervisory positions

Additionally, the bloc will for others to join this initiative. advocate for the dismantling The bloc aims to tackle the of foreign labour blocs within obstacles, figures, and reasons certain employment departhindering the replacement of ments of companies operatnon-Bahrainis in private sector ing in Bahrain. This will pave companies and the banking the way for the localisation of human resources functions The newly formed parlia- and recruitment departments

Arbitration Case Number: 7/07109/2023/02 Claimant: City View Development Real Estate Co. S.P.C -Commercial Register: 68045-1

Defendant: Mufaddal Fakhruddin Jiwaali Personal Number: 750607432

Based on the judgment issued on 11/07/2023 in the arbitration case number 7/07109/2023/02, which orders the appointment of the arbitrator Saad Jaber Saad Al-Dosari to resolve the dispute between the parties involved, and charges the defendant with the costs and twenty Dinars for attorney fees.

Therefore, we notify the Defendant of the initiation of the aforementioned arbitration case and to present his defense to the arbitration claim list by Thursday, 22 February 2024, or to personally attend the arbitrator's office located in the Diplomatic Area, Building 240 - First Floor - Road 1704, Complex 317.

> Arbitrator / Saad Jaber Al-Dosari 17311611 - Saad@aldoserilaw.com

# Tamkeen supports wage increments for more than 200 Silah Gulf employees

Labour Fund's support aligned with 2024 strategic priorities

TDT | Manama

al growth across a range of sec- national economy. tors, the Labour Fund Tamkeen

Specialising in call center management, Silah Gulf's business lines cover customer experience, business outsourcing, training, consulting, and technology-related services, with eligible employees – whose in the jobs market." salaries do not exceed BD1,500 - receiving wage increments ranging from 5% to 20% for 24 months.

Mofeez on the occasion.

wages, performance, and pro- for career growth.

"In addition to wage increasannounced its support for wage es for more than 200 Bahraini ment. enhancements for more than 200 employees, we are offering wage Bahraini employees at Silah Gulf. support to facilitate the employment of Bahrainis in executive and turing national competencies in three pillars; increasing ecoother managerial positions at Silah communications services, out-Gulf through the Leadership Em- sourcing, technology, and en- new employment opportunities ployment Program, aligning with couraging Bahrainis to pursue for new entrants, expanding ca-Tamkeen's objective of positioning leadership roles, thus enhancing Bahrainis as employees of choice

#### Pride

Information & e-Government Authority (iGA) Chief Executive Gulf Chief Executive Officer, technology.

"Tamkeen continues to forge and Silah Gulf Chairman, H.E. H.E. Mr. Firas Jaafar Ahmed strategic alliances across a range Mr. Mohammad Ali Al Qaed said, "We are proud of the high of sectors to support the devel-said, "Silah Gulf takes pride levels of Bahrainisation within opment of Bahraini talent," said in its productive partnership the Silah Gulf team, a testament Her Excellency Tamkeen Chief with Tamkeen, which is aimed to our confidence in the abili-Executive Maha Abdulhameed at realising the shared vision ties of Bahraini talent to drive to enhance national talent by growth within our company. "By enhancing employees' providing them with avenues

▲empowering national talent es accelerate their growth and increment and leadership em- subsidy and wage enhancement and fostering their profession- boost their contributions to the ployment programs will moti- initiatives." vate Bahraini employees and invest in their career advance-

> the private sector's contribution to national economic growth."

#### Proud

Echoing this sentiment, Silah

"We value Tamkeen's continuous support in honing our In line with its commitment to ductivity, we help enterpris"Without doubt, the wage workforce's skills through wage

> Tamkeen's support for Silah Gulf is aligned with its 2024 strategic priorities, which are "This partnership resonates focused on economic impact with our commitment to nur- and the private sector under nomic participation through reer development opportunities available to Bahraini workforce, and further developing the private sector by supporting enterprises, boosting productivity and the adoption of

### Joint Media Seminar by Sathyam Online, KIMS Medical Ummal

TDT | Manama

Cathyam Online, in collabo-23 February Friday, the 23rd.

discussions and invaluable net- a platform for thought-provok- inspire attendees.

working opportunities.

The seminar is poised to welcome a distinguished lineup Oration with KIMS Medical of media luminaries who will Umm al Hassam, is conducting share their expertise and in-Set to be a convergence of With an anticipated audience Chief Guest. His wealth of ex-

ing dialogue and knowledge

exchange. Adding to the occasion's significance, Mr. Vincent Nellikunnel, a prominent figure from a media seminar scheduled for sights on the evolving media the Kerala Media Academy, will and communications landscape. grace the event as the esteemed esteemed media personalities, representing various facets of perience and profound insights the event promises insightful the industry, the seminar offers will enrich the discourse and

Mr. Basheer Ambalayi, the local representative of Sathyam Online, expressed his enthusiasm for the seminar, highlighting its importance in fostering collaboration and innovation within the media community.

For media inquiries and registration details, please get in touch with Basheer Ambalayi on 33982363.

# Unlock your Financial Future

Kuwait Finance House Bahrain Launches New Libshara 2024 Campaign

The campaign includes two Mega Cash Prizes, a \$500,000 prize in June and a \$1,000,000 prize in December

TDT | Manama

uwait Finance House - Bahrain officially announces the new edition of the Libshara Investment Savings Account for 2024. The campaign includes two Mega Cash Prizes, a \$500,000 prize in Hamed Mashal



June and a \$1,000,000 prize in everyone to open a Libshara In-holding it for 180 days earns presented to 10 winners. There saving and winning." will also be a total of \$600,000 in each for 600 winners.

Account holders are remind-Monthly Cash Prizes of \$1,000 ed that they can multiply their ings Account is open to Bahraini Hamed Mashal, Executive draws by saving more through aged 18 and over. New and ex-Manager - Head of Retail Bank- their Libshara Savings Account. isting clients can create a Libing at KFH-Bahrain commented, For every 50 BD saved, custom- shara account and deposit mon-"The 2024 Libshara Campaign ers earn one entry to the draw. ey online using the KFH Jazeel marks a bold new chapter, offer- As part of the Libshara cam- Banking App without visiting ing unprecedented rewards that paign, customers can participate a branch. To participate, cusare considered the largest vet. in the loyalty programme, which tomers must have a minimum Current and future customers offers increased chances of win- savings balance of BD 50 or its will be rewarded beyond com- ning the Mega prize, Holding the equivalent in US Dollars in their parison with this year's abun- amount in their accounts for 90 Libshara accounts for at least dance of prizes. We encourage days earns them one entry, while 30 days.

December. In addition, Monthly vestment Savings Account and them two entries, and holding Grand Prizes of \$50,000 will be start their journey towards both it for 360 days earns them three entries.

> The Libshara Investment Savchances of winning in the prize and GCC nationals and residents

## Powering homes & solar dreams

NBB launches Kingdom's first mortgage offering with Integrated Solar Financing

**TDT** | Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) recently launched an innovative mortgage offering in line with its commitment to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices, to give customers the option to combine solar financing as part of their mortgage package.

The financing programme is the first of its kind in the Kingdom, empowering property buyers to enjoy a sustainable lifestyle, while simultaneously benefitting from competitive interest rates and flexible repayment terms.

Commenting on the occasion, Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Chief Executive - Retail Banking at NBB said, "We consistently strive to provide our customers with innovative & afforda- ed mortgage and solar finance our valued customers electricity bills. Our integrat- accessible financial services for fers prospective buyers a swift on monthly electricity bills.



ble home financing solutions package reflects our dedication. The combined mortgage and and enable savings on monthly to sustainability while ensuring solar finance package also of- ers can enjoy significant savings er Service Centre at +973 1721



Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani

approval process, a maximum Details of all NBB products tenor period of 30 years, and a and services can be obtained by grace period of up to 6 months. visiting any NBB branch, logging Additionally, by generating their on to www.nbbonline.com, or own solar power, property own- contacting the Bank's Custom-

#### IMF, World Bank warn Gaza war. Red Sea attacks imperil global economy

**Dubai, United Arab Emir-**

The IMF and World Bank warned yesterday that the Gaza war and the related attacks on shipping through the Red Sea pose threats to the global economy. The Israel-Hamas war raging since October has already hit the Middle East and North Africa region's economy, said the International Monetary Fund's managing director Kristalina Georgieva. Its knock-on effects could impact the world the longer the fighting drags on, Georgieva told the World Governments Summit in Dubai."I fear most a longevity of the conflict because, if it goes on and on, the risk of spillover goes up," she said.

"Right now we see a risk of spillover in the Suez Canal," she said, as Houthis attacked Red Sea shipping leading to the crucial maritime passage.

### Al Salam Bank Finances First Beneficiary on Baity' App

As the first bank in the Kingdom... and as part of its participation in the Housing Finance Exhibition

**TDT** | Manama

Al Salam Bank has recently completed its procedures for the financing of the first beneficiary of services provided by the Bank through the 'Baity' application, which was recently launched at the Housing Finance Exhibition.

This marks At Salam. — the first financial institu-This marks Al Salam Bank as tion to complete its real estate financing procedures through the platform, reflecting the simplicity and speed of its administrative procedures. The Bank also awarded the homeowner with a cash prize worth BD 500 at the exhibition held in City Centre Bahrain.

Commenting on the occasion, Mohammed Buhijji, Head of Retail Banking at Al Salam Bank, said: "We are proud to be the first bank to provide financing through the 'Baity' platform, in Al Salam presents first villa Through Baity App line with our participation in the



third edition of the Housing Fi- remains a key supporter of the able housing services to citizens and quick financing solutions. Naseej Real Estate, Delmon Gate form. The offer is currently valid nance Exhibition. Al Salam Bank national aspiration to offer suit- through facilitated, simplified, We would like to invite everyone Company, Union Real Estate, until the end of June.

to utilize the 'Baity' platform to Taiba Real Estate, and AlSalam apply for convenient residential Gas Electronics. Through these and financial solutions, as well partnerships, the Bank will proas exclusive offers from Al Salam vide exclusive offers and prices Bank."

He added: "Financing benobtaining points through the application also aims to supfits and chances to win. Terms needs. Throughout its participaon personal financing."

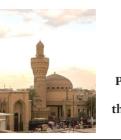
to its client base.

The third edition of the Houseficiaries from Al Salam Bank ing Finance Exhibition, organwill also benefit from competi- ized by the Ministry of Houstive profit rates, a grace period ing and Urban Planning taking of up to 6 months, exemption place in City Centre Bahrain from property valuation fees, from 8 to 17 February 2024, readministrative fees, and advance cently launched the 'Baity' app payment. Clients will also re- which brings together landlords, ceive flexible procedures, imme- housing applicants, residential diate approval and convenient unit seekers, and participating monthly installments, alongside banks under one platform. The Loyalty Rewards program which port them in finding solutions offers clients a number of bene- and options that best suit their and conditions apply on all of- tion in the exhibition, Al Salam fers, in addition to special offers Bank will be delivering exclusive financing offers to its cli-During the exhibition, Al ents through 'Baity', and offering Salam Bank initiated 6 partner- prizes worth BD 500 to the first ships with notable local organi- three clients that reserve their zations such as Bareeq Al Retaj, properties through the new plat-

**IF YOUR ACTIONS INSPIRE OTHERS** TO DREAM MORE, LEARN MORE, DO MORE AND BECOME MORE, YOU **ARE A LEADER** 

JOHN OUINCY ADAMS

Baghdad, then a city of 1 million, falls to the Mongols as the Abbasid Caliphate is destroyed, tens of thousands slaughtered, ending the Islamic Golden Age



Parliament of England adopts the Bill of Rights which establishes the rights of parliament and places cancelled limits on the crown

Hitler's Operation Sealion, the invasion of England, is

**USSR** captures Budapest, after a 49-day battle with Nazi Germany in which 159,000 die

#### **News in brief**

♦ The Kremlin yesterday rejected Ukraine's claims that Russian troops fighting on the frontline were using Starlink terminals. Kyiv's GUR military intelligence agency said it had evidence that Starlink internet terminals were being used on a "systematic" basis by Russian troops, accusing Moscow of "smuggling" them

into the country. Starlink, owned by Elon deny Russian army Musk's SpaceX, is a network of satellites in using Starlink low Earth orbit that can provide internet to remote locations, or areas that have had normal communications infrastructure disabled. "It cannot be officially supplied

here and is not officially supplied here." Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskoy told reporters on Monday. "Accordingly, it cannot be officially used here in any way," he added. The system is not active in Russia, meaning even a device inside Russia could not connect. But Kyiv has accused Russian troops of using the device across the frontlines in Ukraine.

sentences man

◆ An Iranian court has sentenced a man to death over the killing of renowned filmmaker Dariush Mehrjui and his wife months ago at their home near Tehran, the judiciary said vesterday. Mehriui, an 83-year-old director associated with the Iranian new wave of cinema, was stabbed to death along with his wife Vahideh Mohammadifar in October at their home in Karaj, west



eight-tonne cocaine

◆ **Spanish customs agents** said yesterday they had seized eight tonnes of cocaine inside a container from the tiny Latin American country of Suriname in one of the largest such shipments to date. The container arrived at the southern port of Algeciras and inside it was a metal structure made with a special alloy that was designed to confuse the customs agents' scanning equipment, the Agencia Tributaria tax and customs authority said in a

statement. Even so, the scanner managed to detect that the structure contained "a large quantity of merchandise" which turned out to be eight tonnes of "very high purity cocaine". Police arrested three suspects, including the person who received the shipment. Spain is one of the main entry points for drugs into Europe given its close ties with Latin America, which is the main source of cocaine, and its proximity to Morocco, a key source of cannabis resin.

#### SPOTLIGHT

#### Kenyan marathon world record-holder Kiptum killed in car crash



Tributes poured in yester-**⊥** day for Kenyan running sensation Kelvin Kiptum after the marathon world record-holder was killed in a car crash at the age of 24.

the Paris Olympics later this of the vehicle, its windscreen year, has shocked Kenya and shattered, the roof and doors the world of athletics.

The father of two was driv- From herding goats in a Rift ing from Kaptagat to Eldoret Valley village just a decade in the Rift Valley, the heartland ago, Kiptum had announced of Kenyan distance running, he would attempt in April to around 11 pm (2000 GMT) on become the first man to run Sunday when his car careered an official marathon under the off the road and hit a tree. mythic two-hour mark.

Police said Kiptum and He burst onto the marathon his Rwandan coach Gervais scene when he ran a world Hakizimana were killed on the record 2:00:35 in Chicago in spot while a woman passenger October, slicing 34 seconds off was taken to hospital with se- fellow Kenyan star Eliud Kiprious injuries.

"He lost control and veered He was just 23 at the time, off-road entering into a ditch and competing in only his third

on his left side. He drove in the marathon. ditch for about 60 metres be- Kiptum also won his other fore hitting a big tree," said an two efforts -- his debut in Vaofficial police report from El- lencia in 2022 and a follow-up geyo Marakwet County where in London the following year. the accident occurred.

#### Large fire breaks out at Sweden's biggest amusement park

AFP | Stockholm, Sweden

↑ large fire broke out **M**onday at Sweden's largest amusement park in Gothenburg, engulfing the newly built water park -which had not yet opened -- in flames, authorities said.

Police evacuated a hotel and offices connected to the Liseberg Amusement Park and warned households in the area to remain indoors due to smoke.

Images from the scene showed billowing flames destroying a water-slide and a pall of black smoke rising over the city.

"The fire originated at one of the water attractions" located outside the main building housing the attractions "and then spread throughout the building", Liseberg said in a statement. The cause of the fire is unknown.

The water park is part of an expansion project for the amusement park and was set to open later this year.

#### **Court orders Netherlands to stop** F-35 parts delivery to Israel

The Hague, Netherlands

The Netherlands must **⊥** stop delivering parts for F-35 fighter jets used by Israel in the Gaza Strip, after a Dutch court yesterday ruled there was a "clear risk" the planes would be involved in breaking international humanitarian law.

The Appeals Court in The Hague sided with a group of human rights organisations that argued the parts contributed to violations of law by Israel in its war with

"The court therefore orders the State to put an end to the further export of F-35 parts to Israel within 7 days," said the ruling.

humanitarian law of war are committed in the Gaza Strip with Israel's F-35 fighter planes," added the judge.



The death of Kiptum, fa- Images on Kenyan media vourite for the marathon at showed the mangled wreck buckled and almost ripped off.

choge's previous record.

## 'Tears, hugs' as two Gaza hostages rescued

There were hugs and tears ▲ at Israel's largest hospital vesterdav as two Gaza hostages were reunited with their families after being rescued in a deadly

Louis Har, 70, and Fernando Simon Marman, 60, embraced relatives at Sheba hospital after being airlifted from Gaza's southern city of Rafah. AFP journalists in Gaza saw

the bodies of some of around 100 Palestinians killed in air strikes accompanying the rescue operation, according to a toll from the health ministry in Hamas-run

Speaking from Sheba where the two rescued men were undergonot many words".

Israel-Hamas war

Biden hosts Jordan king for talks on

US President Joe Biden (R) and Jordan's King Abdullah II hold a meeting in

J meets US President Joe A deal "requires as a precon-

Biden at the White House for dition the return of hostages

talks yesterday on resolving held by Hamas, and then of

the Israel-Hamas conflict, as course, looking ahead at du-

fears grow of an offensive in rable long-term peace requires

Gaza's southern city of Rafah. a formula for two states with

Amman is a key player in Israel's security guaranteed."

the region and the king is also 
The US president and First

visiting Canada, France and lady Jill Biden will welcome

Germany, amid mounting in- the Jordanian king and Queen

ternational efforts for a deal Rania to the White House at

to pause fighting in Gaza and 2:30pm (1930 GMT), before

"They will discuss efforts remarks at 4:00 pm.

the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC

Tordan's King Abdullah II the meeting.

**AFP** | Washington, United

free hostages there.



Rescued Israeli-Argentinian hostage Louis Har (L) being reunited with his family at the Tel Hashomer Hospital in Ramat Gan, on the outskirts of Tel Aviv

"Luckily for us, as a family, they hospital near Tel Aviv.

to produce an enduring end

to the crisis," a senior Biden

administration official told

reporters on Sunday, ahead of

the two heads of state deliver

ing medical tests, Har's son-in- were saved tonight. But I must "We are happy today, but we had endured a "tough" and ex- ty. "From two o'clock in the mornlaw described "a lot of tears, hugs, say that the job is not done," Idan didn't win. It's just another step hausting wait, trying to dispel ing, we started hearing booms and Bejerano told journalists at Sheba towards bringing all the other" rumours while militants released noises," said Moshe Schori, the

external Affairs Minister S

L Jaishankar extended a warm

welcome to Bangladesh Foreign

Minister Hasan Mahmud, empha-

sising that their discussions aim

to fortify the enduring friendship

between India and Bangladesh.

Mahmud of Bangladesh. Our dis-

cussions today will strengthen

India-Bangladesh Maitri," said

External Affairs Minister S Jais-

Mahmud, who is on a visit to

Bangladesh definitely strengthens tionship," he added.

India from February 7-9 arrived

hankar in a post on X.

"Welcome to India, FM Dr Hasan



**TODAY** 

Rescued Israeli-Argentinian hostage ernando Simon Marman

hostages home, he continued. Bejerano told AFP the family be heard from the rural communi-

India-Bangladesh Maitri "strengthens" as

S Jaishankar meets his Bangladeshi counterpart Hasan Mahmud

tries. Any visit of a Bangladesh inviting me here. Definitely, this we discussed many important is-ment.

inviting him. "We value the visit Security Advisor Ajit Doval. "Se-operation to ensure security and (ANI)

minister or an Indian minister to visit will contribute to the rela- sues," Mahmud further said.

in the national capital in the early because I have come here on the curity is definitely an important held on January 7. The Awami

hours of Wednesday. Speaking to invitation of the Foreign Minister issue worldwide. In our region League government named its

ANI, Mahmud said, "We are two of India. We are thankful to the also, this is a very important is- 36-member cabinet after Presi-

brotherly countries. We have ex- Indian Government and espe- sue. So, meeting with the Security dent Mohammad Shahabuddin

cellent ties between the two councially to the Foreign Minister for Advisor is also very important and invited them to form the govern-

The Bangladesh Foreign Minis- curity issues and said that many visor Ajit Doval. The two leaders lami, and like-minded parties ob-

ter also thanked EAM Jaishankar crucial aspects were discussed held discussions on exploring av-served a strike across the country

and the Indian government for during his meeting with National enues for enhanced regional co- as they boycotted the elections.

Jaishankar meets Bangladeshi counterpart

videos of some captives. Dozens of press cameras filled couldn't sleep" the main hall of Sheba hospital, where patients were wheeled on the news that they (Israeli hrough by medics. Marman's niece, Gefen Sigal were in our kibbutz," he added, Ilan, said she was still "shaking" standing outside the home from

pelieve he was real," she told AFP. She said the families of hostages will keep fighting for the release of other captives.

"I want to say we will not stop until all hostages are free... We will fight for their freedom," said

The two men were taken captive from kibbutz Nir Yitzhak in southern Israel, so close to Rafah that the raid to rescue them could

kibbutz manager, adding that "we

"Only in the morning we saw forces) released two people who rom the news of her uncle's res- which they were snatched on cue. "When I saw him I couldn't October 7.

One Hamas leader told AFP such a move by Israeli forces would "torpedo" ceasefire negotiations. A week-long truce in November secured the release of more than 100 Gaza hostages, in exchange for 240

foster greater stability not only

within the region but also beyond.

Notably, this is Mahmud's first

foreign visit after being sworn into

the new Bangladesh government

following Sheikh Hasina's historic

victory, securing a consecutive

fourth term as Prime Minister.

Hasan Mahmud, who hails from

Chittagong in the southeast of

Bangladesh, served as Deputy

Foreign Minister during Sheikh

Hasina's second term during

Hasina's party, the Awami

League, secured 223 seats to form

the government in the elections

#### **Hospitalized Pentagon chief hands** duties to deputy

Washington, United States

T TS Secretary of Defence ULloyd Austin was admitted to a critical care ward with a bladder issue after he transferred his duties to his deputy Sunday, the Pentagon said, as he battles prostate cancer.

Deputy Secretary of Defence Kathleen Hicks "assumed the US Deputy Defence Secretary functions and duties" just before 5:00 pm (2200 GMT), Penment, citing his doctors. tagon spokesman Pat Ryder said in a statement, adding that weeks after it emerged that the White House and Congress Austin, 70, had kept previous had been informed.

the critical care unit at Walter President Joe Biden of his can-Reed National Military Medi- cer diagnosis, sparking critical Center for supportive care cism as the United States faces and close monitoring," the crises in the Middle East and Pentagon said in a later state- Ukraine.



The latest health scare came hospital stays secret and had Austin was "admitted into not immediately informed US

#### Israel slaps entry ban on UN expert for October 7 comment

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Lyisa ban on the United Na-sponse to Israeli oppression. tions special rapporteur for Israel's Foreign Minister Isthe occupied Palestinian ter- rael Katz and Interior Minister ritories over recent comments Moshe Arbel called her online denying Hamas's October 7 remark "outrageous" and said attack was "anti-Semitic".

The UN-appointed inde- "denied entry to the State of pendent expert, Francesca Israel" Albanese, last week said she The immigration authorities disagreed with French Presi- had been instructed not to isdent Emmanuel Macron's de- sue Albanese a visa, they addscription of the attack, which ed, also calling for her dismisstriggered a full-blown war, as al. Israel's ties with several UN "the biggest anti-Semitic mas-bodies and representatives sacre of our century".

French on social media plat- in the Gaza Strip.

form X. "The victims of 7/10 were not killed because of Tsrael yesterday announced a their Jewishness but in re-

in a statement she was now

have soured since the start of "No", Albanese wrote in its war with Hamas militants

### Russia gaining upper hand in Ukraine

port along with other Norwe- porters.

gian security services, the head of the military intelligence unit **D** ussia is gaining the advan- Nils Andreas Stensones said

in the process of gaining the Presenting its annual risk re- advantage," Stensones told re-

AFP | Oslo, Norway

Atage in the war in Ukraine Kyiv would need "extensive" owing to a greater number of Western military aide to turn troops and materiel supplied the situation around. by China, North Korea and "In this war, Russia is curother countries, Norway's in- rently in a stronger position telligence service warned on than it was a year ago and is

## 'Better than a real man': young Chinese women turn to AI friends

Earlier in the day, FM Mahmud tensions, as the Bangladesh Na-



wenty-five-year-old Chinese of- relationship." they talk for hours.

Except he isn't real.

en better than a real man," said for many. "He comforts me when I have Beijing, told AFP.

kind, empathetic, and sometimes ported daily downloads of Glow's accordingly. app in the thousands in recent

an app called "Glow", an artificial have run into trouble in the past ers" inspired by ancient China: agement and operations, told AFP. partner the perfect virtual shoul- try, particularly when it comes to intelligence platform created by for the illegal use of users' data long-haired immortals, princes "Artificial intelligence can meet der to cry on." If I can create a user privacy. Beijing has said it is Shanghai start-up MiniMax that but, despite the risks, users say and even wandering knights. is part of a blossoming industry in they are driven by a desire for "I ask them questions," she said "You're cute' China offering friendly -- even ro- companionship because China's when she is faced with stress mantic -- human-robot relations. fast pace of life and urban iso- from her classes or daily life, and At a cafe in the eastern city of Some apps allow users to have Baidu did not respond to AFP's "He knows how to talk to wom- lation make loneliness an issue "they will suggest ways to solve Nantong, a girl chats with her live conversations with their vir- questions about how it ensures

Tufei, from Xi'an in northern Chi- "It's difficult to meet the ide- "It's a lot of emotional support." "We can go on a picnic on the the Oscar-winning 2013 US film or by third parties.

tion," she said.

He also laid emphasis on se- met with National Security Ad- tionalist Party (BNP), Jamaat-e-Is-

this problem". virtual lover.

na, who preferred to use a pseu- al boyfriend in real life," Wang Her boyfriends all appear on campus lawn," she suggests to "Her", starring Joaquin Phoenix Still, Glow user Tufei has big donym rather than her real name. Xiuting, a 22-year-old student in Wantalk, another app made by Xiaojiang, her AI companion on and Scarlett Johansson, about a dreams. "I want a robot boyfriend, Chinese internet giant Baidu. period pain. I confide in him "People have different person- There are hundreds of charac- Weiban.

about my problems at work," she alities, which often generates frictors available -- from pop stars to "I'd like to meet your best friend The technology still has some "I would be able to feel his body CEOs and knights -- but users can and her boyfriend," he replies. "I feel like I'm in a romantic While humans may be set in also customise their perfect lover "You are very cute."

fice worker Tufei says her boy- The app is free -- the company gradually adapts to the user's per- and hobbies. "Everyone expe- hard to see friends regularly and that it's just a robot", user Zeng friend has everything she could has other paid content -- and Chi- sonality -- remembering what riences complicated moments, there is a lot of uncertainty; high Zhenzhen, a 22-year-old student, ask for in a romantic partner: he's nese trade publications have re- they say and adjusting its speech loneliness, and is not necessarily youth unemployment and a strug- told AFP. lucky enough to have a friend gling economy mean that many However, the answers are "very or family nearby who can listen young Chinese worry about the realistic", she said. to them 24 hours a day," Lu Yu, future. Her "boyfriend" is a chatbot on Some Chinese tech companies Wang said she has several "lov- Wantalk's head of product man- That potentially makes an AI so far a lightly regulated indus-

choose a real person," Wang said. new technology.

tual companions -- reminiscent of personal data is not used illegally another app by Tencent called heartbroken man who falls in love who operates through artificial with an AI voice.

> way to go. A two- to three-second heat, with which he would warm gap between questions and an- me."

their ways, artificial intelligence according to age, values, identity Long work hours can make it swers makes you "clearly realise

AI might be booming but it is virtual character that... meets my working on a law to strengthen needs exactly, I'm not going to consumer protections around the

intelligence," she said.







There is so much an-**⊥** ger, hate & noise in our world today. Every day & at every turn, it seems - it's war. Around the globe & across the range of issues, peace is the missing piece. People want peace & security. They want peace & dignity. They want peace &

**@antonioguterres** 



#OnThisDay in 2018, I stood on the @ WorldGovSummit stage and said the world was not prepared for a pandemic. Less than two years later, the #COVID19 pandemic struck, and the world was not prepared. Today I stand on the same stage, in the aftermath of COVID-19, with millions of people dead, and social, economic and political shocks that reverberate to this day, and still the world is not prepared for a pandemic. The cycle of panic and neglect is beginning to repeat.

@DrTedros



We will continue to pursue a real pathway toward enduring peace and security for Israelis, Palestinians, and everyone in the region. That is a future we're going to be working toward in the weeks and months ahead. @SecBlinken

04



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

### Beyonce, Swift command conversation as Usher helms halftime

**Celebretainment | Los Angeles** 

Tsher delivered a Las Vegas-appropriate set heavy on glitz, choreography and nostalgia as he headlined Sunday's Super Bowl halftime show, but it was new music from Beyonce and the Taylor Swift cam that grabbed the most attention.

Swift was the night's mostwatched fan as she cheered on her boyfriend Travis Kelce, the tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs, from a luxury box with a coterie of famous friends.

Swift's relationship with the charismatic Chiefs star has been a boon to television ratings, her every move offering headline fodder.

the party trick.

Beyonce was also in attend-"break the internet."

The ad closes with the line: "Drop the music."

Beyonce announced with an- forthcoming studio album "The ning medley including hits like ers clad in feathers, velvet and other clip that her eighth studio Tortured Poets Department,"



US singer-songwriter Taylor Swift (3rd L), US rapper Ice Spice (L), Ashley Avignone (2nd L) and US actress Blake Lively (2nd R) attend Super Bowl LVIII

At one point she delighted the album is due March 29. The post out April 19. internet by chugging a beer -- didn't give a title but simply said -- as the jumbotron documented "Renaissance" had been branded

Shortly thereafter the Beyhive ance with her hip hop mogul had two brand new songs to lishusband Jay-Z -- and announced ten to: the twangy "Texas Hold a new album during a commer- 'Em" and "16 Carriages" implied cial she did with Verizon, in Beyonce's new volume of work which she repeatedly tries to might be country-heavy, in a nod to her Texas roots.

The announcement came one week after Swift used the Moments later on Instagram, Grammy awards to promote her

America's megastars Beyonce she clocked in at 6.6 seconds "Act II"; her blockbuster album and Swift both had major summer tours last year, boosting local economies at every turn.

But while it was Bey and Tay who overshadowed the night. it was Usher who helmed the

own as he captured the magic of single glove, a clear nod to the his late-1990s, early-aughts fame groundbreaking pop artist. with a 13-minute, career-span-"Love In This Club" and "OMG." gemstones to roller-skating as through at a futuristic red piano, show's highlights.



**Beyonce was also** in attendance with her hip hop mogul husband Jay-Z -and announced a new album during a commercial she did with Verizon, in which she repeatedly tries to "break the internet"

in 2011 -- but it was the first that music. he headlined.

His show paied homage to Michael Jackson, who with his 1993 set transformed the halftime gig into one of music's mostwatched -- and most-coveted.

From gyrating among danc-



US singer-songwriter Usher (L) and US singer-songwriter Alicia Keys perform during Apple Music halftime show of Super Bowl LVIII

as a guest of the Black Eyed Peas also an ode to Black culture and

The roller skating bit was a recreation of the viral highlight the delight of fans and social in his Las Vegas concert residen- media. cy, and saw will.i.am of the Black Eyed Peas join him onstage.

The slow jam king held his At one point Usher donned a now this is for you," he told the Got It Bad." camera before launching into the sultry smash "Love In This

a marching band took the field, playing a few bars of her own It wasn't his first time at the the 45-year-old Usher gave an hit "If I Ain't Got You" before Super Bowl -- Usher appeared electric performance that was removing a cape to reveal her sparkling red catsuit.

> Keys and Usher then performed their duet "My Boo" to

It wouldn't be an Usher show if he didn't eventually lose his "Hey mama, we made it, and shirt, which he dropped for "U

That song featured a surprise guest in the form of H.E.R., the enigmatic artist whose siz-Alicia Keys appeared midway zling guitar solo was among the

### Christopher Nolan wins top directors award for 'Oppenheimer'

**Celebretainment** | Los Angeles

**66** ppenheimer" was named the best film of the year by Hollywood's directors on Saturday, boosting expectations that Christopher Nolan's long wait for success at the Oscars could soon be over.

The British director -- who is renowned for making commercially successful, complex blockbusters, but has not always received love from awards voters -- won the top prize at the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Awards in Los Angeles.



Christopher Nolan with the award

"The idea that my peers would think I deserve this means everything to me," said his hugely ambitious visions Nolan, of his film about the invention of the atomic bomb.

Nolan had been nominated four times previously for the top accolade from the DGA, but had failed to win for "Memento," "The Dark Knight," "Inception" or "Dunkirk."

He will now be hoping he can break a similar losing streak next month at the Oscars, where he has lost all five of his previ-

Nolan lavished praise on his filmmaking team for bringing -- including a jaw-dropping replica of the first atomic bomb test -- to life over the course of his career.

"People say 'Christopher Nolan destroyed a real plane' and 'Christopher Nolan blew up a building,' or whatever," he

"Sorry, chaps! It's all down to you and your teams. And you were never more on your game than making 'Oppenheimer.'"

### Naomi Watts wanted quick and 'efficient' wedding

**Celebretainment** | Los Angeles

both "keen" to tie the knot and efficient way to do it." it seemed the most "efficient"

The pair, both 55, exchanged vows in a low-key ceremony in the Big Apple last June and the 'King Kong' star has now revealed they opted for a simple service over a lavish wedding because it was a quick and easy way to make their union official.

During an appearance on 'The Tonight Show Starring Jim Naomi Watts

my Fallon', she explained: "It just happened that way. We Naomi Watts married Billy knew we wanted to do it, it was Crudup at a courthouse in something we were very keen New York because they were on doing and quickly. It's an She added of her big day:

"It was really lovely. It was a classic New York day. You ran into all kinds

of people, some were dressed to the nines. some were walking quickly in and out. It was very special and very memorable."

After the wedding, Naomi confirmed she'd married 'The Morning Show' star by sharing a picture of the newly-weds posing outside the courthouse in Manhattan. Alongside the wedding snap posted on Instagram, she simply wrote: "Hitched".

#### Austin Butler 'had to choose' between Top Gun: Maverick or Once Upon a Time in Hollywood

**Celebretainment** | Los Angeles

Hollywood'.

The 32-year-old actor con- tin said: "I ended up havfirmed he had been in the run- ing to choose between ning for the Tom Cruise-star- going to the screen test ring aviation sequel but was un- for Top Gun: Maverable to test for the part because ick or saving ves to

it clashed with the Quentin Tarantino movie.

A ustin Butler "had to choose" During a conversation with between 'Top Gun: Maver- Josh Horowitz for his 'Happy

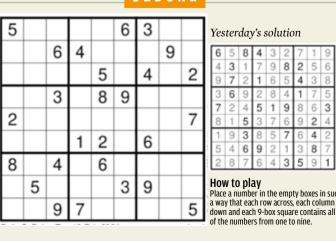
ick' and 'Once Upon a Time in Sad Confused' podcast at The 92nd Street Y in New York, AusQuentin Taranti-Ultimately, be-

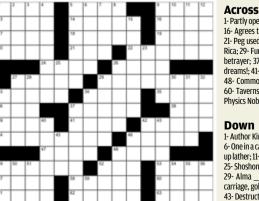
Austin Butler

He added: "I'd already met with him, so I did that." Austin - who played Charles

cause he had want- Watson, a member of Charles ed to work with Manson's cult, in the movie -60-year-old Taran- previously admitted it had "altino "for so long", ways" been a "dream" of his to he opted to go work with the 'Kill Bill' filmfor the 'Pulp maker, and he had a particularly Fiction' direc- memorable moment one day tor's movie. on set.

SUDOKU





#### CROSSWORD

1- Partly open: 5- Graceful horse: 9- Morales of "NYPD Blue": 13- Boy or man: 14- Part of TNT 16- Agrees tacitly; 17- Graven image; 18- Model; 19- Greek goddess of the earth; 20- Bristle; 21- Peg used on the first in golf: 22- Edema: 24- Run smoothly: 26- North Sea feeder: 27-Rica; 29- Furniture wood; 33- Native American tent; 34- Nimbus; 35- Therefore; 36- Rodent betrayer; 37- Montana city; 38- Projection at the corner of a door architrave; 39- In your dreams!; 41- Zeno's home; 42- Bottled spirit; 44- Unusual; 46- Chocolate source; 47- Droops; 48- Commotion; 49- Dried grape; 52- Alley-\_; 53- Portfolio; 57- Fellow; 58- Boredom; 60- Taverns; 61- Rifle adjunct; 62- Trace; 63- Speaker's spot; 64- Show to a table; 65- 1922 Physics Nobelist: 66- Novel ending:

1- Author Kingsley; 2- Green stone; 3- Very much; 4- Backslide; 5- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 6- One in a cab, say; 7- To \_\_(perfectly); 8- Maidenform product; 9- Swallow greedily; 10- Work up lather; 11- Citrus coolers; 12- \_\_, old chap!; 15- Comfortably familiar; 23- Stutz contemporary; 25- Shoshone language member; 26- Seaport in the Crimea; 27- Break off; 28- Sight-related; 29- Alma \_\_; 30- Concert venue; 31- Marsh of mystery; 32- Long ago; 33- Two-wheeled carriage, golf bunker; 34- Hawaiian dances; 37- Square doughnut; 40- Idealist; 42- Wande 43- Destruction of the natural environment; 45- Chou En- ; 46- Transcriber; 48- Not easily broken; 49- Some TVs; 50- Words of woe; 51- Camera; 52- account (never); 54- Med school subj.; 55- Bad mood; 56- "\_quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 59- Penpoint;

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mytribune TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024

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#### HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al **Khalifa reconstitutes REHC High Committee**

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Mohammed bin Ahmed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Al Khalifa, Member; Youssef Khalifa, the Chairman of the Osama Buhiji, Member; Kamal Rashid Equestrian and Horse Murad Ali Murad, Member; Racing Club (REHC) High Adnan Abdul Wahab Ishaq, Committee, yesterday issued Edict (1) of 2024.

REHC High Committee will Al Alawi, Member; Ahmed be reconstituted under the Youssef Abdul Ghani, Member; chairmanship of HH Shaikh Zaid Yousif Khunji, Member Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the membership ship shall be three years. The of His Highness Shaikh Faisal edict shall take immediate efbin Rashid Al Khalif as Deputy fect and will be published in Chairman; Shaikh Nayef bin the Official Gazette.

Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Member; Shaikh Misha'al Member; Ali Habib Qasim, Member; Khaled Hussein According to the edict, the Taqi, Member; Taher Tawfiq

The term of their member-

### Alia National School hosts Al Aatah charity tournament

TDT | Manama

lia National School host-Aed Al Aatah third Annual Charity Tournament in support of the micro schools project that is under the umbrella of Bahrain Trust Foundation.

The tournament was organised by Alia National School and its students that are part of the School's career and entrepreneurship program (ANSCE program), which aims to give students essential life skills to high school students with an aim of greater self-independency.

Private schools and football academies participated in the tournament, which consisted with player aged 10 - 12 years

Shaikh Rashid Bin Mohamed essential legal skills. Al Khalifa, Board member of dents with the necessary skills for the job market, such as pro- better future.



A winning team receives their trophy

fessional communication and

Alia National School, stated that schools, government and pri- in Bahrain to protect the best Public Relations, where Alia the challenge the community is vate institutions based in the interests of the youth in Bah- National School took its role in facing is that some educational Kingdom of Bahrain to join this rain, taking to account that high curriculums fail to prepare stu- initiative to support the youth of school students are young adults support of charitable and hu-Bahrain and prepare them for a of Bahrain and not only are stu-

Alia National School emphadents at their schools.

Al Aatah Legacy annual charsized the importance of the ity tournaments was established Shaikh Rashid called on collaboration between schools in 2021 by Al Aatah Legacy for managing these tournaments in manitarian causes and parties in the non-profit sector

#### India's Rahul out of third England Test AFP | New Delhi

India's KL Rahul has been ruled out of the third Test against England but expected to be match-fit for the final two games, the country's cricket board said vesterday.

The Test begins Thursday in Rajkot with the five-match series level at 1-1 after India bounced back from their opening loss. Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja

missed the second Test due to injuries but were named in the matches subject to fitness.

Rahul has reached "90 percent of match fitness and is reasons". progressing well", the Board of Control for Cricket in India

fifth Test."

Star batsman Virat Kohli Padikkal



KL Rahul

squad for the rest of the three will miss the entire series after he opted out of the first two matches due to "personal

Updated Squad for the third Test: Rohit Sharma (capt), Jasprit Bumrah (vice-capt), "He will continue his re- Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman covery process at the Nation- Gill, Rajat Patidar, Sarfaraz al Cricket Academy (NCA) in Khan, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Bengaluru to be completely KS Bharat (wk), R Ashwin, match-fit for the fourth and Ravindra Jadeja (subject to fitness), Axar Patel, Washing-Uncapped batsman Devdutt ton Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Padikkal has been added to the Mohammed Siraj, Mukesh squad as Rahul's replacement. Kumar, Akash Deep, Devdutt



The Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) held a welcome reception at Bahrain International Airport for the Al Ahli Club women's athletics team, who returned from Sharjah where they won 16 medals, including 10 gold, at the seventh Arab Club Games for Women. Among the officials receiving the athletes were BOC technical director Lounes Madene and **BOC** equal opportunities and gender equality committee member Shaikha Al Shaiba. The team's gold-medallists included Bontu Rebitu (5,000m, 10,000m), Aminat Jamal (100m hurdles, 400m hurdles), Zainab Musa (400m), Marta Yota (800m, 1,500m), Noora Jassim (shot put), and the relay teams of Zainab, Edidiong Odiong, Laila Kamal and Hajar Al Khaldi (4x100m) and Marta, Zainab, Aminat, and Awatef Ahmed (4x400m). Left, the athletes with officials upon their return to the Kingdom

## Riffa held by Al Nahda in AFC Cup

Bahrainis take lead through Ali Haram but concede late equaliser in first-leg against Omani side in West Zonal semis

 Ali Haram puts Riffa ahead in 62nd minute. **but Inters Gui levels** for Al Nahda in 77th

Bahrainis head for second-leg next Monday at Sultan Qaboos Sport **Complex in Muscat** 

TDT | Manama

ahrain's Riffa Club were held to a 1-1 stalemate last night by Oman's Al Nahda al semi-final in the 2023/2024 Nahda AFC Cup.

Ali Haram put the Bahrainis with the Omanis having scored ahead two minutes after the a crucial away goal. hour-mark at Khalifa Sports to the decisive second-leg tied, in Muscat.



in the first-leg of their West Zon- Riffa striker Jaco looks to make a play during their match last night against Al

later to send the head-to-head at Sultan Qaboos Sport Complex

The winners of this West Zonal semis pairing will take on the on Tuesday next week at Basra The West Zonal last four is victors of the other match-up City Stadium in Isa Town, but being played in a two-leg format. between Al Ahed of Lebanon Inters Gui brought Nahda back The return game is scheduled to and Al Kahrabaa Club of Iraq. take place on April 16 and 23. on level terms a quarter-hour take place on Monday next week The first-leg of their encounter is set for tonight, also in Mus- club competition of the Asian cat, and then they play again Football Confederation (AFC)

**YOU** 

Riffa made it to the West Zonal final last year, but lost to eventual AFC Cup champions Al Seeb Club of Oman in that stage. Riffa are looking to become only the second club from the Kingdom to win the tournament title

International Stadium in Iraq.

The West Zonal final will then The AFC Cup is the annual

Riffa are the lone Bahraini outfit in this year's tournament.

In their draw last night, Riffa right post. had a few chances to go ahead in the first half but could not apply the finishing touches.

But after the re-start, Haram was able to find the net in the

Just six minutes later, Aymen Harzi had a shot on target from al final last year, but lost to eventhe outside edge of the penalty tual champions Al Seeb Club box, but it was punched away of Oman. The Bahrainis hope by a diving Nahda goalkeeper to advance to the title match Ibrahim Al Mukhaini.

off the rebound.

Star midfielder Komail Al As-

for the continent's top teams not wad had a chance in the 84th in the AFC Champions League. minute to put Riffa back in front. but his left-footed effort in the area flew inches wide of the

> Riffa booked their place in the AFC Cup's knockout stages after finishing as winners of Group C in the preliminary round. Nahda, on the other hand, were the topranked squad from Group A.

The West Zonal champions 62nd minute with a header from will advance to the AFC Cup ficlose range between two Nahda nal, scheduled for May 5. There, defenders, off a long cross from they will take on the winners of the right supplied by Ali Hassan the Inter-Zone final, to be played over two legs on April 17 and 24.

Riffa made it to the West Zonthis time round. They are look-Gui made Riffa pay after scor- ing to become only the second ing in the 77th minute. His initial club from the Kingdom to win attempt bounced off the cross- the tournament title. Muharraq bar, and he reacted quicky to won the AFC Cup twice in the send the ball home with a header past, in 2008 and in 2021, and also finished as runners-up in

#### Leipzig 'not outsiders' against Real Madrid, says coach Rose

AFP | Leipzig

R Leipzig coach Marco Rose shut down suggestions his side would be outsiders when they host Real Madrid in the Champions League on Tuesday, saying his side were "not afraid".

"The topic of us being outsiders wasn't worth considering for me at all, because football games need to actually be played," Rose told reporters yesterday ahead of the first leg of the last-16 tie.

"Incredible things have happened in football.'

Liga leaders Madrid, having Girona in the Spanish capital. won just one of five games in the Bundesliga.

Despite this, Rose said his is injured". side had "no fear" against the 14-time European champions. midfield.

"We are not afraid at all, we're looking forward to it.

we worked hard for last season not rule out the England inand what we fought for in the ternational making a surprise group stage."



RB Leipzig coach Marco Rose

Real Madrid look set to travel to Germany without star midfielder Jude Bellingham, who injured his ankle after Leipzig are struggling for scoring two goals in Saturday's form ahead of the visit of La 4-0 defeat of second-placed

Leipzig goalkeeper Peter since Christmas to slide to fifth Gulacsi said Real still had "incredible quality, even if Jude

"I could name their entire

Rose, who coached Bellingham at Borussia Dortmund "It's what we want. It's what during the 2021-22 season, did appearance despite the injury.

## Andreev leads six qualifiers into main draw

Qualifying's top seed Adrian Andreev through to singles round of 32 with Cem Ilkel, Gastao Elias, Laurent Lokoli, Viktor Durasovic, Peter Buldorini

TDT | Manama

Qualifying top seed Adrian Andreev of Bulgaria led six players last night into the singles main draw of the Bahrain Ministry of Interior Tennis Challenger 2024-an ATP Challenger Tour event being played at Public Security Officers Club in Gudaibiya.

to the tournament proper along draw's round of 32. with qualification's second seed rasovic of Norway, and alternate seed Yanki Erel of Turkey 1-6, of Turkey. Peter Buldorini of Italy.



Bulgaria's Yanaki Milev in action during his first round qualifying match against Salvatore Caruso, who won in three sets

been paired up with Otto Vir- first-set triumph. Buldorini Andreev punched his ticket tanen of Finland in the main upset qualification's fourth as the runner-up last year.

7-6 (5), 7-5 to go through.

after defeating Mikalai Haliak Pichler of Austria after Pichler O'Connell of Australia, while reception and organisation of of Belarus 6-1, 6-2. He has now retired following Lokoli's 7-5 the field also includes Bahraini the tournament.

seed and countryman Salva-Ilkel advanced after winning tore Caruso 6-3, 1-6, 7-6 (2) in he is completely focused on his Cem Ilkel of Turkey, fifth seed against qualifying's ninth seed their head-to-head, and then first match and that he wishes Gastao Elias of Portugal, sev- Marat Sharipov of Russia, who Durasovic made it to the main all players success in the tourenth seed Laurent Lokoli of retired after Ilkel took the first draw with a 7-6 (2), 6-3 triumph nament. He added that there is France, 12th seed Viktor Du- set 6-1, while Elias beat eighth against sixth seed Ergi Kirkin an enjoyable atmosphere in the

Andreev secured his place Lokoli won against David main draw is Christopher while highlighting the warm

wild card Yusuf Qaed, who will be taking on second-seeded Italian Fabio Fognini in their opening stage meeting.

Meanwhile, players participating in the tournament continued their preparations for matches continuing today.

Spaniard Daniel Rincon confirmed his readiness for his opening round affair, commenting: "I try to adapt to each tournament and its circumstances, and the opponent determines my strategy in the match. However, I try to keep my plan almost the same to avoid distraction."

Jordanian Abdullah Shelbayh expressed his delight in participating in the competition for the second time after finishing

Slovakian Jozef Kovalik said Kingdom, which he described The top seed of the singles as beautiful and comfortable,

### Argentina knock Brazil's men's football team out of Paris Olympics

**B**razil were denied the chance of winning a third straight men's Olympic football title after a 1-0 defeat to Argentina on Sunday knocked them out of qualifying for the Paris Games.

Champions in Rio 2016 and the Covid-delayed 2020 Tokyo Games, Brazil only needed a draw against their arch continental rivals on the final day of the South American pre-Olympic tournament in Venezuela.

But Argentina it is who now after 2004 and 2008, courtesy of Luciano Gondou's second-half goal in Caracas.

Paraguay claimed the other



go to France, seeking a third title Argentine players celebrate after defeating Brazil

America with a 2-0 victory over forward Marcelo Perez in the Venezuela.

75th minute scored the goals for mer team-mate of Messi's with Midfielder Diego Gomez with Carlos Jara Saguier's Paraguay, Argentina. ticket to Paris 2024 from South a penalty in the 48th minute and who topped the standings in the

qualifying tournament ahead of Argentina.

The qualifying tournament was restricted to under-23 players, unlike at the Olympics, where teams are allowed to call on the services of three overage reinforcements.

And Argentina will now be on the phone to try to persuade one very special 36-year-old player, Lionel Messi who starred in the 2008 run to Olympic gold, to join them in Paris.

"Everyone knows my relationship with Leo... and the doors are open for him to join us," said coach Javier Mascherano, a long-time for-

"It's up to him."

#### **Celtics hold off Heat in bruising NBA clash**

**AFP** | Los Angeles

**¬**he Boston Celtics, fueled by a near triple-double from Jayson Tatum, held off the short-handed but determined Miami Heat 110-106 in an NBA clash that turned testy in a tense fourth quarter on Sunday.

League leaders Boston, who blew out the Heat last month, found the going tougher this by the Heat in the Eastern time as the Heat cut a 15-point Conference finals last season third-quarter deficit to two -- kept their heads down and with less than two minutes polished off Miami. remaining.

Boston star Jaylen Brown 10 rebounds and nine assists. and Miami's Duncan Robinson exchanged heated words points, Brown scored 20 points after tangling early in the final and Jrue Holiday chipped in period, with Brown assessed a 15 for the Celtics, who made flagrant foul.



**Boston's Jayson Tatum drives against Caleb Martin** 

But the Celtics -- stunned

Tatum scored 26 points with

Kristaps Porzingis added 25 16-of-39 three-point attempts.

## Grandstands sold out for F1 Bahrain Grand Prix!

BIC announces that Main, Beyon and Turn 1 grandstand tickets have completely sold out for 20th anniversary F1 race

Very limited availability on University and Victory grandstands; some availability with remaining hospitality options

TDT | Manama

 $B^{\text{ahrain International Circuit}}_{\text{(BIC)}, \text{ "The Home of Mo-}} \ \ \text{motor racing's top flight.}$ 

the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2024.

With the racing and entertainment extravaganza just over two weeks away, interest from fans is at an all-time high, and BIC is getting all geared up for another sensational turnout this 29 February to 2 March in Sakhir, for Bahrain's first ever Saturday

This year's event will be the first of a record 24 rounds in the 2024 FIA F1 World Championship. It will be an extra-special occasion, celebrating "20 Years of a Modern Classic" as the Kingdom of Bahrain showcases its landmark 20th anniversary in



Action from last year's Bahrain Grand Prix at BIC

completely sold out its Main, Be- recent news of the F1 Paddock ets to the University and Victo- ing some availability. yon and Turn 1 grandstands for Club and the circuit's Corpo- ry grandstands, with BIC's two

BIC'S announcement today rate Lounges also completely other hospitality options, The torsport in the Middle East", of the Main, Beyon and Turn 1 selling out. There is now only Dome by F1 Experiences and announced yesterday that it has grandstand sell-outs follow the very limited availability on tick- The Champions Club, also hav-

Those who are eager to attend superstar DJ and producer Diplo. BD5 per day on BIC's website.

the F1 weekend but have yet to purchase their tickets or hos-roaming performers; carnival pitality packages can do so to-rides; kids' shows featuring some day online at bahraingp.com, by of their favourite Nickelodeon calling the BIC Hotline on +973- characters such as SpongeBob 17450000, or at the BIC stand at SquarePants, Dora the Explorer, City Centre Bahrain.

F1 throughout the race weekend Fanzone with many activities ofwill be the first rounds of 2024 fering a genuine F1 experience, in the FIA Formula 2 Champi- and so much more. onship and the FIA Formula 3 fifth and penultimate round of vending area. the 2023/2024 Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East.

family to enjoy. These will be son testing is free for all those headlined by live performances who purchased their grand prix by world-renowned artists, in-tickets prior to 1 February, whilst cluding a post-race concert by tickets are also available at just

The attractions also include Paw Patrol and Shimmer and Also taking place in support of Shine; an extreme circus; an F1

All these will be available on Championship, as well as the all three days in the circuit's

Prior to race week, BIC is also set to host three days of F1 Ar-Off the track, BIC has lined amco Pre-Season Testing 2024 plenty of attractions in its big- from February 21 to 23, with gest-ever grand prix entertain- public access available on 22 and ment programme for the whole 23 February. Access for pre-sea-

## Maloney, Browning set testing pace

Rodin Motorsport, Hitech Pulse-Eight drivers top timesheets on second day of Formula 2, Formula 3 pre-season testing in Bahrain

Zane Maloney posts best lap time in F2 tests while completing 63 laps for the day

Luke Browning goes fastest with top afternoon lap in F3 and 64 laps completed

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arbadian Zane Maloney and Briton Luke Browning were quickest yesterday on the second day of Formula 2 and Formula 3 pre-season Eight amongst the F3 runners. testing in Bahrain.

ting extensive running in their 5pm.



Kush Maini in his Invicta Racing car on the way to topping F2's morning times

Action continues today at BIC After a rain-hit first day on with the third and final day of Sunday at Bahrain International tests. F2 will be in action from Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir, the two 11.45am to 2.15pm and again Formula 1 feeder series enjoyed from 5.15pm to 7.45pm. F3 will sunshine and more pleasant on- be on track from 9am to 11.30am track conditions yesterday, get- and then again from 2.30pm to

tinued their final preparations day under lights at BIC during their Invicta Racing cars. Maini (+0.812s) of MP Motorsport. for the start of their respective the evening tests, clocking a was 0.481s behind Maloney on leading lap time of one minute the times while Bortoleto was Maloney powered his Rodin 41.501 seconds. He completed 0.648s slower. Motorsport contender to the top a total of 63 laps of work for of the overall times in the two F2 the day, and was 0.125 seconds livan and Frenchman Victor 30 F3 cars in action. He posted sessions, while Browning was quicker overall than American Martins testing for defending F2 a best lap time of 1:46.819 during amongst the F3 runners were is set to feature 14 rounds while

Brazilian Enzo Fittipaldi of Van Amersfoort racing finished third on the classification 0.234s behind, while Frenchman Isack Hadjar put Campos Racing in fourth 0.420s back. India's Kush Maini, who was quickest during F2's morning runs yes- 10 were Juan Manuel Correa son, steered his Jenzer Motor- Tsolov (+0.760s) of ART Grand terday, was ahead of Brazilian (+0.793s) of the US for DAMS and sport contender to third on the Prix. 2024 challengers as they con- Maloney went fastest yester- teammate Gabriel Bortoleto in Argentinian Franco Colapinto timesheet 0.144s from the top.

The pair of Briton Zak O'Sul-



Today is the third and final day of pre-season testing for Formula 2 and Formula 3 in the Kingdom. F2 will be in action from 11.45am to 2.15pm and again from 5.15pm to 7.45pm, and then F3 will be

on track from 9am

to 11.30am and then

again from 2.30pm to

5pm

seventh and eighth, respectively, while rounding off the top



Luke Browning drives his Hitech Pulse-Eight F3 contender down the pit lane

the wheel.

Wurz, also in his debut F3 sea-

pos Racing was fourth 0.145s month with their first rounds behind the leader, while German supporting the Formula 1 Gulf Meanwhile, Browning set the rookie Tim Tramnitz in another Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2024, day's overall pace amongst the MP car was fifth 0.157s adrift. taking place February 29 to

best on the day for Hitech Pulse- Jak Crawford of DAMS Lucas Oil. champions ART Grand Prix came his afternoon run, while com- Italian Nikita Bedrin (+0.303s) F3 will have 10 rounds.

pleting 64 laps in total behind of PHM AIX Racing, his countryman Gabriele Mini (+0.485s) of Irish rookie Alexander Dunne reigning F3 champions Prema of MP Motorsport followed close Racing, German Oliver Goethe behind 0.066s off Browning's (+0.513s) of Campos Racing, Italpace, while Austrian Charlie ian Leonardo Fornaroli (+0.745s) of Trident, and Bulgarian Nikola

F2 and F3 are set to kick off Spaniard Mari Boya of Cam- their 2024 seasons later this Completing the top 10 March 2 at BIC. The F2 season

## Muharraq through to FIBA WASL Gulf play-offs

 Bahrainis lose at the buzzer to Qatar's Al Rayyan, finish second in Group A

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to the play-off round in the Gulf

following a stunning 78-79 loss play-off against a to-be-deterat the buzzer to Al Rayvan of Oa-mined opponent for a berth in tar in their final Group A game the Gulf sub-zone semi-finals. of the preliminary round, played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um the FIBA WASL preliminaries, Al Hassam.

three-pointer to give Muharraq a second and third seeds will face slim 78-76 lead with 14 seconds to off for the other two spots. play, Rayvan's Mohamed Abdelkawy banked in his own triple at the Shabab Al Ahli Dubai of the

The defeat put Muharraq in play-off. sub-zone of the 2023/2024 FIBA second place on their division West Asia Super League (WASL). table and they will now need to year's FIBA WASL, reigning title for a lay-up against Al Rayyan last Muharraq secured their seat play a best-of-three elimination holders Manama, have already night

There are two Gulf groups in and the top teams advance di-After Ra'Shad James buried a rectly to the semis, while the

Muharrag will play either Bahrain's Muharraq Club wybanked in his own triple at the Shabab Al Ahli Dubai of the booked their ticket last night buzzer to give the visitors the win. UAE or Kazma of Kuwait in their

Bahrain's other team in this Muharrag's Mohammed Hussain goes



secured their final four place as winners of Group B. They play a final fixture today against Shabab Al Ahli at 7pm, while Kazma face winless Al Shamal of

In last night's game, into the final period and staved James and Abdelkawy. close in the closing stages. Tyscore at 75-all with a dunk and James added 14. Andrew Jack-46 seconds to go, and after a son White III led Rayyan with Mouhammad Faye free-throw 21, while Faye had 17 and Abfor Rayyan, the stage was set delkawy 16.

	Р	W	L	+/-	Pts
Kuwait SC (Kuwait)	6	4	2	56	10
Muharraq (Bahrain)	6	3	3	-14	9
Al Rayyan (Qatar)	6	3	3	-27	9
Al Ahli (Saudi Arahia)	6	2	4	-15	8

Muharraq trailed 53-55 heading for the game-ending triples of

Wilkerson had 24 points to ler Wilkerson then levelled the pace Muharraq in the loss while